

# REPORT OF THE CMC BUILDING TASK FORCE

December 2014

## BACKGROUND

Church Council appointed a Building Task Force in April 2014 to "evaluate, prioritize, and recommend to council changes to the [Community Mennonite Church] facilities and grounds." An earlier committee tried to solve issues involving kitchen space shared with Patchwork Pantry, but that committee discontinued its efforts when the possibility of the sale of the Dean House arose. The Dean House question remains unresolved, the Building Task Force attempted to review space considerations with and without the Dean House in the picture.

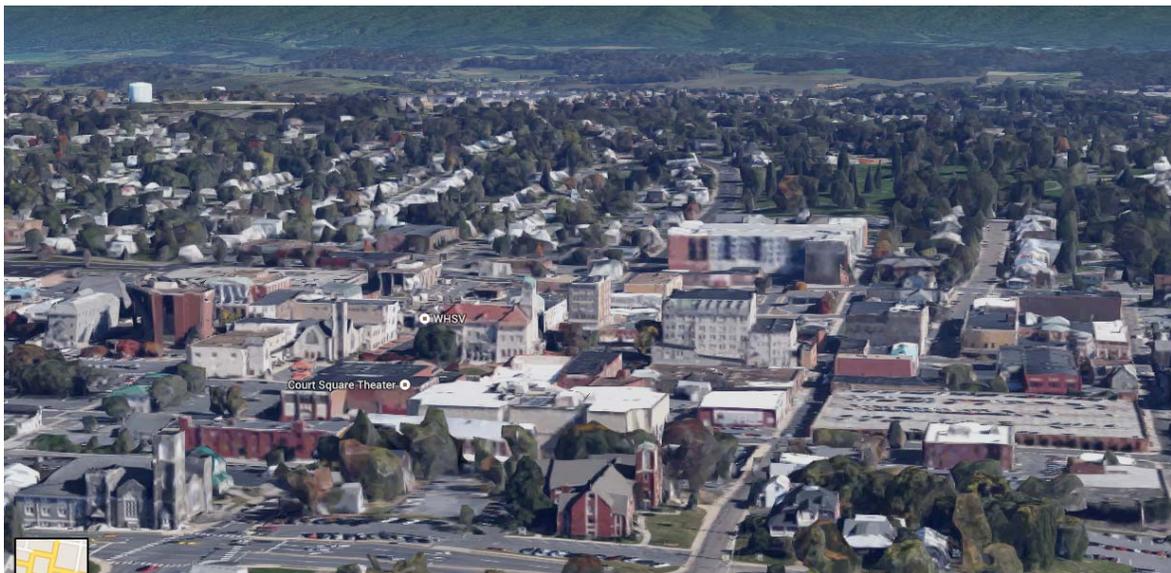
Since Community Mennonite Church moved to South High Street in 1988, there have been at least three attempts to plan further building renovations. Two involved professional architects; another resulted in a drawing by a member of an addition. Records of these efforts are spotty at best, though a search of the church archives continues. At this writing, the task force has only been able to obtain a partial plan from one of the architect's efforts. [See Appendix 2 for the records that were found.]

The task force began with a survey of current space and usage before proceeding to a review of traffic patterns into, through, and out of the church building. Members were assigned a certain area of the church on which to report; the entire group brainstormed for a list of problems, needs, wishes, and solutions ranging from simple to dreamland. During the task force's work, architectural drawings of the entire structure were prepared by Johann Zimmerman.

Finally, the task force assembled all viable recommendations and attempted to prioritize them and to group them into phases of work.

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## CHURCH HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

The oldest part of the current church was built in 1907 on the site of one of Harrisonburg's first churches.

### METHODIST CONGREGATION, 1790–1865

Two churches were chartered in Harrisonburg in 1789. The first was a Presbyterian church built on East Market Street near Court Square, and the second by a few months was a Methodist church near the where Community Mennonite Church now stands. The Methodist church deed was granted to Bishop Francis Asbury "and his successors and appointees." A log church was built, then replaced in 1805 with a frame building. Maria Carr, early Harrisonburg resident, says it was a "large white frame with a steeple, as it was called; it had the sweetest-toned bell I ever heard.... There was one door on the east and two on the south and two aisles with a double row of pews in the center and a row on either side. The pulpit was high, and a space enclosed in front of it with benches for mourners to kneel at. It had a large gallery running around the east, south, and west sides.... Behind the church was a large green yard; at the lower west end was a graveyard—many of the best people being buried there."<sup>1</sup>

	1785	Thomas Harrison dies
	1790	Methodist church built
	1805	Larger church built
	1851	Methodists move
	1865	Church building collapses
	1907	New Brethren church <i>Current fellowship hall</i>
	1918	Kitchen, coat room
	1927	Nursery, admin office
	1951	Sanctuary, 109, offices
	1978	First Church of the Brethren moves out
	1978-1988	Maranatha Church of God, commercial uses
	1988	CMC acquires building. <i>Extensive renovation</i>
	2007	CMC buys Dean House

One of the "best people" was Thomas Harrison, founder of Harrisonburg, buried in a crypt in 1785. Wayland, writing in 1949, says that "until recent years were to be seen the tombstones of various early residents of the community, among them Lawrence Wartmann, founder of the Rockingham Register [and printer of Joseph Funk's 1816 German hymnal], and Captain Rueben Harrison."<sup>2</sup> Thomas Harrison's body and those of several other people were moved to Woodbine Cemetery in 2003. There is a plaque on the north side of CMC—where our Memory Garden will be—commemorating that removal.

The Methodist congregation moved to a new building on German (now Liberty) Street north of Market Street in 1851. And the old church was used for "fairs, headquarters for officers in militia drills, and various public gatherings... [and] in that historic building [in 1860], the Masons held some of their exercises in connection with the laying of the cornerstone of their new temple."<sup>3</sup> The building itself, however, was neglected, decayed, and collapsed in 1865. "The old church upon the hill, after standing siege, which began at an early hour, until 4 o'clock, tumbled with a crash.... Quite a crowd of the oldest inhabitants

<sup>1</sup> Carr, 32–33

<sup>2</sup> Wayland, 18-19

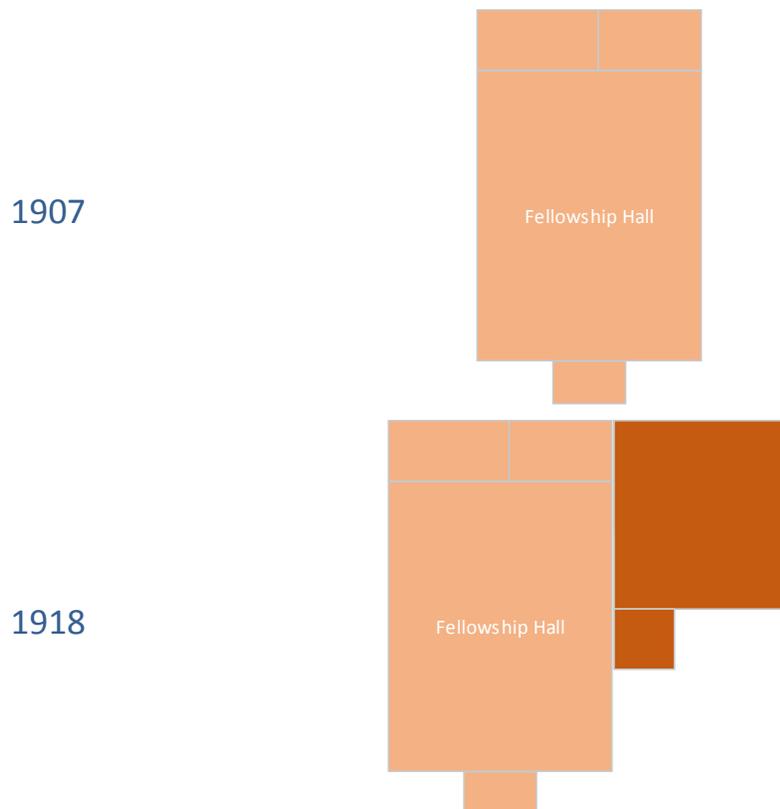
<sup>3</sup> Wayland, 18

were present, gathering nails, splinters, etc., as relics."<sup>4</sup>

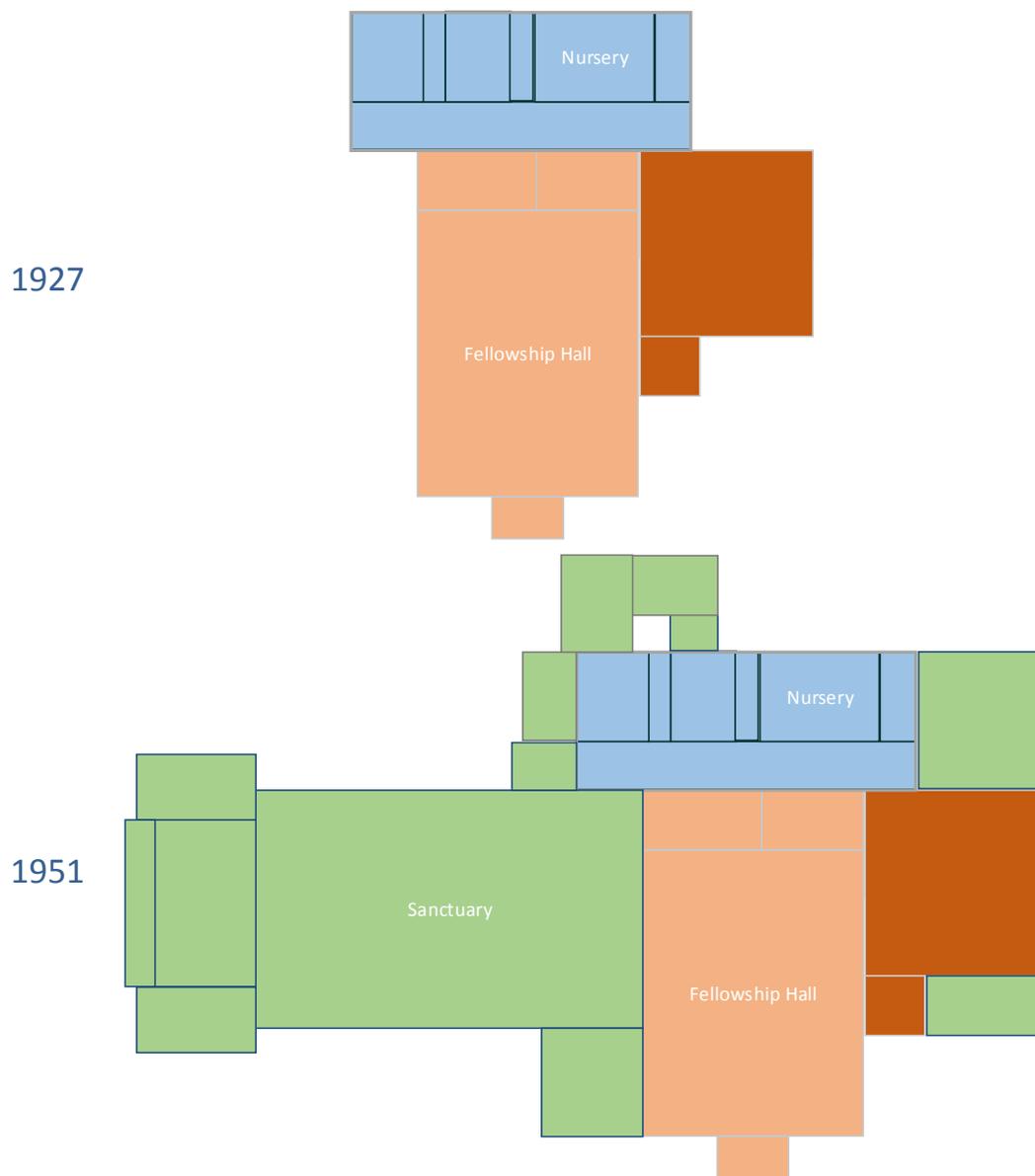
The original Methodist congregation moved to Main Street in 1911—it is Asbury United Methodist Church.

