

Questions and Answers

FUMC All Church Meeting on 4/7/2024

11:15-12:15pm

What is Church Center versus Planning Center? (Kim Garver, Leadership Council Co-Chair and Team Lead for Communications and Marketing)

Planning Center is the administrative portion of this electronic platform—this is primarily for the staff and leaders and is used behind the scenes. Church Center is for people within the system—once you fill out a visitor card you will be entered into Church Center. Church Center has a mobile app that will allow our congregants to easily interact with others, obtain group information, navigate the website on their phone more easily, and sign up for specific events more easily. We will be expanding the use of Church Center in the coming year and tracking the number of active members using the mobile application. The use of Church Center is not mandatory—you will still be able to get all the information you need through our church website, emails, worship bulletins and by calling the church. Our website is primarily designed to be used “externally” for those who are not within our database yet. The website also contains valuable information for all congregants looking for more details.

What are the megachurches doing to attract people? (Nancy Lynn, Senior Pastor)

The Church of the Resurrection is the largest Methodist church in Kansas and is not an evangelical church. Many of our staff have visited this church as part of the leadership courses they sponsor in October. We have to pay close attention to our own culture and how it compares to other church cultures. We have to decide carefully what works for our church and what doesn't. One thing that megachurches do very well is encouraging their members to invite others to the church. Nancy will be preaching on the “E” word (evangelism) on Sunday, 4/14 which you can view on our FUMC-A2 youtube channel or watch under the Sermons tab on the Church Center home page.

Explain the similarities and differences between the proposed Green Wood and Contemporary worship that is being planned. (Nancy Lynn, Senior Pastor)

The Green Wood Task Force and the Green Wood congregation are primarily interested in keeping the worship service and music that they currently have similar when they move the service to FUMC-A2 downtown. This worship style has been used since its beginning in 1994, and is more “eclectic” in its style. The music has contained elements of jazz, folk, acoustic and

gospel. In the past there has been more engagement by the congregation with drama, storytelling and music which they hope to expand upon in the near future.

There has been a desire to begin a more contemporary worship service in the downtown space for a long time with contemporary Christian music. The idea is to be more appealing to a younger crowd. It is possible that there may be some blending of these services in the future. We will continue our traditional service with choir and organ but adding other options will meet the interests of people with other worship preferences.

What do you believe will be the target audiences for the traditional, Green Wood and the newly planned Contemporary service? (Nancy Lynn, Senior Pastor)

The traditional service we have right now is a great service and is primarily for people who have grown up with a traditional worship service, both within and outside the Methodist Church. We do have a lot of people, not just young people, who are interested in a worship service with contemporary Christian music, sermons that are more “conversational”, and worship that is creative and innovative. Green Wood will still be reshaping its identity as it moves—with the goal of maintaining what they have right now in an intimate space.

Update as of 4/30/2024: As the Green Wood Task Force continues their work, they have identified informality, flexibility, creativity, and innovation as important characteristics of that worship service. Meanwhile, those working on a new service will be intentionally reaching out to people who have been hurt by the church.

What authority does the United Methodist Church have over FUMC-A2 over legal problems? (Jenaba Waggy, Associate Pastor)

Jenaba was acknowledged as being an expert on the Book of Discipline and the organizational structure of the Methodist Church. It depends on the nature of the type of legal problem—when it comes to the local church, we have nearly complete autonomy in how we handle our own internal situation such as staffing and intra-church conversations. When it comes to moving property or formal cases being brought against a clergy or congregant that is when our Michigan conference would get involved. We hold all property in trust for our UMC—there are committees that oversee property and ensure that we are good stewards of our property.

The General Conference of the UMC is when the global denomination talks to itself. About 850 delegates from around the world will be gathering in North Carolina at the end of April. We do not have any delegates from our church. This will be a two-week conference that will review 1009 pieces of legislation. We will be talking about this as the conference progresses.

The Annual Conference is for the State of Michigan and will take place at the end of May extending into early June, 2024. This is a chance for the Methodists of our state within our 7 regions to talk about how we “do church” within the state of Michigan.

Our local Church Conference will occur in the fall of every year. The date is set by our District Superintendent and we won't know for a while exactly when this will be occurring. In general, this takes place between August and November of 2024. This covers items such as clergy salaries, how many delegates we send to Annual Conference, and how we are functioning as a Methodist Church within the state of Michigan.

How will the redevelopment of Wesley be paid for? (Tim Kobler, Wesley Chaplain)

There are multiple ways in which this project may be paid for. One way is through a capital campaign—reaching out to our church and former alumni to raise money. Because of the nature of this project we may be eligible for some grant money for new worship space and affordable housing. We hope to apply for grant money for these two purposes to reduce the amount of money we need to raise from friends and alumni.

