

Christ UMC Co-op Study Committee

Topic: Brainstorming issues around dissolving the Co-operative Parrish and once again becoming an independent UMC.

November 16, 2009

Potential benefits of dissolving:

- Good infrastructure, property, & low debt (approx. \$103,000 in debt)
- Potential financial savings in some infrastructure. For instance could have a less expensive phone system.
- Stable core group of church members.
- Communication might be simplified with only one congregation.
- Could return to a traditional leadership with a committee structure, instead of being a staff lead church. (Some debate on if this is a strength.)
- Possibility of developing a unique mission around which we can build cohesion.
- With only one church using the facilities, they would be available on a more regular basis.
- Christ UMC would regain primary responsibility for its future.
- Would have a pastor dedicated to Christ UMC alone (may or may not be full time).
- Could still partner with Shepherd's or other UM church as desired or needed. For instance, could still have a joint FEAST if desired, and even joint service projects.

Struggles / Areas to Work through if dissolve:

- Do we have the financial and personal resources for two worship services?
- Would recent growth in worship continue?
- Potential cost for redoing some: example internet, media, printers, etc.
- Potential for increased cash flow difficulties.
- Will Annual Conference insist we pay Conference obligations (apportionments, health and property insurance) which church has paid 4 of 8 last years?
- Loss of some staff who presently help us:
 - Contemporary music and service. (Contemporary service presently coordinated by Ron Williams and the worship team might lose key volunteers. Steve Jones, for instance, is helping here because of the co-op.
 - Education
 - Tech assistance
 - Office-Colleen and Jane help both churches. Could only keep one at Christ.
 - Could we afford financial cost of a full-time clergy person?
- Decrease in energy that comes from many Shepherd's members.
- Questions about do we have the number of volunteers that are needed to carry out the ministry we desire?
- Aging demographics.
- Can church reclaim its missional identity and reach out to community effectively?
- What would happen to some programs that are facilitated primarily through Shepherd's people including:
 - Youth
 - Children
 - Contemporary Worship
 - Etc.

Christ UMC Co-op Study Committee

Topic: Brainstorming issues around merging the two congregations.

December 7, 2009

Potential benefits of merging:

- Could deploy financial resources more effectively. For instance would share the cost of staff instead of duplicating work.
- Could have an overarching staff to help the church serve, ie children's, youth, worship, etc..
- More diversity in age demographics of congregation. Would have both young and old, new and long time Christians.
- More cohesive missional identity than in present co-operative parish.
- Opportunity to pay financial obligations to UMC (apportionments, pension, property insurance) more consistently.
- Larger congregation provides opportunity for members to focus on and skills for serving instead of duplicating tasks (finance, spr, trustees, etc).
- Would provide clearer identity of church to community than co-op presently offers.
- SRC probably has more new converts (in part because of the newer residents near the SRC property), which gives them a more natural bridge to unchurched populations.
- Significant financial opportunities when it comes to pastoral needs. For instance merged church would probably only have one pastor, instead of the two now serving.
- Significant financial opportunities when it comes to property needs. Church could sell one property and move to the other, or sell both and buy a different piece of property.

Struggles / Areas to Work through if merge:

- Conflict over needing only one piece of property:
 - Would one piece of property be sold and everyone move to the other?
 - Would both churches sell property and move to a new one?
- Style(s) of worship in merged congregation:
 - Would there still be traditional worship? Can there be any assurance of retaining traditional worship or contemporary worship?
- Initial potential conflict over the need for only one appointed clergy.
- Would the church keep the parsonage or move to SRC's pattern of providing a housing allowance instead of a parsonage?
- What is name of merged church? Would it be Christ, Shepherd, or a brand new name?
- Christ members would take on SRC debt of \$700,000 compared to the \$103,000 on the LMC property. On the other side, SRC's budget is approximately 75% more than Christ's.
- Would members who live north of LMC travel to SRC and vice versa?
- Remnant of hurt feelings and distrust of staff/laity/and district leadership.
- Do we share a missional identity?
- Would the leadership of the new congregation be shared between people who made up original churches?