

Reasoning for approving a contract to facilitate Reconciliation

The primary goal for hiring a professional mediation consultant is for the overall health of the church. The selected consultant has already performed an assessment and we reported his findings to the congregation. The reasoning there was a lack of detailed information in the report (i.e. what exactly is the conflict?) was to hold to the confidentiality agreements agreed to, both the consultant and those that were interviewed for the assessment. As the elder and deacon boards have discussed this issue, our basis for recommending the congregation approve entering in a contract is as follows:

- The assessment showed that there is a significant level of hurt in the congregation due to conflict in our church. This conflict is deep rooted and did not surface just over the past couple of years. It involves not only individuals, but also has migrated to leadership and several larger groups. Therefore, the conflict is complexed, multifaceted, and is affecting the body in numerous ways.
 - The conflict did not go away with the departure of some members – there are individuals that are still members of CBC and desire resolution. If some type of mediation opportunity is not provided – healing may not take place and there is possibility these individuals will also leave and create additional conflict.
 - Although there have been attempts by the Board and some members to resolve the conflict, these attempts have not produced the desired reconciliation needed to resolve the divisions.
 - The level of conflict has grown to the point where we do not have the expertise to resolve it. Therefore, the elders and deacons sought out a professional consultant whose is grounded in Godly biblical methods and has vast experience with resolving these types of conflicts.
 - Realizing forgiveness and reconciliation can only be done through the work of the Holy Spirit, there needs to be a means to help the parties achieve these desired results. Again, the proposed consultant has a tested process that can be used at CBC to facilitate the mediation to enable individuals to reconcile the currently strained relationships.
- Process to be used by the Consultant
 - Phase 1 – Pre-meditation (onsite, one week)
 - Meeting/training with leadership and others involved. A workshop will be held to provide those involved with an introductory understanding of the foundational principles of biblical peacemaking and provide training for biblical conflict resolution.
 - Conflict coaching interviews with select key individuals. The consultant will spend time with individuals to learn more in depth about the conflict (past and

present) to gain a better understanding of the conflict. The assessment provided some good information but did not go into the details of the issue(s).

- Preparation of the congregation. Assist them to understand the mediation process and Biblical principles. Done through instruction, encouragement and assignment.
- Preaching. The mediation Pastor will preach on Sunday, if requested
- Training to mediation participants. Mediation parties will receive a mediation preparation assignment upon their agreement to participate in mediation.
- Report out to leaders and/or the congregation.

- Phase 2 – Mediation

- Application Workshop. Using the assignments and application workshop training, a workshop will be performed with participants.
- Pre-mediation Coaching for key mediation parties. Meetings will help prepare the parties for actual mediation.
- Mediation. Actual time will depend on time needed for each mediation, number of parties, issues, and complexity of the issues.
- Mediation Reporting. A plan is developed for reporting out based on agreement of the mediation parties.

- Costs are estimated at approximately \$17,500 for each phase, which includes travel of \$4,000 for each phase, for a total of approximately \$35,000. The contract is set up based on expenses incurred (as approved by the Boards) – with payment to follow. So, if it takes less time than estimated or we don't move forward with Phase 2, overall cost will be less. The same is true if need more time.
- The elders and deacons feel that this is the direction that God is leading us to enable the Holy Spirit to work in these relationships and foster true forgiveness. Your approval is requested.