

Elkton UMC Study Committee
For Church Building Projects
August 23, 2014

OVERVIEW:

Purpose of Study Committee – Find out how to make our church building a welcoming, safe, accessible and comfortable place for all gathering here in groups and as individuals.

A. Disciplinary Requirements for Church Building Projects include:

1. Analyze the needs of the church and community
2. Project the potential membership with average attendance
3. Write up the church's program of ministry
4. Develop an accessibility plan

B. When the Study Committee creates a Report, then this Report will be the the basis for a called meeting of the charge conference, presided over by the District Superintendent. Our Study Committee intends to seek input from the Congregation once we have a draft report. We will then finalize the report, and present at our annual charge conference on October 26, 2014.

For informational purposes, but not as part of this Study Committee's effort, the next steps include:

C. If the charge conference approves the need for a building project; at that time they will nominate a Building Committee which will use the Study Committee findings as a basis to begin their work. Next, the Congregation will vote to approve or disapprove this action, and if approved, the Building Committee moves forward.

*DETAILS FOR THE DISCIPLINARY REQUIREMENTS
FOR BUILDING PROJECTS:*

A. Analyze the needs of the church and community

Needs of the Church:

1. We need a more welcoming, safe and defined entrance. Since the side entrance is closest to the parking lot, we need to make that entry more -
 - Visible
 - Pleasant /Welcoming
 - Safe (check railings, and carpeted steps for safety issues; do they meet safety codes?)The doorway needs to look more like an entrance; the door needs to be improved; we need signage to guide newcomers into the building (e.g. "Enter Here", or "Sanctuary Inside" or even arrows pointing the way.

2. We need handicapped accessible bathroom(s). The current main level bathroom is beyond 3 doorways to reach it and is not large enough for a wheelchair to enter; both of these are barriers to handicapped members/visitors. The toilet is very low, and hand rails are inadequate. Bathrooms in the basement are larger, but there is a step up into each, again making handicap access blocked, besides which there is no way for a truly handicapped person to even get to our basement.

3. We need a handicapped accessible Fellowship Hall. There is no way for a truly handicapped person (certainly not via wheelchair) to get to our basement when we have Harvest Dinners, pancake breakfasts, funeral receptions, Maundy Thursday Silent Suppers, etc. We currently have a number of people who are left out of the group gathering and food is hand carried to the main level. Carrying the food up steep stairs is also hazardous. With a typically small number eating upstairs, these folks are definitely not “part of the group” and cannot choose their own food when there is a buffet. A handicapped person is isolated enough without our environment making it worse.

Handicap accessibility might be accomplished by means of an elevator to the lower (and upper floors) or it might be a “bump out” expansion to the back and side of the current main floor to create a new Fellowship Hall. More space is not as much of an issue as better access and a more functional layout.

The Fellowship Hall has also experienced numerous floods from leaking bathrooms and exterior walls. This problem has produced a horrible, septic-like smell that is at least unwelcoming, if not a health risk.

4. We need an improved and safer space for our nursery. The space we have now is older, poorly equipped, has too many doorways, and is not safe for small children or infants. The current space could become part of a choir practice area – it does have a piano – or an adult Sunday school room. We have a number of infants and smaller children in the congregation, so this need has more urgency than before we began the Contemporary Service (which has attracted younger families with children.)

5. We need a more accessible and larger choir practice room. The current space is cramped, and not handicapped accessible (we have older members who have difficulty getting upstairs – some members have quit who cannot climb the stairs.)

6. We need a larger, safer, more modern kitchen. We provide snacks weekly to the children’s tutoring program (Wednesday Walkers) and meals for multiple church functions (Maundy Thursday, funeral receptions, pot luck dinners, pancake breakfasts, and the like). The current kitchen is poorly arranged with crowded cabinets, a steam cabinet, sinks, and work tables. Several updates have been done over the years, but no significant improvement has been done in the last 10 due to anticipation of a possible building expansion with a new kitchen. Safety issues are the peeling walls (possibly asbestos), the need for a sump pump due to multiple water issues, slippery floors, an ensuing horrible smell perhaps due to the recent water issues, and poor lighting.

7. We need better/different space for the Adult Sunday School that meets on the main floor. The class meets in a small area that serves many uses for many groups at the same time. The

children come through on their way to and from the Nursery, the choir comes in to assemble before church service and to get to the area where their choir robes are hung, and individuals choosing to use the bathroom on the main floor walk through this area. Whenever there is a reception, this class is cancelled since it also serves as the reception space.

Needs of the Community:

1. The Boy Scout troop needs improved storage for equipment and materials and a safer environment to gather. They meet during the school year in our Fellowship Hall. They have a variety of equipment and materials that are stored in an overflowing closet and a file cabinet in the Ladies bathroom. They also store camping equipment on wooden shelving in the dirt covered furnace room. We need to have better storage space/closets for their materials, both for safety of items, and for a cleaner appearance. The scouts also have one or two overnight events in the Fellowship Hall, as well as their meetings, award ceremonies, etc. The kitchen, floor, bathrooms, and stench are not conducive or welcoming to the scouts or their families for these events.

2. The Wednesday Walkers need better storage space and a safer environment to gather. Students come from the adjacent elementary school for this after school tutoring program supported by volunteers. The tutoring occurs in the Fellowship Hall, at tables in the main room. The kitchen is used to prepare snacks for the children. We have a variety of books, workbooks, and snacks that are stored. When there are meals served for the congregation, these materials are sometimes covered by cloths, but the materials are threatened to be lost or damaged. Having closed, secure storage would be an improvement.

