

## InterAct Ministries, Inc., Board Meeting

Lazy Mountain Campus, Palmer, Alaska  
July 29, 2017

**Members Present:** Bill Twichell, Chairman; Randy Jackson, Vice Chairman; Ray Prigodich, Secretary; Al Strawn, Treasurer; Huron Claus; Hugh Grant; Randy Jackson; Mike Matthews; Dave Perry; Chuck Schaap; Gale Van Diest; and Dale Smith, *ex officio* as Executive Director.

**Others Present:** Steve Horsman, Dan Mayerle (electronically), and Lucas Orner (electronically) for the first part of the meeting.

### Call to Order and Welcome

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

### Announcements and Housekeeping Matters

Dale Smith explained Steve Horsman's new role as Alaska Assistant Field Director. Since Dale is in Alaska for only one out of every six weeks, he has delegated to Steve the lion's share of the field leadership role.

Dale made a few comments about Dann Spader's book *4 Chair Discipling: Growing a Movement of Disciple-Makers*, a copy of which was provided to each Board member. While Dale doesn't agree 100 percent with the author in some areas, he nevertheless finds the book, which is based on a chronology of the life of Christ, to be very helpful, and he encouraged us to read it.

Huron Claus reported briefly on the Native Christian Leadership Conference that took place last week in Bemidji, Minnesota, with several members of InterAct Ministries in attendance.

### Devotional Time

Mike Matthews led us in our devotional time. He began by noting that, all too often, people's understanding of scripture is based, not on careful exegesis, but on how certain passages have been interpreted by well-meaning preachers and teachers who have failed to give adequate attention to the context in which those passages appear.

One example of this is the way many people interpret Matthew 18:20, where Jesus is quoted as saying, "[W]here two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there among them" (HCSB). It's often assumed that Jesus was referring either to his omnipresence as the second member of the Trinity or perhaps to his wholehearted endorsement of even the smallest gatherings of believers. Neither of these interpretations is consistent, however, with the context in which this verse appears. It would seem rather that Jesus was assuring the disciples that he would guide them in their decision-making.

Another example is the way most people understand the meaning of Psalm 46:10a: "Be still and know that I am God." Readers typically assume that the psalmist is encouraging people to remove themselves from the hustle and bustle of daily life and meditate quietly on God. Of

course, there's nothing wrong with doing this, but the context doesn't support this understanding of what the psalmist is actually saying. In the original Hebrew, the word translated "be still" conveys the idea of going limp with one's hands. The Holman Christian Standard Bible translates it as "Stop your fighting"! Earlier in the psalm, the writer mentions the trouble and turmoil that are so characteristic of the world. "Nations are in uproar [and] kingdoms fall," he writes in v. 6. But then in v. 7 he says, "The LORD of Hosts is with us," and he adds in v. 9 that "[The LORD] makes wars cease throughout the earth," shattering bows, cutting spears to pieces, and burning up chariots. Therefore, the Lord says through the psalmist in v. 10: "Stop your fighting—and know that I am God, exalted among the nations, exalted on the earth." And the writer adds in v. 11: "Yahweh of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold." So according to v. 10, as the world continues to fall apart, we must remember that the victory is all God's, not ours. We need only to "shup up, sit still, and watch what [our] Daddy is about to do."

### **Opening Prayer**

Huron Claus led us in prayer.

### **Potential Conflict of Interest**

A potential conflict of interest for InterAct staff member Gale Van Diest and InterAct consultant Mike Matthews was noted.

### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

Huron Claus moved that the minutes from February 4, 2017, be approved, and Chuck Schaap seconded his **motion**. The motion was **approved** without any objection.

## **REPORTS**

### **Russia Field Director's Report (Lucas Orner)**

Lucas, who joined us electronically from Ulan Ude, Buryatia, went over some highlights of his written report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He also informed us that Shawna Hess' 12-year-old nephew just unexpectedly passed away and that she's about to return to Spokane for the funeral. He requested prayer for her as she travels.

Lucas then responded to some questions:

- Mike Matthews asked him if he has a particular Siberian people group in mind that he's hoping to encourage the believers in Krasnoyarsk to target. Yes, he replied—the Buryat people. Doors seems to be opening, he said, significant relationships are being established, and there's a huge need among the Buryats that's not being adequately met. The Buryats, who number about half a million, constitute the largest people group in Siberia. Gale Van Diest mentioned that he's been concerned about this group ever since InterAct began focusing on Siberia in 1991 and that he's therefore very encouraged to hear this.

