



UPG PROPERTY ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATION Revised October 31, 2020

Recommendation

It is recommended that in order to fulfill the vision of the visioning report that all of the existing properties be sold, and a new property should be purchased to house the new community (Option 3 as per considerations below).

Background

In December of 2019, the people of the United Proclamation of the Gospel in Bethlehem, Light of Christ and St. Peter's, entered into a vote to become a parish. In the document shared in preparation for this vote the following was shared:

"If a "Yes" vote is cast in this process, the voter is sharing his/her desire to continue in our current arrangement with an understanding that the leadership of the UPG will be guided by the visioning report (dated February 12, 2019). This report expressed a desire, at some point in the future, to create a single congregation. A "Yes" vote does not necessarily say that you are prepared now to be a single congregation (a special congregational meeting would need to be convened for such)."

The vote endorsed becoming a parish by a count of 129 in favor of the proposal with 4 opposed. Based on this overwhelming vote the parish councils moved in January 2020 to form the first "UPG Property Assessment Team".

In February of 2020, St John's Windish Council approved a motion to investigate becoming a partner congregation of the UPG.

Ministry Team

The second UPG Property Assessment Ministry Team was formed as a sub-committee of the Transition Team to:

- Assess the current properties of the UPG parish and St John's Windish
- Determine the future needs of the UPG parish
- Make recommendations to fulfill the UPG's future needs
- Present findings/recommendation to the Transition Team

The ministry team is comprised of four members from each location to include Light of Christ, St. Peter's and St John's: Mike Horwath, Lou Dravec, Todd Jones, George Baltz, Richard Elterich, Jeff Nelson, Tracy Heberling, Kenda Riley, Kenny Remaly, Stephanie Skinner, Susan Vitez and Ron Leposa

The ministry team met several times to gather information, discuss options, complete an assessment survey, and formalize this recommendation by a majority vote.

UPG Future Needs

The future needs of the UPG parish are understood to ideally be:

- A sanctuary to worship 265
- Seven or eight classrooms for Sunday School
- Offices for ten (10) staff members
- Sanctuary and fellowship hall on the same floor for accessibility
- Outdoor worship space
- 140 designated parking spaces

Options

In assessing the future needs of the UPG parish, the property assessment team determined three options for consideration:

1. Continue in the current arrangement by using Light of Christ, St. Peter's, and St John's properties for regular worship and alternating between all locations for joint worship experiences.
2. Consolidate the UPG parish to one property (Light of Christ, St. Peter's, or St John's) and disperse the other properties.
3. Seek out a new, neutral property and disperse one or all existing properties.

Considerations

Option 1 – Continue the current arrangement

The current arrangement of the UPG parish presents several challenges to remaining a sustainable model long term, including:

- It is confusing for members to keep track of location and time for joint worship services.
- Sunday School is only offered at one campus. This forces families to make decisions on where to worship and sometimes does not allow a family to worship together in one location.
- The current schedule and alternating joint services between campuses is not conducive to welcoming new members.

Feedback gathered during small group sessions, held prior to the UPG parish vote in January 2020, indicate that many existing members across the UPG desire to hold more joint worship opportunities. The property assessment team feels the UPG is being

called by God to plan and take steps to move the UPG toward one congregation that worships under one roof.

Option 2 – Consolidate to one existing property

Each member of the current team completed an assessment survey of St John's Windish. The assessment survey compared with the previous report on the exiting UPG properties against ideal future needs. The assessment considered criteria across three categories:

1. General – Criteria related to the building, space, layout, parking, property condition, location, etc.
2. Sanctuary – Criteria related to the main worship space, including appearance, accessibility, organ, acoustics, HVAC, restroom location, etc.
3. Fellowship Area – Criteria related to the social rooms, including setting, location in building, kitchen, etc.

The team also considered the overall 2020 operating costs of St John's Windish with the previous 2019 operating costs for each property in the January 2020 assessment.

Each criterion was scored on a scale of 1-5, with 1=most ideal, and 5=not sufficient for UPG future needs. The assessment did not compare one building against the other. The individual scores were tabulated, and the summary results are shown in Attachment A. The Light of Christ and St Peter's scores were from the January 2020 Assessment Team.

The assessment of each property against ideal future needs of the UPG yielded in an average score, with a fifteen point difference between the three properties. The results indicate that while any property could be augmented to provide more ideal amenities to meet the future needs of one congregation, the team presently feels that one property would not adequately suit the needs of one congregation in the future.

One additional factor not easily quantified nor included in the survey is that of emotional attachment to one's church/building. Choosing to consolidate the UPG into one of the existing properties creates a win/lose situation that could alienate members of the church whose property is chosen to be dispersed.

Option 3 – Seek out a neutral property

Searching for a new, neutral church property can allow the UPG to move forward in a unified direction as one congregation, in a place where all members can feel a sense of belonging to their new church. In this scenario, all members of Light of Christ, St. Peter's and St John's will be moving on from their existing church building to a new church property. While leaving these three buildings that parish members have gained a sense of belonging to, this may create an opportunity for further unity as one congregation and allow members to see each other as truly belonging to one congregation and one church.

In looking for a new building, the UPG has an opportunity to find a property with amenities that better align with the future needs and desires of a new, combined congregation.