### BRETHREN CHURCH, 1907–1978

A Church of the Brethren congregation erected a new brick church on the site in 1907. This building is the CMC fellowship hall. The current kitchen was added in 1918. In 1927, an expansion brought the current administrative offices and nursery. The current sanctuary was built in 1951, along with room 109 and the back pastors' offices. The Harrisonburg First Church of the Brethren used the church until it built a new structure on Dogwood Avenue near Westover Park in 1978.



<sup>4</sup> Newspaper article in *Old Commonwealth*, November 22, 1865. Quoted in Wayland, 18. However, there may be more to the story. In a "Shenandoah Valley Chronology" published in *The Rockingham Recorder* in 1959, Wayland described the collapse this way: "1865, Sunday, November 19—Boys throw down the old Methodist Church 'on the hill' in Harrisonburg—site of the present Church of the Brethren."



**FIGURE 1. CHURCH BUILDING THROUGH TIME**

### CHURCH AND VARIOUS COMMERCIAL USES, 1978–1988

After the First Church of the Brethren moved out, the church building was used for at least part of a decade by the Maranatha Church of God. At the same time, it had various commercial uses—a beauty parlor on the second floor, for example.

## COMMUNITY MENNONITE CHURCH, 1988–PRESENT

CMC acquired the building in 1988 in a trade with the Maranatha Church of God—Maranatha went to CMC's original location on Green Street, and CMC moved to South High.<sup>5</sup> The congregation undertook a number of improvement projects in the following years. According to members who were there, the council approved a renovation budget of \$45,000, later increased to \$75,000. Many members worked on the renovations which included:

- At the front of the sanctuary, there was a long red velvet curtain from approximately 10 feet below the rose window to the floor.<sup>6</sup> There was nothing behind it but an opening to the baptistery. The wood paneling was in bad shape and extensively refinished. The ceiling was also refinished.
- The wall below the steeple, at the back south side of the sanctuary, was black with mold due to a roof leak along the edge of the steeple.
- The walls of the fellowship hall were covered with drywall that was replaced, but the suspended ceiling was left in place.
- A nursery or cry room extended into the fellowship hall from the sanctuary, where the doors at the back of the sanctuary are now. This and other partitions were bolted to the hardwood floor of the fellowship hall. The room was removed and new plywood had to be laid for the floor. When the room was there, the only entrances to the sanctuary were the doors on either side at the back.
- At the same time CMC was doing its renovation, Rockingham Memorial Hospital (then located on Cantrell Avenue, now Martin Luther King Way) was also renovating. RMH ordered too much carpet. Somehow, CMC got the excess and used it on the fellowship hall and sanctuary floors. The walls on the main floor also got carpeting so that kids could play in the church and not worry about messing up the walls.

Members who were part of CMC then remember the many volunteer hours spent on the church building as a community-building and often enjoyable experience. Undoing or redoing the parts of the building that were improved then may be bittersweet for some of the members involved. On the other hand, one also hears stories that begin with, "Yeah, we should have done that a long time ago" or "We should never have..."

The building and land were assessed by the City of Harrisonburg at \$854,400 in 2000 and that value has gone up in every assessment since; the current (2014) assessed value is \$1,695,900. CMC owns the church building free and clear.

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<sup>5</sup> The building exchange seems to have been a **straight-up swap**, with the large amount of required renovation at High Street compensating Maranatha for the smaller space at Green Street. No draft picks were involved in the trade.

<sup>6</sup> Part of the removed curtain was used to make a robe as a gift for Terry Burkhalter, the CMC member who spent the most time on the wood panel refinishing. Apocryphally, the robe still exists somewhere behind the altar.

In 2007, CMC voted unanimously to purchase the Dean House, located at 110 Old South High Street across Water Street from the church, for \$470,000. The owner had passed away and preferred that the house go to the church. The current tax assessment value of the Dean House, which is used primarily for Sunday school space, youth group meetings, and by other congregations, is \$339,400. Church council received in 2014 an informal offer of \$425,000 to purchase the Dean House; the developer of the Ice House and the parking lot on Bruce Street was the interested party. The offer was declined. CMC owes less than \$200,000 on the building note.

CMC's block is shown in Figure 2, and the neighboring lots listed in Table 1.



**FIGURE 2. THE CMC NEIGHBORHOOD**

**TABLE 1. CMC'S NEIGHBORS**

ADDRESS	OWNER	ACREAGE	ZONING
177 W. MARKET ST.	OTTERBEIN UNITED METHODIST (PARKING LOT)	0.186	R-3
167 W. MARKET ST.	A-SIDE LC (BARRY KELLEY)	0.191	R-3
157 W. MARKET ST.	A-SIDE LC (BARRY KELLEY)	0.422	R-3
135 W. MARKET ST.	FAIRFIELD & SONS (ROSETTA STONE)	0.415	B-1
70 S. HIGH ST.	COMMUNITY MENNONITE CHURCH	0.396	R-3

## CHURCH AREAS: DESCRIPTIONS AND NEEDS

The Building Task Force tried to look at each area of the church both in isolation and then in the context of the whole of the building and congregational life. These are reports on the areas, their use, and their deficiencies.

### STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

The church building is about 17,500 square feet. The sanctuary makes up the most of this area, covering about 2,600 square feet on the main floor and about 650 square feet of the balcony. There are about 2,800 square feet of youth Sunday school rooms, and the fellowship hall covers nearly 1,800 square feet.

The Dean House is about 3,300 square feet, or just under 1/5 as big as the church. The combined area of both buildings is about 21,000 square feet, with 84 percent of that in the church building. For what it's worth, various sources suggest 30 to 55 square feet per person, meaning our square footage would allegedly serve a congregation of 380 to 700 people in both buildings. Sometimes it's not the area, but how it's divided and how space is shared.

Figure 3 shows the use of space in both buildings.

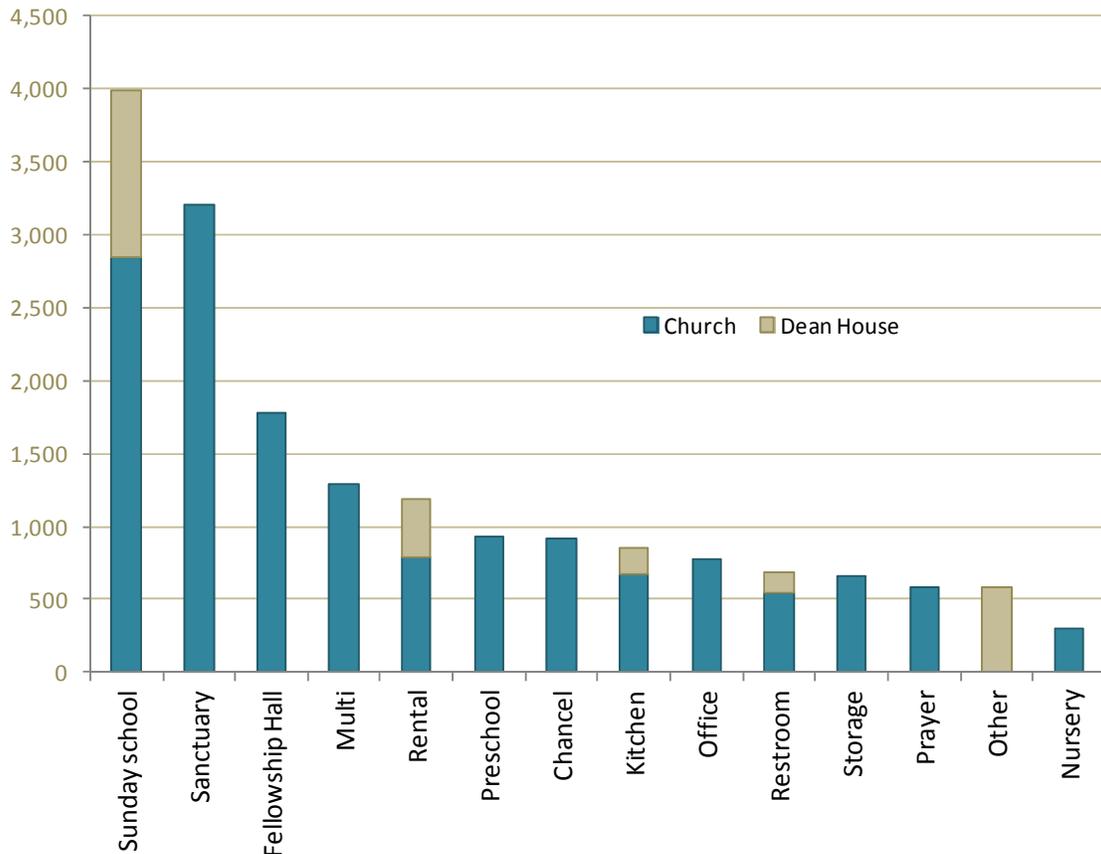
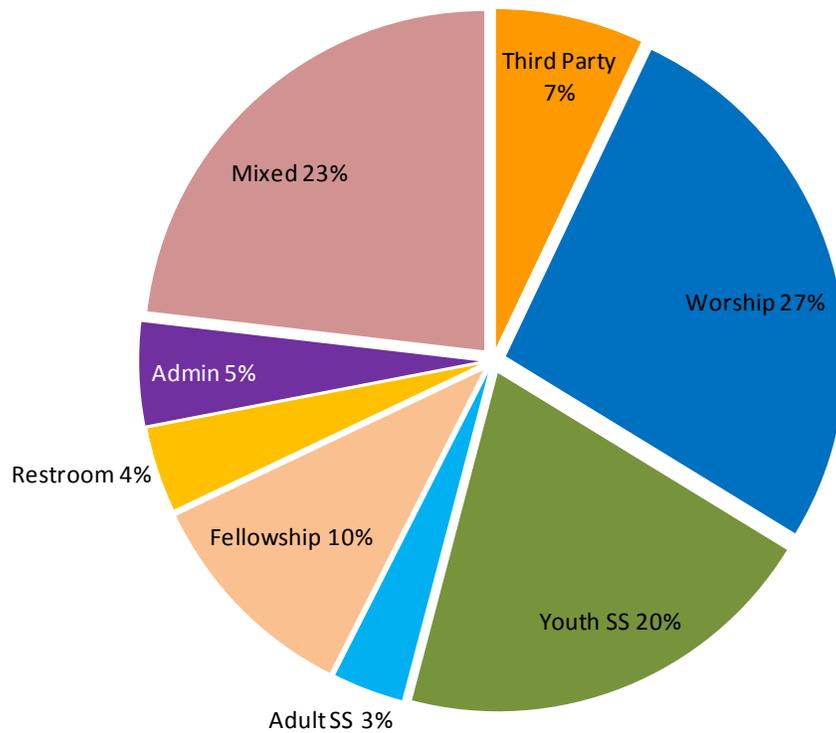


