

STRONGHOLD CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER COMMITTEE

Presbytery Report: June 14, 2016

Committee Membership:

TE Jeri Baker, RE Ted Finefield, RE John Gerlach (2016);
TE Jim Friedmeyer, TE Judith Hardie, RE Julie Leber (2017); and
RE Terry Mohaupt, TE Kathie Luke, and a RE Betsy Johnson (2018).

- I. Assist staff in policy development & implementation and budget development & review:
 - a. We met with Danny, our new executive director, sharing our connection and commitment to camp ministries, and making a commitment to helping Danny and the Stronghold Staff come together during these hectic and joy-filled weeks of camp.
 - b. The Summer Staff training is almost completed. The team shows great promise, mature connections and team development for this early in the camp season!
 - c. A new format for financial reports has been requested that should better assist tracking data to help develop strengths and ameliorate weaknesses.

- II. Provide leadership in fundraising and fund development.
 - a. Phase I of the work in/on Sears is completed utilizing most of the profit made from the sale of wood cut in 2015. Significant upgrades to Barrick are virtually complete, and a new-to-us van is in the acquisition process, just in time for Day Camp!
 - b. Chris Busker continues to increase sales, rentals, and community relations. Camp registrations are up 20% over this time last year. Having administered a few Outdoor Education programs, greater promotions will come this Fall. The pilot Pre-6th Grade program is funded through new Rockford partnerships. The second annual 5k Run to the Castle in September and the Olde English Faire in October approach. A 900+ church contact list has been created/updated, and our social media presence/reach is nearing our year end goal.

- III. Be in partnership with staff in strategic planning and to act as a think tank with staff for the betterment of Stronghold ministry.
 - a. Volunteers are in the process of updating our current website while explorations into outsourcing a new format for the website begin.
 - b. The pre-camp volunteer workday was very successful, much thanks to both Tom and Richard.
 - c. New revenue streams are being discussed and several (5-6) fundraising events are being planned in the coming year.

- IV. **Recommendations:**
 - a. The former Stronghold Advisory Ad Hoc Committee, prior to being dissolved, had moved to recommend forgiving the payroll debt through end of year 2014 (over 200K). Only when this debt was highlighted in April's reports, did we realize the error. As members of staff, of our committee, and of the former ad-hoc committee feel it to have been an oversight, *we now recommend this debt be formally forgiven.*

- b. We have long concurred with the wisdom of exploring the 501(c)3 or 501(c)3 and LLC status, but feel strongly that our committee and executive director should be an active part of that exploration and determination. We are aware of precedents and “roadmaps” for the journey to governance by a board of directors, development of bylaws, and chartering with the state; and we know records of these processes, research data, and guidance of national-level professionals are as yet unplumbed resources.
- i. *We therefore recommend that Part II: Stronghold Description be separated from Parts I and III (Visioning Admin. Board & COM);*
 - ii. *We further recommend that the current Stronghold Committee, the new Executive Director and the presbytery Board of Trustees, with staffing support from the General Presbyter, work together to explore populating a Stronghold Board of Directors, creating bylaws and charter documents, and progressing through the process of becoming a 501(c)3, or a or 501(c)3 and LLC organization, reporting back to the presbytery assembly for necessary approvals.*

Together with the Kenya Partnership Committee an Oak Tree is soon to be planted, commemorating 20 years of ministry and partnership with the presbytery. We approved this idea with joy, because we can see into the future; as the tree grows into its purpose, so may Christ’s ministry of hospitality here at Stronghold!

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Judith March Hardie
Willow Creek Presbyterian Church of Argyle
Moderator, Stronghold Camp and Retreat Center Committee