



June 2007



## A WORD FROM THE PRES...

### Customer Conference

Over the years I have occasionally had various people suggest to me that we ought to hold a conference of GSS customers. Quite recently heard this suggestion once again. The need, it seems, is for folks to be able to discuss together where they would like to see us take our products and take our company. Such a conference would also give us a chance to test out some of our ideas about the future and where we think we see the needs of our customers developing. To be fair to ourselves, we have held a few meetings over the years around the venues of the annual meetings of computer administrators and of conference treasurers, but those have always been short discussions of an hour or two and usually around specific, functional topics.

As I "read the winds of change" of computer usage within the church and the desire of many of our customers to

communicate more fully with their constituents through the internet using interactive, data driven websites; and as I look all around me at how much has changed in consumer level purchasing and financial management along with health management and other aspects of our lives, all using the internet to enhance access to both information and action based upon it; it appears to me that we need to map out some significant new courses of direction for future software and services that we offer.

Again, to be fair to ourselves, we have made some substantial forays into internet based, data driven applications. We have online functions for statistics, event registration and rosters, local church leadership and a recent project to process Safe Sanctuary applications, training, screening and references online, and these are all pieces of this puzzle. But the puzzle is much bigger, and when it is all put together it must make a whole picture.

Therefore we have decided to hold a Customer Conference. We would like to have some direct discussions together with our customers regarding your needs and the direction you would like to see us take our software. This will be a concept level

discussion, and not about specific software design issues. Thus we would like to invite one person from each of our conferences to come, and to be prepared to represent all of the various ministries that our software supports or that you would like for it to support in your conference.

We have selected the dates of August 24-25, over a Friday afternoon/evening and Saturday morning sessions, beginning at 3:00 PM on Friday and concluding by 11:00 AM Saturday. This should give us three sessions of about two hours each on Friday afternoon, evening, and Saturday morning. We'll meet in Kansas City because of its central location in the country and good air transportation. We will select a hotel near the airport and one that has shuttle service, to minimize travel hassles.

We'll send more details to our primary contact for each of our customers soon. In the meantime, it would help us in our planning if each customer would send me an email indicating your interest or commitment to have a representative join us. And all or our users can help by communicating your ideas to your attendee prior to the conference.

AI



## FROM THE BULL PEN...



### MissionBase and Windows Vista

In the February edition of the Eagle Eye, I briefly discussed the new Microsoft operating system called Windows Vista. The new operating system was released to the public on January 30, 2007 and almost all computer manufacturers are bundling Vista with their new computers. The most common version being included is Vista Home Premium even though there are several Vista versions available. Usually when you purchase a computer from any common retail location such as a discount super-store or a computer store, it will have

the Home Premium edition of Vista already loaded on it. One of the significant issues reported in the media regarding Vista is that many software applications that work under Windows XP will NOT run with the Vista operating system. There is significant controversy about this challenge, and at least one computer manufacturer has decided to once again offer Window XP as a choice of operating system when purchasing a new computer.

We do not know yet if MissionBase will work on the Vista platform. However, we began to test MissionBase with Windows Vista late in May. We purchased a "typical" computer that a conference might purchase from a well-known manufacturer with Vista Home Premium as the operating system to test MissionBase.

We don't know yet if MissionBase will work without any glitches on our test computer or if it will need modifications. If it will work "as-is", we will be able to support MissionBase very soon on Vista based computers.

However, if it requires modifications, it could be months before it is ready for release.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** In the meantime, if you intend to purchase a new computer for your office, PLEASE MAKE CERTAIN YOU GET THE WINDOWS XP OPERATING SYSTEM ON THE NEW COMPUTER. GSS cannot support MissionBase on a Vista based computer until we have had the opportunity to fully test it. If you choose to purchase a computer with Vista, you would need to keep the computer where you have MissionBase operating, which means you would need to have two computers for your work.

Bill Johnson

**Module of the Month:**

This month, rather than a module, we are highlighting a new "Service." Great Spirit Systems Corporation is gearing up to offer Web site Hosting as another available service to our customers. Sites would be set up and hosted by GSS, but content would be maintained by the customer. We will be looking for a couple "beta test" customers willing to try out this new product at a reduced cost. If you have been searching for a new web site solution for your district or conference, this may be a great opportunity for you. The beta test sites will be actual web sites, but will be limited in size during the testing phase. For more information, please contact [Lori Smith](mailto:Lori.Smith).



**LORI'S  
TIPS  
&  
TRICKS...**

**Find it FAST!**

Most of our users print reports of one type or another from MissionBase. Some of these reports are even quite extensive in length. Most of our users have discovered the arrows at the top to flip from page to page, but did you know there was a "Find" feature. This feature can make "jumping" directly to the information you need quite simple.

Along the top of any report printed to screen in MissionBase, you'll see the box with the binoculars to the right as shown.



That is the "Find" feature. Type in a few characters (letters OR numbers), then click the "Find" icon, and the report will automatically advance to the first match in the report. If that is not the match you needed, just click the "Find" icon again!

When the report reaches the end of the document and all matches have been found, a message will indicate there are no matches. You will need to return to the beginning of the document to begin another search.

**Our Current Add-on Modules:**

- Benefits (Pension [CRSP/ CPP] billing, Medical, Flex, Life Insurance, Dental, Vision, & UMPIP billing)
- Event Registration
- Cabinet Decision Support
- Certified Leadership (Safe Sanctuary)
- Candidacy Process tracking
- Year-End Statistics (Tables 1,2,3)
- Church Remittance
- Online Local Church Leadership
- Online Statistics entry
- Online Event Registration
- Onsite & web-based training

For more information on any of these modules, contact [lori@greatspirit.com](mailto:lori@greatspirit.com)

**GoToMeeting**

There has been a terrific response to our GoToMeeting training sessions, but the number of participants has decreased significantly. This could be due to the busy schedules around Annual Conference, or simply that all our users are now ready to join our tech-support team! Or perhaps, due to several conferences planning their own, customized, GoToMeeting training sessions for their users. In any case, the training sessions open to all users will be postponed for a few months, or until requests are received for needed sessions. However, if your district or conference wants to schedule a customized training, this is still available.

We offer these customized training sessions for \$60/hour + \$75 preparation fee for up to 10 participants. That is still a much more economical option than an on-site training.

This can be a very useful way to get a number of new District Superintendents or Administrative Assistants "up to speed" in a hurry! Contact [Lori Smith](mailto:Lori.Smith) to schedule a training for your new users today!

**GSS Vacation Schedule**

We try to make contacting us as easy as possible. We add an "away" message on our email when we are unavailable, and try to do the same on our phone messages. However, it is easier to know who is not available to begin with when looking for support. So we are posting our vacation schedule for your convenience. Throughout the year, we will try to post dates to make our users aware of when we are unavailable for user support.

**Dates Unavailable:**

Al Fifhouse:	June 8-22
Bill Johnson:	June 22-28
	July 12-22
Lori Smith:	July 18-25