- Given the Orners' hectic summer schedule, Gale asked Lucas if he and his family have concrete plans to get some rest before school begins, and Lucas responded in the affirmative.
- Huron Claus asked how we here in America can better pray for the Buryat people. Lucas replied that, in his opinion, the best way to generate interest in and prayer for the Buryats is to tell stories about specific members of that people group. He and Jamie, he added, have a passion to put into writing the stories of a number of Buryat converts and to tell of the passion these new believers have for the salvation of their family members.
- Randy Jackson asked for more information about Shawna Hess' health issues. Carol Smith explained that Shawna suffers from lupus and that her symptoms tend to be cyclical, so that she experiences both good and bad times. Significantly, Shawna's physical struggles have enhanced her testimony among the Buryats. People have been moved by her willingness to continue ministering to them, despite her physical affliction.

#### **Canada Field Director's Report (Dan Mayerle)**

Dan, who joined us electronically from Alberta, went over some highlights of his written report, which also had been circulated prior to the meeting. In addition, he reported on the tragic drowning of a young believer in Manitoba earlier this week and requested prayer for the young man's family, none of whom are believers. His body was found on Thursday.

- Dan mentioned that John Tobin continues to struggle with the effects of his bipolar disorder. John is attempting to adjust to what he describes as his new normal, but he feels at least somewhat depressed continually, and this is negatively impacting his ministry. Dan requested continued prayer for him.
- Dan also noted that the merger with Midway Christian Leadership, although more complicated than originally anticipated, is now complete. Most of the Midway personnel, he said, had had very little cross-cultural training prior to the merger, but since joining InterAct they've all been to the Center for Intercultural Training. He requested prayer for their continued integration into the larger InterAct family.

Dan then responded to some questions:

- Dave Perry asked if the merger with Midway is essentially just a matter of InterAct assuming responsibility for a camp or if there's also a larger strategy for eventually planting churches in that part of Manitoba. Dan replied that Midway itself had had a vision for church planting even prior to the merger and that InterAct Canada does indeed intend to move in that direction.
- Huron Claus asked for more information about Urban Fire.
  - In his reply, Dan explained that many First Nations young people who move to the city lack the resources needed to succeed in an urban environment. Sadly, because they struggle to find a place to live and to find employment, they often crash and burn, returning to their home communities after just a few months and feeling like failures.

- Urban Fire is a discipleship ministry that provides housing, job leads, and coaching in life and study skills. The ministry team also hopes eventually to establish a small business that will provide opportunities for work experience and for the development of a work ethic.
- There are not yet any native people on the ministry team, but there are plans to recruit some First Nations people as team members in the future.
- There is also a desire to connect native believers living in Calgary with this ministry. The native population in Calgary is between 60,000 and 70,000, but there isn't a single native church there. A few churches in Calgary would like to begin reaching out to First Nations people, and a small number of native people regularly attend some of the churches there. Huron and Gale encouraged Dan to be active in pursuing various possibilities, rather than passively waiting for something to develop.

#### **Alaska Assistant Field Director's Report (Steve Horsman)**

Steve went over some highlights of his written report, which had also been circulated prior to the meeting.

- He particularly emphasized the need to recruit additional missionaries, and he expressed his excitement about several prospects who are currently considering joining InterAct in Alaska.
- He reported that three native Alaskans who have completed LEaD are now either in full-time ministry or are pursuing further education in preparation for full-time ministry.
- He is doing research to determine if InterAct perhaps owns some additional properties in Alaska that it isn't currently aware of.
- He noted that because the Lazy Mountain property is old, a great deal of maintenance and renovation needs to be done.

Steve then asked if there were any questions:

- Dave Perry asked if InterAct is considering establishing any work in southeast Alaska. Dale Smith responded that this had been considered sometime back but that research undertaken at the time revealed that enough was already been done in the region by other ministry organizations.
- Huron Claus asked what's being done to equip people in non-native churches for involvement in native ministry. Al Strawn then interjected that training should perhaps be made the sole focus of InterAct's ministry in Alaska. He suggested that given the variety of ministries in which we're involved in Alaska, we may be trying to do more than we can realistically handle. Instead of recruiting new missionaries of our own, might it not make more sense, he asked, to offer training to people who are already in Alaska, serving with other ministries? Indeed, why not repurpose the Lazy Mountain Campus, he asked, as a learning center for all of Alaska?

In response, Bill Twichell noted that, as Steve had reported, God has been moving in recent days to bring a number of people our way to whom we hadn't first reached out. Instead,

these people have sought us out. It would seem therefore that the Lord is already taking the initiative to increase the number of missionaries serving with InterAct in Alaska.

Gale Van Diest then shared how encouraged he is by the plan of the Alaska field to take training modules out to where the people are, rather than requiring everyone to come to the Lazy Mountain Campus. Training, he believes, is vitally important. We did more of it in the past, he noted, but we then closed down some of our training programs.

