

Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County
Facility Needs Assessment and Improvements Report

145 West Rose Tree Road
Media, PA 19063

April 2018

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I. Introduction

For about a year, the facility improvement team (aka the FIT) has been meeting with stakeholders and collecting feedback about what aspects of our present building and grounds are highly valued and what aspects can and should be improved. We also heard some great thoughts about what facilities would be desired to support the future of the congregation.

The facility improvement team would like to acknowledge the prior work of groups and individuals in developing strategic plans, property improvement goals, visioning sessions, master planning, and similar undertakings. Not least of which was Peter’s “Vision 2025” sermon of January 31, 2016, which laid out a context and a compelling vision for the future. Each of these processes and resulting documents proved to be very valuable sources of information for the group as well as setting the stage with the congregation for this forward-thinking planning work.

Building on the prior studies and information, and following the decision in 2017 to invest in this location rather than think about moving elsewhere, this recent effort focused two areas of data collection: a facility assessment and a programming needs assessment. The formal assessment of the current conditions of our building and grounds as well as tabulation of deferred maintenance items was undertaken primarily by the Property Committee. The evaluation of the program needs and how the facilities could be improved to support the program was the primary focus of the FIT group. The following representative stakeholders were identified:

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|--|---|
| <i>Minister</i> | <i>Social Justice</i> |
| <i>Religious Education/DRE</i> | <i>Membership</i> |
| <i>Music Ministry, Chorus, concert organizers, etc</i> | <i>Pastoral Care</i> |
| <i>Staff/Administration</i> | <i>Dinosaurs</i> |
| <i>Rose Tree Day School</i> | <i>Family Group</i> |
| <i>Adult RE</i> | <i>Book Club, Quilters, Camera Club</i> |
| <i>Green sanctuary</i> | <i>Board of Trustees</i> |
| <i>Property Committee (building and grounds)</i> | <i>Executive Team</i> |

In addition to the individual and group feedback sessions, a workshop was held on February 25th to prioritize, reconcile, and dream a bit about the future of our church and the facilities at 145 Rose Tree Road.

This report includes summaries of the conversations, findings, and repeated themes and will provide a basis for proceeding with the design phase of facility improvements.

II. Executive Summary: Emerging Themes for Our High-Level Needs

Several key areas that would benefit most from facility improvements emerged from this process. There was consistent feedback and consensus that any renovation or new construction should incorporate the principles of sustainable design (aka “green” design) and should embrace accessibility for all. The key areas are:

A. Religious Education

1. Additional classrooms
2. Looking like RE Classrooms on Sunday mornings (not looking like borrowed from the Day School)

B. Spiritual Space

1. Enhancements to the Sanctuary (acoustics, audio-visual, cooling)
2. Dedicated space for meditation and quiet reflection; accommodate small groups

C. Community

1. Kitchen a big commercial kitchen
2. Parking—more parking is needed but do it sensitively
3. Fellowship Hall—replacement, or renovation and addition
4. Staff offices—office suite
5. Additional meeting rooms
6. Large space for the entire congregation to meet

D. Preserve Our Traditions

1. Outdoor open space
2. Views of nature from inside
3. Memorial Garden
4. Spaces are generally multipurpose and shared

E. Rose Tree Day School

In addition to the above items, the following is specific to RTDS:

1. Improved entrance and corridors (including cubbies)
2. Office and staff breakroom
3. Classroom renovations (including deferred maintenance items)

III. Outline of Process

The following illustrates the steps in the process for improving our church facility: (1) visioning, (2) assessments and clarification of needs, (3) professional planning and design, (4) a capital campaign, and (5) construction.

Here is a breakdown of where we have been, where we are, and where we are going:

Completed prior to this:

- Foundational strategic plan, visioning sessions, prior studies, etc.
- Peter’s sermon of January 31, 2016
- A decision in 2017 to stay here rather than consider other locations

Scope of this assessment study:

- **Property Facilities Assessment**
- **Facility Needs Assessment and brainstorming:**
 - **Feedback via Stakeholders discussions**
 - **Workshop on February 25, 2018**

Next steps:

Building Committee

Architect to perform Feasibility Studies

Capital Campaign

Facility Design and Fundraising

Construction!

