

InterAct Ministries Joint Board Dialogue

Menucha Retreat & Conference Center, Corbett, Oregon
February 1, 2019

Present: Dave Bedford, Rick Green, Randy Jackson, Daryl Kroeker (electronically), Sheldon Penner, Ray Prigodich, Chuck Schaap (electronically), Dale Smith, and Jack Teeter.

Absent: Huron Claus, Keith Klippenstein, John Russell, and Gale Van Diest.

Others Present: Steve Horsman, Alaska Field Director; Dan Mayerle, Canada Field Director; and Lucas Orner, Russia Field Director (electronically, for the first part of the meeting).

Welcome

Dale Smith began the meeting at 9:00 AM by welcoming the participants and making several announcements. Jack Teeter then led in prayer. Four wives also joined us for the initial part of the meeting.

Devotional

Ray Prigodich focused on Jesus as our model for mission. After quoting what Jesus said to his disciples in John 20:21, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you," he suggested that, in essence, what Jesus was telling them was: "In the same way that my Father sent me to lay the groundwork for a mission to the entire human race, I'm now sending you to carry out that mission—and to continue carrying it out until it's been completed." He also suggested that just as Jesus meticulously followed the plan, or model, for mission that his Father had given him, it's imperative that, as we carry out his mission, we follow the pattern of life and ministry that he modeled.

Ray then went on to share four specific aspects of the way Jesus ministered, out of a total of 19 that he used to share with his students every year when he taught the course "The Biblical Theology of Mission" at Denver Seminary:

1. As Jesus engaged in ministry day by day, he remained in constant, conscious communion with his Father, doing nothing without first consulting the One who had sent him (cf. Mark 1:35-38).
2. As Jesus ministered from day to day, he displayed an intense dependence on the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit (cf. Luke 4:1-2; 14, 18).
3. In his evangelistic encounters Jesus employed a wide variety of approaches, tailoring each one to fit the specific situation and the unique needs of the person(s) with whom he was speaking.
4. In his evangelistic encounters Jesus also made clear the cost of discipleship, taking care not to make conversion seem unrealistically easy (cf. Luke 18:18-30; Matthew 19:16-29; Luke 9:57-62).

Prayer

There was a time of corporate prayer, led by Carol Smith and Randy Jackson.

ECFA Governance Toolbox Series – Succession Planning

We spent some time looking at Series No. 4, “Eleven Principles for Successful Successions: Every CEO is an interim CEO,” watching a series of brief videos and going through an accompanying viewing guide:

- Principle 1: “Avoid Buses [unexpected death] and Boredom [loss of passion]!”
- Principle 2: “Discern Your Board’s Succession Values and Beliefs”
- Principle 3: “Inspire Your CEO to Thrive with a God-Honoring Lifestyle”
- Principle 4: “Model Successful Succession in the Boardroom First”
- Principle 5: “Delegate Succession Planning to the Appropriate Committee”
- Principle 6: “Invest in Growing Your Leaders (Every Leader Needs a Coach)”
- Principle 7: “Trust God and Discern Direction! – Wisdom on Ending Well”
- Principle 8: “Plan for Plan A: Your CEO Retires”
- Principle 9: “Plan for Plan B: Your CEO Resigns”
- Principle 10: “Plan for Plan C: Your CEO Is Terminated”
- Bonus Principle 11: “Discern if a Search Firm Would Be Helpful”

Note: The videos for all the series can be accessed at ECFA.org/toolbox.

In answer to the question, “What are some examples of people in InterAct who retired well?”, Gale Van Diest and Bob Moffatt were among those whose names were suggested.

Suggested action steps:

- Dale suggested that it would be helpful if the board had an emergency succession plan, making clear who would step into his place, at least on an interim basis, should he unexpectedly be unable to continue serving as executive director.
- Mike Matthews suggested that a succession planning committee or task force be created.
 - Daryl Kroeker recommended that such a committee or task force include the current CEO.
 - It was agreed that the two board chairmen and Daryl Kroeker, as an at-large member, should comprise this committee / taskforce and that Daryl should serve as the point person.
 - It was also agreed that this committee / task force be charged with:
 - Developing an emergency succession plan;
 - Developing a long-term succession plan;
 - Fleshing out the policy implications; and
 - Answering the question, What should the next CEO look like?

Russia Field Report

Lucas Orner highlighted several items in his written report, which was included in the Board packet, after which he answered a couple of questions:

- Is the ministry of any of the nationals in Yakutia being hampered because of the long delay in the return of Ted and Kate Mole? Lucas replied that, according to Ted, the believers there are largely functioning and initiating things on their own.
- In answer to another question, Lucas said that he has been in contact with a German couple with prior experience in Novosibirsk who are presently serving with OM. They have expressed interest in joining InterAct, but it is uncertain if German nationals can legally be appointed by InterAct. Indeed, it's unlikely that they can, but Lucas has nevertheless been exploring this issue with Jerry Crosby.

