

InterAct Ministries, Inc., Board Meeting

InterAct Ministries Headquarters, Boring, Oregon
August 4, 2012

Present: Gerry Breshears (Chairman), Huron Claus (Vice Chairman), Andy Baxter (Treasurer), Ray Prigodich (Secretary), Mike Matthews, Doug Prins, Sheldon Penner, Gale Van Diest, and Dale Smith.

Absent: None.

Others Present: David Joseph (Alaska Field Director), Dan Mayerle (Canada Field Director), Thomas Slawson (Russia Field Director/Director of Public Ministries), and Roy Martin (Chief Financial Officer) were also present until discussion of new business began.

Call to Order

Chairman Breshears called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

Devotional Time

Huron Claus talked to us about how to communicate the gospel effectively in a shame-oriented cultural context. It's significant that, because of their strong shame orientation, some native languages lack words for "sin" or "forgiveness."

Shame began with Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:7) and was also a factor in Cain's murder of his brother, Abel. Shame is the ultimate disruption of harmony with the Creator and his creation, as creatures attempt to secure their destiny without reference to the Creator. As Paul wrote in Romans 1:20-25, although sinful humanity knew God, they did not honor him as God.

People can deal with their shame by putting their trust in the Lord. As Paul wrote in Romans 9:33, "[T]he one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." (This idea is repeated in Romans 10:11.)

We come into right relationship with our Creator, not through our own initiative, but through God's initiative. As Paul wrote in Philippians 2:6-7, Jesus Christ, "being in very nature God, . . . made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant." "He humbled himself" (verse 8). He was everything, but he came as nothing. He came, not to be served, but to serve.

The cross symbolizes the most shameful form of death during Christ's time. His cross was the culmination of a life that involved shame and rejection. "Jesus . . . for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame. . ." (Hebrews 12:2), and he endured great hostility (verse 3).

Through what Christ did on our behalf, the possibility of harmony with God and his creation has been restored. In Native American culture, the greatest way to honor someone is by giving them a gift, while the greatest shame comes from not accepting a gift that is offered. When we fail to accept his gift, are we the greatest offense to the Creator God?

David wrote in Psalm 25:2-3: “[I]n you I trust, O my God. Do not let me be ashamed. ... None who wait for you will be ashamed, but those who deal treacherously without cause will be ashamed.”

While in Peru recently, Huron met with a chief who is in his 80s. After Huron shared some of these thoughts with him, the chief accepted Christ, lamenting that other missionaries over the years had never clearly communicated these truths to him.

When Huron finished speaking, a brief time of discussion followed. Gerry Breshears suggested that shame, guilt, and fear are the three major issues people deal with, with one of the three generally being the dominant one in a given cultural context. Mike Matthews recommended the book *Honor and Shame*, by Roland Muller. He also noted that the themes of honor and shame are prominent in the book of Hebrews.

Prayer Time

Before we prayed, 1) Sheldon Penner shared briefly about his intestinal issues and recent hospitalization; 2) David Joseph asked for prayer about Harry Hafford’s upcoming ordination and the impending transfer to Harry of the leadership of Fairbanks Native Bible Church; and 3) Thomas Slawson requested prayer for the impending marriage of Vanessa Greer and Scott Gilbert. He also reported that he and his family are now about 95% settled in Portland.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Gale Van Diest moved and Huron Claus seconded his motion that the minutes from February 4, 2012, be approved as corrected:

- 1) Under “Approval of Previous Minutes,” the wording of the approved motion was changed to the following: “Gerry Breshears moved and Andy Baxter seconded his motion to approve the minutes from August 1, 2011 ~~February 5, 2011~~, as presented. They were approved without any objection.”
- 2) Under “Annual Meeting Date,” the wording of the approved motion was changed to the following: “Huron Claus moved and Ray Prigodich seconded his motion that the annual general meeting of the membership of InterAct take place at the Boring home office on September 12, 2012, with Roy Martin serving as the meeting chairman. All members are invited either to be present or to vote by proxy electronically.”

The corrected **minutes** were **approved** without any objection.

