

Final Report
First United Methodist Church, West Lafayette, IN
Fruitful Congregations Journey
WIRED Capacity Team

Charge: *To develop a plan to expand the capacity of the WIRED service.*

Team Members: Eric Barker, Taylor Owings, Steven Murray, Suzie Kline, Tim Delworth, Katie Givan, Paige Clinkenbeard

Recommendation #1: Maximize setup in the Activity Center every Sunday.

Scriptural basis: The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.' "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' - Matthew 25:20-21 (NIV)

Background information: Jesus teaches us to be good stewards of our resources. We have typically been setting up ~120 chairs with additional chairs available to be set up as the Activity Center fills up. We have ~160 chairs at our disposal, and can most likely set up 150 chairs each week. This arrangement will maximize our capacity in the Activity Center immediately.

Implication or challenges:

- We need to keep track of chairs, as many find their way to other parts of the building. It needs to be stressed to the staff that these chairs should not leave the Activity Center.
- As we add chairs, we need to be cognizant of fire code issues.
- We need to be sure that the sound in the Activity Center covers all seating area. The sound dispersion will be reviewed with the AV tech crew.
- This arrangement for setup needs to be communicated clearly to the staff members that are responsible for setup.

Links to other FCJ teams: None

Recommendation #2: *Beginning in Fall 2015, start a 2nd WIRED service in the Activity Center at 9:30am*

Scriptural basis: For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. – Romans 12:4-5 (NRSV)

Background information: The team recognizes that many people are concerned about furthering dividing the church into multiple worship services. Growth in worship attendance in WIRED has led to the need for increased capacity, so that greater outreach to our community can be accommodated. The team affirms the Biblical principle described in the above scripture, as well as 1st Corinthians 12:12, “The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.”

The 9:30am timeslot was selected because:

- It allows for a single tech team and band on Sunday mornings. A service on Saturday evening, for example, would require a separate tech team and band, which is less feasible based on personnel at this time.
- While this timeslot would overlap with the 9:45am Sunday School hour, we believe that many families and community members may choose this option. The intent is to have children in worship for the first 15 minutes (9:30-9:45), and then dismiss them to Sunday School at 9:45. This will parallel with the 11:00 service, where children attend service for the first 15 minutes (11:00-11:15), and are then dismissed to Worship Express.
- For those individuals desiring to attend worship and Sunday School, this will still be an option, as the 11:00 service will still be available.
- Existing nursery childcare and Sunday School programming can meet the needs of families.
- The Activity Center would be unavailable during the 9:45 hour as a venue for classes. There is occasionally one class that meets in the AC during the Sunday School hour. That class would need to meet elsewhere.
- The Lead Pastor would be more available to be at the 9:30 service, and could be recorded in WIRED at 9:30 on some Sundays to be re-played at the 11am WIRED service that same day. Currently, the Lead Pastor is recorded at the 8:30 Traditional service. This would provide more continuity and personalization for the WIRED congregation.
- It is important to remain focused on the intent to grow capacity and provide new opportunities for growth, thus, reaching new people and adding new people to

our church. It is not envisioned that adding this service would simply allow for redistribution of existing attendees.

Implication or challenges:

- Times other than Sunday morning have major implications for childcare and child, youth, and adult Sunday School.
- 8:30am is likely too early for our demographic (current generations, young families, our young adults), and we do not anticipate that to be an ideal time slot to reach out to new members.
- Because this service would overlap with the 9:45am adult Sunday School hour, there will be a strong need for alternatives to the Sunday School hour for adult spiritual growth. This is critical for spiritual formation and the facilitation of community building. This needs to be addressed by the other FCJ team dealing with spiritual formation.
- If this new service reaches capacity as quickly as the original WIRED service, it may be necessary to consider other options depending on the timeline to build a sanctuary (see below). These options could include: Remodeling or expanding the Activity Center to accommodate more seating OR Adding a 3rd service in the Activity Center (for example, Saturday evening).

Links to other FCJ teams:

- Guest Integration team
 - Communications team
 - New Leaders and Servants team
 - Staff Mission and Vision
 - Spiritual Development team
 - Local Demographics team
-

Recommendation #3: *By Fall 2015, the New Sanctuary Committee should be re-activated.*

Scriptural basis: Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. – Acts 2:46-47 (NRSV)

Background information: The team anticipates continued growth in WIRED, with the ultimate need to relocate WIRED into a remodeled Christian Life Center. In March

2012, the Church Council voted to initiate a one year strategic pause from further planning for a permanent sanctuary. As it has now been 3 years since that action, the team recommends that the church re-assess the need, vision, and feasibility for a new sanctuary with a plan to move forward within 36 months.

