

Facilities Visioning & Needs Task Force

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Survey Results

December, 2010

68 surveys were returned, six of which were from vested groups/committees (Staff, Trustees, Worship, United Methodist Women, Genda Funeral Home, Boy Scouts.)

The responses given regarding affiliation, were either “attend” or there was no selection made.

1. The CURRENT uses of St. Matthew varied with the most prevalent uses being Sunday services/worship, Pre-School, external/community groups (Boy Scouts, Mommy & Me, YMCA, walkers), and religious education/Bible study. Less mentioned uses were to make Disciples of Christ, fellowship, meetings, funerals/weddings, with music being mentioned three times and drama once.
2. The FUTURE uses were fairly equally divided with “Same” or no response at all. Four creative suggestions were a private school, housing for senior citizens, coffee shop, and conference center.

3. Inside areas of church:

Sanctuary: 60% Yes 40% No

Most respondents felt the sanctuary should be “warmed up”, made more “friendly” with fresh paint, new carpeting/flooring, reupholstered pews, and updated audio/video equipment. Several saw the need to redesign the chancel area and extend it with more portable furnishings (pulpit, lectern, etc.) being added. Railings should be removed and the choir should be moved to the side to allow the focus to be on the cross and altar. Windows should be upgraded with non-glare glass to allow the removal of blinds/window treatments. The roll of the organ should be reevaluated in the long term future of worship.

Narthex: 80% Yes 20% No

Most respondents felt the narthex needed “updating”, “freshening”, and to be made “warmer and more inviting” with the removal of wall paper and adding new lighting fixtures. Many felt that a redesigning of the area was needed including the removal of coatroom walls, perhaps even moving into the outside landscaped areas and breezeways, and the raising of the ceiling. Most felt the second set of doors should be removed and that the outer doors should be replaced with glass doors. These changes would allow for an information center, hospitality area, visitors center.

Front Entrance: 40% Yes 60% No

Those who responded in the affirmative felt that the entrance needed to be updated with new doors (with windows or glass) and/or a handicapped door. Expanded landscaping was suggested to be more welcoming and less formal. One of the front entrances needs to be more accessible for funeral homes since the narrow breezeway doors/halls make turning a casket most difficult and the front steps not easily navigated. A comment was made concerning the unevenness of the concrete.

Courtyards: 35% Yes 65% No

Those who responded in the affirmative felt that the courtyards could be “freshened” with new benches and more Biblical plantings. More inventive thinkers would like to see the areas enclosed for a larger chapel setting or classroom/youth space to encourage year round use.

Youth Room: 25% Yes 75% No

Those who responded in the affirmative felt that the space needed to be enlarged and updated with new paint, flooring, furnishings, and more storage. The addition of sound/video equipment, TVs, game systems, and computer access would also be helpful.

Music Department: 10% Yes 90% No

Those who responded in the affirmative felt that the department needs more office and storage space. An additional rehearsal room would be helpful with more robbing storage and changing areas. New robes and microphones are needed.

Kitchen: 85% Yes 15% No

Those who responded in the affirmative felt that the kitchen needed a complete update with new appliances (esp. a dishwasher and the addition of an icemaker), cabinets, secure storage, air conditioning, more electrical outlets, and reconfigured plumbing. The suggestion was made to use the maintenance office to increase space with minimal trouble/cost that would allow us to better meet health codes/standards. It was also suggested that we needed to reevaluate the role of food in the church to gauge our actual needs.

Fellowship Hall: 60% Yes 40% No

Those who responded in the affirmative felt that the area needed to be updated and welcomingly “freshened” with paint, dry walling, new flooring, sound/video systems, and more electrical outlets. A new stage area was suggested on the east wall with “no frills” curtains/acoustics, “no frills” stage and lighting, and “no frills” sound system. The backstage entry would be in the kitchen hall with a movable wall/curtain. The suggestion was also made that FH be enlarged perhaps to the south to accommodate the creation of a “rec room” and bring in more “portables” and sound proof dividers for the designing of classrooms. New tables and chairs were seen as a must.

Parlor: 50% Yes 50% No

Those who responded in the affirmative felt that the area needed a complete update with new paint, flooring, and furniture. The kitchen area was seen as an inefficient space. Some felt that the parlor was unneeded and should be repurposed as a classroom/youth room/fellowship or hospitality area. It was also suggested that it be refurbished as an attractive, well appointed conference/meeting/teaching room that is equipped with a large conference table with comfortable seating for ten people and basic AV equipment.

Library: 10% Yes 90% No

Those that responded felt the library should have computer/internet access with more comfortable furniture, updated equipment, and relevant books and more of them! It was also suggested that it could house a Bible/religious book store and a coffee bar. Some suggested that the room be repurposed.

Pre-School: 35% Yes 65% No

Those that responded in the affirmative felt that the area needed to be expanded/enlarged and refurbished with new furniture. There should be more storage/cabinetry/shelving in the rooms. Sinks and/or restrooms and refrigerators should be in each room. Corkboards should be installed in the hallways. Air conditioning was seen as a necessity. And an indoor play area would be a dream!

Nursery: 10% Yes 90% No

Those that responded in the affirmative felt that the nursery should be updated with soothing colored paint, softer overhead lighting, and new flooring. Some felt that only one room was needed rather than 2 rooms. The sound system should be repaired to allow adults to hear services. Suggestions were made that the nursery should be moved closer to the sanctuary and “beepers” should be supplied to parents to notify them quietly if they were needed.

