

## Town Hall Meeting

December 8, 2019

Opened with prayer at 12:15 Larry. Announcement: new ministry beginning in January – 4<sup>th</sup> worship service 12:30 pm in different languages Swahili and French. Also plans to start ESL class at 11:00 am Sunday morning. Maybe a Saturday prayer service might be possible. 40 persons interested so far.

- Dianne Moore – what is a relaxed liturgical service and the rationale for shortening the 8:15 service?
  - Relaxed liturgical service does not have a simple definition – it is traditional service, singing hymns, using liturgy, etc. If we are trying to cast a wide net and be as welcoming as possible, we should have 3 different services/options. Will be some differences – for instance – 8:15 – prelude music prior to start/conclude with a welcome, call to worship & hymn. 11:00 – voluntary after welcome, call to worship, & hymn. Probably have 1 scripture reading – text for sermon only. Probably no prayer of illumination. Why 45 minutes – didn't want to start at 8:00 am
- Dorothy Woodford – does that imply that we will have a choir and Charles at the 8:15 service?
  - Charles and Aaron will work together for the 8:15 music.
- Colby Benton – these are a lot of changes, why making them all at once- maybe have some changes as a trial?
  - Trials are hard to implement – changes are like dominoes, and much harder than you think. Doesn't mean that every change

that we make is locked in – No. There will be tinkering and changes along the way. It takes a while to get used to the change. Larry's prediction, 12 months from now, well over ½ the congregation will like the changes, 30% will say not that much changed, don't know why you made such a big deal, the rest won't like the changes.

- Nancy Kindervater – 9:30 service – is there any way the ministers can stand on steps to be more visible. Minister up front hard to see.
  - Worship is drama – move around, sit, stand, kneel, etc.  
Distance between chancel and the first row of pews – proposed – screen in chancel area replaced with 2 monitors on either side. We have technology to show the preacher on the screen in addition to seeing the minister. Probably \$50,000-70,000 price range.
- Sarah Winterhoff – I feel like the changes will affect me – middle schooler and elementary school age child, and Sara teaches Sunday School. Want middle schooler to have a class to be a part of, not just work with Kids church. Son in 4<sup>th</sup> grade is not going to happy being with all age groups.
  - Change is scary – understand anxiety. These things have been talked about and analyzed. Last Town Hall meeting was where is the change – what are we doing? We are responding to our kid's ministry and student ministry. Many successful churches are using the model that we are switching to and doing well. This goes against a lot of people's grain – if we teach our kids to not worship, nothing else matters that we do. More of our kids don't worship than do. It is our duty to teach kids to worship.
- Harriet Thomas – what are you hearing from the United Methodist church at a higher level – hold to end

- Helen Culley – concern about the chapel to make kids church – other spaces available. Chapel is used at other times – ripping pews out is bad idea. Suggest taking things slowly.
  - Larry – removing pews from chapel will still remain a sacred space, still be attractive, Reveille has all chairs (no pews), Chapel can be used for a prayer group with chairs – which can be grouped in a circle. Pews are not flexible – ask yourself if you have been to 2 or more services in the chapel in the past year, seems to be unused space in TUMC. Used more for storage than worship for now. Idea is to make it more useful.
- Cory Booker – Kindergartener & toddler, class of young adults applaud the changes, being torn – class decided to meet on Sunday night instead of Sunday morning.
- Shari Adams – 8:15 worshipper wondering what we do from 9 to 9:45 on Sunday morning before going to SS class?
  - From 9 – 9:30 we want to build up fellowship time in the Welcome Center. Have SS Class start earlier if that works.
- Susan Ainsworth - previous church had coffee room
- Gray Booker – piggyback on what Cory said. This is about the kids – 8:15 – adult at 8:15 gives their kids gift every Sunday. A tribe of adults to adopt the kids. Implore everyone to help change kids' lives.
- Dorothy Woodford – didn't know about chapel. Surprised more people don't come to 12:30 service. May need more advertising for the 12:30. Elaborate more about chapel – before we start ripping out pews, can we as congregation vote on that.
  - not things that could be done in a conference room – want it to be a sacred space. Larry visited a sanctuary in Williamsburg – pews and rows of chairs in front of the pews – very attractive, Duke Chapel also does that. That opens up flexibility for

orchestra specials, move into different arrangement. Wed service is a relaxed liturgical service.

- Teresa Given – involved in the conversations for a long time, am excited but also a little nervous. We come to church, we are comfortable, but this is not about us – it is about the people who don't know what we know – it is about them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ what about Eaton Hall and the Parlor? Eaton Hall is not the highest priority right now. No plans at this time known.
- Brian Winterhoff – had the opportunity to work with HS SS class for 7 years. Concerned with removing the time for our youth to get together and to build their faith together – across school boundaries. Question – evaluate changes as we move ahead, communication & understanding is important – come back together to evaluate changes. Larry – seek feedback constantly – period to evaluate 6-12 months. We need to request feedback – decisions are not made in town hall meeting, they are made by committees.
  - Nov 24 video – youth talked to Larry and were excited about the changes.
- Rosemary McCullough – be aware that we have to be strong for the world – adult SS classes are a mainstay – they are small groups.
  - For younger people they prefer non-Sunday morning meetings.
- Joseph Toler – basically church is about us, you help me on my journey, how are we going to get the “non-churched” people into our 4 walls? How are we going to reach out to the community?
  - This is tough environment in our society – trying to make the church more “user friendly”
- Mark Coakley – will there still be acolytes at 8:15 service  
Yes

- Doris Clements – changes at 9:30 service – how will communion effect timing of service – will it still be 1 hour.
  - yes
- Wayne Bullis – In addition to other comments – making our church more user friendly is only going to happen through us not the changes. Appreciate Larry for the changes.
- Katherine Smith – changes are scary – grew up in church – feel like I got pigeonholed – didn't get to know older adults, but youth group was my close knit group. Appreciate the changes – feel like they will be good for us.
- John Cardwell – changes in general conf in May will take a while to take effect – right? Larry – depends on which plan gets adopted.
- Dorothy Woodford – General conf. – possibility is that nothing changes – is it then up the individual congregation that decides – if nothing changes, for a church to leave it needs 2/3 votes of its members, and a cost of several million under current rules. All of the plans require conference to vote – not congregation.
- Jan Benton – will minutes be available?

UM Church response: terms of traditionalist plan take effect Jan 1. Next general conf – May 2020. 3 plans suggested – they would separate into 3 denominations, different plans but similar in many ways too. Lack of trust – bad blood in General Conference. Bishop Lewis intends to enforce the discipline forcibly – Va Conf getting more tense.