

Unity of Phoenix
Minutes of Family Meeting #4
Sunday, March 17, 2006

Rev. Alice Anderson opened the meeting with prayer. Terri Sue Rossi introduced herself as facilitator for this meeting. She said that the agenda for the meeting was going to be changed somewhat. As a result of Rev. Richard Rogers' resignation, time will be allowed to deal with discussions and questions regarding this resignation, and afterwards, depending on the time factor, the agenda will shift back to what was originally planned: findings from the focus groups and specific feedback from them.

Terri Sue said there would be a brief presentation by the President of the Board, describing what is known to the Board, and then the floor will be opened for questions and answers. Since Rev. Rogers was not going to be present at the meeting, the Board created several ways for congregants to express their gratitude, their appreciation or whatever else they wanted to say to Rev. Rogers. Opportunities for written comments were to be made available, also an opportunity to be videotaped in the courtyard, as well as personal communication with Rev. Rogers during his last two Sundays, March 19th and March 26th.

Terri Sue continued "we are going to devote the time answering any questions that you might have and trying to answer them to the best of our abilities." She pointed out that chaplains were available to those who might need them. If the Q & A period took the entire time of the meeting, then another Family Meeting would be called to address those items in the original agenda.

The procedural rules were then covered: Be respectful, accept criticism positively; one person speaks at a time; actively listen; anyone can request a stop to pray. Questions were also going to be timed so that everyone would have a chance to comment.

The meeting was turned over to Georgia McGraw-Ball, President of the Board. She welcomed everyone and thanked them for taking time out of their busy schedule to come to the meeting. The other Board members then introduced themselves: Penni Honey, Linda Pond, Treasurer, Tom Gebler, Judy Schwiebert, Secretary, Ronda Fisk, Vice-President, Bruce Baird, and Robert Vest. Georgia asked if everyone received a copy of the letter of resignation. While copies were being handed out to those without one, she mentioned that the Board tried to anticipate the questions that were going to be asked, and tried to prepare a presentation in response to them.

First, Georgia mentioned that there was a contract between Rev. Richard Rogers and Unity of Phoenix. However, "a contract, is just a contract," Georgia said. "It's a piece of paper with the intentions that we had at the time when he was here working." The Board, using Unity's spiritual principles, decided, "OK, Richard, if this is really what you want, this is really what Spirit is calling you to do...it is not our job to stand in your way, and we fully support you."

The second issue that Georgia (and the Board) had anticipated was the severance agreement between Rev. Richard Rogers and Unity of Phoenix. Ronda Fisk, an attorney and Vice-President of the Board helped in the preparation of the agreement. The details are confidential, but the agreement covered all the issues that could be a problem in the future. It was an amicable parting of the way. Georgia commented that it is a common practice when ministers leave a congregation, they sever ties with that congregation. The reason for that is that it allows the ministers who are then ministering to the church, to create that bond with the congregation without interference from a prior minister. Rev. Richard Rogers agreed to that. He still has some weddings scheduled, and he will continue with those. In the future, if there are any specific requests for him to handle such activities, he will be able to continue with them, with the permission from the church.

Georgia continued, “what we can do now is talk about moving forward and what that is going to mean for the congregation, for the church, for the ministers that are here, and everybody involved.’ At this point, Georgia turned the meeting over to Ronda Fisk, who read from the By-Laws, addressing the things to be done when a senior minister leaves.

Ronda said the By-Laws don’t say very much about such an event. She mentioned the things that are specified. First, it is members of UOP who can vote on the confirmation of who the senior minister will be, as differentiated from congregants, who cannot do so. The second provision says, “Should a vacancy occur in the office of senior minister, the Board of Trustees shall communicate with the President of the Association and request a list of available applicants for the position.” The last provision quoted by Ronda was “The governance of the church shall be vested in a Board of Trustees elected from and by the membership and the management of the church shall be vested in the Senior Minister who shall be appointed by the Board and confirmed by the membership.” “That is all the guidance that there is in our By-Laws as to what we will do going forward,” said Ronda.