Mike Matthews led us in prayer for the Orners.

Canada Field Report

Dan Mayerle highlighted several items in his written report, which was included in the Board packet. He also corrected the second paragraph, having forgotten about one additional resignation—that of Kelsey Comley, who was single when appointed but is now married, and whose husband, an RCMP officer, has been transferred to far northern Canada. Dan then answered several questions:

- He elaborated a bit on the strategy of Urban Fire.
- He reported that Bill Twichell has completed his radiation treatments and is feeling quite well, so that hopefully he'll soon be able to become more active in member care.
- With regard to a succession plan, he said that he has been thinking about Greg Hamilton as a suitable person to step into the role of field director, at least on an interim basis.
- He clarified the meaning of the term “whole-life discipleship.”
- He explained what it is about biblical counseling that prompted Wes Schellenberg to leave InterAct. Wes has the perception that those who advocate this method tend to lack grace—that they “hit people on the head” with scripture and then declare that everything is OK.
- He explained that, like Wes, the Janzens cited their concerns about biblical counseling as the reason they were leaving InterAct. Dale Smith noted that other issues were also involved, however, including the Janzens' struggle with submission to authority and their perception that InterAct is overly legalistic.
- When a question was asked about the Woodards' resignation, Dale Smith jumped in and explained that Dan (Woodard) was looking for ministry opportunities that he perceived were unavailable to him through InterAct. He too has some reservations about biblical counseling, but that was not a major factor in his resignation. Dale went on to say that although the departure of these three couples is a big loss to InterAct, there is an upside, and that is that with all the dissension gone, there is now a better sense of community within InterAct Canada.

Jack Teeter led us in prayer for the Mayerles.

We recessed for lunch at noon and reconvened at 1:00 PM.

Alaska Field Report

Steve Horsman highlighted several items in his written report, which was included in the Board packet:

- He noted that because Alaska Bible College has been shifting its primary focus from preparing people for village church planting to training people for pastoral ministry, it likely will no longer be a primary feeder school for InterAct Alaska. He added that the emphasis at Frontier School of the Bible seems to be more in line with our needs.
- He elaborated a bit on the significant contribution several of our newer missionaries are making.
- He explained that, unfortunately, two of the three people who had been expected to participate in LEaD this time around relapsed into their addictions, resulting in there being only one current participant. He also noted that Matt Derr is doing a superb job helping with the teaching.

Dale commended Steve for the strong contribution he has been making to the Alaska Field in numerous areas. Steve and Jill, he said, are moving the field forward exponentially.

Steve then answered a couple of questions:

- He elaborated on what was behind the Millers' resignation. A major factor was that they had been told before their appointment that they would be free to do pretty much whatever they wanted, which, of course, turned out not to be the case. It is also a struggle for James to submit to authority.
- He explained that the newly-created Field Consultation Team has only an advisory role; it exercises no authority.

Jack Teeter led us in prayer for the Horsmans.

Report of the Executive Director

Dale Smith highlighted several items in his written report, which was included in the Board packet:

- He gave some additional background on George and Harriet Walker's decision to join InterAct, expressing delight over what George will bring to InterAct in the area of training.
- Since most of the staff members at the U.S. office sense a vacuum of leadership there, he requested input regarding the wisdom of him and Carol possibly relocating to Oregon.
 - He said he believes that the issue is primarily a matter of perception and that it is essentially an issue of morale.
 - Do we really need a U.S. office? someone asked.
 - What about relocating the U.S. office to the Lazy Mountain Campus in Alaska? another person asked.

- It was noted that fewer resources are available in Alaska and that InterAct, Inc., would likely lose all, or at least most, of its current staff members.
- It was also noted that travel in and out of Alaska is very expensive.
- In this digital day and age, how important is it for staff members to be at the same location? it was asked.
 - Ray Prigodich gave the example of the way TEAM is now operating, with its main office still in Illinois, but its executive director based in Tennessee and its accounting operations based in Texas.
- Some staff members at the Boring office, Dale said, feel that the “heart” left when Diane Schoming left.
 - In response, the question was asked: Could someone other than Dale bring “heart” to the Boring office—perhaps a former InterAct missionary who would serve in the role of administration director?
- Might it be feasible, it was asked, for Dale and Carol to relocate to Oregon only temporarily—perhaps for a year—to deal with this situation?
 - Dale responded that this would be unworkable, since he and Carol need to be physically present in Alberta for at least 180 days a year in order to maintain their residence permits, and since it would not be good for their house to be empty for such a lengthy period.
- What about completely separating the U.S. and Canada InterAct operations, someone asked, so that each entity would have its own executive director?
- By the time discussion ended, there was a clear consensus that it would not be wise for Dale and Carol to relocate to Oregon.
- Dale requested that we pray for the U.S. office—that a good solution can be found for this problem.

Mike Matthews led us in prayer for Dale and Carol.

The meeting concluded at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Prigodich, Recorder
Crossville, Tennessee
February 6, 2019