REPORTS

Executive Director (Dale Smith)

Dale Smith presented a synopsis of the written report he had previously submitted to the board. He touched on his strategy of “high trust, high contact,” which has been necessary, he said, in light of past hurts. He also touched briefly on his pursuit of the Five P’s: prayer, partnership, people, public profile, and perspective.

Who are we today and what is our future direction? Dale asked. He touched on the changing relationship between the two parallel organizations, InterAct Inc. and InterAct Canada. Historically, InterAct Inc. was the mother ship, while Canada was a field, but today the two organizations are essentially equal. Do we need to change the organizational structure to reflect this?

There's an encouraging synergy, Dale reported, when he meets with David, Dan, and Thomas. They work together well and engage in productive brainstorming. InterAct is nevertheless in a state of malaise at present.

Some discussion of the change process followed, with acknowledgement of the need for grandfathering, since it's unrealistic to expect that all of the older missionaries will be capable of changing.

Russia Field Director/Director of Public Ministries (Thomas Slawson)

Thomas reported that some very encouraging things have taken place in Russia over the past six months, which has been a refreshing change from the discouragement characteristic of recent years.

What does InterAct do in Russia? Through a partnership approach, we help churches plant churches by facilitating the ministry of the Word, by promoting good works, and by developing resources.

For a long time, there was much uncertainty regarding the visa situation in Russia. Now, however, all current personnel possess temporary, three-year resident permits, and it appears likely that these permits will be renewable in the future.

Thomas talked a bit about his family's recent relocation to Portland.

Thomas is continuing to explore the possibility of establishing an outreach to Uzbeks in St. Petersburg, in partnership with a local church there.

Krasnoyarsk is a strategic city on the Trans-Siberian Railway. Although the Orners first located there by necessity, it's likely that they'll remain there, since there is great potential for using Krasnoyarsk as a base for outreach to the surrounding region. Thomas is thinking about the possibility of recruiting missionaries to serve primarily as English teachers in Krasnoyarsk, and he's hoping to send a short-term team to do some English teaching next summer, in partnership with local churches in Krasnoyarsk.

There have been ups and downs in Tuva, but overall the work there is encouraging. Vanessa Greer (soon to be Gilbert) has a heart for women's ministry, and together with Scott, Thomas hopes to develop an internship program for transformational development in Tuva.

Ted Mole recently visited Yakutia and still hopes to be able to return there to minister to people gripped by addictions of various kinds.

Thomas is very encouraged about the prospect of future ministry in Russia. Although more missionaries are needed, there's now a critical mass of personnel.

Thomas also gave a brief overview of his new Public Ministries role, going over the six- step strategy included in his written report: 1) know the mission; 2) envision the message; 3) communicate the vision; 4) equip the church; 5) facilitate a church partnership; and 6) maintain the partnership.

Alaska Field Report (David Joseph)

David reported on the recent Alaska Networking Summit. Although it was a very positive experience, it's unfortunate that more local churches did not participate. The participants were mostly from various parachurch organizations. InterAct's involvement in the Summit helped demonstrate to others that InterAct is still a viable player in Alaskan ministry.

David also discussed the proposed new Leadership Development Program, which is envisioned to be a joint partnership between InterAct Ministries, ChangePoint Church, and Victory Ministries. David candidly admitted that he finds the prospect of working with ChangePoint to be a little threatening. Because the church is so large, he's afraid that it will want to dominate the program, which would be unfortunate, given its lack of sufficient worldview understanding. David talked a bit about "The Church Involvement Spectrum":

- 1) Survival (church is unengaged in missions, struggling to survive).
- 2) Jerusalem first (church concentrates exclusively on local ministry).
- 3) Do it for us (church supports agencies to act for it).
- 4) Inform us (church expects agencies to act but inform it regularly).
- 5) Partner with us (church is equal partner with agencies, involved in decision-making).
- 6) Help us do it (church drives mission but draws on agencies' expertise).
- 7) Don't interfere (church does mission independently).

David would like the relationship with ChangePoint to be at Level 5 ("partner with us"), rather than at level 6 ("help us do it").

Extensive discussion followed, with various Board members indicating that they largely share David's concerns about ChangePoint.

Canada Field Report (Dan Mayerle)

Dan reported that immigration is an issue of concern in Canada, since some American missionaries have been experiencing long delays in receiving permission to work there.

