

## **Healthy Church Initiative Recommendations Questions** **Answers to Your Questions - May 2, 2017 edition**

Who do I contact if I have questions?

**Members of the HCI Leadership Team are:**

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Why are we doing this?

**As a congregation, we say that what we believe and what we want others to know about God, is that our Lord is loving, accepting, forgiving and welcoming. We want to be a community of believers who live this out in our lives. We realize that we do not always extend this love and grace to one another who are already a part of our congregation.**

**We have a chance to strengthen the spiritual heart and harmony of our congregation and to fulfill our calling to be a church in the heart of our community. We desire to be better representatives of God's grace as we share the love of Jesus to others.**

**Our Healthy Church Initiative is a way our Annual Conference is helping us and other selected churches like us to be vital for generations to come, and to help us avoid the decline that will come naturally if we do nothing.**

What is Passionate Spirituality?

**Passionate Spiritually is faith that is actually lived out with commitment, fire and enthusiasm. A church that lives its faith with passionate enthusiasm will experience success with many methods. It's an optimistic faith that views obstacles as opportunities and turns defeats into victories. This is one of the identified growth areas of our congregation.**

**We also need growth on Inspiring Worship which is the shared experience of God's awesome presence. It is a personal and group encounter with the living God.**

Where are the current ministry needs of our existing congregational members being addressed?

**In addition to our existing pastoral care and staff who provide care for members, this will be multiplied through our third recommendation of "Relating with Love and Grace Through Community (Small) Groups." These groups will be an important way in which we develop deeper relationships with one another and care for one another.**

What will happen to our church committees?

**To assure that our time, energy and resources are best directed toward the mission of our church, we will re-organize our structure. Our implementation coach will work with us to design this structure so that all of areas are resourced.**

How do we involve members who do not regularly attend?

How do we get more volunteers to be active in ministry?

**Current trends across the church nationally and internationally suggest that attendance may not be the key in the future, engagement in the ministry of Jesus Christ in the community will be the future of the church.**

What type of service will the one service be?

Is there more opportunity for a more contemporary worship service?

**The goal is to have people experience the amazing grace of God in fresh and new ways. Worship will become more alive through music, visuals, congregational engagement, flow and design. There will be a worship design team and implementation coach to assist us.**

**There will be a Breakthrough Worship workshop to help us with this led by Dr. Marcia McFee on Saturday October 7<sup>th</sup> in St. Paul. We are looking for interested people to attend.**

Why do we have to remove all of the pews if we vote for this?

**This will help us better direct our energy and resources towards the Sunday morning experience in fresh and new ways. It is our intention that this will help worship become more alive through increased congregational participation. This will also create flexibility in the sanctuary, create more space and comfort for those attending. The worship and design coaches will assist us with our decisions.**

What is this about taking everything down from the walls?

Why do we have to take these things down?

**It is important to communicate warmth, grace and welcome and have our building help tell our story. As a symbol of this new venture we will thoughtfully and intentionally create a fresh, unified look. A church is intended to be designed, not decorated. A church interior designer will be part of our consultant team.**

How are we going to pay for these things?

**This is not so much a cost to us today as an investment for the future of our congregation. One of our strengths is being a generous congregation. The HCI consultants saw that we step up when there is a tangible need or project.**

What is the cost if we do nothing?

**Our congregation in Fairmont will continue our several decade trend of decline and eventual closure. Our congregation will continue to lose vitality and community effectiveness. We would miss our opportunity to become a congregation focused on our future, and this may be our last chance before we get too far into decline.**

Is there any flexibility in any of the recommendations?

**There is limited flexibility dependent upon the advice and direction taken with the coaches.**

Do we have to approve all five recommendations?

**It is all or nothing because all five recommendations are intertwined.**

What is our timeline to get these recommendations done?

**For most churches who have already been through this process, it has been an 18-24 month process.**

What are the dates of Town Halls?