Huron Claus then asked what native people think of the Lazy Mountain Campus. Gale responded by suggesting that, in the eyes of many, this is “the Vatican” or “the holy hill.” Those trained at Lazy Mountain in days gone by at the Alaska Bible Institute feel that this place is very important. Steve noted that the Lazy Mountain Campus also has a special place in the hearts of many orphans who lived in the Alaska Children’s Home, which was located on this property before ownership passed to InterAct in 1971.

### **Executive Director’s Report (Dale Smith)**

Dale briefly went over the main points of his written report, which was circulated prior to the meeting. His report consisted primarily of what he believes the board expects of him. He also talked at some length about how, after having previously been skeptical of biblical counseling, he has come to value it greatly. Biblical counseling today, he noted, differs greatly from the biblical counseling of the Jay Adams era, which had a reputation for harshness.

Mike Matthews asked what the process will be for the publication of Barney Furman’s recently-completed history of InterAct Ministries. Dale said that he has delegated to Thomas Slawson responsibility for overseeing the process, including finding qualified people to edit the manuscript.

[At noon we broke for lunch and then reconvened at 1:00.]

Chuck Schaap asked what is included in member care. Dale replied that member care includes such components as helping staff members with their walk with the Lord, giving counsel when needed, providing pastoral care, mentoring, and developing ministry skills. Of course, all this is too much for Dale to do alone. He’d like to do more, but his administrative responsibilities severely limit the time he has available to engage in relational ministry. Therefore he has asked those staff members whom he directly supervises to render this sort of care to the staff members they directly supervise.

Mike Matthews moved that Dale’s report be accepted, and Gale Van Diest seconded his **motion**. The motion was **approved** without any objection.

### **Prayer for the Fields**

There was a time of corporate prayer for the various fields of InterAct Ministries, brought to a conclusion by Chairman Twichell.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Finance and Audit Committee Report** (Al Strawn, Chairman; Ray Prigodich; Chuck Schaap; Gale Van Diest; Dale Smith, *ex officio* as CEO; Bill Twichell, *ex officio* as Board Chair; and Karen Schweitz, *ex officio* as CFO).

Chairman Strawn presented the committee's **report** (see attached minutes) which, following a time of discussion, was **approved** without any objection. By approving the report, the Board accepted the following recommendations:

- That Kern & Thompson be appointed as auditors for the 2017-18 fiscal year.
- That the clergy housing allowance for 2018 be set at a maximum of \$30,000.
- That an additional \$20,000 be allocated for mobilization activities during the current fiscal year.
- That Karen Schweitz be authorized to transfer, endorse, or sell stocks, bonds, or other securities up to \$50,000 per transaction and that Jerry Crosby and Roy Martin no longer have this authorization.
- That InterAct Ministries, Inc., enter into an agreement with the Allen Trust Company to serve as our fund manager.
  - Note: Based on this action, the following statement has been prepared to present to the Allen Trust Company: "At its semiannual meeting on July 29, 2017, in Palmer, Alaska, the Board of Directors of InterAct Ministries voted unanimously to instruct the management of InterAct Ministries, Inc., to enter into an agreement with the Allen Trust Company to serve as the organization's fund manager."

**Nominating and Review Committee Report** (Hugh Grant, Chairman; Huron Claus; Randy Jackson; Mike Matthews; Dave Perry; Dale Smith, *ex officio* as CEO; and Bill Twichell, *ex officio* as Board Chair).

Chairman Grant presented this **report** (see attached minutes), which was **approved** as amended without any objection.

- Note: In the original document, with its recommendations for 2018, Bill Twichell was listed as an *ex officio* member of both the Nominating and Review Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee. However, since Randy Jackson will be serving as Board Chair in 2018, Bill's name was removed and Randy's name was added to these two lists. In addition, Randy was listed as a member of the Finance and Audit Committee in 2018, but since he will serve on that committee in an *ex officio* capacity as Board Chair, his name was removed as an ordinary member of the committee.

By approving this report, the Board accepted the following recommendations:

- That the following slate of officers be approved for 2018:
  - Chairman: Randy Jackson
  - Vice Chairman: Chuck Schaap
  - Secretary: Huron Claus
  - Treasurer: Al Strawn

- Note: Although Ray Prigodich will no longer be serving as Secretary of the Board, he has agreed to assist Huron in preparing the minutes for each Board meeting.
- That the Board committees be constituted as follows in 2018:
  - **Nominating and Review Committee:** Hugh Grant, Chair; Huron Claus; Dave Perry; Jack Teeter; Dale Smith, *ex officio* as Executive Director; and Randy Jackson, *ex officio* as Board Chair.
  - **Finance and Audit Committee:** Al Strawn, Chair; Ray Prigodich; Chuck Schaap; Karen Schweitz, *ex officio* as CFO; Dale Smith, *ex officio* as Executive Director; and Randy Jackson, *ex officio* as Board Chair.

