

FINAL PASTOR'S REPORT

From Reverend Corinne Baker, Interim Pastor

October 9, 2001

Council Reviewed Progress at July 10, 2001

POSITIVES

- Good Worship
 - Special Worship Services i.e. Lenten, Advent, Christmas are very meaningful.
 - The emphasis given to National Holidays on the closest Sundays appreciated.
- Sanctuary is beautiful and comfortable.
- Music is good.
 - Rob Gundlach, the Music Director and Organist is a real asset.
- Lay Participation
 - It is a real plus to have lay people read the scriptures.
 - It is an inspiration to see how well the Lectors take responsibility for their ministry. Lectors feel that their spiritual life has grown during this time.
- Sunday School Building
- Caring Congregation
 - The congregation is more relaxed, there is more trust.
 - The congregation tends to be more traditional in their worship style.

At this meeting, the following were also discussed:

COUNCIL MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Council Members are the spiritual leaders of the congregation, and as such, they should be willing to commit themselves to regular Bible reading, prayer, discussions with others.

As congregational leaders become aware of how prayer brings them closer to God in times of concern, joy, that they be willing to share their experiences with individual members in appropriate situations. This could mean that when individuals turn to leaders to share an illness, concern, even a joy, that the leader be willing to offer a

prayer (if appropriate) or share if and how prayer has helped the leader in difficult situations.

2. Council Members can help identify areas where the church is or is not meeting the spiritual needs of the people. They can help identify areas of joy and concern in the congregation by being aware of:
 - what is happening in activities of the church,
 - by listening to people.
3. Council Members help organize programs and practices that meet the traditional principles of the church as well as meeting the spiritual needs of the people.
4. Council Members serve as resource people to encourage other members to be active and take responsibility in order to fulfill their membership responsibilities. This is the key way that other people are trained and drawn into the active leadership of the church. This means that the leaders ask, encourage and trains others to perform the tasks in their areas of responsibility rather than doing the task themselves without involving others.
5. Council Members direct the work of the church.

This means that the leader takes responsibility to see that the major areas in the life of the church (worship, service/outreach/mission, education, fellowship, administrative and fiscal) have people who have experience in or people who have been trained to carry them out.

 - In the discussion the council members also discussed that the general attitudes of leaders and members need to improve and above all, leaders must set the example for the congregation of not criticizing the council, or individual members, or the staff, to anyone in the congregation or the community. By not joining in discussions which are putting down the church and its leaders in places like the back of the church during worship, or outside on the sidewalk, or during a fellowship time but instead listen carefully to the concern and interrupt if it is necessary saying that the leader hears the concern and will take it up with the president or the council, rather than to allow the bickering to continue and spread.

- Communicating clearly and often with the congregation was discussed with many stating that this is a must.

THE FOLLOWING ARE ALSO ISSUES THAT ARE IMPORTANT FOR THE FUTURE GROWTH OF UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH BY THE INTERIM PASTOR

- * At the September 18, 2001 meeting additional conversation centered around the same issue that was discussed above, namely that council members should not talk in a negative way about any decision the council has made, or talk in a negative way about any staff person, or a council or congregational member.
- * At this same September 18, 2001 meeting, discussion occurred around the necessity of supporting the new pastor at all times in the congregation, in the community and, if the council member thinks it is needed, then talk to the pastor and or president.
- Discussion also centered around CHANGE and how important it is to realize and accept that their must be changes made. With the new pastor, the council may decide to add an additional hymnal, or change or add to or substitute with other changes.

THE INTERIM PASTOR FEELS IT WILL BE IMPORTANT IN THE FUTURE FOR COUNCIL AND THE NEW PASTOR TO LOOK AT:

1. Appointing the new pastor as head of staff to better coordinate the work of the pastor and the church. This would also include assessing the job descriptions of the secretaries.
2. It is important for the secretaries to receive training on computers, on publication software, and training on any part of their responsibility which will continually need to be upgraded.
3. Assessing the computer/printer needs of the office.
4. To studying if it would be advisable to change the Sunday schedule to provide Sunday School during one of the services so that a parent or parents could come for one hour and have their children attend Sunday School. This might include having the children in worship for the first few minutes, and then being dismissed to Sunday School for the rest of the time. The children could also be brought back in at the conclusion of the

service if there is an important part of the service where they should attend.

5. Discussing the situation of many Sunday School teachers not attending worship, as well as many parents who come to Sunday School not attending worship with or without children. This seems to divide the congregation into those who attend worship and those who attend Sunday School and continues the pattern of both not being part of the whole.
6. The new pastor should have a new computer provided from the church for him/her to work in the church office or in the parsonage. (Unless the new pastor does not need one). Communication via internet etc. is a must in the future.
7. Reaching out to the community and communicating this need to the congregation must continue with the understanding that this will be a long-term commitment. CHURCH GROWTH takes concentrated, on-going, continual nurturing.
8. The Public Relations efforts of the church is improving and will need to continually improve. It would be helpful for the leadership to continue discussing how to make the outside appearance of the church look more inviting and accessible.
9. The ushers are where visitors form their first impression of the church. The role of "welcoming" will need to be emphasized - perhaps even with job descriptions.
10. The area of finances should be discussed in order to make the reports for the congregation easily interpreted and the money counters must all know and follow the same procedures.

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11. As the church continues to grow and become more focused on the community, a commitment to a particular mission/outreach program will nurture the faith of the members as well as provide Christ's love to the community. Younger people/couples who both work have a strong desire to commit to a particular outreach program that will immediately help others - that has a particular focus. They are not interested in attending meetings where issues are discussed, with little action. We have discussed this issue many times.
12. Welcome Information Folders will need to be upgraded. The firm that the church contracted with for the pictorial directory will provide several hundred at no additional cost.
13. Communication and support between the new pastor and the president of the congregation as well as the pastor search committee will need to be more open, more frequent, and be strong and supportive for the new pastor to begin and sustain the first year with success.
14. The area of finances should be discussed in order to make the reports for the congregation easily interpreted and the money counters all must know and follow the same procedures. I wonder for counters, if an easier method of recording how money is distributed into different accounts can be found.
15. Spiritual growth/nurture needs to be encouraged. There are fellowship groups, but, beside Sunday School, there are no study groups/support small group ministries. The history of this congregation tends to be one where bible study has not been a major interest.
15. The congregation has several warm, supportive groups who care for each other. This is a real asset, but can also be a hindrance to shy or new people who do not know how to break into these groups. The friendliness and care that people give to one another is very heart-warming and inspirational.

I believe that the biggest hurdle to face is that of change. I think that we have made big improvements in this area - even though there is much improvement still needed. When I arrived, I found that trust in the pastor was very low. Part of this issue was the change that was involved between the previous pastor and a new woman pastor who had a much different style of ministry.

People, it seemed, came to appreciate the interim pastor's style of caring and leading Worship. At first, many people expressed surprise that the interim pastor was interested in them as a person, rather than this being one more "job" along the way. I have enjoyed the challenges, joys and fellowship during these two years immensely. A big thank you to Rob, Cass, Darlene, George and other council members for their love, support and encouragement.