

First United Methodist West Lafayette
Church Council
May 23, 2011

Church Council members attending: Jim Beaty, Dan Berger, Bill Fornes, David Eichenauer, Judi Forsyth, Lowell Gardner, Doug Morehouse, Bob Nicholson, Jeanne and John Norberg, Dave Ridings, Nancy Wagner, Barb Witz, Bob Zink. **Absent:** Bill Boyer, Tracy Badgley, Rich Frank, Sally Gustafson, John Jones, Mike Heinz, Max Hoke, Glen and Lana Robyne, John Sorenson, George Van Scoyoc.

Committee chairs and representatives to Church Council : Jan Beaty, Shari Bittles, Tim Delworth, Nola Gentry, Neil McTavish, Gail Polles, C. Virgil St. John, Elen Wilson. **Absent:** Eileen Chamness, Jim Driskill, Karen Logan, Jim Paine, John Polles, Joel Rasmus, Cary Mitchell, Brian Titlow, Mary Welch.

Others attending: Eric Barker, Charles Boonstra, Bob Day, Suzie Kline, Stu Kline, Anne Kolodny.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Dan Berger

Joel 2: 28 "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions."

"In Native American culture there is a talisman called a "dream catcher." Here is one. According to legend, parents are to hang a dream catcher over their newborn's cradle, and the web is to catch only the child's good dreams, while letting the bad dreams escape through the spaces of the web's strands. As I understand it, back somewhere around the year 2000, the then Sr. Pastor Dean Stuckey, proffered a dream for the church to relocate to a different area of town, where there would be a fresh start, where there would be more parking, where new families could be attracted to First Church. Over the next few years many people talked about the dream, and then one thing led to another: people caught the vision, this property became available for a ridiculously low cost, there were people who wanted to buy the old property that First Church occupied, and the first phase of this building was constructed. In the fall of 2004 we moved into the new building, which everyone knew was incomplete.

"The dream of a new sanctuary never died. In fact, when I arrived in June of 2007, I began a series of Gatherings (17 in fact) where 232 people attended. I asked everyone two questions: "what do you like best about First Church? And what one thing would you change about First Church?" The number one answer to the latter question was, "We want our new sanctuary. We are tired of worshipping in a gymnasium." It was during these Gatherings that I realized that there was a dream and vision of someday soon completing our building with a sanctuary.

"Within several months, a New Building Committee was established. For nearly 3 years now, it has met, toured various church sanctuaries, interviewed architects, attended a seminar on church building, interviewed church fund raising consultants, conducted several hearings and input sessions to get the ideas of church members, etc.

"Through this long process, the New Building Committee continues to dream of a new sanctuary and everything that can happen when it exists. The committee continues to dream of attracting new people to the cause of Christ. The Committee dreams of our church growing numerically, spiritually and missionally. It has the vision of utilizing our present building for its original intent. One of the members of the New Building Committee said it best a few weeks ago: "I think the time is right. It's like God is hitting us over the head by saying, you have low interest rates, you've got contractors bidding projects low so they can stay in business, you've got a willing base to build." I call this "holy dreaming." In the long and short of all of our deliberations, we must not get derailed by those who want to keep things as they are. In the long and short of all our deliberations, we must

ask ourselves the question: "What does God want? What does God envision our future to be like? What ministries can we perform with a completed building, that we can't do with an unfinished one I was speaking with Todd Ladd, the pastor at our sister church in Delphi. The Delphi UMC is in the midst of a \$3.6 million dollar church building. They are leaving their sanctuary that is downtown and building a new 24,000 square foot facility next to the High School and the new Indiana 25 by-pass. He told me this morning, that they decided to build at the height of the recession precisely for the reasons our New Building Committee has said now is the time to build: low interest rates, low contracting costs. He said that there were a few who were very reluctant to build. But, their committee said, "The Lord will provide. If God guides, God provides." That could be our mantra. We need to be Holy Dreamers who see the vision of what God can and will do through us in the near and far future."

Pastor Berger then passed out a short questionnaire asking those in attendance what their dreams were for FUMC in the next 5-15 years and what they were willing to do to make these dreams a reality.

Minutes: Minutes for the March meeting were approved by e-mail in March. That approval was re-affirmed without change at tonight's meeting. Motion to approve moved by John Norberg. Second by Neil McTavish.

New Building Study

An extensive discussion took place about next steps in light of consultant's overview of congregation's assessment of proposed building campaign.

Neil McTavish gave a three-minute overview of very detailed written suggestions submitted from Council on Ministries, including the Music and Missions/Social Concerns Committee.

To request a copy of the consultant's assessment and/or these reports, please email jnorberg@purdue.edu.

Neil made two main points:

- The New Building Committee should affirm any strategic ministry values that might have been developed prior to the development of this next phase.
- The New Building Committee should be asked to consider a smaller and revised project based on the identified ministry values and this preliminary report.