IV. FIT Workshop (2/25/2018)

❖ Existing conditions and deferred maintenance

- Fellowship Hall roof
- Fellowship Hall floor
- Fellowship Hall windows
- Painting, touch-ups, minor repairs, etc.
- Improved insulation for energy efficiency
- Heat in the nursery (better control)
- Meeting rooms—heat, receptacles, AC units
- Day school classrooms: insulation, moisture on exterior walls, storage, kitchen vs. office vs. hallway
- Front doors
- Kitchenette
- Toilet rooms—fixtures, counters

❖ Great about existing space

- Embrace change
- Children's chapel
- Storage in Fellowship Hall
- Windows in Sanctuary/views of nature
- Wood floors
- Architecture beams, wood/light
- Rose Tree Day School is physically part of church
- Fellowship Hall as a meeting space
- Fortunate to have the land
- Connection to nature
- Safe outdoor play space
- Peter's access to Sanctuary
- Lobby/reception space
- Sense of history/sense of place

❖ Must have

- Kitchen: commercial, dishwasher, range, pot sink, large, close to event space, cooking classes, catering, food storage, opens to Fellowship Hall, attractive, community outreach
- Adequate offices for staff
- Additional sacred spaces: pastoral care, meditation, privacy
- Storage solutions
- Storage for RE classes
- 2-4 more equipped classrooms, some for small children and others for youth
- Air conditioning in the Sanctuary
- Accessibility

- Entrance/lobby modification: universally accessible, welcoming, coats, nametags, awning, ramp to dais in sanctuary
- Rooms with privacy
- Improved acoustics, more AV equipment in Sanctuary
- AC in new construction
- More parking

❖ **Nice to have**

- Security/cameras—outside, indoor
- Outdoor rec—gaga, basketball, volleyball, etc.
- Sanctuary expansion? Push out offices
- Public sewer/upstairs bathrooms
- Showers
- PV panels, solar/geothermal, AC+PV aligned, wind power
- Flexible space: performance space, movement studio, start-up justice orgs use space, space for adult meetings, theater/concerts, large group meeting room for workshops

❖ **Wishlist**

- Air conditioning everywhere
- More land
- Choir loft

❖ **Topics for another time**

- Church shuttle
- Transportation

❖ **Questions to consider**

- How would we have a single service?
- How do we serve the community with the space we have?
- How do we maintain the open feeling of the Sanctuary and have effective AV?
- What does Day School need/want? Is it compatible?
- How do we improve opportunities for youth? Youth social space, Saturday night club
- How do we utilize our beautiful outdoor space? Amphitheater, basketball court, fire pit
- How do we preserve the nature around us?
- How do we have a church where we can rent our space regularly? Income for events and space for community organizations

V. Feedback via Stakeholders Discussions

What are the things you feel most strongly about the existing facility should not be changed? What are the things about the existing building and grounds that support our programs really well?

Things we value highly:

- Beautiful, light and bright, Sanctuary connected to nature
- Adaptable space, flexible for multiple uses
- Feel and openness of building, with windows so we feel close to nature
- Cozy spaces
- Set space for children for unique worship
- Open space with fields and woods
- Memorial Garden – connections across generations
- Room to play outside
- Building blends into the surroundings

What aspects of our current program could be improved with changes in the facility? Specifically, what changes would make a big improvement? What would you like to see in the future? How would the facility need to change or expand to support this vision?

- Dedicated space for meditation, quiet reflection
- Improved acoustics in the Sanctuary
- More comfortable chairs in the Sanctuary
- Permanent integrated set up for projection and sound in the Sanctuary
- Air conditioning in the Sanctuary and operable windows in the cupola

- Need more space for RE: 3 or 4 additional classrooms with age appropriate furnishings
- Some larger classrooms
- Dedicated classrooms for each age group with furnishings and materials to support that age and curriculum
- Larger preschool space with room for spirit play
- Dedicated youth room

- Large commercial kitchen, with a high-speed institutional dishwasher
- Additional meeting rooms, including one or two larger rooms (15-20 people)
- Large group meeting space
- Room that can hold the whole congregation and serve food to at least 200 seats
- Adequate offices for all staff; office suite
- Replace Fellowship Hall with a multi-use facility with classrooms and auditorium

- Air conditioning throughout; include operable windows for ventilation
- Heat in all areas (Nursery and entry lobby are underheated)

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- Furniture – serious thought must be given to the selection of furniture – for all the particular uses of the room (example, tables that fold easily, multi-use furniture)
- Storage adjacent to spaces where items will be used
- Janitorial supplies stored out of sight
- Environmental stewardship:
 - Photovoltaic panels to provide electricity for the church
 - Geothermal heating and cooling
 - Don't "pave paradise and put in a parking lot"
- A sign on the front of the building naming our church. Small roof over the entrance.

- More parking including more handicapped spots; additional parking out back with a back entrance
- Relocate the dumpsters
- Outdoor space for older children / adults. (a gaga pit, basketball hoop, fire pit, etc.)
- A labyrinth on our grounds (with garden?)
- Park benches and paths around the property

- Address all deferred maintenance and repair items

- UUCDC bus

- RTDS specific (in addition to above):
 - New (or updated) entrance
 - Office for Director
 - Break room for staff
 - Classroom renovations, including exterior wall repairs
 - Wider corridors, larger classrooms, larger cubbies
 - Toilets adjacent to classrooms
 - Playground fence / barrier