FIGURE 3. CHURCH AND DEAN HOUSE USE BY SQUARE FOOTAGE

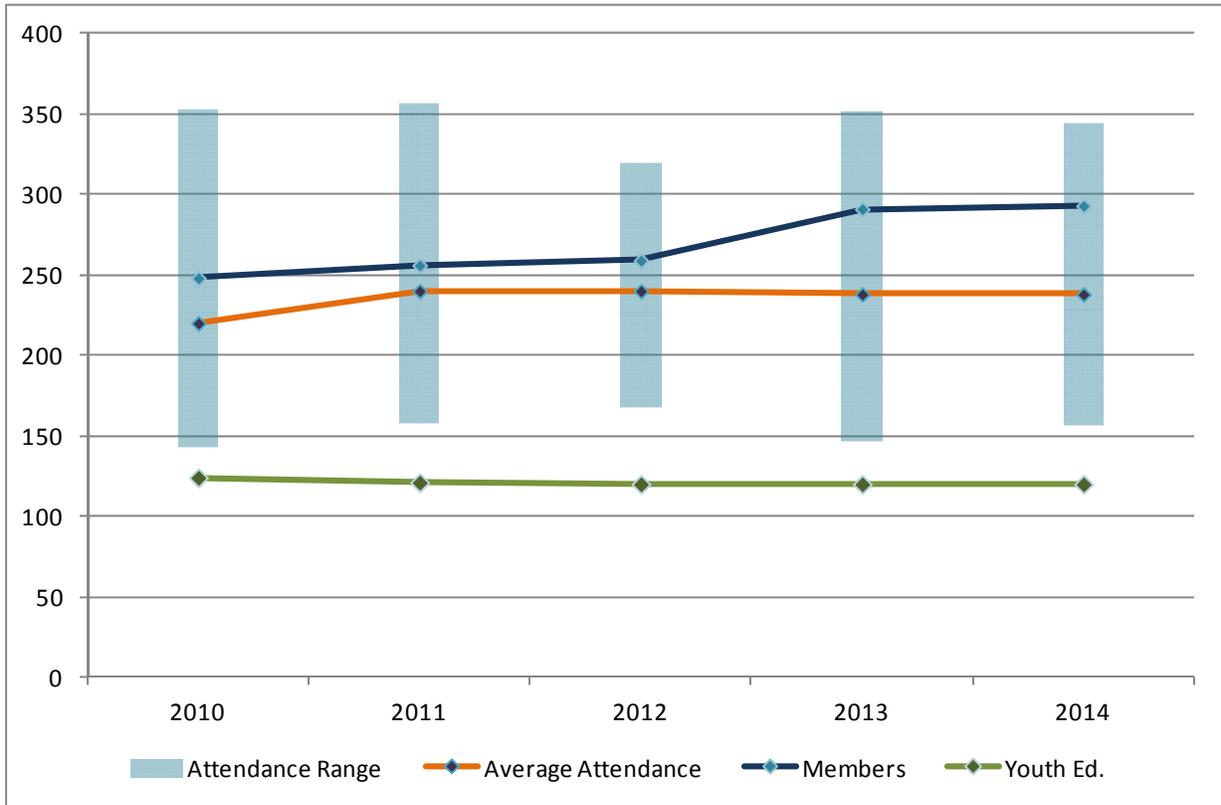
Figure 4 shows the distribution of usable (i.e., not hallways or stairwells) for both buildings combined.



**FIGURE 4. USABLE SQUARE FOOTAGE BY PRIMARY USE**

The question of building use depends not just on the space, but on the people that use it. At CMC, the congregation is the largest group that uses the building, but not the only group—as shown above, a full 7 percent of the structural area is given over exclusively to third parties (like Community Preschool and New Bridges) and another 23 percent is mixed use. While that 23 percent includes space used by more than one CMC group, it also includes space that CMC shares with outside groups—the kitchen, for example, is used by Patchwork Pantry, and Room 109 and the library upstairs are used by Skyline Literacy. That 23 percent does *not* encompass shared spaces like the fellowship hall (used by CMC and by other groups for meetings and child care) or even the sanctuary (used for worship as well as meetings).

This report will provide more details on the use of space by CMC and by outside groups, but as for CMC itself, look for the moment at attendance statistics, shown in Figure 5.



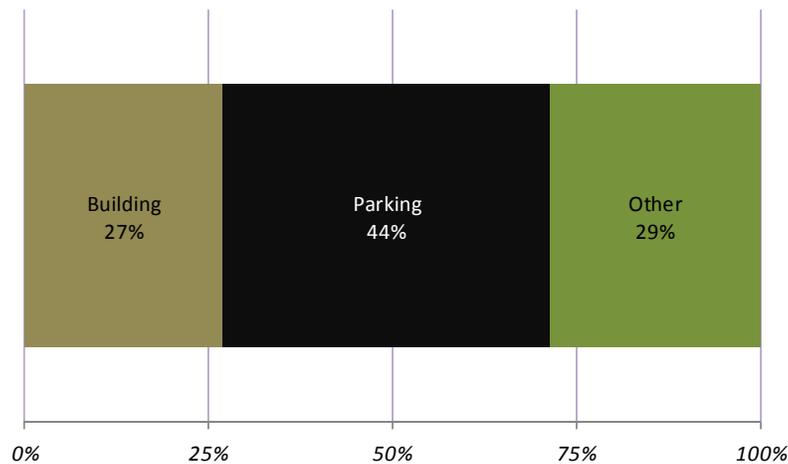
**FIGURE 5. ATTENDANCE, MEMBERSHIP, AND YOUTH, 2010–2014**

This graph shows steady average attendance<sup>7</sup> of about 240 over the last four years; steady K–12 Sunday school enrollment for five years, and an increase in membership of nearly 20 percent over five years. The range of weekly attendance counts, shown as blue blocks, has remained similar from year to year over the last five years.

Land use becomes a question if the church is to consider expanding the church building beyond its current footprint. At the edge of a newly thriving downtown, additional land would not be cheap, even if it is available. The lots to the north of the church (see Table 1) would seem to offer the best possibilities for acquisition, should the Dean House be sold. (There is even the possibility of another trade: the developer interested in the Dean House owns those properties.)

<sup>7</sup> All attendance figures are from counts by the ushers midway through the service. Were they taken at the *start* of the service, one would imagine that our sanctuary was never close to full. On the positive side, a visitor unaware of local custom and arriving on time for worship can probably find somewhere to sit.

As for the present lot, the church building covers about one quarter of the land area, while the parking lot accounts for more than 40 percent. See Figure 6.



**FIGURE 6. CHURCH LAND USE**

### AREA NEEDS

In its work, the task force assigned and heard reports on specific areas of the church building and Dean House. Those reports are found in this section. Among the questions we asked:

1. How is the space used now, and by whom?
2. What are the limitations of the current space?
3. What are some things we might otherwise be able to do?
4. How important is the space, and what priority should changes to it be assigned?
5. How would the requirements for the space change if we no longer had the Dean House?

We were interested in a long-term plan; a vision was perhaps too much to hope for, but there is some of that. By starting our discussion with history, the length of the proposition becomes apparent on its own. We hoped not to propose work on the same area of the church twice, or propose projects that involved undoing something we just did. Past history is shaped in the future by events and necessities, though, and depending on how far back one looks, the more clear it becomes that little can be done without also undoing. We never talked in dollar figures (just relative cost) for fear it would discourage wild, brilliant ideas—but also because money is not a goal.

In all these questions, the inescapable truth is that we, the congregation, work and live together in this space that we share. While we have molded the space—it was another congregation's and now it is ours—the church building also forms us in ways that we may not recognize. A place directs thought and being; tools determine your capabilities. Though we may at times be less than our building, there are ways in which we cannot be more than our building. Watch for those.

## SANCTUARY

Regular sanctuary use, by day and hour. For a composite monthly building schedule, see Appendix I.

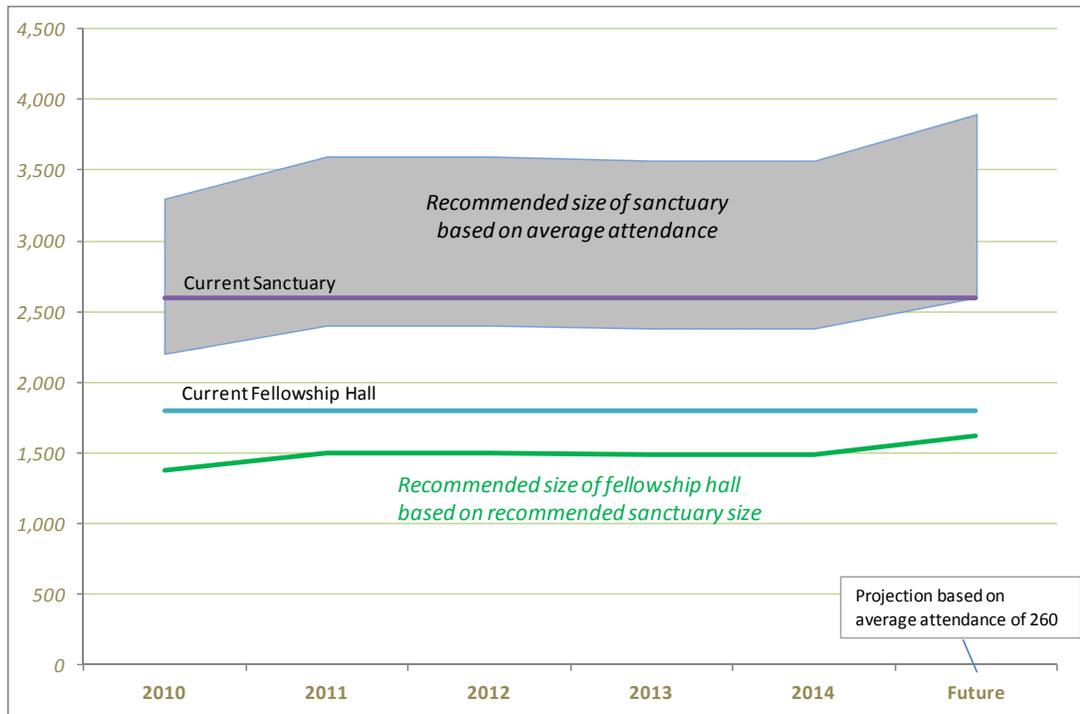
	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<i>CMC</i>	8–12			6–8			
<i>Other</i>							6–9
<i>Also</i>	Choir rehearsals, meetings, Sunday school classes, prayer room, weddings and funerals, LIT, community meetings						

The sanctuary is distinguished by its wooden ceiling, stained glass windows along the aisles and at the front, and a deep altar with a hidden baptistry. It is a long and comparatively narrow rectangular space in which the congregation spreads out some 65 feet from the altar, in a space 40 feet wide.