Georgia said we have already communicated with the Association of Unity Churches and they suggested various scenarios, one of the most important of which, was that the process be guided by the congregation. (Rev. Richard Rogers already had notified the Association of his resignation.) The first scenario is to select an interim senior minister who is not a candidate for becoming senior minister. He is there just for the time that is needed to select the permanent senior minister. “We are not going to be doing that process,” Georgia said. The second scenario is to have an acting senior minister (which we have done) and then augment that with the process of a national search. The third scenario is to have the acting senior minister become the permanent senior minister, without doing a national search and the final scenario is “whatever else might show up that Spirit might bring to us.” “There could be something we haven’t even considered,” said Georgia.

Having all these possibilities available, and still in the process of grieving over Rev. Richard's departure, Georgia, as President, recommended that we just wait and see what will be the best way to do it. "We're in no rush, we have wonderful ministers here that are taking care of us." As a caveat, Georgia pointed out that the Board has a fiduciary duty to do the highest and best for the ministry, so an argument can be made for going out and doing a national search. Georgia then turned the floor over to Rev. Richard Maraj to speak about the benefit of doing a search.

Rev. Maraj said that our ministry is still in shock and in a time of grief. The prudent thing to do is to take time to make the highest and best decision for the ministry. "Whoever is supposed to be the next senior minister will be guided here in whatever form it is, but whatever the decision will be, it should be guided by Spirit," said Rev. Richard.

That being the end of the official presentation, Terri Sue opened the floor for questions. She went over a few details as to the procedure for either approaching the microphones or submitting written questions. She also requested the chaplains to stand up so they could be identified for those needing one. Pam Griffin, one of the congregants and a court reporter, was thanked for taking the minutes of this meeting.

Q: Fred: I've been a church Board chairman, and a co-chair of a search committee, and it's not an easy process. My concern is that we have three excellent ministers and we shouldn't wait too long to hire these people and give them their new titles.

A: Ronda Fisk: The Board absolutely agrees with you that we love our ministers. One thing to keep in mind is the By-Laws of the church that specify that the Senior Minister shall hire and supervise the associate ministers. So whoever the new Senior Minister is, he/she is the one who decides who the associate ministers are. Just so that everyone understands, that's how the rules are written.

Q: Ken Staudenmayer: This is the first church I've joined, and I'm sad and scared. If we're the people and we can vote on what to do, why can't we vote to see if we want to go ahead with the process of looking for more ministers or have Rev. Richard Maraj be the Senior Minister? Can we vote on that? Can we right here, vote, if we want to do that?

A: Georgia McGraw-Ball: Are you asking if the By-Laws allow us to do that?

Q: Ken: If we can legally do that, to vote whether we want to look for more ministers (costing time and money), or keep what we have... "if it's working, why fix it?"

A: Georgia: There has not been a decision made on what the next steps are going to be.

Q: Ken: I thought you made a decision.

A: Georgia: No, No. I said we haven't. I said these are possible decisions that could be made.

Q: Ken: I want the opinion of the people.

A: Georgia: The By-Laws do not allow for the congregation to select the minister. The minister is selected by the Board and ratified by the congregation...that's what the By-Laws say. What I said is we would be listening to the congregation as to what would be their preferable process, probably over the next four to six weeks.

A: Richard Wallace: You have to have a congregational meeting and you have to call it in advance with written notice, etc.

A: Georgia: Correct

Q: Ken: So we can do that?

Terri Sue said time is out and we have to move to the next question. Terry Sue continued, “Maybe we might need to clarify how the procedure worked. What it sounds like is the Board is going to listen to how the congregation wants to proceed, and then they will make a decision about what the best path is to take.” “Do I understand correctly?” “That’s right,” Georgia responded.

Q: Lisa: I don’t want, as a congregation, to feel like Rev. Richard is our rebound, nor do we want him to feel like he’s our rebound. So if we go through the process of grieving, letting go of Richard Rogers, and then doing some kind of search, and then if we decide on Richard Maraj, it will be thoughtfully, prayerfully thought out, not out of a knee-jerk desire to rebound.

A: Terri Sue: Thank you very much.

Q: Male person: The first item is keeping the severance package confidential. I am happy to go along with the confidentiality of salaries and responsibilities, but in order of the magnitude of this agreement, I think it be either brought forward to the members or be made available to the members.

The second item is the time frame. If you hire a minister in late November or December, you go into the Christmas season and it becomes difficult to “dump that much stuff” on a new ministry. If we haven’t made a decision by September, we then have to go for another six months and wait until February or March of the following year.

A: Terri Sue: Thank you very much.