The vote?

**So far these recommendations have been presented at**

- **The Town Hall meeting between services on April 9<sup>th</sup>**
- **The Discovering Your Gifts class on April 9<sup>th</sup>**
- **The Quilters group on April 11<sup>th</sup>**
- **Lakeview UM Health Care Center April 11<sup>th</sup>**
- **Agape Choir and Chancel Choir on April 12<sup>th</sup>**
- **Town Hall meeting Wednesday night – April 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm**
- **Town Hall at McMurtry's April 26<sup>th</sup>**
- **Town Hall with Rachel UMW Circle April 20<sup>th</sup>**
- **Town Hall meeting between services on April 30<sup>th</sup>**
- **Town Hall at The Ranch May 2<sup>nd</sup> afternoon**
- **Town Hall at church Narthex May 2<sup>nd</sup> evening**
- **Town Hall after UMW Salad Luncheon May 4<sup>th</sup> afternoon**

**Upcoming Presentations**

- **We wish to meet with UMW circles and other groups informally**
- **We would like to have additional meetings at church or in homes**

**The Church Conference vote will be May 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 am.**

Will there be time for discussion when we take the vote?

**No. Since we have had multiple Town Halls for discussion and questions, there will only be a short presentation of what the recommendations report states.**

70% of who makes the decision when we vote?

**70% of church members present and voting on May 7<sup>th</sup>.**

**According to the United Methodist Book of Discipline, a church conference extends the vote to all professing members present at such a meeting.**

What happens if we don't have a 70% vote to approve the recommendations?

**We lose the opportunity to have coaching and expertise to help with implementation of these recommendations. This coaching and expertise would be paid for through the Minnesota Annual Conference's Reach Renew Rejoice initiative.**

#### **Questions from 4/19**

Which churches have previously done realignment of committees similar to what has been recommended to us? What is their rate of success?

**Churches who have done something similar are New Ulm, First UMC; LaCrescent UMC; and Hamline UMC. There is more information in the church office, or you may contact these churches directly.**

Who will be in charge of committees?

Who will be in charge overall?

**Congregational members will chair committees just as they do now. Members of committees will be nominated by the Nominations Committee as they do now. The new "Leadership Team" has developing new leaders as one of its tasks.**

What is the role of the pastor in the new "hierarchy"?

**The same as it is now.**

What can be done to help develop our Passionate Spirituality?

**As we improve our small group ministry we will deepen our relationships with one another. This will help us develop more unity among our congregation, learn other people's story, learn our church's story, be open to experiencing worship in ways that will inspire us and draw us into a deeper relationship with Jesus.**

What opportunities are there for youth to be on this new structure?

**Innumerable opportunities are available for youth to participate in whatever way interests them.**

What is the timeline? Is this a 5-year plan? When is the timeline reevaluated?

**The timeline will be developed by our congregational implementation team and implementation coaches. The timeline will be continually reevaluated with no "deadlines" set at this time.**

Who decides the rank order of priorities? Which of the five recommendations are most important?

**The implementation team will set the priorities and starting with the easier items may make the most sense. The five recommendations are intertwined to complement each other so have equal importance to the health of our church.**

Are we required to do everything and buy everything recommended to us?

**No. Yet the success of the recommendations is related to us following through to the best of our ability.**

How much have we already paid for and/or committed to for the HCI process?

**The local church cost for the HCI Process is \$3,000 (which can be spread over 2-3 years) and a local self-investment of 1% of our annual operating budget for new and emerging ministries. For 2017 that 1% is budgeted at \$3,700. The actual cost of the HCI process for each congregation is approximately \$13,000, with \$10,000 being invested in us by the Annual Conference through the Reach • Renew • Rejoice initiative.**

**We are awaiting an invoice from the Annual Conference for our first payment of the \$3,000.**

Will we be forced to spend money on these things even if we don't have the money and are forced to borrow to do it?