Although some really "cool" things are happening in Muslim ministry, Dan said that it's questionable whether InterAct ought to continue its involvement in this area, inasmuch as many other organizations are also addressing this need. Unfortunately, however, few other organizations are reaching out to Punjabis.

Dan touched briefly on some of the other items in his written report:

- He's hopeful that InterAct Canada will be up and running at the new office facility by the beginning of September.

- The vision of InterAct Canada is to have 20 teams ministering in 20 communities by the year 2020.
- More thought needs to be given to how best to address the growing native presence in the urban communities of Western Canada. Younger people especially are migrating to the cities. By 2015, it's likely that there will be over 85,000 native people in Calgary. Yet not one native church exists there.

Also, since potential missionary recruits are looking for creative options, we need to think more about how we can provide such options for them. We also need to figure out how to move more in the direction of building teams, rather than placing just one missionary family in a given community.

Mission/Purpose Gathering's Initial Report

On Thursday, August 2, Mike Matthews facilitated a meeting of three board members (Gerry Breshears, Huron Claus, and Andy Baxter), the three field directors (David Joseph, Dan Mayerle, and Thomas Slawson), and the executive director (Dale Smith), to consider the niche that God has for InterAct Ministries during this decade of ministry.

After first reviewing the history of InterAct, the group agreed on the following list of commonalities:

- Cooperating with churches
- Making disciples
- Transforming communities
- Among least reached peoples

They then agreed to present to the board the following proposed statement of mission and purpose: "InterAct Ministries exists to make disciples and transform communities among least reached peoples in cooperation with churches."

Some suggested, however, that the proposal be expanded as follows: "InterAct Ministries exists to make disciples, **gather believers into local churches**, and transform communities among least reached peoples in cooperation with churches **and other likeminded organizations**."

Chairman Breshears indicated that he assumes this process will continue and that there will be another meeting of this group prior to our next Board meeting in February.

There was some discussion as to whether InterAct missionaries should directly plant churches or serve instead as facilitators, helping existing local churches on the field to plant other churches.

Finance and Audit Committee Report (Andy Baxter, Gerry Breshears, Gale Van Diest, Dale Smith, and Roy Martin)

Because Chairman Baxter was unable to be present at yesterday's meeting of the committee, Roy Martin presented the committee's report on Andy's behalf (see attached minutes). The **report** was **approved** without any objection. By approving this report, the board accepted the following recommendations:

- That Byers and Hurlburt be appointed as auditors for the year ending March 31, 2013.
- That the board approve the clergy housing allowance of \$24,000 for 2013, and that Gale Van Diest be added to the list presented to the committee.

Roy noted that although income has been declining, InterAct Inc. is still very strong in terms of reserves. Using only the resources currently in reserve, the mission would be able to operate for a full eight months.

Nominating and Review Committee Report (Sheldon Penner, Gary Breshears, Huron Claus, Ray Prigodich, Doug Prins, Dale Smith)

Chairman Penner presented this report (see attached minutes). The **report** was **approved** without any objection. By approving this report, the board accepted the recommendation that Bill Twichell be asked to serve on the board beginning in 2013, to be voted on by the membership on September 12.

Chairman Penner also reported on other potential new board members:

- Hugh Grant has indicated his willingness to begin serving in 2013 and has completed the questionnaire.
- Dave Perry has also indicated his willingness to return to the board in 2013.
- Loren Leman has indicated that while he is not in a position to return to the board next year, he hopes to be able to do so at some point in the future.
- While Wasillie Mute has indicated his willingness to serve on the board, his remote location would make it difficult for him to do so.
- Although Ken Jackson has expressed a measure of hesitation about serving on the board, he is still under active consideration as a potential board member, either for InterAct Inc. or for InterAct Canada.
- Dale has been asked to begin approaching Randy Jackson (Ken's brother), Chris Gates, Al Strawn, and Dave Eller for possible future service on the board.

NEW BUSINESS

Victory Ministries Proposal

There was lengthy discussion about the degree to which this proposed program would fit in with InterAct's mission and purpose—particularly because the program apparently won't be very contextualized. But since the Lazy Mountain property (140 acres) has sat largely dormant since 1988, when ABI ceased operations, the consensus was: Why not allow the facility to be used for this purpose? But it was agreed that the final decision should be made by Alaska Field Director David Joseph, and not the board.