Q: Charles: My comment is not to have Richard Maraj come on board too quickly, that it needs a chunk of time. You don’t want to rush into it because if there are any problems down the road, we don’t want blame attached to the fact that that “we asked him to be the minister too soon, and it wasn’t thought out.” I want Richard Maraj; he’s great, but I would hate for there to be hassles –that is was too rushed. The other question is whether Richard Rogers will be invited to speak?

A: Ronda Fisk: That would be a decision to be made by the acting Senior Minister. Generally there is a period of time, perhaps a year, in order to give distance between being the Senior Minister and coming back in as a guest speaker.

Q: Pat Dilts: I’m wondering if during this time of transition and the financial problems we have been having, will the church be able to hold out during that period when people leave to do their grieving and then come back?

A: Georgia: It's impossible to tell what will happen. We just continue to do church the best way we know how with the ministers that we have here now.

Q: Andrea: I love this church that I started to attend 14 years ago when Richard Rogers came. My question to the ministers and to the Board is, "What do you need the most from me?"

A: Rev. Richard Maraj: "You are already doing it." The responsiveness of the church community is so loving and supportive. The staff, the Board the volunteers and the congregation have really stepped up. I would say let us allow us to grieve, and in that process, let us minister to one another and support each other. "So I thank you for asking that question, and I just think you guys are doing it."

Q: Ken: I've been coming to this church since it started, and I want to bring two things to your attention that have happened since these wonderful people (the new ministers) have come on board. First, I have never heard a minister get a standing ovation after a sermon. It's amazing. Secondly, the vacuum has been filled by the amount of people coming. "If you've all noticed how the attendance has dropped off, commensurate with the money that they've been taking in, this place is filling, and it's filling quickly."

Q: Written Comment: How does the resignation of Richard and severing with the congregation affect him speaking the next two Sundays? Will he still be speaking?

A: Georgia: Yes. He is officially resigning the last week in March.

Rev. Alice Anderson: One of the reasons he will be back is for the opportunity to begin closure. So it's really going to be important for the whole congregation to show up those two Sundays and show Richard your love and support, and for you to begin your grieving process.

Rev. Richard Maraj: One of the reasons that the minister leaves for a while is so there is no interference with the flow of the business and the way that the new ministers are ministering. But I would love to see Richard coming back as a speaker as soon as possible and when it's the right time it will be fabulous for everybody.

Q: Female Person: My husband and I were married at the church on Northern and we came to Unity not because of Richard Rogers but because of Unity and the beliefs and people and the energy. Richard was the icing on the cake! I don't look at Richard's leaving as a loss; I see it as a child going off to college. And if we allow ourselves to think how horrible this is, we will start a downward spiral. We have to allow Richard to realize his next spiritual step, while we stay here doing our own thing. There is a wonderful Unity energy here in the children's ministry, in the bookstore, in our commitment to living love groups. We all just need to say: What can we do? How can we continue to be loving? How can we continue to be supportive? And who can we continue to support this ministry with our love and our finances?

Q: Katar: I am sure many things go into the process for Richard in his choice and his moving forward. Part of my grief is an anger that if even the smallest part of that was because of his salary issue. I have a hard time with that piece. I know there are others who have felt strongly that he deserves all that he can receive for all that he has given. But I think it's a shame that if any of his decisions came because of that issue.

A: Ronda Fisk: In Richard's conversations with us and in his letter he never once mentions his salary. His only comment was that you might have difficulty finding someone to come in at the salary I had. It was not the reason he is leaving. He explicitly stated numerous times that the reason his is going elsewhere to do other things is because Spirit called him to do that. It was not about money.

Q: Written Comment: I would like to ask that everyone, be responsible for not engaging in rumors, speculation and finger pointing. The one thing we can't get away from is that we are all human, with human frailties.

Q: Female Person: We like to hang on to things we love, but the truest love is letting go. If Richard was called by Spirit to move, then we shouldn't only be supporting him; we should be celebrating for him. Everything is in divine order. We have three amazing ministers and a great love between them and the congregation is beginning to evolve. We may soon need a fourth minister, and trust that God will send the perfect fourth for this team.

Q: Fred Bowman: I've been a member for over 20 years, and I'm surprised to hear people talking about the grieving process. I think we are here to celebrate the 14 years that Richard was here and the accomplishments of the church thus far. We are here to start planning on our future and where the church is going. I'm hoping that the Board and the ministers will come together, will look at where we are now and where we're going and do some planning based on where we are at now, what the membership is, and that people will come together and that we will have a stronger, more unified church. I would like to suggest one thing that will help bring this church together—that is looking into one another's eyes, because the eyes are the windows of the soul. We don't do that enough.