**No. Yet the success of the recommendations is related to us following through to the best of our ability.**

**Questions as of 4/26**

Will any ministry staff lose their jobs as a results of a positive vote?

**No. The consultant saw the addition of Dale and Jenny as a positive addition to the church and helpful as the process moves forward.**

Are the HCI recommendations forcing the choir out of the choir loft?

**No. The choir is finding that members of the choir are having more and more difficulty getting up the stairs into the choir loft. If the choir stops being in the loft it will be for reasons of accessibility.**

What will the paper ballot look like?

**Something along the lines of...**

**We accept and commit ourselves to the five recommendations in the Healthy Church Initiative report and commit ourselves to work through the HCI process as we, with God's help, revitalize our church.**

Yes

No

Who will count the ballots?

**The volunteers who count the weekly offerings.**

How will the results be shared?

**After the votes are counted, the results will be shared at the Church Conference and we will end in prayer.**

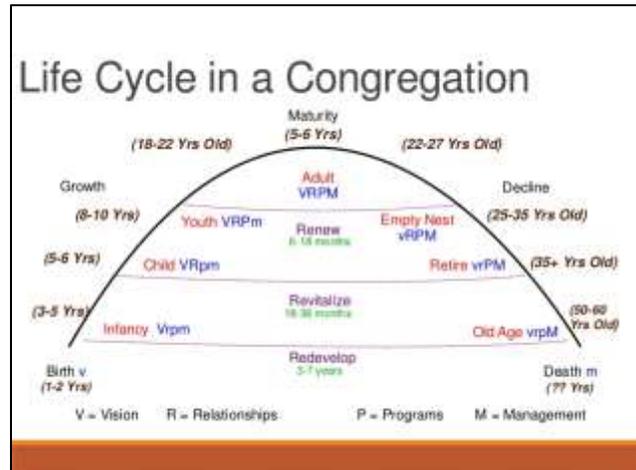
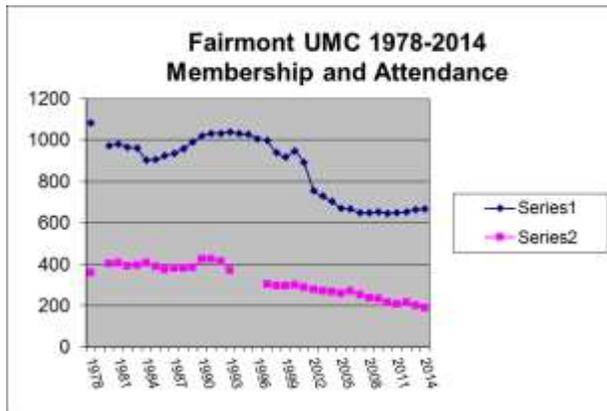
**Persons will be invited to have a time of fellowship in the Narthex as the votes are counted.**

How much preparation and research has gone into preparing for the Healthy Church Consultation Weekend?

- **The FUMC Leadership has attended four day long training weekends.**
- **Pastor Tony has attended an additional five day long pastor training sessions, with one more scheduled for May 9<sup>th</sup>.**
- **We have read five books as part of this training process**
- **In preparation for consultation weekend, we interviewed community leaders, looked at demographic studies of the surrounding area within a 15 mile radius of our church, answered an extensive worksheet about our congregation, had mystery guests attend our worship services, and had 30 congregational leaders participate in the Natural Church Development Survey**

If we don't approve moving forward on the recommendations, is it guaranteed that our church will decline and move toward closing?

**We cannot guarantee that our church will either decline or grow. Yet as we look at the trends of membership and church attendance for the last 30 years, we are on a consistent downward trend. As we consider research on the lifecycles of church, we are well on declining path of the curve.**



Will provisions be made for members who are in nursing homes to have transportation to church?

**We are currently working on this.**

*(This sheet was updated and printed 05/02/2017 5:49 PM)*