While the sanctuary is sufficient for worship, it also limits our worship in ways seen and felt. The sanctuary is more formal in shape and decoration than our natural worship practices would require; over time, our services have become more formal to better match the space, and the inflexible nature of the space limits our creative alternatives.

The plain size of the sanctuary limits our numbers. The average attendance of about 240 is approximately equal to the seating capacity on the first floor; as the balcony holds another 75 people, our average attendance is about 75 percent of capacity. This tracks well with published suggestions that a church that is 80 percent full, is full. The fact that our average attendance has been about the same for four years running suggests that we cannot expect a sustained increase in the current space. One could read the attendance numbers as bumping up against our space's ceiling.

Various guidelines suggest 10 to 15 square feet of worship space per person in attendance. Figure 7 shows the sanctuary size that would be recommended based on our average attendance. Keep in mind that although we used "average attendance," sometimes attendance is as much as 40 percent above average.



**FIGURE 7. SANCTUARY AND FELLOWSHIP HALL RECOMMENDED SIZE VS. ATTENDANCE**

Sound and lighting in the sanctuary are imperfect and have been for years. As a culture, as we become accustomed to better technology, we are likely to become more sensitive to the shortcomings of our systems. Our congregation is now older on average than in years past. Visibility and intelligibility are limited by inadequate illumination at the front of the sanctuary—low-quality definition, no dimming, and scattered control. Intelligibility is further hampered by a sound system that is not up to the task. Sound limitations include inadequate amplification capacity, with one large speaker prone to feedback. There is no permanent or easily usable video presentation equipment.

One enters and exits the sanctuary through the fellowship hall, meaning the attendant noise of people arriving for church also enters the sanctuary before the start of worship. There is no buffer or quiet foyer to ease the transition. At the end of worship, the limited space in the fellowship hall means the sanctuary empties slowly.

The sanctuary is used sometimes for adult Sunday school class immediately after worship, and the start of this class is often delayed by people lingering in the sanctuary. If the Dean House were to be sold, the use of the sanctuary for that purpose would become more necessary barring other changes to the church building.

In summary, with a larger space, we could grow numerically. With a wider space, we could encircle one another in worship, and enable greater creativity and flexibility in services. With a better equipped space, we could more fully realize the potential the room has for communication and community building. However, the final limitation on the sanctuary makes it difficult to alter: there is limited room for expansion, and changes would be costly.

**FELLOWSHIP HALL**

Regular fellowship hall use, by day and hour. For a composite monthly building schedule, see Appendix I.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<i>CMC</i>	8-12						
<i>Other</i>		12-1, 6-9	12-1	10-12, 12-1, 6-8	12-1, 6-9		6-9
<i>Also</i>	Congregational meetings, monthly gathering, other CMC group meetings						

The fellowship hall is the original church sanctuary from 1907. The north end is closed, but the eastern corner by the kitchen is a relatively narrow opening that that is regularly a bottleneck. The south end, the original church entrance, is a classic church portico on the outside, but enclosed and raised a step off the floor on the inside. The door does not open from the outside, and the steps outside begin inches from the outer door, making



it a safety hazard. (It would actually be safer if the door only opened from the outside.) The west side of the fellowship hall opens directly to the sanctuary.

These restrictions on entrances and exits make the fellowship hall function as if it were smaller than it is—and the 1,750 square feet are on the small end of functional on their own. (See Figure 7, above.) We are at or beyond capacity for meetings and potlucks, and the room is crowded with tables uncomfortably close together.

After church, the limited space leads to mingling, whether one seeks or not; another conversation is, most times, just over your shoulder. People congregate in doorways and in front of the coffee counter. There is no place to stand and gather around something. The south side usually has fewer people because nothing draws them in that direction. The hymnal racks increase congestion by the sanctuary doors, but must remain there while people are leaving the service so that hymnals can be returned.

An unused piano has been removed from the fellowship hall (and given a good home), and a large information kiosk has been relocated to the room outside the kitchen, where it may or may not interfere with coat racks during the winter.

In short, the fellowship hall is too small. If it can't be expanded, at the very least the flow through it should be improved.

## KITCHEN

Regular kitchen use, by day and hour. For a composite monthly building schedule, see Appendix I.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<i>CMC</i>	8–12						
<i>Other</i>				10–12, 5–8			
<i>Also</i>	Patchwork Pantry storage and deliveries, weddings, funerals, fellowship meals, meetings						

A predecessor of this building task force (one of several since CMC moved to South High Street) was known as the "kitchen cabinet." This group was formed to find a way to make the kitchen easier to use for both CMC activities and Patchwork Pantry, a food distribution organization founded at CMC by CMC members. After working with all parties and an architect, the kitchen cabinet had nearly settled on a (rather expensive) plan involving a small addition on the east side of the kitchen and a series of shelving and storage improvements for Patchwork's sole use.

The cost, some unresolved issues, and news that someone might be interested in the Dean House halted further planning. But the problems (essentially, two groups trying to use the same space) and the shortfalls (nonfunctional equipment, for one) persist.

The kitchen, at nearly 700 square feet, is large for a church. It is not, however, large enough to allow dedicated space to Patchwork and CMC—at least not in its present configuration. There is a new (2014) stove, but the dishwasher does not wash dishes and the icemaker sometimes just takes up space. Some other appliances are extraneous, and microwave ovens sit on otherwise useful counter space. A lock has been added to the door, but this has led to other problems involving access when food is delivered for Patchwork.

Complicating the Patchwork question is the need for a better flow of people through serving lines, either for meals or for coffee. Electrical service to the kitchen has been improved, but wiring from the panel to the outlets needs to be completed.

There are several kitchen improvements that could be made through the normal budget process or through policy changes. And there has been no shortage of dedicated work by Hospitality committee and Patchwork representatives on plans to better share the space; however, no single plan has long endured or answered all the questions about the use of kitchen space.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOMS

Regular Sunday school room use, by day and hour. For a composite monthly building schedule, see Appendix I.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
CMC	10–12			6–8			
Other		6–9			6–9		
Also	Committee meetings						

Youth Sunday school classes are held in 10 rooms—some on the second floor of the church, some in the church basement, and some in the Dean House. With an enrollment of about 110, it works out to 11 students (and two adults) per class. The actual attendance is, most weeks, less, making the space sufficient. There is not, however, an excess of Sunday school rooms, and losing the Dean House would have a big impact in this area.

The recommended youth classroom space for our youth enrollment is shown in Figure 8. Keep in mind that the numbers there are for all classrooms and all youth; it does not mean that every classroom is the right size for the class that meets there.

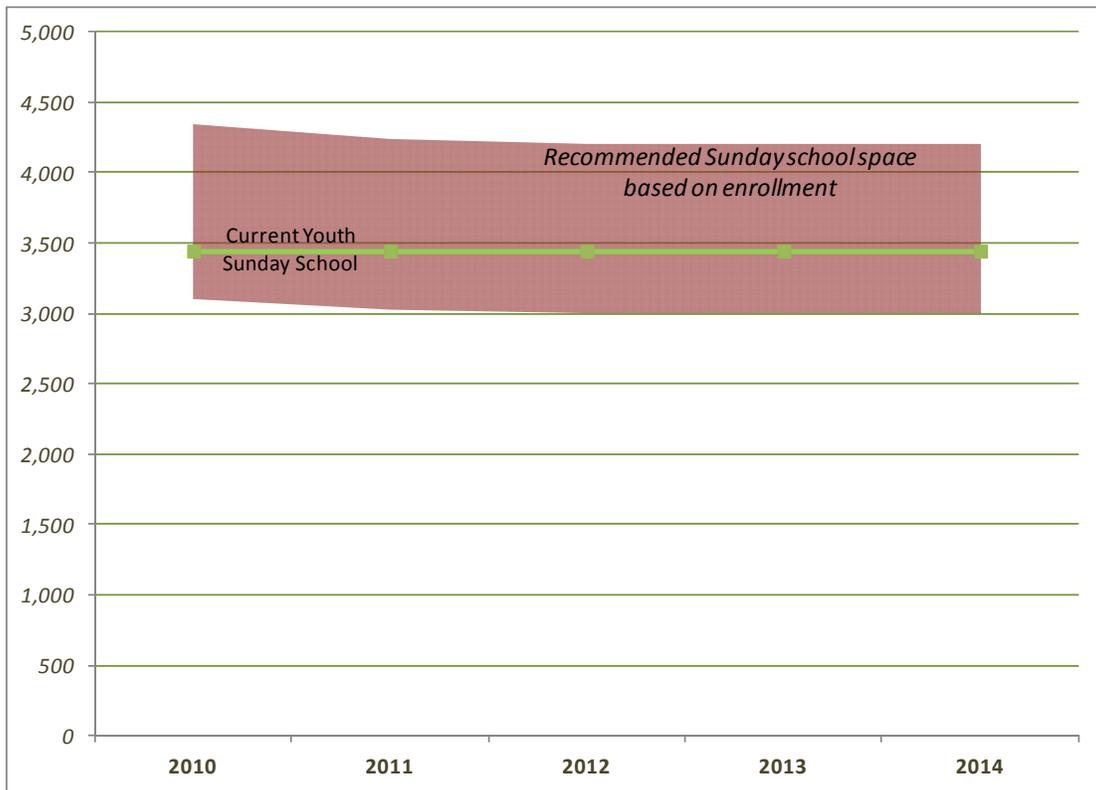


FIGURE 8. YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT VS. RECOMMENDED SPACE

Adult Sunday school attendance is not counted as well as it is for youth, but we estimate 60 to 75 people. Those classes meet in Room 109, two rooms in the Dean House, sometimes in the sanctuary, with off-site gatherings at a donut joint and private homes. (Neither off-site meeting is currently active, but both have been in 2014.) There is also a quilting class that meets in the coat room area between the kitchen and 109, and "Coffee and Conversation"<sup>8</sup> meets wherever.

