

Oak Ridge Area Churches of Christ Cooperative Meeting Minutes

Date: August 28, 2009

Attending: Gabe Potter, Todd Deaver, Ray Smith, Curtis McClane, James Steele, Tom Ethridge, Neil Thompson

Opening Prayer: Ray Smith

Background: There have been cooperative efforts before in our histories. We have had a city-wide meeting at the High School. We have had evangelistic efforts in Knoxville. We have also had many youth group events. Ray further stated that the purpose of the meeting was not to talk merger at all, but what we can do together to further the cause of Christ in our community.

We then went around the room and asked for ideas about how our churches can work together.

Todd Deaver: Suggested a joint VBS in the summer. Also, our churches could sponsor a seminar that would appeal to the wider community. Also, he suggested joint services.

Curtis McClane: Suggested that we join together to build a Habitat House. He also suggested we restart the 5th Sunday Singing.

Gabe Potter: Mentioned that we need to begin a Spanish work here in Anderson county. He also suggested taking Bible classes or a VBS to the apartment complexes here in Oak Ridge.

Neil Thompson: echoed Gabe's suggestion of working in the apartment complexes. He also suggested that we have a joint week of camp at Hillbrook.

Jim Steele: replied that the camp board would have approve another camp week. He also suggested the 5th Sunday singing. He also talked about bringing back the youth singing.

Tom Ethridge: mentioned that he would be in favor of a singing. He mentioned a cooperative family retreat and our area churches sponsoring a booth at community events.

Ray Smith: mentioned that he was in favor of a retreat and also the teenage singings. He also liked the VBS idea, especially if we could take it on the road.

Tom Ethridge mentioned that we need to improve our communications so as a fellowship of congregations we could better use our combined resources.

Ray Smith then told the group the story behind the Love Bears. (For the benefit of other readers who were not at the meeting, the Love Bears began when Martha Love was killed in an automobile accident and her small son who was in the accident but uninjured physically was taken from the hospital by Susan Welch and Laurie Snyder. They realized later that if he had been given something to hold on to at the time of his trauma and separation from his dying mother he would have been more secure and thus the idea of a "bear" was developed. The name "Love" bear is in honor of Martha. Highland View has made literally thousands of these simple bears and they have gone to many states and some foreign countries.

Other churches have adopted the program and other Oak Ridge area churches could easily do so as well
– Ray)

Tom then suggested that we develop a resource bank for people with skills, programs that meet needs and ministries that each church does. He also suggested that we could bring experts into our meeting so we can learn what works.

Jim Steele then mentioned the monthly meetings that have been going on in East Tennessee and he talked about the annual youth conferences that are state-wide.

Action Item: Each representative will bring a list of resources, events and ministries to the next meeting, which is on September 24th at 5:00 P.M. The meeting will be held at the Providence House near the Highland View building at 138 Providence Road.

Those attending this initial meeting are encouraged to invite others to attend future meetings.

Closing Prayer: James Steele