

# Council on Ministries Report

## *Prepared for Church Council Meeting of May 23, 2011*

Discussion at the COM meeting on May 16<sup>th</sup> focused entirely on our response to Dick Beal's interim requirements. We focused on helping the Building Committee satisfy the first two recommendations at the end of the report. These are:

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

The members of the COM were tasked with sending a copy of the consultants report to the members of their ministries and then gather ideas to meet the requirements. These ideas were then to be collected by me from the leaders of the specific ministries without filtering and alteration.. They are presented here in summary form to both the Church Council and the building committee. The complete responses are enclosed in the ministry reports attached. We had complete analysis and reporting from Missions and Social Concerns and the Music Ministry Council. Other points were added during the COM meeting itself by representatives of the Children's ministry and VNS.

### Points:

1. We could perhaps build a sanctuary with seating for 450 with the option of adding a balcony at a later date if required.
2. We do not need to *add* classroom space as we could repurpose existing rooms once an addition is build.
3. We should renovate the basement.
4. We must renovate the basement as we are out of classroom space for adult education in our current facility.
5. Eliminate the chapel.
6. Eliminate the bell tower but consider what might be designed in its place to create a focal point for the new sanctuary.
7. New office space may be necessary.
8. The music wing should not be reduced as the purpose of the new sanctuary is to enhance worship and worship opportunities including the music ministry. Space near the sanctuary seems essential. We could build a shell for the music wing to be finished as time talents and resources permit.
9. We could build a shell for the music wing and just complete the rehearsal space allowing for completion of the storage spaces.
10. Finish the basement and include restrooms and showers.
11. This may not be necessary once WIRED moves to the CLC – the current narthex will not be as much of a focal point (1 versus 2 services).