The task force was not able to develop an accurate representation of how many youth or adults who attend the worship service stay for Sunday school; or how many youth and adults come only for Sunday school. There are no daily attendance figures for either Sunday school division that we are aware of. In a pinch (or absent the Dean House), these rooms could also be used for adult Sunday school: the steeple prayer room, the conference room, the preschool, and the sanctuary balcony. Each has drawbacks.

The church nursery is not technically part of the Sunday school—it is open during the worship service—but the room is less than ideal in several ways. The ventilation is lousy and the space is on the small side, especially given the propensity of parents to stay there with their children rather than returning to the service. There is a small restroom reserved only for nursery use, which is very useful, but neither that restroom nor the adult restrooms have changing tables.

Maybe the most pressing need in the current Sunday school rooms is the removal of old, possibly mold-harboring carpet from the downstairs classrooms. There is also a suggestion to remove interior walls on the second floor of the Dean House to create two rooms out of four, each of which will hold more people (indeed, hold the entire MYF), hopefully in time to accommodate a new young adults class beginning in March 2015.

### RENTAL/SHARED AREAS

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It is likely that the average member of the congregation is not aware of all the groups and organizations that use our facilities regularly and occasionally. As shown in Table 2, tenants are in our buildings no less than 90 hours per week. For a composite monthly building schedule, see Appendix I.

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<sup>8</sup> This is somewhat euphemistically listed as an adult Sunday school class, but basically involves people sitting around and chatting. Which is cool and all, but the people attending that class are not counted in the attendance estimate.

**TABLE 2. BUILDING TENANTS**

TENANT SPACE USE	HRS/ WEEK	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT- SUN	FT. <sup>2</sup>	RENT/ MONTH
<i>* INDICATES DEAN HOUSE</i>									
PRESCHOOL <i>EXCLUSIVE</i>	30	9–3	9–3	9–3	9–3	9–3		950	\$0
NEWBRIDGES <i>EXCLUSIVE</i>	40	9–5	9–5	9–5	9–5	9–5		800	\$500
PATCHWORK PANTRY <i>SHARED</i>	5			10–12, 6–9				6,000	\$100
EL CAMINO DISCIPULAR <i>SHARED</i>	3						6–9	5,000	\$0
THE TABLE* <i>SHARED</i>	3						4–7	1,000	\$0
SKYLINE LITERACY <i>SHARED</i>	4	6–8			6–8			2,700	\$0
BRIDGE OF HOPE* <i>EXCLUSIVE</i>	9	8–3	5–7					225	\$200
ROSETTA STONE	—							PARKING LOT	\$250+ SNOW
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>94+</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>\$1,050</b>

There are issues to be discussed elsewhere about how tenants in our building are managed, contracted, and selected. This report, though, is concerned with the spaces that the tenants use and with the degree to which tenants wishes and needs are to be considered in the course of renovations to the church physical plant. Community Preschool, for example, has enjoyed rent-free, dedicated quarters since its founding some thirty years ago by CMC members. There is no current rental agreement between CMC and the preschool, but in lieu of rent, the preschool makes in-kind contributions to church upkeep—the playground mulch, downstairs restroom cleaning, painting preschool rooms, etc. Some of these (the mulch, for example) are required for the preschool to operate but wouldn't necessarily be done by the church in their absence. The preschool has customized its space to the extent that it cannot be used for CMC children's Sunday school classes, though adult classes could meet there. The preschool uses some storage space exclusively, either through formal arrangement or the calcification of informal understandings.<sup>9</sup> The possibilities of making some of those spaces shared, rather than exclusive, become necessities in executing some of the recommendations made later in this report—and then the conversation returns to the aforementioned methods by which tenants are managed.

NewBridges, which logs the most hours per week of any tenant, has exclusive use of two basement rooms. The lighting and wiring there are less than ideal. NewBridges also received a grant from a downtown beautification group and used it to construct,

<sup>9</sup> For example, in addition to its classroom, the preschool has exclusive use of an upstairs storage room behind the chancel and additional closets. It also uses the fellowship hall for a rainy-day playground, and the downstairs restrooms, and another basement Sunday school room.

without prior design approval from CMC, a wooden arcade over the main exterior entrance to their offices (on the northeast corner of the building).

The loss of the Dean House would place the space used by the preschool and NewBridges among the areas that CMC needs in order to function barring additional construction. The Dean House is also home to The Table (Sunday afternoons) and Bridge of Hope (two days per week in exclusive space).

The task force does not know of any building or renovation requests from tenants except for the previously discussed issues surrounding the shared kitchen space with Patchwork Pantry. There are, of course, improvements that could be made, including better windows and a door in the NewBridges office. The task force was not favorably disposed toward spending a lot of money on improvements that would benefit only tenants—especially given the rent the groups pay, which again is not an issue for this report.

### CHURCH OFFICES

Regular office use, by day and hour. For a composite monthly building schedule, see Appendix I.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
CMC	9–11	9–5	9–5	9–5	9–5	9–5	
Also	Pastors' use outside of regular hours, conference room used for meetings						

Various sources recommend that a pastor's office should be between 250 and 350 square feet. The three pastors' offices at CMC are 140 square feet (Jennifer); 180 square feet (Jason); and 125 square feet (Dayna). The administrator's office, at 155 square feet, is within the suggested range of 150 to 225 square feet—barely.

In addition to size questions, the piecemeal construction of that area of the building has resulted in an odd configuration. The narrow hallway to Jennifer's and Jason's offices bypasses the administrator's office and was described in our discussions more than once as "creepy."<sup>10</sup> The janitor's closet, also located down that hall, is hard to reach and not central to much of anything, and the odor of the cleaning supplies should probably not be so close to anyone's full-time offices.

Prior to this task force's work, there was a plan drawn up to remodel that corner of the building, adding a family/accessible restroom on the main hall and creating a third pastor's office with a window near where the janitor's closet is now. This plan was tabled, and in the meantime, Dayna moved from her original office on the main hall to the "back office," the space west of the administrator's office, which has abundant natural light. Her previous (larger) office became a useful conference room.

Ideas for this area involve reconfiguring the administrator's office to make it the waiting area or entrance to all three pastors' offices.

<sup>10</sup> "Dim" is the value-neutral term, probably. Also, "narrow."

## ENTRANCES AND ACCESSIBILITY

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The parking lot at CMC (which occupies more than 40 percent of the land—see Figure 6) has about 55 parking spots. At recommended rates of 1 spot per 2.25 people, this accommodates approximately 125 people, or just more than half our average attendance. The parking lot as configured can be very tight, especially along High Street, if just one person doesn't pull up far enough or drives something really long. Rosetta Stone rents 25 spots for use during the workweek, and the eight spots along High Street are actually on city property.

Additional parking, however, is very much available. There is a municipal lot less than a block away, and a municipal parking garage less than 0.1 miles away. The developer who made an offer on the Dean House has also publicly discussed his desire to build a new parking garage at the corner of Old South High and Bruce Streets.

In short, it is silly to think that CMC does not have enough parking. Many churches in cities manage with no dedicated parking area at all. We feel that better instruction to regular attendees—including verbal instructions, Web page information, and improved signage in the parking lot—could make the on-site parking more available to those who truly need it. The signage would also help visitors and people at CMC to visit one of the tenants or participate in some activity.

The place a person parks determines where that person will enter the building. The only "accessible" entrance is at the ramp on the north side of the building. However, this ramp is not ADA-compliant—the slope is too steep.<sup>11</sup> Our ramp would need to be more than twice its current length to be compliant. Furthermore, the hall inside that ramp is narrow for wheelchairs, canes, or crutches—or even just two-way traffic.

The entrance is just the beginning of the list of church areas that cannot be considered accessible to people with disabilities. Neither main-floor restroom is fully accessible, and the basement restrooms are unreachable for people with limited mobility. The podium in the sanctuary is not accessible. The sound system in the sanctuary has only limited capabilities for hearing assistance. There are some large-print hymnals available, but the sanctuary lighting is borderline. The Dean House lower floor is accessible by wheelchair, but only via a circuitous route.

Flow through the church building would be improved by removing the bottleneck at the kitchen/fellowship hall corner and by making the south entrance (the original 1908 church entrance) usable. Changes to the ramp on the north side might also mean the bike rack has to be moved, and if the north entrance is improved, placing the bike rack there would make that entrance more used and also make the bike rack more visible.

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<sup>11</sup> According to rules written in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990—nearly 25 years old—an access ramp must have a slope no greater than 1 inch of rise over 12 inches of run. Some national religious organizations, by the way, lobbied Congress to exclude churches from the provisions of the ADA, claiming that religious buildings should not be considered "public accommodations." This claim, based on cost over theology, prevailed and churches are exempt from the ADA.

## ENERGY USE

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The building task force briefly discussed solar power and understands that a previous inquiry into solar panels on the roof indicated that the steeple is a shadowy impediment to such a process. We believe the question warrants further study, however.

There are two heating systems in the church—a furnace that serves the sanctuary and fellowship hall, and a steam system that covers the northeast part of the building. The furnace is old, but could last 20 years, or could completely die next week. (The Dean House oil furnace did exactly that last year, and was replaced.) The steam system is possibly in worse shape; there are leaks below the floor in the New Bridges area. There does not seem to be a good cost-benefit reason to preemptively replace the furnace, and the steam system would likely be replaced with something else. But in any case, the church should plan for what comes next, whenever that may be. A new heating system should account for the areas covered by both systems plus currently unheated and uncooled areas, like the kitchen.

An old building has many old windows in it. The sanctuary stained glass windows have been sealed in the last five years and covered with outer storm windows. Some efficiency improvements can be realized by replacing other windows or installing storm windows where needed.

## MEMORY GARDEN

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A memory garden is planned for the northwest corner of the church yard; the congregation approved the project in May 2014. "The purpose of a memory garden... is to dedicate an outdoor area for the interment of human remains of church members, their immediate family members, and non-members," the project's prospectus says. "Attractive landscaping would make the garden a suitable location to place the cremated ashes of the human body. It would be a place to meditate, remember and celebrate the lives of the persons whose ashes have been placed there."

The project's cost is estimated at \$38,000, including landscaping, an assistance fund, and two years' maintenance. Fundraising (through donation and the sale of "plots") is ongoing. Construction will begin when two-thirds of the budget has been raised.