Q: Written Comment: "Many people love Richard Maraj and know he would be great as our Senior Minister. I am curious to hear from Richard Maraj as to whether or not Unity of Phoenix is where he is looking to be Senior Minister?"

A: Rev. Richard: Yes, I would be open to being the permanent senior minister, but I am still in favor of opening it up for a national search. And I will be competing for the job.

Q: Female Person: I wanted to share that I've been coming to Unity to listen to Richard's message since about the time he came to the church. I've also visited Unity churches from California to Florida, but never found anyone who delivered a message the way Richard delivered it. Yet, I've realized that in a very short time I have been

spiritually fed by the ministers that are taking over Richard's place. And so, perhaps it wasn't just Richard's message, but this congregation that was feeding me spiritually. I am grateful to be here tonight and know that God is going to support all of us.

A: Terri Sue: Thank you.

Q: Donna Wheeler: I've been here for about six years, working for Unity of Phoenix for about six months, and volunteering for special events for about six years. I know many of the people who left and with whom I still maintain contact. One thing that is undeniable by all of them: that this spiritual community provided a phenomenal forum for everyone to grow.

The other thing I wanted to address is that as a volunteer for special events I had the privilege of driving the speakers to and from UOP, including Wayne Dyer, Deepak Chopra and others. All of them mentioned that they could feel the love in this place.

I also wanted to comment on the new ministers. In the beginning I wasn't sure about what was happening. Yet in a very short time, almost miraculously, the transition occurred so naturally. I want to commend Rev. Alice on her accessibility when I needed to speak with her.

A: Terri Sue: OK, thank you.

Q: Written Comment: (addressed to the three ministers) If the process of getting a new senior minister goes out to other ministers applying, how does that affect the current ministers on board? What if two of the three current ministers want to apply, is there a chance of hurt feelings?

A: Rev. Shannon: I already have a new job...that of Family Minister, so no, I will definitely not be applying.

Rev. Alice: I will not be applying for the position either. I am happy to support Richard.

Q: Laurie: I have been a member for 10 or 11 years, and when I first joined the church I thought it was because of Richard and his wonderful messages. But the longer I stayed and became active (choir member) the more I realized that same love and spirit that I felt with Richard was in everybody in this entire church. The most wonderful way that I can thank Richard Rogers for all the things we learned, is to live what he taught us.

A: Terri Sue: Thank you.

Q: Joann Swesinger: I've been coming here for about a year and a half. With these three new ministers there have been so many changes; new programs and I'm very happy about it. Not that I don't love Richard Rogers, but I have been to other churches who have lost their minister, and you do get through it. For the first six months no one said a word to me, but I kept coming back because of the theology, and even brought my son

and his wife to the church. But with the new ministers, I am seeing a change and I'm excited about that.

A: Terri Sue: I'd like some people to make a point to talk to Joann before the end of the evening.

Q: Male Person: What are the financial lessons that have been learned over the past year? What changes are being planned for the future?

A: Terri Sue: What I'd like to do with this question is to postpone it until we get back to the agenda, as this question is more applicable in that area.

Recess taken from 8:10 to 8:15

Q: Byron Weaver: I've been a member for about eight years and was hoping that Richard Rogers would never leave. But after listening to Richard Maraj several times I told my wife that if we ever lose Richard, that I would want Richard Maraj. How long does the Board intend to wait to start the process of appointing a Senior Minister?

A: Georgia McGraw-Ball: I'm not quite sure at this time. We'll get through the next couple of weeks and then we'll see how everybody is feeling. We may talk a little bit later in the program if we have time about our visioning process that we see going forward. We're planning on May being our "vision" month. But at this point we will wait for about three or four weeks and then see how everyone feels about a national search.

Q: Colleen: I've been a member less than a year, and I was sad to hear of Richard's leaving because he's what kept me here when I was looking for a church. But at the same time the new ministers that have come on have expanded that experience so much more for me that I'm very involved in the church and I love coming here. It is the whole congregation that makes this church. As wonderful as Richard Rogers was, and we'll always remember him, we know that we are the congregation. We are this church. We are what makes it. I think that we need to really focus on who we are and what we can bring to this congregation.