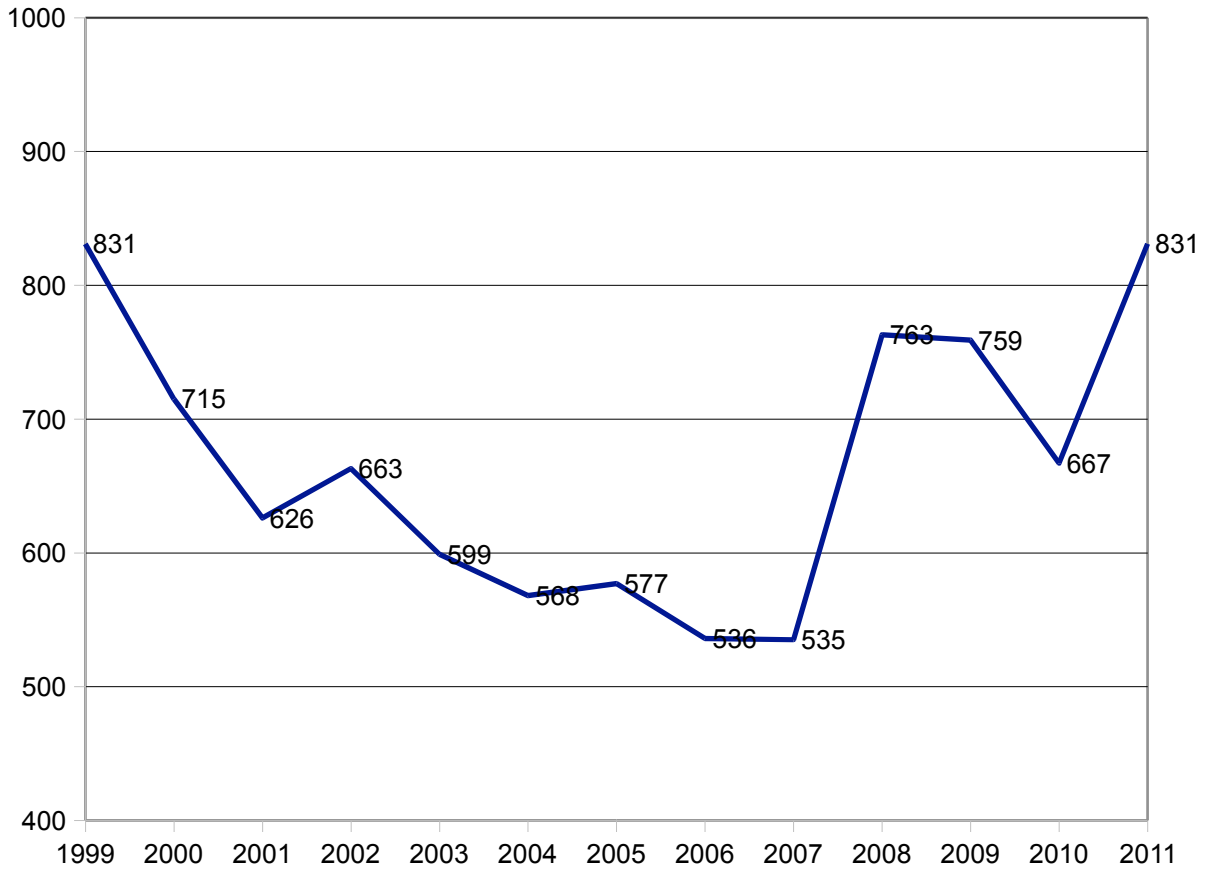
12. Several members are not enthusiastic about the incorporation of a cafe in the new narthex but think it might be something in the current narthex for WIRED.
13. The only people willing to help with coffee now are the Days. Why would we buy a more complicated setup without a guarantee that a ministry can coordinate and provide people to run it. Cappuccino machines are expensive and complicated. No plan – no buy. We can provide space and utilities but a ministry that wishes to run it should fund raise to purchase equipment and then be able to sell coffee to raise money for their ministry.
14. Why can't we break the new construction into two reasonably priced phases with the second phase scheduled to be complete in the fall of 2019 – the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our congregation.
15. Why can't we reduce the footprint of the sanctuary by raising and pushing the back third of the seating over the narthex. This would give us a balcony without a shadow, a place for AV, and an ability to close off the raised space for smaller groups such as the 830 service. It should also result in fairly substantial foundation expense reduction.
16. Make it possible to pledge sweat equity so that all can be part of the campaign.
17. Use the current chairs in the CLC in the new sanctuary.
18. WIRED will not need more space as WIRED services can be held in the CLC.
19. Not sure if it is reasonable or possible to eliminate the debt.
20. It is not possible to accomplish the expansion for no more than three million dollars.
21. Regular communication with the congregation from a variety of individuals is essential.
22. It seems as if presentations and messages have focused on the superficial (materials and beauty) versus the functional (how the space will allow us to worship, witness and serve.)
23. We need to highlight the positive aspects of the ability to provide more creativity in worship – visual as well as auditory (color, symbolism, drama, liturgical dance)
24. Each area needs to shave its wish list.
25. If we build we can use the CLC as the original multi-purpose room it was intended to be.
26. We have to assess the “health” of the stored pipes.
27. MMC needs to review the costs for pipe organ installation. Our costs that we have are from estimates from 200 and 2001.
28. We only need congregational seating for 450 in the sanctuary.
29. Dig a basement under a new sanctuary if the decision is made to build.
30. Renovate our current basement.
31. Consider large multi-purpose rooms that have large storage areas that could be changed to several meeting rooms with movable partitions like the Faith safari room.
32. Covered drop off essential.
33. Reveal the estimate for all costs including furniture and equipment so we can make a knowledgeable decision.
34. The church needs more transparent finances. We are told that the money is there – where? People will not give if they are unsure of financial management.
35. Several have expressed that their giving will be limited unless the project is tied to mission giving.
36. Cutting of the Missions budget for 2011 undermined the proposed building plan for many. If we can't afford Missions how can we afford an expansion.
37. We need disclosure of the entire budget including the foundation before we can make a decision regarding whether or not we can afford to build. It should be presented to the Church Council.

