

Study Committee Report

Discipline ¶2544 c

1 Analysis of needs of the church and community

Church

The warm reception which guests receive at Centennial has a tradition of transforming visitors into members. A monthly shared Sunday meal is a tradition which stretches back over 80 years. Fellowship time is what gives Centennial its friendly atmosphere, building and maintaining close relationships with members. A study of our attendance over recent years indicates a slight decrease. After analyzing this problem we have determined that our facilities are inadequate to provide a welcoming atmosphere to new visitors. While we have received a few new members over recent years, we feel that we could improve on these numbers with a better and expanded facility.

Sanctuary: It is quite possible to increase the size of our sanctuary by 25% to 40% within the existing walls. However, this increase in size would be of no benefit if the rest of our facilities cannot accommodate an increased attendance.

Fellowship Hall: Because current worship attendance often exceeds the capacity of the fellowship hall, not all people in attendance at Sunday Service are able to stay for fellowship time. People do not feel comfortable in a crowded space, and an overcrowded fellowship hall hinders hospitality to visitors. This creates an unwelcome atmosphere to visitors attending our service for the first time. (We only get one chance to make a good first impression)

Parking Lot: On normal church Sundays the parking lot is often at or near capacity. On occasions when there are special events (funerals, weddings, Christmas play, Annual Soup Supper and Bazaar, etc.) our lot is not large enough to accommodate the number of cars, often leaving to visitors to park on the street or on private property adjacent to the church. These special events draw visitors that normally do not attend church and if these visitors find that parking is inadequate, they are not likely to return for Sunday Services.

Bathrooms: There is currently only one restroom on the first floor of Centennial. There is a need for the addition of men's and women's bathrooms which comply with ADA standards. We are not able to adequately accommodate our current membership let alone new members. It is imperative that we can accommodate the needs of people with ADA facilities all on the ground floor.

Kitchen: Updating the kitchen and bathrooms would allow for compliance with ADA standards, improving hospitality to members and visitors with disabilities.

Outdoor Signage: Centennial UMC at Ivy is located on University Ave. While heavy traffic passes Centennial each day, our church lacks visibility from the road and many may pass without noticing. A lighted sign would increase visibility and serve as an evangelism tool to attract new visitors.

Community

The area surrounding Centennial is growing, and Centennial is a healthy, vital church with much to offer their neighbors. To be able to accommodate even moderate growth, the expansion is necessary. Centennial was once a little church in the country, but the area surrounding Centennial is increasingly becoming more suburban. Centennial offers a niche that is appealing to those new to the community, particularly those relocating from rural areas. It is a growing, healthy church that has retained the warm feeling of a country church congregation. The expansion project would put Centennial in a good position to attract new members in the growing community.

2 Project Potential Membership with Average Attendance

Attendance information

A quick look at Centennial's Sunday worship attendance appears to show a steady predictable group of weekly worshipers; however when these counts are viewed over time with regression analysis a trend is quite pronounced. The trend line shows attendance has dropped by approximately 25% over the last seven-and-a-half years. Exhibit A

There are dozens of homes under construction within 5 miles of Centennial and infrastructure is currently being built to support the construction of several hundred new homes in the same area. Exhibit B

3 Church's Program of Ministry (¶201-204)

Overview of ministries

Fellowship:

- Dinner Day Every First Sunday for over 80 years
- Annual Soup Supper and Bazaar

Missions:

- Mission Committee organizes many different missions efforts throughout the year including Meals From the Heartland, ongoing Food Pantry drive, Heifer International, Helping local families in need, mission trip to Dominican Republic, etc.
- Active UMW with a heart for mission

Spiritual growth and Christian Education:

- Sunday School for children and adults
- True Believers Wednesday night children and youth ministry
- Youth Group
- Small Groups

Community Ministry:

- Live Nativity and Christmas Open House
- Community Easter Egg Hunt
- Community Trunk or Treat
- Fellowship opportunities: Cocoa and Canvas, I-Cub's outing,

4 Accessibility Plan

Updating the kitchen and bathrooms would allow for compliance with ADA standards, improving hospitality and allowing full participation in church life to members and visitors with disabilities.

Conclusion

Rarely can you survive 140 years without adapting. Centennial's facilities have adapted through its history – after 55 years our congregation knew we needed more than a one-room sanctuary so the building was raised and a basement for fellowship and education was added; changes were made after 85 years without an indoor restroom and 95 years of worshipping with the windows open during hot summer Sundays; 15 years later we were concerned about forcing our

congregation and visitors to use steep stairs to get to our basement fellowship area and restroom so a new fellowship wing was constructed as well as hard surfaced parking. It is time to adapt again as the expectations of our congregation, visitors and potential members have evolved and now we need two restrooms, accessibility to the basement for all, enough room for all to enjoy fellowship and a more inviting parking lot.

Our demographics show we are going to need to welcome new members to replace over half of us during the next 25 years; we can't do that with a 1980's church.

Exhibit A

**Sunday Worship Attendance
2010 - Mid 2017**

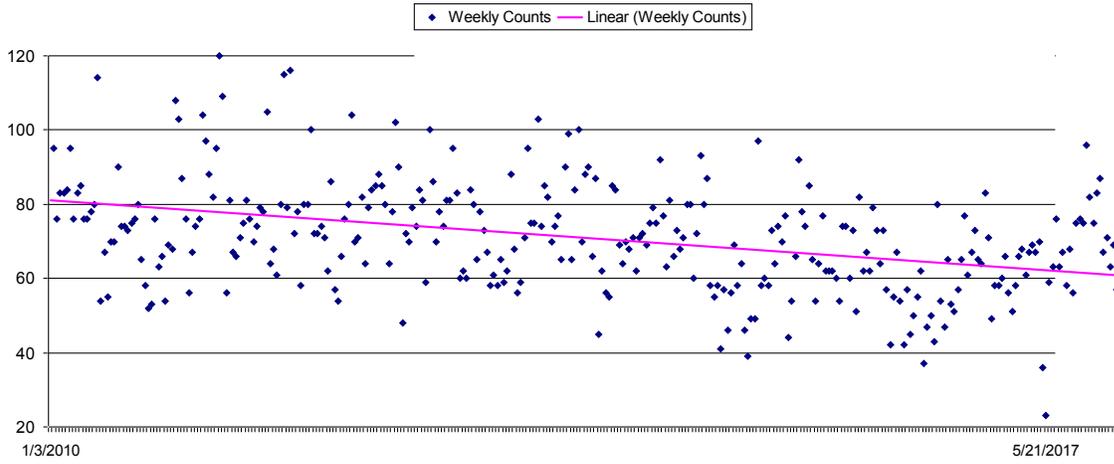


Exhibit B

 Areas where new developments started during 2017

 Areas where new homes continue to be built