A: Terri Sue: Thank you.

Q: Herb Carney: Does the Board have a definite plan of communicating with the membership about the processes that you are considering? Do you have something definite that you are going to pass out to the membership?

Also is there any way that the membership can review and change the By-Laws that are not working for us? Has that ever been done? Have we ever reviewed the By-Laws to see whether or not they are still functional for this organization?

A: Georgia McGraw-Ball: I will answer the first part of the question. As far as an exact plan, we don't have it in place yet. We are meeting this Saturday, and we also have a Board meeting coming up. So those will be items on our agenda. We will use the

Congregant Participation Plan and all the different methods we have for communicating with the congregation. We may be asking for feedback along the way about different steps that we are contemplating. As far as the By-Laws, question turned over to:

Ronda Fisk: The By-Laws outline the provisions for changing them. It usually happens through a motion of the Board or through a motion of a certain number of the membership. You bring these proposals to a membership meeting, which can either be the annual membership meeting in January or you can call a special membership meeting by motion of the Board or a certain number of congregants. At that meeting there needs to be a quorum (200 members or 10% of the membership), and then you have to vote on the proposed changes. Notice has to be given along with the proposed changes. It is a process and takes time.

Q: Charles: I commented earlier that there should be a decent amount of time between now and the new Senior Minister. My question is what is the plan that the Board has? Is there a time line? Also, will there be an announcement next Sunday or the following one as to what is going to happen next?

A: Georgia McGraw-Ball: I don't think we will be prepared either of these two Sundays to make any announcement as both Sundays are to be focused on Richard Rogers. We want to provide a forum for everybody to thank him and say their goodbyes. So it wouldn't be until April 2nd, at the earliest, that we would have an outline or an inkling of what we think we are going to do.

Ronda Fisk: Another thing to keep in mind is that on April 1st we are bringing in a consultant to work with us on Board governance and transition. Her name is Beth Ann Suggs. She's known all over the country for working with Unity churches. So April 1st is a time when we are going to be processing with her about what things we could do and how we should go about doing it. We are not going to rush this process, but we absolutely have your best interest at heart. As Georgia said, we are trying to balance everything.

Q: Jim: Given our current financial difficulties, is it possible to do without a fourth minister for a while? The ministers we have, the services that we have are fantastic and I don't want to cut back on anything, but we could save a lot of money.

A: Georgia McGraw-Ball: Our budget for this fiscal year is in place. If we were to hire a new Senior Minister next week, and he wanted six ministers, he could have as many as he wants, so long as he stays within the budget. So the Board sets the parameters on the budget, which we have done. Our main concern is that we totally stay in budget.

Q: Jim: Did that answer my question?

A: Georgia: So I guess I would say that depending on the Senior Minister that was put into place, he could decide we only need two ministers.

Q: Jim: So what you're saying is that it is up to the Senior Minister?"

A: Georgia: Right.

Q: Richard Wallace: Could I say something as a volunteer here?

A: Terri Sue: Sure.

Q: Richard: Why one would think that we could do this in the next couple of weeks is unreasonable. We're already thinking about Easter Sunday and I'm in the process of looking for ushers for four services Easter Sunday. "You want a new minister try-out?" "No, thank you." "The month later will be fine with me."

Q: Sally Jo: I just want to put out there that this isn't something that we have to "get through" to get to the blessing. This is the blessing. Richard started his "best year ever" and I just want to say this is a place for transformation. Spirit doesn't want us to stay the same forever. Transformation is not something to be afraid of. It is something we have to be in as fully as we can be in.

Q: Greg Ray: I'm on staff here and I want you to know how hard these ministers work. They work 16, 17, 18 hours a day, seven days a week. They listen to you and to your needs and try to make this one great congregation. So this is your home and we need them.

Q: Wes: One of the first services I heard from Richard Maraj was about the rose. I look at our Unity family as a rose bush. We all have our seasons, and we have just weathered a winter that has been very hard on us. We're just coming out from under that snow. We need to give our new ministers a chance to blossom. I look at them as little buds on our rose bush. And I think they are blossoming tremendously. They come out into the courtyard after services and meet the congregants and say hello and make them feel like this is a home.

End of Question & Answer Period—Moving Back into Regular Agenda

Terri Sue said the first item on the agenda is the financial statement, and she introduced Bruce Baird.