Implication or challenges:

- Is this timeline realistic?
- The cost of the new sanctuary build should include a needed remodel of the CLC to fit WIRED-style of worship. The remodel would ideally include a permanent stage, redoing the front to accommodate contemporary fixtures, lights, screens. Examples of images for permanent staging can be provided.

Links to other FCJ teams:

- Values and Vision team
- Local Demographics team
- New Leaders and Servants team
- International Community team

Recommendation #4: *Within the next 24 months working in conjunction with the District Superintendent, partner with another local UMC congregation to assist them in starting a WIRED service at their church.*

Scriptural basis: During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them. – Acts 16:9-10 (NRSV)

Background information: Central to our mission of creating disciples of Jesus is our need to reach out and facilitate growth in the broader church community. There are many local UMC congregations that are struggling as well as areas of greater Lafayette that are not served by a contemporary worship environment in a UMC congregation. In his recent message to our congregation, Steve Clouse from the INUMC Conference Church Development office charged us to “Go!” Our team believes that the successful experiences and operational knowledge that we have gained over the past 4 years in WIRED would be of great benefit to another congregation. Our leadership could mentor another local congregation furthering our mission of making disciples and transforming the world.

Implication or challenges:

- We should work with the District Superintendent and our Lead Pastor to identify potential partner churches. The churches should be carefully vetted to ensure that they are suitable and amenable for a WIRED-style service.
- We must overcome the inward focus of many within our own congregation. The FCJ WIRED Capacity Team is cognizant of the concerns that WIRED is “ours” and “part of our distinctiveness” or the concern that this would cause us to “lose members to other churches.” Such insular thinking is counter to our core value of being mission-minded.
- Who would fund this? It is envisioned that as a partnership AND a mission that there would be some shared expenses by FUMC and the partner church to start the service.
- There are many implications for this: need for band, suitable environment for contemporary worship, tech teams. Ideally, these needs would be met by new people at the partner church.
- This service may or may not necessarily be “branded” as WIRED, but could take on a distinct name suitable for the partner congregation.

Links to other FCJ teams:

- Values and Vision team
- Local Demographics team
- New Leaders and Servants team
- International Community team
- Staff Mission and Vision team

Recommendation #5: *Within the next 12 months, hire a dedicated staff member (~10-15 hours/week) to assist with coordination of WIRED*

Scriptural basis: We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness. – Romans 12:6-8

Background information: As WIRED continues to grow, leadership and organization is necessary to maintain forward momentum. WIRED currently represents ~25% of the congregation and that is projected to grow as capacity is enhanced. In addition, there are no paid staff members assigned to WIRED, thus a paid staff person would add stability to this ministry. As the recommendations above are implemented especially #2

and #4, the need for paid staff support will be essential. This person would ideally have gifts that include: strong organization and planning, excellent oral and written communication skills, knowledge of contemporary worship, passion for reaching the unchurched, and sufficient spiritual and personal maturity that facilitates the coordination of the WIRED team. It is not necessarily envisioned that this person would be an ordained UMC clergy, though if a suitable individual could be identified, that could be an added benefit.

Implication or challenges:

- Current budget implications could make this difficult.
- It is essential that a person with the right skill set be identified. The team is apprehensive about the appropriateness of an assigned Associate Pastor for this role as this person may lack the needed skills and could be re-assigned by the Bishop leading to a lack of stable leadership for WIRED.
- This person could serve a vital role in implementing recommendation #4; serving as a mentor for the partner church.

Links to other FCJ teams:

- Values and Vision team
- New Leaders and Servants team
- Staff Mission and Vision team

MOTIONS FOR CHURCH COUNCIL

- 1. Move for adoption of recommendations #1, #3, and #4.*
- 2. Move for adoption of recommendation #2 with the understanding that at least one adult Sunday School class will be offered in the 11am hour.*
- 3. Move for endorsement of recommendation #5 and it be referred to SPRC and the Staff Mission and Vision team for consideration and implementation.*