

The Baptist Home's Board of Trustees
President's Report
Steven R. Jones
June 5, 2007

Because We Have Been Given Much

Although change can be difficult, change is real and moving faster regardless. Personally, I never felt my timing to change was adequate. I either acted too hastily and impatiently or was too hesitant to embrace it.

Change is not new to The Baptist Home; in fact, we have had to make several changes in recent years. Perhaps, the greatest change was in our admissions policy. Another change is in how we communicate to others about this ministry. In other words, the ways in which we create awareness and market ourselves.

I really do not like that word "marketing" because it conjures up, in my mind, all kinds of less than honorable images of manipulation. How many times have we seen the words "new and improved" on a product and discover that the interest those words created did not live up to expectations. Such is our culture.

One of the dangers in addressing change is that we will lose all that is precious to us. I want to assure you that all that is good and valuable in our heritage weighs heavily on our decisions.

Our greatest desire is to do no harm. However, that is not enough. We must do all that we can to stay relevant to the culture. I believe this is what Jesus meant when he said, "...Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."

It begs the question, "How do we stay relevant in our ministries without sacrificing the values, and beliefs we hold dear?" How do we continue to follow His challenge to be the salt and the light, particularly to aging humanity?

We cannot ignore changes in aging culture. Today, people are living longer and living independently longer. Our experience is that people are postponing housing and long-term care services for as long as possible. The number of aging services has increased significantly since 1913; from home health services to multiple housing services enabling older adults to stay in their current living situations longer. People are choosing services closer to family, community, and church support; therefore location has become an increasing factor in choosing aging services. A generation type is disappearing and a new one is emerging. The GI generation is giving way to the Silent Generation; a generation with a different set of characteristics, mindsets, and expectations. Society has moved from a need base to a want base. Our standards of living has increased. There are new demands and expectations on what is provided in aging services.

We cannot ignore changes in Baptist life and the Church. Analysts are talking about a decline in organize faith, particularly in denominationalism. People are pushing away from distant organizations, preferring faith organizations closer to home. The SBC/MBC have been embroiled in controversy for over 25 years. An increased level of dirty political activity has been obvious within the conventions; increasing suspicion and mistrust among brothers and sisters in Christ. The MBC has fragmented into

three organizations. It appears it is about to split again between those who are following a one-man political machine, known as Moran Baptists, and those who believe it is time for change of direction, calling themselves SOC (Save our Convention). This will make at least four organizations we will relate to, since we have residents from churches that affiliate to one or more of the four. One leader told me that he did not think it possible to put "Humpty Dumpy Back Together Again."

After Sunday's Memorial Service, I visited with resident Mary Cobb. I asked her how she was doing because I knew she had experienced a number of significant losses recently, especially her eyesight has diminished and her mobility has been impaired. I also asked her how she was able to cope with the losses. She said, "I just widdle me another paddle." She explained it was an old Indian expression. When Indians lost their paddle while canoeing, they got to shore as quickly as possible and 'widdled' another paddle. In spite of the losses, Mary strives to stay relevant.

In addressing change, we are attempting to stay relevant. In spite of the difficulties regarding change, we will continue to pursue the very best for this ministry. Norma helped me find the theme for our meetings this week. "Because we have been given much." Luke 6:38 reads, "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

In closing I want to express appreciation to our staff present in this meeting : Jim Nelson, Director of Communications/Development; Frank Fain, Director of Educational Services and Senior Adult Specialist; Lynn Jackson, Administrator of the Chillicothe Facility; Sherri Snider, Administrator at Arcadia Valley; Sammy Allen, Administrator at Ozark; Karl Snider, Chief Executive Officer; Norma Jones, President's Assistant; Roger Hatfield, Ministries Specialist and Project Coordinator for the Baptist House of Mercy Project; Vicky Davis, Asst. Administrator/Director of Nursing at Chillicothe and Norman Shands, Chaplain at the Chillicothe Facility. As we visit the other facilities in the future, I will offer my appreciation to them at that time. Our staff from the housekeepers to the nurses, to those who work in activities, chaplains, maintenance, dietary, and Social Services deserve a profound appreciation for their services to this ministry. It is not easy to turn out the lights, close the door, and go home when you minister at TBH. Our staff would not have it any other way.

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