Maintenance: 25% Yes 75% No

Those that responded in the affirmative had no positive comments except that one suggestion was to enlarge the space. The room was considered an “eyesore” that should be cleaned up, reorganized, and the door kept closed. Outdated and unused items/junk should be disposed of frequently. It was suggested that it be incorporated into the boiler room.

Sunday School Rooms: 40% Yes 60% No

Those that responded in the affirmative wanted more inviting décor with paint and new furnishings. More organized storage was needed Chalkboards should be replaced with wipe-off boards. Central air would be welcomed. Enlarging or expanding should be considered.

Church Office: 25% Yes 75% No

Those that responded in the affirmative felt that a complete update/redesign was necessary, including the addition of a conference room and more storage. New paint, flooring, furniture and updated technology (wireless internet access) and equipment are a must (includes new AV carts, VCRs). Suggestions were made that the office area be repurposed and moved to another space in the building.

4. Outside areas of the church:

Parking Lot: 15% Yes 85% No

Those that responded in the affirmative felt that we needed more and better lighting, perhaps motion activated. Sidewalks should be added all around the building. Additional parking lots should be added in the front of the church. An outdoor walking path should be included to the back yard. A less confusing traffic pattern is needed.

Back Yard: 30% Yes 70% No

Those that responded in the affirmative felt that we need to upgrade our weed control/fertilization control and maintain a “lusher, green” area for youth activities. New landscaping is needed. Perhaps new signage saying “Welcome to St. Matthew” with the erection of three crosses would be an addition. There should be a sidewalk to the pavilion. Restroom facilities would be useful. “Dreaming” would lead to a new pre-school building or an all purpose facility for youth or contemporary worship service.

Front Yard: 30% Yes 70% No

Those that responded in the affirmative felt that we needed to increase our weed control/fertilization program. Relandscaping is badly needed with lower maintenance plantings (get rid of the bush surrounding the spotlight). It was suggested that competing landscaping companies might maintain if allowed to advertise.

Pavilion: 5% Yes 95% No

Those that responded in the affirmative felt that we needed more/better electrical outlets and lighting, running water, storage, a BBQ pit, restrooms, and a wide hard surface path for a myriad of reasons, including handicapped accessibility and easier movement of supplies whether by wagon or motor vehicle. A walking trail was suggested. Remove nearby shrubbery.

Storage Barn: 5% Yes 95% No

These were mixed responses. It should be cleaned out and reorganized. It should be enlarged and a work shop added. There should be storage for the Boy Scout troop, including their trailer. Comment made: “If it’s cleaned up, will the congregation be allowed to use it? We were asked to remove our items.”

Entrances: 35% Yes 65% No

Those that responded in the affirmative felt that the entrances needed to be updated and “freshened” to appear more inviting. New doors are necessary. Perhaps better/more lighting would be helpful. More signage outside and “You are here” maps inside each entry. A covered/canopied entry at the east/office door with handrails on both sides would better accommodate our elderly or handicapped parishioners. There should be a handicapped/automatic door.

Parsonages: 10% Yes 90% No

Those that responded in the affirmative felt that the parsonages needed to be updated including the remodeling of kitchens/baths. It was suggested that the Forest Drive parsonage be sold and the excess proceeds be used to remodel and refurbish the main parsonage on Maple Drive and make it more usable for selected pastoral/church activities. Regular lawn care needs to be maintained.

5. Top two improvements: (Prioritized by number of responses)

Narthex and Kitchen (Tie), Sanctuary/chancel area, Fellowship Hall and Parlor (Tie), Front entrance/doors (including canopy and automatic door), Restrooms, Central air, “Freshened décor”, Pre-School. The following all received equal consideration after the afore mentioned: Youth, Info center, Landscaping, Window replacement, Video/Sound equipment. Cumulative Funds need to be brought to and maintained at a comfortable level to sustain the changes being made.

6. Problems: (Not many responses)

Old equipment, including video/sound systems, furnishings and tables/chairs (FH), flooring
Kitchen, including ovens and dishwasher
Restrooms
Water fountains
Soap dispensers

7. Far out ideas:

Cover the east courtyard and turn it into an atrium/garden/chapel that is accessible from the sanctuary.

Chapel

New “state of the art” kitchen

Pre-School building

Separate Fellowship Hall

New building in back yard for contemporary worship/conferences/meetings/youth with restrooms, kitchen, fireplace

New building for offices, kitchen, stage, gym, storage, maintenance

Gymnasium with showers, kitchen

Indoor playground

Restrooms near pavilion

Church wide central air conditioning

The following “**far out**” **ideas** did not deal with facilities but are worthy:

Increased membership

Youth growth

Satellite congregation on west side of town in cooperation with a compatible, established congregation like La Cosecha

Everyone’s purpose is to serve and love and be more a part of the community.

Added comments:

NO QUESTION CONCERNING RESTROOMS...SHOULD BE REMODELED AND BETTER HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE.

Church staff should clean up the classrooms/storage facilities.

Paint with warm colors.

Grants are available to revamp and update playground, add fencing.

Continue three services.

Have a community project fund raiser dinner (not fish or noodles)!