Nothing in this report should conflict with this plan.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

We compiled, by church area, a list of all feasible projects, as well as some that weren't manifestly feasible. The complete list is in Table 3, with prioritization and a phased grouping of tasks later in this section.

**TABLE 3. ALL PROJECTS CONSIDERED**

AREA	DESCRIPTION
CHURCH OFFICES	Make the administrative office the entrance to all three pastors' offices
	Nameplates for Nitsuh's and Dayna's offices
	Paint Jennifer's office
	Remove unnecessary "creepy" hallway
	Natural light for administrator's office
	Conference room
ENTRANCES AND HALLS	Remove the glass-encased sign that one sees upon entering via the ramp
	Add outdoor signs for parking, entrances
	Make ramp at north entrance ADA compliant
	Make south entrance to fellowship hall more usable; extend outside platform, move playground fence back, new doors with crash bars
	Move bike rack to south side of church
	Widen hall at ramp entrance
	Improved lighting in hall by nursery and restrooms
	Add baby changing tables in restrooms
	NW stairs to basement are not safe. Hallway to NewBridges is substandard
	Double doors by memory garden; make it the main entrance for office and renters
	FELLOWSHIP HALL
Move door to kitchen south, opening up bottleneck to halls	
Improve flow for kitchen use/meals/coffee	
Repair or replace water fountain	
KITCHEN	Add bucket sink, cleaning supply closet
	Make an opening in the cloak room wall with cabinets below and above
	New dishwasher
	Two modular storage units
	Remove large upright freezer
	Refrigerator/freezer unit
	Add heating/air conditioning (also in fellowship hall)
RENTAL AREAS	Improved lighting in New Bridges. Enlarge window wells. New fixtures.
SANCTUARY	Modular railing that would make the platform accessible for people with cane, walker mobility
	Permanent (or semi-permanent) installation of projection equipment
	Improved sound system
	Improved lighting

	One location for all the sanctuary lighting switches.
	Build space on south side of church. See Muhlenburg Lutheran as example.
	Better use of front space
	Some way to provide extra seating and/or a way to separate the rear entrance from the fellowship hall
	Stained-glass window behind baptistery
	Stained-glass window in prayer room
	Move the sanctuary to a new construction on the NE corner of the building; redo current sanctuary for other functions
	Make platform accessible to wheelchairs
	Put hymnals under seats to eliminate hymnal racks
SUNDAY SCHOOL AREAS	Carpeting/other floor treatment in the lower-level children's SS rooms
	Move nursery to basement. Use paging system to call parents.
	Dean House: Remove wall between second-floor north-side rooms, and between south-side rooms.
	Remove refrigerators and range from second-floor Dean House kitchen
	Room 106 (Conference Room). Improve with artwork, other decoration
	Not enough good adult SS rooms
	Make entrance near preschool accessible to get to lower level

### ALREADY UNDERWAY, OR WILL BE SOON

The following items from Table 3 are already underway, or will be handled in the regular budget and work assignment process.

- Name plates and office painting
- Stained-glass window in prayer room. Need to replace carpet, paint, trim.
- Removing walls in Dean House second floor. Should be done before March 2015.
- Removing refrigerator and range from Dean House second floor
- Replace water fountain

### PHASE I PROJECTS

The building task force finds that the most pressing needs, for physical reasons of some importance, but also in moral and even scriptural terms, are those related to access to the building and as many parts of it as possible. The unencumbered use of the building, the way one can get where one wants to be, is of a piece with the many ultimately beneficial months the congregation spent discussing who exactly we would welcome to our fellowship. Such fellowship is of limited utility, when entire areas of the church cannot be used by all, or when limitations remain that prevent the most basic function of a church: gathering together as the body of Christ. Inclusion should not be the primary goal of a church—it is the basic condition under which a church should operate.

And that is not now the case. There are people who would lead worship, were it possible for them to ascend the three steps to the lectern. There are people who would

stay for Sunday school if they could only use the restroom after church. There are people who would stay for potluck if they had a place to sit. These include people now members of our church, and, we believe, people who might otherwise be a part of our body.

One day, CMC will want and need a new or expanded sanctuary, and though that day occasionally seems close, this is not it. Instead, the building task force recommends that our first phase of renovation resolve or alleviate issues of simple accessibility and the more complex issues of making the building, as a whole, more tuned to what we wish our church to be—not the building, but the church. While this set of recommendations makes the church more accessible, it also, not coincidentally, makes the church building more like us.

We recommend, to start:

- Removing the main-floor restrooms and building new, fully accessible restrooms at the current nursery location. If possible, the janitor's closet will be moved also.
- The nursery would move to the large, southeast Sunday school room in the basement. A restroom will be added on the wall that backs up to the existing restroom. A pager system will be purchased to give parents peace of mind while on another floor. The carpet throughout the basement will be replaced.
- The previous restroom site will be opened, expanding the fellowship hall by nearly 300 square feet, with one or more arches to facilitate the flow of people. If possible, the north wall of the fellowship hall will be returned to its original brick—the old structure emerging to enrich the new.
- The ramp on the north side will be made ADA compliant. This will make it necessary to move the bike rack to the south side of the building.
- The south entrance to the fellowship hall will be improved by adding a platform and code-compliant steps outside. The chain-link fence around the playground will be improved and moved closer to the play area.
- In the sanctuary, we will add a railing to the sides of the proscenium. We will improve the sound system and hearing assistance system. We will explore the installation of a permanent projector and easily setup screen. Light bulbs will be replaced with brighter versions. We will explore whether it is feasible to put all sanctuary light switches at the same place, or whether wireless switches can be employed.

Implementing this list is no small task, and significant questions remain. See "Next Steps," below, for some of those questions and concerns.

## FURTHER PHASES

After this first phase of work, we recommend assigning other tasks to specific commissions or for further study. This work and study could go on even while the Phase I work is taking place.

### KITCHEN

While some of the flow-of-people issues related to the kitchen may be alleviated by the Phase I work, the internal kitchen and kitchen/Patchwork issues will not. The Community Life commission and Hospitality committee should be given authority and budget to work to resolve these tasks:

- Purchase a dishwasher and refrigerator/freezer; remove old upright freezer
- Complete wiring improvements
- Allow Patchwork to obtain and place two modular storage units
- Add a bucket sink and cleaning supply closet
- Evaluate the benefits of opening a serving window on the cloak room side of the kitchen
- Placing additional wooden storage cabinets, like the one in the cloak room, in other locations in the cloak room/room 109
- Consider whether Patchwork Pantry and its clients are better served by relocating

### ENERGY

The building task force recommends that a specialized energy efficiency/Creation Care group be appointed by council to evaluate:

- Current energy usage and efficiency
- The condition of current building heating and cooling systems, and alternatives to them
- The feasibility and benefits of solar and other alternative energy sources

### CHURCH OFFICES

This area of the building is largely independent from other building considerations, such as the kitchen, sanctuary, and fellowship hall, in that projects in those are not likely to affect the office area. The building task force recommends that church council work with the pastors and Administration commission to consider these projects:

- Once the hall from the ramp is widened, what effect is there on the conference room, and what might be the best use of the remaining space?
- Will it work better to remove the narrow hallway to Jennifer's office and to turn the administrator's office into a common gateway/waiting area for all three pastors' offices?
- Would it make sense to move the administrator's office to the new conference room and put a window onto the ramp hallway? Or, in conjunction with the

Memory Garden project, would it be better to redesign the glass-door entrance on the west side of the church as a main during-the-week visitors' entrance?

## SANCTUARY

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The building task force recommends that outstanding questions about the sanctuary be turned over to Worship commission. These include:

- The chancel in the church is very deep and space is unused. Can the front of the church be redesigned or modified to use the space better? For example, one idea involves movable folding screens that could be used to bring the "back wall" of the chancel closer to the congregation.
- Consider stained glass in the large window behind the baptistery. This may involve changes to the baptistery doors facing the congregation.
- Should the church have a standing arts budget allowing for special projects or installations performed purely for the fact of their beauty and the effect on our thoughts and prayers in a place of worship? Where are the lines between function and decoration and art, and does it matter?

## FUTURE IN DREAMS: A NEW SANCTUARY

There is no right answer to this question: Does a church expand in order to grow, or grow when it has decided to expand? One can examine the question in miniature in this example: If we had more adult Sunday school rooms, would we have more adult Sunday school classes? If there is an answer to either question, it probably comes down to timing: Has the church decided that it is not averse to a larger worshipping body, and at the point when that decision becomes consensus, are there people who will come and fill the new space?

According to church records, CMC membership grew by 10 percent or more in each of the five years following the congregation's move to High Street, giving some support to the idea that if you build it (or trade for it), they will come. In 1992, CMC had a membership of 100.<sup>12</sup> In 2014, CMC reports 294 members. Of the eight Virginia Conference churches of 200 (average attendance) or more in 2011, only half had grown in the previous five years, with CMC the second-fastest growing.

Conversations about church growth conducted at CMC in recent years revealed some discomfort with growth, or at least uncertainty about what to do about it. In a survey taken in 2011, big majorities felt that CMC would continue to grow and that services were crowded at least sometimes. The survey offered four "ways to respond to growth": call groups to attend smaller congregations; plant another church; form another worship group at CMC; or renovate/expand facilities. Sending groups to smaller congregations and forming another worship group at CMC were the most popular