- 38. We must consider whether God is being served by a future building project.
- 39. A vote to build will not pass at this time.
- 40. We need to better establish what our values and priorities are as a church. Is building our next step to carrying out the will of God and the strategic plan of the church?
- 41. A Value Engineering meeting should be held in which all in the congregation are invited to suggest technical changes to the plan that would retain function yet save big money.

***Attendance***

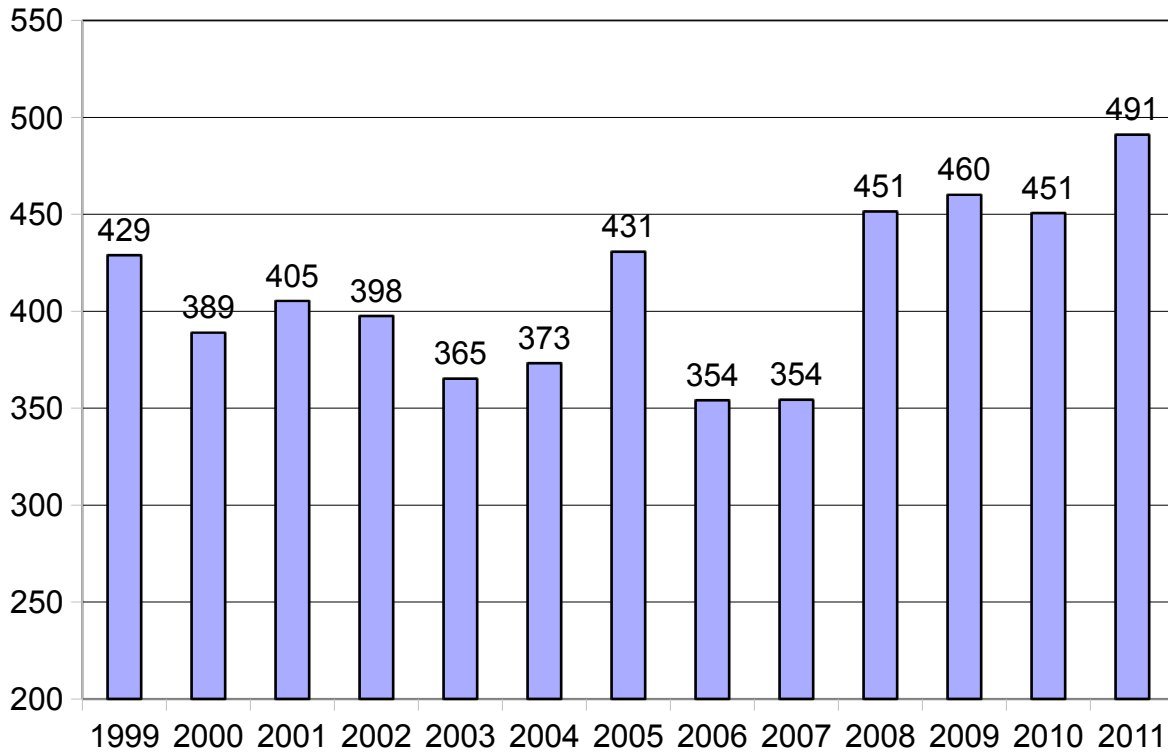
Easter attendance was very high this year at 831. This is as high as it has been since 1999.

**First UMC West Lafayette  
Easter Service Attendance**



March and April attendance has been significantly higher than at any time in the last 12 years. Even though Easter attendance was as high in 1999, the average attendance was far higher this year.

### First UMC West Lafayette Mar/Apr Average Attendance



Another positive is that I have noticed that for some of the recent Sundays, combined CLC and WIRED 11am service attendance has exceeded the capacity of the CLC.

In Christ,

Neil McTavish

#### ***Worship***

Joel Rasmus

Nothing to report.

