



Elders Update

#7: May 2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters of ABMC,

We praise God for the 7 brothers and sisters who were baptized last Christmas and 6 this Easter. May they grow in the Lord with blessings and joy.

In keeping with our previous Updates from Elders Board Minutes for maximum transparency, this Update is a summary of the decisions made by the Elders after careful and prayerful deliberation. Historically, all decisions have been unanimously decided after open and prayerful discussion.

The Rev. and Mrs. Wang felt sure that God has called them to a new ministry in Dallas and the Elders Board has the same discernment. There was a minor but disturbing spreading of opposite view which exposed the lack of understanding and encouraged the confusion of the governance of ABMC and the different roles of the elders and b/s. This Update provided a good object lesson. Please pay attention and read it carefully. Further biblical teaching on the qualifications and duties of elders will follow.

Critical issues were discussed:

1. Has the church offered a full time position to Rev. Wang for him to stay and serve our church?
2. Why was the decision to go to Dallas so sudden?
3. Is the church going to 'hire' pastors?
4. Should b/s involved in the recruitment process?
5. Is there enough transparency?

6. Personnel matters are highly confidential and involved privacy issues. Elders Board is responsible for personnel matter and it is not appropriate for b/s to participate. The main focus of b/s of ABMC is to grow in the love for God, b/s, their friends and seekers.
7. Rev. Wang made the following clarification. "In December, Dallas church wanted Esther and I to go for an interview. I asked Winston. Winston encouraged us to go. I was surprised. Winston was very spiritually mature. He told me that I have to go for the interview to see if that is God's will. After the interview, Esther and I decided that if Bible Translation continues in LA even as a part time job, I will change from volunteer pastor to part time pastor for ABMC with the Elders Board's blessing. To our surprise at the end of March, BT decided to close the LA operation and we were very clear that this is God's leading for us to go to Dallas. Our decision has nothing to do with full time job offer from ABMC.
8. "Regarding "transparency", our decision is very sudden to ABMC's b/s, and we apologize that we could not share about this earlier. Esther and I wanted to stay in LA. Winston as the Chairman of the Elders Board affirmed God's leading for us to go to Dallas and it is much appreciated."
9. Rev. Li commented on "transparency" that the call by God for a minister to go or stay is for the Elders to discern and rule, b/s should not be involved. Winston commented that the Elders and b/s much preferred Rev. Wang to stay. But God's will be done. We have faith God will provide our needs in a timely fashion. The 2 years history of ABMC is a testimony to God's faithfulness.
10. As to what is the Elders' stand on hiring pastors, Winston pointed out that in the January Elders Board meeting minute #3 "the church will need to have pastors on staff". The Elders Board has been praying and waiting upon the Lord. A number of potential candidates have been reviewed but no match found yet.
11. As to the confusion caused by some who do not understanding the governance structure of ABMC, our

constitution clearly stipulated that ABMC is governed by the Elders Board. ABMC does not make decision by one member one vote of the congregation, but is led by the Elders Board. Brothers and sisters should trust that God who spoke clearly through Paul that the church is to be led by the Elders. More teaching on this subject next week at the Agape Forum ABMC web site.

12. According to the Constitution By-Law, Article III “the Chairman of Board shall be the chief executive officer of the Church, and shall serve under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ. He shall preside at all meetings of the Elders Board...and he shall have the general powers and duties of supervision and management usually vested in the office of president of a corporation. He shall be designated attorney-in-fact for the Church by virtue of his office.”
13. The Chairman leads the Board. All Elders are encouraged to speak freely, prayerfully but confidentially. Any Elder can offer any suggestions and any opinions on any issues that were brought up for discussion and decision. But once the decision is made all elders have to abide by the one voice policy. The decision of the Board is the decision of every Elder even if they have an opposite view earlier. That is very basic and fundamental conduct for all Board members. No Elders can continue the debate outside the Board with b/s because it will cause division in the church. The process of pastor recruitment is handled by the Chairman, with Elders participation and final approval.
14. All Elders should be spiritually mature and always sensitive to the leading of the Lord. They always look out for the best interest of the sheep and the church. This is their sacred duty.
15. There are a very few b/s who strongly oppose the idea of commissioning Rev. Wang and want him to discontinue as an elder. The Elders Board agreed that commissioning Rev. Wang to a new field led by God is ABMC’s honor. By sending Rev. Wang, ABMC abides by the will of God and promise to pray for the Wang family. ABMC is happy and willing to be the home base for the Wang family.

16. Rev. Wang will continue to be the Elder of ABMC which will have a stabilizing effect for ABMC and will be very encouraging to Rev. Wang. Rev. Wang said he wants to stay as elder to continue contribution to the church and stabilize the church. But if instead it causes division, he is willing not to stay as elder. Winston explained that Rev. Wang should put ABMC and the b/s above any hurtful criticism or strong negative pressure. That is what a good shepherd would do, stay the course and protect the sheep and the church. That is the sacred duty of Elders.
17. Elders Board decided on an ABMC Pastor Recruitment Policy: 长老会关于“聘牧”的教導:
“长老会已在年初開始為此事積極禱告探索等候。教会聘牧是件大事，求神賜我們一位志同道合的牧師來幫助、帶領我們在事奉過程中成長。所以，我們先求主預備我們的心。這個“心”包括事奉神的心志、對教會委身的心志、奉獻的心志等。同時，教會的奉獻收入也要達到一定條件，在條件未成熟時聘牧，會造成對牧者的虧待。我們深信神自己有成全我們的时间，讓我們同心合意、恒切禱告等候，預備我們自己，時候到了，神就會為我們預備合適的牧者。”
18. Elders Board decided to affirm God’s leading of Rev. Wang to Dallas Church. ABMC will have commissioning ceremony on 5/9/2010 including the Second Anniversary Celebration and Mothers’ Day program. 5/10/2010 GLACMA general membership meeting will have a prayer affirmation ceremony for ABMC commissioning Rev. Dong Wang to Dallas.

Johnny emailed in his resignation as an Elder citing personal reasons. The Elders Board received it with regret and thanked him for his faithful service. The Elders Board decided to accept his resignation. Johnny will continue ministry in the Children Ministry and the Wednesday Worship with Bible Study and Prayers.

We praise God for His protection.
And for His loving care of our young Church, ABMC.

Amen.