3. The Elkton Lions meet in the Assembly Room twice each month and need storage for their supplies. They prepare/serve meals, and have dishes and kitchen equipment that is intermingled with church kitchen supplies. It would be convenient if there were separate storage areas for each of these activities and groups. This group also has to contend with a very antiquated kitchen design and appliances.

4. Numerous gatherings for planned events and our space is not accessible for everyone. We schedule multiple events in the Fellowship Hall with the hopes of including community members. Such events include, but are not limited to Chili Cook-off, Game Night, Harvest Fellowship dinner, and plans for a coffee house with the Praise Band. The setting is currently not attractive or welcoming with its dank, dark atmosphere.

5. Less Frequent Activities for the Community need a safer and more modern space with handicapped accessibility. We have a variety of activities that include: Vacation Bible School, an Ice Cream Social, a community yard sale, and storage of bottled water for the weekly Living Waters Ministry.

B. Project the potential membership with average attendance

Town of Elkton Growth projections are zero for future growth. While the Town has not grown much in recent years, the Contemporary Service that we began in 2010 has actually increased our

average Sunday attendance from 67 per week to 98+ per week. We do not anticipate this much growth in the next 5 years, but we do anticipate a 5-7% increase.

C. Write up the church's program of ministry. From our Annual Retreat, our program of ministry includes the following:

1. Disciples Worship. In 2013, we continued to offer two different but equally excellent styles of worship. We also offered special worship services on Christmas Eve and during Holy Week and Easter. In 2014, we'd like to offer youth bells at 8:35 worship as well as 11 am. We would also like to display a church events calendar.

2. Disciples Make New Disciples (Evangelism/Invitational Ministries). In 2013, we ran regular ads in "The Villager" newspaper, publicized worship and church events in the other local newspapers, updated our website, and maintained two Facebook pages. We also welcomed the community on Halloween with "Trunk or Treat" and a maze, distributed flyers inviting people to Christmas Eve Worship, and worked to develop materials for worship "newcomer's packet." In 2014, we'd like to use across-the-street banners for all special events, work closer with the Boy Scout troop, make an effort to include in verbal and written announcements to "invite your friends" and also, plan more fun events as easy entries for inviting friends.

3. Disciples Grow In Their Faith. In 2013, we offered four Sunday school classes (2 adult, children & youth); offered a women's "book club" study and support group; and offered a Camp Heifer themed VBS for a week. We also encouraged and got more participation from children and youth in Camp Overlook, encouraged greater participation in District Leadership Training, and had participation in the Women of Faith Conference in DC. In 2014, we'd like to offer a Lenten class; have an ongoing prayer group, have more females from our congregation attend the Women of Faith Conference, and encourage participation in District Prayer events.

4. Disciples Grow In Their Faith Through Fellowship With And Belonging To Each Other. In 2013, we held a Harvest Fellowship Dinner; had an ice cream social; had a chili cook off and game night; continued the Joy Club visitation ministry (monthly visits to shut ins); and sponsored meals for family and friends following a funeral. In 2014, we'd like to have more family activities including: wiffle ball, a movie night, a Gong show, and perhaps Bingo. We feel that improving access to a handicapped bathroom is a priority as well as a more welcoming Fellowship Hall to host these events.

5. Disciples Engage In Mission Outreach. In 2013, we offered bottles of water to Elkton Elementary School parents on Mondays (Living Waters); tutored at risk 1st and 2nd graders on Wednesday after school (Wednesday Walkers); recruited a Rebuilding Together team to build a handicapped ramp for a local resident; raised money for Friends for Fuel, and the "Souper Bowl of Caring" headed by our Youth. We also collected food for EAUS Food Pantry on an ongoing basis; raised \$2,000 and sent a joint Youth/Adult team to Project Crossroads (building repairs to needy families in southwest Virginia); and we donated a van and Christmas gifts to a needy family ("Angel Wheels"). In 2014, we'd like to continue the

above mission programs from 2013 plus raise money for Camp Overlook scholarships, increase the amount we give to Heifer International; and meet our connectional giving obligations at 100%. We also want to celebrate our successes.

D. Develop an accessibility plan. We need to evaluate existing handicap access to see what does and does not meet current ADA Standards, including the following:

1. Entry Ramp Railings
2. Side Entrance Railings and Stairs
3. Existing bathrooms (main floor, and basement)
4. Fellowship Hall – we have no access for wheelchairs at this time.
 - a) Stair railings need to be evaluated
 - b) Determine the possibility of stair lifts
 - c) Determine placement for a potential elevator
5. Upstairs Choir Room and Sunday School rooms - no access for wheelchairs
 - a) Stair railings need to be evaluated
 - b) Determine the possibility of stair lifts
 - c) Determine placement for a potential elevator.
6. Kitchen is not accessible to anyone handicapped
7. Evaluate Access for the following:
 - a) normal access from the parking lots to the Sanctuary
 - b) normal access to and from the Sunday School rooms
 - c) normal access to the downstairs bathrooms
 - d) normal access to the Fellowship Hall /Kitchen/Furnace Room
 - e) need for signage for newcomers to find their way

JMU may have students who could help with this analysis.