## *Music*

Gail Polles

### MMC Response

#### Church Growth Services “Interview Summary – Conclusions and Recommendations”

#### Question #3

What is your personal opinion of this project...what should be done? (See page 4)

- A) Design a smaller sanctuary that seats no more than 450 people.
  - a. Response: a possibility. We might begin with a smaller sanctuary, with the option of adding the balcony at a later date when the space is required.
- B) Add classroom space for all ages.
  - a. No. Repurpose existing space, such as the music room. Install folding walls to allow for creative space use in the music room. Reassign existing classes that have reached the 80% rule to unused classroom space. Renovate the basement.
  - b. One committee member strongly believes that we are out of classroom space for adult education in our current facility, and options such as the basement and music room renovations are necessary for continued growth in this area. There is no need to add more space, but renovation is necessary.
- C) Eliminate the bell tower, chapel, and the space for new offices.
  - a. We concur with eliminating the bell tower, but what might be designed in its place to create a focal point for the new sanctuary? We concur with eliminating the chapel. New office space may be necessary.
- D) Reduce the size of the music wing
  - a. No. The purpose of the new sanctuary is to enhance worship and worship opportunities, and this would include music ministry. Space near the sanctuary seems essential.
    - i. Possibilities: build a music wing “shell” to be finished as time, talents, and resources permit (e.g., project for a Building and Construction Management class at Purdue, volunteers, ...)
    - ii. Build a shell and complete the rehearsal space, allowing for later completion of the storage spaces for instruments, music, robes, etc.
- E) Finish the basement and include restroom and showers.
  - a. Yes.
- F) Reconfigure or redesign the narthex to accommodate fellowship on Sunday mornings.
  - a. Perhaps this will not be necessary, assuming the new sanctuary is built and WIRED moves to the CLC. There will no longer be a conflict.
  - b. Several committee members are not invested in the incorporation of a fellowship kiosk (i.e., coffee, tea, etc) into the new sanctuary narthex. This might be something for in the narthex of the WIRED service though.
- G) Find more space for WIRED.
  - a. WIRED will have use of the CLC, once the sanctuary is built.
- H) Eliminate the debt.
  - a. Reasonable? Possible?
- I) Accomplish the above for no more than three million dollars.

a. Not possible

Further thoughts:

- Regular communication with the congregation from a variety of individuals is essential.
- It seems as if the presentations and messages have been focusing on superficial and material matters. Change the focus of the message - not on the structure (sanctuary) and its beauty, but on how this space will allow us to worship, witness, and serve.
- Highlight the positive aspects of the ability to provide more creativity in worship – particularly for those who respond to visual as well as auditory stimuli (i.e., color, symbolism, drama, liturgical dance...)
- Music Ministry has downsized its original dream to the basics. Each area also needs to “shave” its wish list.
- Building a sanctuary allows us to use the CLC as originally planned for recreational purposes during the week and gives us great outreach opportunities.
- Bring in Goulding and Wood consultant to access the “health” of our stored pipes. This would be helpful in our decision-making process about installation of our pipe organ.
- MMC will review the following materials
  - Estimated costs – moving and refurbishing the pipe organ prepared by Marc Loudon (2000)
  - Marc Loudon’s response to questions posed by Eric Barker re: options to consider – pipe organ versus electron organ (2000)
  - Pipe Organ Moving/Refurbishing Priority List prepared by Dana Paterson and Marc Loudon (2001)
  - Notes from organ meeting that included Marc Loudon and Sallie Crawford (November 2009)

Gail Polles  
Chair, Music Ministry  
May 11, 2011

## ***Education***

Nola Gentry

Adult LIFT (Sunday School) offering this summer will be structured for people to be able to be gone on vacation and people will not be lost on content. One exciting offering is the "preacher as teacher" class, with the ordained clergy of this congregation presenting classes on different subjects.

The Education Committee also started to discuss with the pastors about offering a training session in late August for Sunday school teachers one evening. The sessions would be lead in the Children's, youth, and adult areas.

Shari will present Children's report and Glen youth.

The two Sunday's that Children's Sunday school will not be held this summer will be optional and a class decision for the adult classes.

Pray for Nola.

## ***Children's Education***

Shari Bittles  
See separate report.