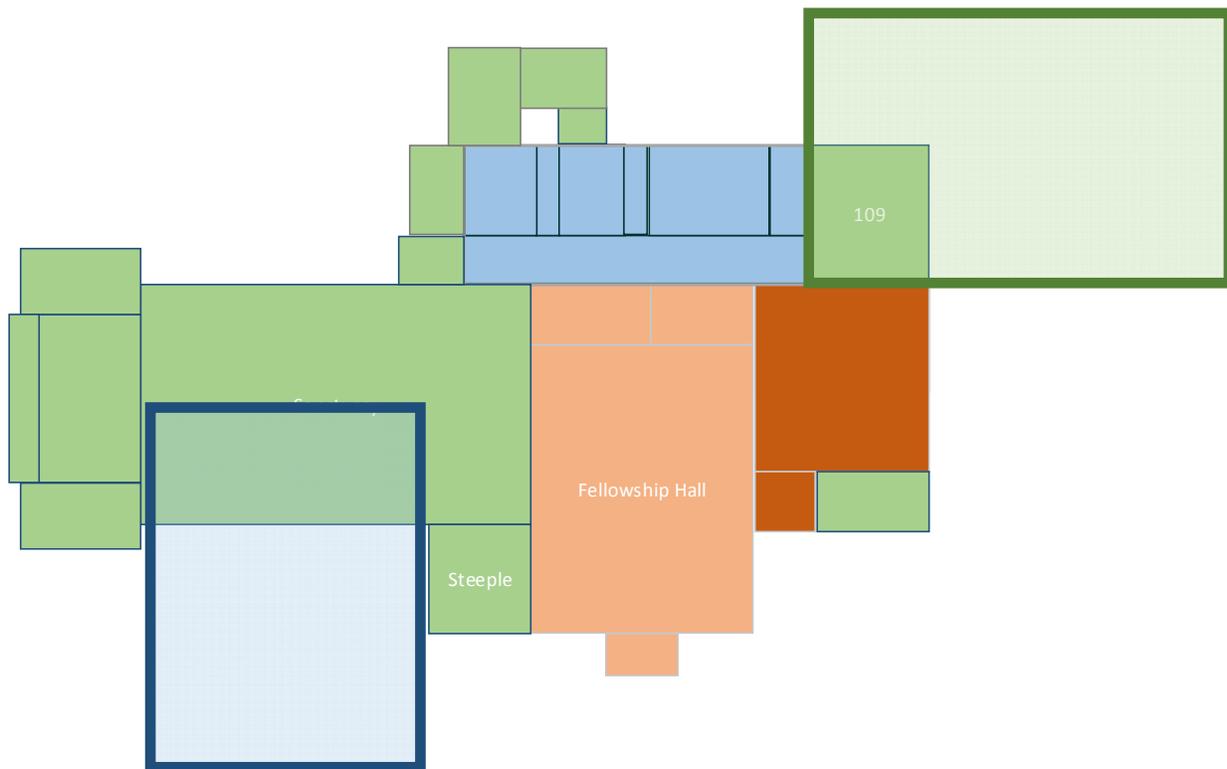
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<sup>12</sup> The average attendance reported that year was 280. With all due respect to whomever was counting or performing the calculation, this number and the 300 average attendance reported in 1993 are plainly wrong. We're not buying the 312 average attendance in 2002, either. That's basically the current Easter crowd every other week.

choices, followed by planting another church. Renovation garnered about half the support of the most popular choices, with a clear majority opposed.

That summer, pastoral team encouraged members to visit other congregations. There were few takers. There was an attempt in the mid 1990s to hold two services, but it was not successful and lasted less than a year. There has been discussion of that again, but the personnel and timing haven't yet been right to give it a try.

That's not to say these other options wouldn't work, and the building task force takes no position on their advisability. Instead, we will say that if and when CMC finds itself in need of more sanctuary space,<sup>13</sup> there are essentially two options at the current site. They are shown in Figure 9.



**FIGURE 9. POTENTIAL SANCTUARY SITES**

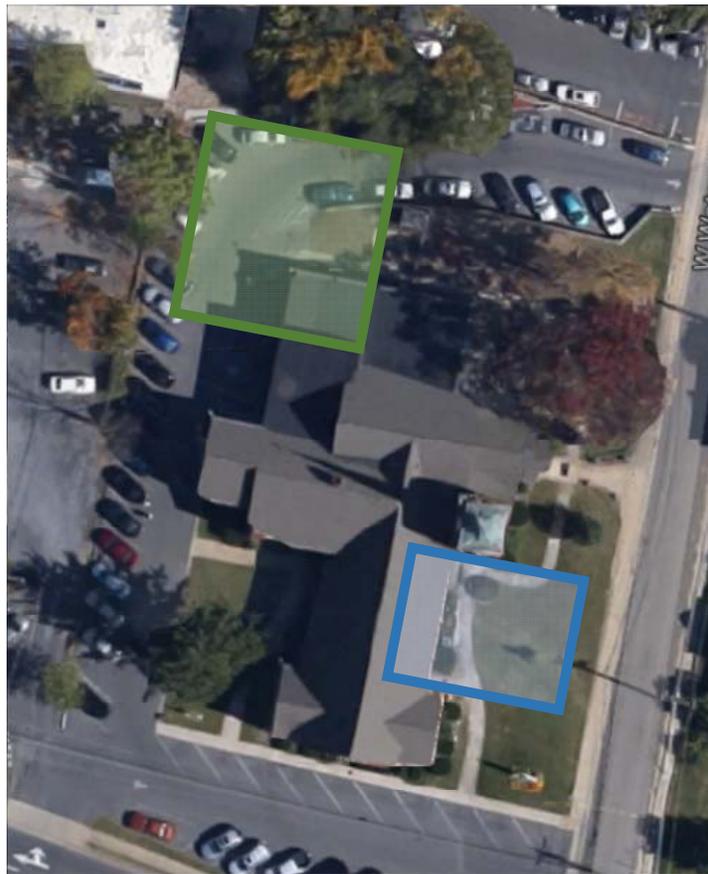
The first location, shown as a **GREEN RECTANGLE**, uses Room 109 as its southwest corner. Given the constraints of the property line, the addition could be approximately 50 feet by 75 feet, yielding sanctuary space of approximately 2,700 square feet. While this is only about 200 square feet larger than the current sanctuary, the configuration of the room plus balconies could enhance both capacity and the form of our worship service. This location could be built with a basement, providing more classroom and other space. And the current sanctuary could become more fellowship space or be used

<sup>13</sup> The building task force believes that this time is closer at hand than the survey results would lead one to believe.

in any number of ways. One drawback would be the elimination of our current parking lot's prime redeeming feature: the option to drive all the way around the building.

The second location, shown as a **BLUE RECTANGLE**, alters the southern half of the current sanctuary by building an addition toward Water Street (on existing lawn). Starting from the peak of the current roof, the addition could go approximately 45 feet from the current south wall and use the space from the prayer room in the chancel to the steeple, about 45 feet. This yields an additional sanctuary space of approximately 1,700 square feet, for a total of more than 4,000. Keeping the current altar area and balcony as part of the new space varies the visual possibilities and shows the new sanctuary emerging from the old; this evolution<sup>14</sup> would also show on the outside. An entrance hall or foyer could span the southern end of the new structure, and the sanctuary orientation would work in any number of ways. Like the Green version, this addition would include basement space.

The two suggested sites are shown in Figure 10 from another view.



**FIGURE 10. POTENTIAL SANCTUARY SITES (FROM THE AIR)**

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<sup>14</sup> In the strict biblical sense.

## NEXT STEPS

Hanging over this entire report is the question that precipitated the building task force's formation: What will become of the Dean House? As we have mentioned several times, the loss of the Dean House would cause space shortages in critical areas in the church building. The specter of the Dean House's ultimate fate has shortened this task force's definition of "long-term planning" and will continue to do so for our successors for as long as it remains unresolved. But while the loss of the house would have immediate consequences, depending on what was obtained in return for it (either cash or land or both) it could also open up a number of possibilities not explored in this report. For example, acquiring land to our north could mean we build a separate Sunday school or administration structure—just an example.

With that question remaining, we feel comfortable proceeding with the projects outlined in this report. We are not confident, however, how exactly this will work. For example:

- There was a consensus on the building task force that an architect should be involved. A CMC member, an engineer, is willing to solve the engineering problems inherent in the projects and to draw blueprints, but is not interested in the design of the renovations. Who, then, will say: we want this arch here, this wall treatment there, this fixture, this type of floor, and so on. We agree, however, that handling such decisions in a committee would be a disaster. At the very least, an architect should review and critique whatever plan we develop. Ideally, we would tell the architect exactly what we want and ask him or her how it should look.
- Some sort of project management will be necessary. The proposed Phase I items involve moving people from one room to another, and possible disruption to church and tenant operations. This will not coordinate itself. We recommend that a church member be asked to take this position, and that he or she be paid a stipend.
- Funding was not discussed in the building task force, and we respectfully dump this on the church council. While we made rough estimates of cost for each task (relative to other tasks), we do not have a detailed estimate of the work for Phase I nor a recommendation on funding. We suggest, though, that the accessibility issues are of a sufficiently past-due nature that borrowing for their execution should not be discounted.

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Wayland, John W. *Historic Harrisonburg*. Harrisonburg, VA: C.J. Carrier, 1949.

## APPENDIX 1. TYPICAL CHURCH MONTHLY USAGE

This calendar shows the events, meetings, and regular building use in a typical month.

CMC functions are shown in blue. Regular tenants are shown in red. Parking lot use is in green. Occasional uses are shown in orange.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
WORSHIP FELLOWSHIP MEAL THE TABLE SING	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES BOH ROSETTA SKYLINE LIT OUTREACH COM	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES BOH ROSETTA YOUTH COM PCRC	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES PATCHWORK ROSETTA MYF	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES SKYLINE LIT ROSETTA	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES ROSETTA	EL CAMINO
WORSHIP THE TABLE	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES BOH ROSETTA SKYLINE LIT	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES BOH ROSETTA WORSHIP COM SR FELLOWSHIP	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES PATCHWORK ROSETTA MYF	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES SKYLINE LIT ROSETTA MEETING FINANCE COM	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES ROSETTA	EL CAMINO MEETING
WORSHIP THE TABLE	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES BOH ROSETTA SKYLINE LIT	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES BOH ROSETTA MONTHLY GATHERING	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES PATCHWORK ROSETTA	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES SKYLINE LIT ROSETTA CHURCH COUNCIL	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES ROSETTA WEDDING REHEARSAL	EL CAMINO WEDDING
WORSHIP THE TABLE	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES BOH ROSETTA SKYLINE LIT	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES BOH ROSETTA	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES PATCHWORK ROSETTA MYF	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES SKYLINE LIT ROSETTA SAFE CHURCH	CMC OFFICES PRESCHOOL NEW BRIDGES ROSETTA	EL CAMINO

## APPENDIX 2. RECORDS FROM PAST BUILDING PLANNING EFFORTS

Records from the several previous building task force—like efforts at CMC were difficult to come by. There is a partial building blueprint developed by the Leroy Troyer Group in the 1990s; not coincidentally, this plan moves the restrooms to the current nursery space and opens the north wall of the fellowship hall, too, as the current Building Task Force proposes. That blueprint is in the church office; it was not found in the church, but was rather provided to CMC by Randy Seitz of Blue Ridge Architects, who worked for the Troyer Group at the time it was created.

### FROM 1995

A "Master Plan Committee" produced a summary pamphlet in January 1995 outlining recommendations for various aspects of congregational life, including "size and space." Dorothy Jean Weaver chaired the committee, and members who still attend CMC included Jennifer North Bauman, Jim Bishop, Harry Showalter, and Mim Yoder. This document is notable in its holistic consideration of both the building and the congregation—and in how some of its recommendations would not have been out of place in this current report twenty years on. It contains only a few building renovation suggestions, but offers some major options for accommodating the congregation during worship—including the formation of two congregations. It is included in total below.