Amendment to the Bylaws to Allow for Proxy Designation by Electronic Means

Andy Baxter moved and Sheldon Penner seconded his motion that Article II, Section 6 of the bylaws be amended as follows: "Proxy: A Voting Member may designate another Voting Member to vote by proxy. Proxy designation shall be in writing (electronic format is

acceptable), shall indicate the full name of the Member signed by the Member, and must name the person designated as proxy. The writing may give voting instructions, and shall be presented to the meeting chairman on request. Proxy designators shall be counted present for voting and quorum purposes.” The motion was approved without any objection.

Amendment to the Bylaws to Allow for Participation in Annual Meetings to Occur Electronically without the Member Being Present at the Place Designated for the Meeting

Gale Van Diest moved and Huron Claus seconded his motion that the following new section be added to Article II of the bylaws: “SECTION 7. Electronic Meetings: Participation in any meeting may occur electronically without the member being present at the place designated for the meeting provided that all participating members have access to the information and debate, may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting and may vote in a reasonably secure manner including without limitation oral voting, electronic voting, and regional voting with votes counted and communicated to the chair of the meeting. Groups of members of any size may participate at designated regional locations for ease of electronic communication. The chair may require that participation occur at such regional locations. Matters addressed by electronically held meetings carry the same force and effect as if such matters were addressed at the designated place for the meeting.” The motion was approved without any objection.

NOTE: The idea is not that electronic participation should become the norm, but that it should be permitted when circumstances dictate.

Election of Officers

Mike Matthews moved and Doug Prins seconded his motion that the following slate of officers be accepted:

Chairman: Gerry Breshears
 Vice Chairman: Huron Claus
 Treasurer: Gale Van Diest
 Secretary: Ray Prigodich

The motion was approved without any objection.

Committee Appointments

Gale Van Diest moved and Andy Baxter seconded his motion that the following committees and chairs be appointed:

Finance and Audit: **Gale Van Diest**, Gary Breshears (ex officio), Dave Perry, Roy Martin, Dale Smith

Nominating and Review: **Sheldon Penner**, Huron Claus, Gary Breshears (ex officio), Ray Prigodich, Doug Prins, Dale Smith

Executive Director Relations: **Andy Baxter** (ex officio – Canada board chair), Gary Breshears (ex officio – Inc board chair), Jack Teeter, Dale & Carol Smith

The motion was approved without any objection.

Board Discretionary Fund

Huron Claus moved and Sheldon Penner seconded his motion that this new committee will always be comprised of the current board chairman and treasurer, together with the executive director. The **motion** was **approved** without any objection.

Future Meetings

The locations for next year's board meetings were discussed. Dale reported that, with the sale fares currently in effect, the cost of meeting in Phoenix next February would be only \$2000 higher than the cost of meeting in Portland. (Without the sale fares, the additional cost would be \$4000). The consensus was that the benefit of meeting at CHIEF's headquarters in Phoenix is worth the additional expense. It was therefore agreed that the winter meeting should take place in Phoenix on Saturday, February 9, with committee meetings and other activities taking place on the 7th and 8th. It was also agreed that the summer meeting should take place in Portland on Saturday, August 3, with committee meetings taking place on the 2nd.

Meeting Evaluation

There was agreement that things moved along quickly and efficiently, and that the presence of the three field directors continues to be very helpful. We did, however, lapse a little into the discussion of management issues—something we need to be careful to avoid in the future.

There was some discussion of whether Dan Mayerle should continue coming to the summer board meetings. (This is something Dan himself has asked about, inasmuch as the Inc. board has no direct jurisdiction over him.) The consensus was that it's definitely helpful for Dan to be present. It was agreed therefore that he should continue to be invited to come, but not required to do so. He will, of course, routinely continue to be present at the February meetings, since that's when JMAC meets.

Board Member Comments

Andy Baxter, whose term ends this year, was commended for his service to the board.

Adjournment

Chairman Breshears adjourned the meeting with prayer at 1:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Prigodich, Secretary
Oswego, Illinois
August 10, 2012