Building maintenance issues are not exciting—windows, waterproofing, HVAC—how can we make them seem more appealing? (Anne Cox, Chair of Trustees)

Anne Cox would like to offer a behind the scenes tour to inform people about the trustees projects. If everything is going well, trustees do not hear about it. For example, we have beautiful new countertops in the bathroom. We have a new boiler and we are all glad to have heat in the building. The boiler room is in a storage room across from the kitchen and it is always nice and warm. We need to communicate with a better narrative to the church in regards to what is happening. The number of details that the trustees are in charge of with maintaining two churches and two parsonages is quite impressive but most of the work goes unseen.

Is there a plan to deliver a script or wording as to why people should re-engage with the life and work of our church? (Kim Garver, Leadership Council Co-Chair and Team Lead for Marketing and Communications)

Absolutely—the communications team is working on creating a communications strategy to reach the 2-300 people on our inactive list in conjunction with our clergy. We are also revisiting the workflows that we have in place for new visitors to our church. This work will be taking place in the spring and fall of 2024.

You have an outline for a one-year plan for 2024—how do you feel you are doing on the strategic priorities so far? (Kim Garver, Leadership Council Co-Chair)

We are doing great—we have broken down our strategic priorities into six teams and have both quarterly and monthly checklists. At each monthly leadership meeting we are reviewing our tasks lists for each of the six areas in order to hold each other accountable for our plans and progress. We do expect there will be some changes along the way as we continue our work.

How many strategic partners will we need to plan for this redevelopment project of both Wesley and the downtown church? (John Kaczor, Lay Leader and Team Lead for Redevelopment of Downtown)

At this point we are just beginning the process of visioning for the redevelopment of the downtown church. We are looking to engage the help of a professional consultant, similar to what Wesley did to develop their broad vision for what they want to build. We hope to engage the congregation in our visioning process so that ideally this would be complete by the end of the 2024 calendar year. We will have some preliminary discussions with a few developers this year, with more robust discussions in 2025.

Should we anticipate a fundraiser in our future to ensure all of this redevelopment? (John Kaczor, Lay Leader and Team Lead for Redevelopment of Downtown)

Since we are in the beginning stages of visioning for the redevelopment of both Wesley and the downtown church, we are unsure of how fundraising will be handled. It will likely be some combination of a capital campaign, grant funding, and partnering to some extent with external developers and financing companies. The entire process is anticipated to last the next 2-3 years, with an optimistic breaking ground goal of 2027.

Why does the Wesley Foundation need both the current space and a new building? Why not deed the current Wesley space to FUMC? (Tim Kobler, Wesley Chaplain)

There is no current plan for how to manage the current Wesley Foundation space within the church. These discussions with the downtown church will need to be carefully considered during this process. Selling the current Wesley space to the downtown church will be one of many options to be explored.

How will the traditional, family, Green Wood and Contemporary services be woven into a cohesive community? (Nancy Lynn, Senior Pastor)

The traditional service will continue to exist as it is an important part of our worship tradition. The Green Wood service will be designed in a space in the downtown church with the goal of maintaining the current worship service, while trying to incorporate more engaging elements from the past. The family service will be piloted in the summer of 2024 to consider how elements of this service may be appealing to families with young children. This experimental service will also serve to support the final thesis project for my Doctor Of Ministry degree, to be completed by January of 2025. The contemporary service will be primarily oriented toward those who wish for more contemporary music and a worship style that is more conversational, engaging and experimental. We expect these services to evolve as we plan and implement them and it will be important that all will feel welcome and included in our church. Tracking attendance numbers and obtaining feedback from the congregation will be critical to understand and innovate as we proceed. I think communication and offering all-church learning, fellowship, and service opportunities will be key to a cohesive community.

Can we host a “behind the scenes” tour of the church that would include additional history and viewing of spaces that are not typically shared on the visitor tour? Can a trustee be included? (Anne Cox, Chair of Trustees)

Yes, this is a great idea. It is important that congregants better understand the more invisible parts of our building and the resources it takes to maintain an older historical building. We will put this on the trustees agenda to plan for such a tour and advertise this in the worship bulletin, similar to what we do for the visitor tour.

Please do not forget about the Memorial Garden. (John Kazor, Lay Leader and Team Lead for Redevelopment of Downtown)

The Memorial Garden is a very important part of the history and legacy of our church. Maintaining the Memorial Garden will be an important topic to address when any redevelopment of the downtown church is considered.