## ***Missions and Social Concerns***

Mary Welch

### Missions/Social Concerns

#### **Review of Interview Summary Conclusions and Recommendations From Church Growth Services (March 24, 2011) Submitted for discussion at Commission on Ministries (May 16, 2011)**

The Consultant interviewed the largest potential donors:

- was that a good cross section of members surveyed
- who are the others that we will count on to fill the gap?
- Given the concern and uncertainty of those surveyed, even the largest donors had doubts.

#### **Large themes of concern—**

**Strategic plan.** The Church Council asked last fall for a strategic plan to be developed. The result was a one evening event for leaders to cycle through the various groups to offer evaluation and suggestions for each group. Comments were given to each group about that group, but a comprehensive report has never been compiled for Church Council's review. Even if this were to be available, this is not considered a strategic plan. It seems that this was done so that we could move along to a proposal to build.

- J) **Recommendation:** Hire a professional strategic plan consultant (or identify someone in the local community who has strategic planning experience who will volunteer) to help us develop a plan that reflects our values and principles.

**Size—**Why are we planning to double size or worship space we have now? There was concern that our attendance on the highest attended Sundays wouldn't begin to fill a doubled space.

- **Recommendation:** Consider 1.5 times the seating.

#### **Space**

##### **Basement—**

Basement is the cheapest way to get classroom space that we need

- **Recommendation:** dig a basement under this site (if the decision is made to build)
- **Recommendation:** To reduce costs further, bring the basement we currently have up to code and build class/meeting space in the present basement BEFORE we consider any further construction.
- **Suggestion:** Consider large multipurpose rooms that have large storage areas that could be changed to several meeting rooms with movable partitions.

## Services—

A covered drop-off space is absolutely essential somewhere. (This can be done aesthetically) Care about services and convenience for members—not JUST street appeal.

**Recommendation:** A covered drop off space is essential in the redesign.

## Finances

People like to give to bricks and mortar—especially men Moreover, not all costs were revealed in proposal(i.e.organ installation, furnishings). The plan is not transparent or complete at this time.

- Members of First Church are not privy to the real financial status of the church. Even Church Council does not get full disclosure of church's finances—we are told money is there, but where and how do we get it? It is people's choice to give to what no matter what their financial status. People will not feel comfortable giving to First Church if they feel that their money is not being managed well.
- The report included several individuals who indicated that their giving would be limited unless it is tied to mission giving.
- By cutting the Missions budget in the proposed 2011 budget for Church Council to consider, the church administration created the appearance that First Church is no longer what a church should be about. The presentation of the budget dramatically undermined the proposed building plan for many in the church.
- A one-page review of finances at most s Church Council meetings is not enough information for educated decision making, particularly when a multimillion dollar project is proposed.
- **Recommendation:** The entire budget (including the Foundation) needs to be fully disclosed to the entire church.
  - Church leadership is asking for accountability **because we CARE** about future of this church, not because we are being critical.
  - Full disclosure of Finances—Church Council commissioned that all finances be consolidated (operating and foundation/investment information) so the leadership can see the entire picture of finances. We have been told this has been done. However, a full disclosure of all finances has never been presented to Church Council. Financial information should not be privy only to members of finance.

### **Recommendation: Hire a financial consultant**

They are available for non-profit organizations through State of Indiana

## Other

- **Recommendation:** There should be a church wide period of discernment regardint the will of God in this building project. This does not include finances, but whether God is being served by a future building project.
- **Recommendation:** “Elephant in the Room” Many people feel that a vote to build would not pass at this time, but most are afraid to speak the truth. As one of our members said, “Let's speak the truth with love.” Create a method to get honest feedback from the congregation.

- **Recommendation: Survey**—We have come together in small focus groups. However, we should solicit the confidential and honest opinions and assessments of all members of the congregation. What are our values and priorities? Is building a new sanctuary the next step to carrying out the will of God and the strategic plan of the church?

The people have spoken in this report that we are not ready—we don't have the support so how can we expect to get the financial commitments?

Submitted on behalf of Missions and Social Concerns  
for Commission on Ministries (May 16, 2011)

by  
Mary Welch, Chair of Missions

***United Methodist Women***

Eileen Chamness

*Filed separately.*

*Other ministries have nothing to report or are reported separately.*