Bruce said the main thrust of tonight's presentation would be the feedback on the focus groups of congregants who offered their thoughts, and what we should do from a financial perspective. The information I will cover is the same that you can find in the Upward Venture. We are providing financial updates every month in the newsletter. We'll also give out the financial information once a month in the bulletin.

Bruce first covered a graph of our revenues minus expenses, giving us the net proceeds. For October, 2005, our bottom line was \$97,600. The prior year we had \$44,000, so the first month of this fiscal year we were doing well.

Looking at November, this year we were \$6,700 positive, and last year, we were almost \$44,000 in the red. So we are going in the right direction.

And in December we had almost \$73,000 as the bottom line, whereas the previous year we had \$1,800.

In January, we didn't do quite as well as last year, but last year we were \$33,000 in the black. This year we are \$16,000 in the black, but this is a preliminary number because we haven't finished doing the bank reconciliations yet.

Last year in February we lost \$8,200 and we are looking at being \$6,000 in the black for this February. So you can see that while we do have some cyclical nature to our profitability, we're moving in the right direction. As you look on a year-to-date basis through January of this report, we had budgeted to be \$119,000 in the black and we are actually at \$193,00 in the black. So on a financial basis of our revenues minus our expenses, we're moving in the right direction.

The next item that Bruce covered was the attendance. This item, Bruce said, has been a bit of concern. We have essentially been less than last year. Only one month in this fiscal year has shown to be higher attendance than last year. The good news is that for the last two weekends we have been positive, so it is a good sign. It looks like we are starting to trend up.

The next item was worship receipts. That is the money that is taken in on a monthly basis from worship. In October 2005 we had \$175,000 receipts as opposed to the previous year's October, which was \$156,000. In November we were pretty much the same for both years. Then in December we were a little down, about \$10,000 from last year. And in January, we were about even \$132,000 versus \$130,000. We improved slightly in February.

Per person giving was the next topic covered. Bruce said that on a per person basis, everyone has been giving more. Even though the attendance has been down, the receipts reflected a higher per person giving. In October, 2004 the per person giving was \$24. This year, October, 2005 it went up to \$27. In November, 2004 it was \$22, as opposed to November, 2005 of \$24. December, 2004 it was \$20, versus this December, 2005 of \$24. January, 2005 showed receipts of \$19 per person, versus \$22 for January of this year. February was just about the same, a little bit higher. But this trend in the per person giving has helped us boost our revenues.

Bruce concluded his report by asking if there were any questions, and offering to meet or talk with anyone that had any questions for him.

ROBERT: Robert recognized the volunteers, Board members and facilitators that came forward to be a part of the focus groups whose function was to come up with ideas and possibilities to reduce the church's debt and to raise money for other things. The focus groups met four times, and the following persons were acknowledged and thanked: Maxine Anderson, Sally Lay, Mary Dicerbo, Kathy Dorman, Chris Finney, Tamy Conoway, Lisa Bicwell, Herb Carney and Mark Husky. They were outstanding in helping us get to our basic ideas.

Here are some of the recommendations that the focus groups came away with. One of the top suggestions was a capital campaign fundraiser. Bruce Baird will be able

to talk about that in a few minutes in a little more detail. There were other ideas that were mentioned. One was congregant symbolic purchase of a piece of Unity land. Another suggestion was special events. This is an area that we haven't done here very much. It is, however, something that is done in many non-profit organizations and other churches. Also gala banquets were suggested. For example, a dinner or dinner with a dance. A mention was made that we should do things that would bring in people not only from our own congregation, but from the outlying community as well.

Other recommendations included special events, carnivals, raffles, auctions and musicals, silent and live auctions. Some other fund-raising events were considered; i.e. leasing of the land to others or leasing it for cellular phone towers. The only downside of the latter is that the leasing contracts are for a long period of time; say 20, 30 or 40 years, but financially they are very lucrative.

Also mentioned were book and rummage sales, window decal sales, creating and selling a "Best of Unity" CD. We have great opportunities here with the great music we have every month at the church.

Asking attendees to give a little bit more. It was determined that even by giving an additional \$6.15 would greatly increase our receipts so we could reduce our debt and stay in the black.

The last item considered was renting out the facilities for non-Unity events. We have lots of space here on campus with rooms that are not used and could be rented out to raise money.