#### *STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT*

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*We, the members of Community Mennonite Church, in seeking to grow toward greater faithfulness as God's people, commit ourselves to the ongoing process of discovering God's purposes for our congregational life. To that end, we set forth this Master Plan as a way to walk in obedience to God's call, as we understand it at this time in our life together. We call on all individuals and groups within the structure of Community Mennonite to subscribe to this document as a guideline for planning, growth, and decision-making.*

#### *CONGREGATIONAL DESCRIPTION*

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*Community Mennonite Church is a fellowship of Christians which seeks to know and to follow Jesus Christ in daily life. Members of the congregation subscribe to the covenant of Community Mennonite Church and to the Mennonite Confession of Faith as guidelines for faith and practice.*

*Listed below are some characteristics which describe us as a congregation at the present time. This is not a set of goals, it is only an honest picture of what we look like right now:*

- *As a church, we are relatively young (22 years old). This may contribute to our being "untraditional" or innovative, willing to try almost anything once.*
- *There is a disproportionate number of members in their 30s and 40s. Accordingly, there are a large number of children and youth in the congregation. There are relatively few retirees, but a growing number of young adults.*

- *Many members are affiliated with Eastern Mennonite University as students, faculty, or staff. Additionally, a large number of EMU students attend during the school year, without committing to membership. Involvement with EMU has the side effect of making us a people in transition, with a significant number of persons leaving and arriving each fall.*
- *Many adults in the congregation are professionals with a college education, with a large number of these persons in teaching or the helping professions.*
- *CMC historically has expected significant commitment from members, which is reflected in a continuing high level of involvement in congregational life.*
- *CMC values shared leadership, believing that everyone's contribution is significant to finding God's will for the church. The Pastoral Team is one expression of this shared leadership.*
- *CMC is rich in people resources, with many persons having leadership ability in a variety of areas.*
- *CMC members are people capable of seeing "the big picture." Many persons have had cross-cultural experiences, including living overseas for extended periods.*

#### CONGREGATIONAL MASTER PLAN

*As people of the "Great Commandment" (Matt. 27:37-40), we are called to love God fully and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We show love for God in our worship, love for neighbor in our mission and service, and love for ourselves in nurturing our Christian community.*

#### LOVE FOR GOD

*In light of our faith commitment and congregational character, we call ourselves to show love for God through worship in these specific ways.*

*We affirm the following strengths in our worship life and urge these practices to continue:*

- *We make specific connections between our worship of God and our daily lives.*
- *We have thoughtful and creative services that are well planned and led and we are open to new and non-traditional acts of worship.*
- *We encourage broad participation within our worship services, both in leadership and in congregational involvement.*
- *We hold the sharing time as an important part of building community in the context of corporate worship.*
- *We experience rich variety of music, both in congregational singing and special music.*
- *We include children in worship in a wide variety of ways.*
- *We enhance our worship through the arts, using banners, visual arrangements, drama, movement, and other artistic expressions.*

*We recognize areas which could be strengthened, and therefore we recommend:*

1. *That Worship Commission initiate a process each fall to enable modules to discern gifts for worship leadership and provide a way for modules to pass along any suggestions and concerns about worship at CMC to the Worship Committee.*
2. *That "Welcome to Worship" continue as a valuable part of our gathering in community. To make this time worthwhile, we ask worshippers to enter the sanctuary with a sense of reverence and enter promptly into the singing and worship experience.*
3. *That Facilities-Property Committee plan for structural modifications to physically separate the gathering space at the rear of the sanctuary from the worship space.*
4. *That the Worship Committee continue to plan an annual training workshop for those who do worship leading, scripture reading, song leading, children's stories, etc., and that congregational members whose gifts have been discerned in these areas be requested to attend these workshops.*
5. *That the Music Committee be encouraged to plan more special music appropriate to the worship theme.*
6. *That the Pastoral Team plan for an annual covenant class to be held in the Sunday school hour each fall quarter for persons who come to us from other churches (Mennonite and other-than-Mennonite) and wish to become members at Community. This quarter of classes would precede the annual Commitment Sundays to help prepare new members for making their commitment statements with the rest of the congregation.*
7. *That Worship Committee, Pastoral Team, and others involved in leading worship consider:*
  - *More frequent celebration of communion*
  - *Greater focus on confession—corporate and individual—within our corporate worship*
  - *Continued use of "healing" or "cleansing" services—times in which persons can publicly express their need for healing, desire for prayer, new or renewed faith commitments, etc.*
  - *Careful use of the "stand and greet your neighbor" routine, and*
  - *Regular or frequent inclusion of several minutes of (directed) silence at some point during the worship service*

#### *LOVE FOR OTHERS*

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*In light of our faith commitment and congregational character, we call ourselves to show love for others through mission and service. We therefore recommend:*

1. *That each fall Pastoral Team encourage the formation of at least three modules around a specific mission project, such as Friendship House, Mercy House, Patchwork Pantry, etc.*
2. *That every module commit itself to one explicit outward project/activity/outreach goal.*

3. *That the congregation canvass the immediate geographic area of the church with information and an invitation to Summer Bible School, one month prior to the event.*
4. *That the church make available a telephone, likely in the present library area, during church office hours for community persons who have no phone service to place local calls. A literature rack with information on area service agencies and programs will be placed in proximity to the phone. This public service will be evaluated after a three-month trial period.*
5. *That CMC households be encouraged to contribute at least 10 percent of before-tax income to CMC.*
6. *That the Evangelism and Outreach Committee study the implications of the new jail complex adjacent to the church and what our mission opportunities could be there.*
7. *That ministry to college students be strengthened in these ways:*
  - *That a covered dish meal be held early in the church year for college students and CMC persons having expressed interest in relating to them*
  - *That weekly van transportation be provided for students at specified times and places*
  - *That a sign-up sheet for college students (and other newcomers) be provided each fall to indicate interest in specific involvements in the congregation (could be inserted in church bulletin or back of hymnals)*
  - *That families be encouraged to "adopt" one or more students during the church year*
  - *That a Sunday school class especially for college-age students be considered, and*
  - *That any student who makes a verbal or written commitment to the congregation be encouraged to join a module for the school year.*

#### LOVE FOR OURSELVES

*In light of our faith commitment and congregational character, we call ourselves to show love for ourselves through nurturing our Christian community. We therefore recommend:*

1. *That we work at strengthening our accountability to each other—individually and corporately—by continuing to affirm the importance of annual Membership Commitment Sundays and to give priority to this event each fall; that every person who wishes full or associate membership be expected to give a verbal or written expression of personal faith and his/her relationship to Community Mennonite Church; and that these statements be accessible to the entire congregation.*
2. *That all persons committing themselves to full or associate membership become members of a module, and that the Module Formation Coordinator, in cooperation with Pastoral Team, make every effort to place every member or interested attender in a module by the time of fall Commitment Sundays.*

3. *That we affirm modules as basic units of congregational life that provide a place where we are accountable to each other, and that modules become safe places to discuss personal finances, gifts discernment, time management, etc.*
4. *That each module have a written covenant statement (goals) in place by December 1 and submit to Pastoral Team a brief written review of its activities of the past year by August 31. These reviews will be made available at fall retreat.*
5. *That Pastoral Team members take initiative to visit the modules they are responsible to shepherd twice a year for dialogue and interchange on module and church life.*
6. *That in order to be a more welcoming, inclusive community, modules sign up for three Sundays per year to be a host group for newcomers, visitors, or others who may be seeking a church home or deeper involvement in the congregation. This could take the form of sharing a meal or other expressions of hospitality. We further recommend that members of the host module be identified in the church bulletin and by wearing some type of identification.*
7. *That the module bulletin board continue to be a means of disseminating information about module life to the congregation and to newcomers and that space be provided in the fellowship hall for re-locating the module bulletin board at more accessible height.*

#### MATTERS RELATING TO SIZE AND SPACE

1. *Due to ongoing maintenance and renovation needs in our building, we recommend monthly work days be established, at least until all projects currently underway have been completed. We urge wide participation in these work days by CMC members.*
2. *In order to address current limitations in our physical structure, we recommend that consideration be given to reconfiguring the balcony/foyer area, in order to provide physical separation between the worship space and gathering space and to provide extra seating in the sanctuary; parking problems be addressed; update and improve signs to clearly indicate parking locations, entrances, important rooms, etc.*
3. *In light of recent trends in congregational growth, and in anticipation of further growth, we recommend that the congregation consider the following four options for addressing size and space issues. We recommend that the Council of Module Representatives develop a process and timetable by which these options can be explored and discerned, and by which a specific proposal will be presented to the congregation for action.*

#### **OPTION 1**

- *Keep working with the present congregational structure.*
- *Provide a van to transport EMU students and alleviate parking.*
- *Hold two fellowship meals each month, with a rotating schedule so everyone can attend one meal per month.*

- Evaluate situation in one year.

#### **OPTION 2**

- Have two worship services on Sunday morning with Sunday school between services.
- Persons chose services with an eye toward eventually forming two congregations.
- Sunday school, youth programming, and fellowship meals be shared by both groups.
- Fellowship meals on a rotating basis as in Option 1.

#### **OPTION 3**

- Form a second congregation which uses the same building, but at different times.
- Employ another half-time pastor for this congregation, and form a second pastoral team with one or two pastoral elders.
- Have separate Sunday school programs, but common youth clubs.
- Both Pastoral Team members would meet together regularly for support, coordination, pastoral leadership, etc.

#### **OPTION 4**

- Retain current congregational structure, but encourage groups of two or three modules to meet for worship separately from the rest of the congregation on the rotating basis during the times of the year with highest attendance.
- Sunday school participation would continue as usual—only the worship service itself would be held separately.

#### **MASTER PLAN FOLLOW-UP**

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- We recommend that once each quarter, for as long as deemed necessary, each identified committee or group report to the congregational vice-chair concerning the status of the recommendations assigned to them.
- We recommend that the Master Plan be reviewed and updated five years from the date of adoption.

## FROM 2000

In December 2014, the CMC Junior MYF sponsors distributed scrap paper on which members were supposed to write suggestions for an upcoming activity. Later, an unused scrap was found to contain the minutes for a November 2000 church council meeting that referred to a "Facility Master Plan." Here is the relevant portion of the November 16, 2000, minutes:

*2. Minutes #34 from the 26 October meeting were approved. The following recommendation was approved at our 31 October meeting and should be included as an addendum to those minutes:*

*The Church Council affirms the work of the Facility Master Plan Committee and recommends the adoption of the plan outlined in their October 29, 2000, document. Congregational adoption will require an 80% approval in a written vote taken between November 5 and 12, 2000.*

*If the congregation approves the Facility Master Plan, Council will appoint an Interim Project Committee, to oversee implementation of the Interim Phase of the Plan, as well as a Building/Finance Committee, to bring the implementation of the long-range plan. These committees work closely with the facilities committee and the administrative team. They will have some flexibility in determining the best way to implement the overall facility master plan.*

Further information and the Facility Master Plan itself could not be located.