Much discussion centered on whether it would best to decide what we can afford first or decide the congregation's priorities first. Will people pledge without a plan of what is proposed? Other suggestions and observations included:

- Move forward with the main portions of the plan but be prepared to build in phases, building the shell of some components until funds become available.
- Estimate the cost for each piece of the proposed plan and alternates, tapping the guidance of local professionals. This general information would be help the congregation set priorities and also be useful if we phase-in the work.
- Work with the consultant, Dick Beall, who offered to continue to help us at no additional charge.
- Survey the congregation, with FUMC providing input on the survey design and questions to the consultant, possibly using on-line format provided by SurveyMonkey. Jeanne Norberg will send written suggestions to Dave Ridings.
- We keep to keep in mind that expanded facilities will increase costs and should plan for how we will fund that.
- We need to keep in mind other related costs, such as financing (building loan, construction loan).
- Let's move ahead based on what the consultant says we can expect to raise and see what comes in.

- The consultant gave us seven recommendations, and we should do those before we move ahead.

Motion: The Church Council ask the Finance Committee and the Building Finance Committee to decide, in consultation with our consultant Dick Beal, what we can afford to spend. Moved by Virgil St. John. Second by Jim Beaty. Vote by show of hands: 7-9. Motion **defeated**.

A proposed amendment to the above motion would have set a two-week deadline for a report. Moved by Virgil St. John. Second by Jim Beaty. Vote by show of hands: 6-8. Amendment **defeated**.

The building committee will meet Tuesday, May 24, to discuss the other recommendations and take next steps.

Lay Leadership report: Doug Morehouse

Work continues on plans for small groups. Launch expected in the fall.

Lay Leadership update: *Pastor Berger*

Nola Gentry is stepping aside as chair of the education committee but will stay on the committee. The group will need to meet to in the next month to identify a new chair.

Pastoral and staff reports:

Pastor Berger: Current and retired pastors will each teach adult classes during the summer. Vacations are coordinated so there will be a pastor in the pulpit every Sunday.

Trustees: *Stu Kline*

U.S. 231 is under construction. Easements are executed for water, sewer, electric. Work will result in improved service.

Costs for snow and ice removal was more than expected so the money left in the operating plan is "very low."

Staff Parish: No report

Finance: *Tim Delworth*

Revenues are up 13 percent over last year, which is good news.

FUMC will offer an online-giving option via PayPal. Watch for it on our Web site.

FUMC will shred documents in June. If anyone in the congregation has documents to be shredded, they may bring them in June 5 or 12. There will be no charge unless an individual has a large quantity.

If you have questions about finance, contact Anne Kolodny in the FUMC office.

Foundation: *Doug Morehouse*

Doug is now chair. As of 12/31, FUMC foundation assets totaled \$1.265 million. The market also has performed well since then.

Building Finance: *Pastor Berger*

Building debt reduced to \$165,000. This is money we "owe ourselves," not to a bank or mortgage lending company. In June 2007, debt was \$966,220. In 47 months we have paid down \$801,000. We also have \$650,000 in various accounts such as those for parsonage and Vision in Action. This \$650,000 does not include Village Nursery School or the Columbarium funds.

Council on Ministries

Village Nursery School: *Jan Beaty*
School's out!

Old Business

A new process for crafting 2012 operating planning, requested at the March Church Council meeting, was outlined by Finance Committee chair Tim Delworth. (The full plan is available under the heading "May 2011" at <http://www.fumcwl.org/ChurchCouncil>.)

The process includes the following:

- Finance will provide financial information to program areas and committees in June.
- All committees will turn in their proposed "wished for" operating plan by Labor Day.
- Commitment cards will be due the second Sunday in October.
- If large reductions are believed necessary in the operating plan, the Finance Committee will meet in joint session with the Church Council in late October to hear 10-minute presentations from program areas and committees.
- Final plan will be published in Prevue and Sunday bulletin before a final vote at the November Council meeting.

New Business

Motion: All committees and program areas should submit their reports to the church office by noon Friday before the Church Council meeting. These reports should be e-mailed by the end of the day Friday to all members of the Church Council. When members don't see the materials until they arrive for Church Council, they cannot adequately digest the information and ask questions during the meeting. Moved by Jeanne Norberg. Second by Judi Forsyth. Motion passed unanimously.

Questions

From Judi Forsyth: What is being done about the stones from the memorial garden at the FUMC Chauncey Street location? (They had been moved earlier to our present location, but placed close to our west property and easement lines. At the March meeting there had been discussion that they would need to be moved to make way for utility lines associated with the U.S. 231 construction. Several members hope to see the stones incorporated into a rock garden by the columbarium.)

Doug Morehouse responded saying he and Brian Titlow have been assured that it is safe to leave them there for now.

(From Judi Forsyth: After the meeting, Stu Kline surveyed the area and found that some of the stones were beyond the property line and others were very close to it. He said he would arrange to have them moved.)

CLOSING PRAYER: *Bill Fornes*

(This report and written reports of committees are available at www.fumcwl.org/ChurchCouncil)

Secretary: Jeanne Norberg