Those are some of the key ideas that came out of the focus groups. We want to get your feedback on these items. That's why we are sharing them with you. And, of course, we would like to move forward and make some of this happen.

The meeting was then turned back to Bruce Baird.

Bruce Baird: I'd like to thank all the people that participated in the various focus groups. What we have done is broken the suggestions into long-term and short-term projects. Every focus group recommended that we do some sort of capital campaign fundraising. This is not something that can be done in one or two months. It is a long-term project which the Board feels should be professionally facilitated. We have had one of these groups make a presentation to us and we look forward to getting some other groups to come in and give their recommendations.

This process will be managed by a number of members from the Board and a number of members from the congregation. It will take a lot of different committees and a lot of different people participating. So we are hoping that you will sign up for all these jobs.

In the short term, our goal is to increase Unity family connection by activities. And it's also to create an immediate positive financial impact in our current fiscal year.

The Board has set a goal that we will be at least \$50,000 more in the black than we were last year as far as the amount of money that we have in the reserves. And the way to do that is to bring in more money than we spend.

The Board needs to make a decision on the long-term fundraising activity, and it will be meeting in the next couple of weeks so we would like some input from all of you that are here tonight. So based on whatever feedback we have, we will then move forward on that particular activity.

Q: Tom Gebler: We will be passing out clipboards for those who would like to sign up as volunteers, either short or long-term.

A: Terri Sue: And no one is obligated to sign up. This is just if you want to. It will give the Board a pool of names to contact when they make their final decision.

Q: Written Comment: What are the financial lessons that have been learned over the past year? What changes are being planned for the future?

A: Georgia McGraw-Ball: I think what we have learned is that our product here, our main product, is our Sunday service. And our ministers have made that the number one priority to do worship services the best way they know how.

The other thing we learned is that if we ask, and we let you know what's going on, we receive. And so we are going to continue to do those two things. Also we are watching our budget very carefully and we are staying on top of it.

Q: Ken: We have a small group of people that meet at my house and we are looking at some ways that money can be raised for the church. One of things might be to sell CDs of the sermons, instead of the small cassette tapes. They don't fit my car and I would love to listen to the ministers' sermons on a CD.

A: Georgia McGraw-Ball: Someone has donated the money to provide us with a CD copier, and the plan is to have them available. Charlie Brown? "They will be available April 2nd."

Georgia: Ask and you shall receive!

Ken: Another thing I would recommend is to bring in guest bands instead of the same singers that we have time after time. They would bring in their families, so we would have 20 or 25 people who would not only be exposed to our church, but who would also be donating. Perhaps we should also have a loose-leaf that we could print of the sermons and sell them for \$2 a piece. That would be another thing that you could sell as a one-year subscription.

A: Terri Sue: Thank you.

Q: Female Person: What about if we all bought a Unity lottery ticket and put it in the prayer box?

A: Terri Sue: OK, it's 9:00 o'clock.

Ronda Fisk: We want to take this opportunity to recognize a couple of people. First of all we would like to recognize are our amazing ministers who have made such an amazing contribution to this ministry for the last eleven months. So Shannon, Alice and Richard, on behalf of the Board, we have a small token of our gratitude and we say thank you, thank you, and thank you.

We have one more gratitude and that is to Terri Sue Rossi. She came through I can't tell you in how many ways. She has spent countless hours with all of us coaching us through this process, coaching us through how do you hold meetings like this. How do you listen to people? How do you communicate? What is it you need to do next? And she has made this possible not only for us, but for you. And so for that, Terri Sue, we can't thank you enough. We have a couple of small tokens of our gratitude. But we just want to say thank you.

And with that we will turn it over to Shannon for our closing prayer.

Rev. Shannon: I think I speak for us all in saying that this is a truly, truly amazing ministry, and every single one of us knew it the second we came here. And every time you all tell us how amazing we are, it's very clear to us how amazing you are, and you wouldn't have drawn us here if you didn't have the very same things that you admire in us. You had it first. You drew us here.

This is a time of great change, and it's also an exciting time. There are lots of emotions. I don't need to name them all because you've been feeling them, and we've been feeling them. And there's also excitement. So now let's pray.

Closing Prayer by Rev. Shannon

Terri Sue: We've sat here and we've thanked the ministers. They've thanked us, but the Board needs to be thanked also. (Standing ovation)