It was also noted that Hugh Grant will invite prospective Board member Jack Cranford to meet with the committee at the time of the February Board meeting.

### **Audit**

Hugh Grant moved that the 2016-17 audit be approved, and Gale Van Diest seconded his **motion**. The motion was **approved** without any objection.

### **Date, Place, and Chair for Inc. Annual Meeting**

Dave Perry moved and Ray Prigodich seconded his **motion** that the annual meeting of InterAct Ministries, Inc., be held in cyber form on September 12, 2017, from 2:00 to 3:00 PM, Pacific Daylight Time, at the Boring office, to be chaired by Jerry Crosby. The motion was **approved** without any objection.

### **Discussion of the Carver Governance Policy Model**

Following our last board meeting, Al Strawn sent each member a copy of Ted Hull's book *Focusing Your Church Board: Using the Carver Policy Governance Model*. With most of us having read that book, we discussed some of the pros and cons of adopting the Carver Model.

- Chuck Schaap said that while the book includes many helpful and valid points, he doesn't believe that our board should adopt this model at this time.
- Dave Perry concurred with Chuck, adding that he doesn't believe that this is an appropriate model for our board.
- Randy Jackson suggested that the Carver Model isn't a good fit for a ministry organization.
- Al Strawn said that in his secular role, he operates under this model and has found it to be very effective in that context. Understanding, however, that there would have to be strong buy-in on the part of the entire Board for this model to work for InterAct, he has no intention of pushing it on us.
- Bill Twichell expressed his opinion that a transition to the Carver Model is not necessary, saying, in effect, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."
- Ray Prigodich suggested that, while we're clearly not ready at this time to adopt the Carver Model, we not dismiss it entirely but plan to take a second look at it at some future date.

**In-camera Discussion** (with the Executive Director absent)

We talked about how well we think Dale is doing in his role. The clear consensus was that he's doing an excellent job. We noted that his relational skills have been particularly helpful in moving the Alaska field beyond the hurts and pessimism that were so rampant for a number of years. Dale is a shepherd, and both he and Carol have servant hearts.

Given the nature of Dale's report to the Board, we wondered if he was hinting that he'd like to receive more direction than we've been giving him—that our expectations of him should be more explicit.

When Dale rejoined us, Chairman Twichell shared with him some of the positive comments that had been made about his performance. Randy Jackson asked Dale if, in fact, he would like more direction and guidance from the board. In response, Dale said that he's not necessarily looking for more such input. To the contrary, if we're comfortable with the way he's performing his duties, there's no need, he said, for us to add anything more to what we've already put into writing concerning our expectations of him.

Dave Perry asked Dale if things at this time are about where he had expected them to be when he began serving as Executive Director. In response, Dale said that Alaska is not as far along as he had hoped it would be. He had hoped that there would be more new missionaries on the field by now. He's pleased, however, at the stellar job Steve and Jill are doing in keeping momentum going. In contrast to Alaska, Canada, Dale said, is farther along than he had anticipated it would be by this time, and he's also pleased that the work in Russia has begun to grow.

Dave Perry asked Dale if he can see himself continuing as Executive Director until he reaches the age of 70. Dale replied that he can easily envision that, that he's very much open to that possibility, and the consensus of the Board was clearly that we would like Dale to continue in his role for several more years.

The question was raised as to who is responsible to make plans for Dale's succession. Dale said that this responsibility lies both with him and with the Board. He said that he sees both Dan Mayerle and Lucas Orner as having high potential for stepping into the role of executive director. Dan, however, is already in his mid- to late 50s.

**Notice of Henry Retirement**

It was announced that Dave and Kay Henry will be retiring on October 1, 2017.

**Future Meetings**

The Board will meet on:

- Thursday through Saturday, February 1-3, 2018, at the Menucha Retreat and Conference Center in Corbett, Oregon, with committee meetings on the afternoon and evening of the 1<sup>st</sup>, the Joint Board Dialogue on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Board meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Friday and Saturday, August 3-4, 2018, at a Portland hotel, with committee meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the Board meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup>.



- Thursday through Saturday, January 31-February 2, 2019, at the Menucha Retreat and Conference Center in Corbett, Oregon, with committee meetings on the afternoon and evening of the 31<sup>st</sup>, the Joint Board Dialogue on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and Board meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Meeting Evaluation**

There was consensus that the Board packet that had been distributed ahead of time was “just right” and that the Board agenda was “excellent,” with no one expressing a need for any changes in the future.

### **Closing Prayer and Adjournment**

Outgoing Board Chairman Bill Twichell expressed his appreciation for the spirit of the Board. Then, following a closing prayer by Al Strawn, Chairman Twichell adjourned the meeting at 4:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Prigodich, Secretary  
Crossville, Tennessee  
August 4, 2017