

November 7, 2006

From: Pete
To: Horizon Team

Subject: Building Recommendations

Now that that pledges have come in, I think “the time has come” for us to make our modified plans for church construction. The congregation has responded in very generous ways and we are grateful!. Our Annual Budget is underwritten in such a way that will make our upcoming ministry and missions work much easier. We will likely receive something like \$2.4 million dollars in pledges for the next three years to build our Hampton Park facility.

Now, I believe that we as a Horizon Team should make some recommendations to Church Council and subsequently to the congregation. As you know, if we had received our goal of \$3.3 million, with cost increases we would still be something like \$300,000 short of what we needed. With \$2.4 million, it is clear that we will not be able to do what was originally planned. Additionally, we need to do this in an expeditious fashion. Hopefully, approval will come soon from the county. The Bank is ready to help us, and we need to have our plan ready when all these things finally come together. We and the congregation have waited long enough!

With all this in mind, I would like to begin the conversation with several options that have come into my thinking. Let me stress that I see this simply as a beginning place to stir discussion and thinking about our options. I would recommend that Horizon Team take some time to review these options, add to them, modify them, and make a recommendation to Church Council which includes all the options discussed and what Horizon Team recommends. Church Council then can begin the process of communicating to the congregation the options and the recommendation, having a town meeting if necessary, and voting on the revised plan sometime in early to mid-December.

With all this in mind, let me offer what I see as four possible options. Some of these options are much more realistic than others but I think it is important that Council and the Congregation know that we have considered all of them because some of them, even though we don't see them as viable could be real enough in the minds of our church.

Option 1: Hold on until we have enough

In this option, we just put everything on hold. We wait until we can do things as we originally planned. We would collect money for another three years, have that money saved up, and then depend on another campaign three years from now to get us across the street with the whole package.

One advantage here is that the package is already put together, it is already paid for and all we do is move the execute date by three years. We would also end up borrowing less money for less time and save substantial interest.

The disadvantages are many. We lose momentum, building costs are only going to go up, and giving will likely drop to the campaign if we spend another three years doing nothing. Also, we will be three years behind in preparing for the many new people coming our way in the growing subdivisions who need Christ.

Option 2: Build the Sanctuary Only at Hampton Park

In this option, we only build a worship space. There are some advantages. First, we can do it. We save something like \$2.5 million which is in range of our checkbook and financing. Building a new worship space will attract many new people. Building a worship space will also be more attractive and exciting to many in the congregation. In these two campaigns, a new worship facility has been a high motivator for many who have given generously.

There are also many disadvantages. First, we are simply adding a similar space to what we have now. Newer, yes. More exciting, definitely. But in the end, we have the same number of seats in a better, more attractive building. Then, we become a three building campus instead of a two. We still have to pay the Woodlake Child Development Center for our tiny cold chairs and a gym that struggles with teaching because of acoustics. This option gives us no opportunity to enhance our discipleship which has struggled for years because of space limitations. We also lose the preschool, which has been a major attraction point for the community and the congregation. Finally, we will be pouring the majority of our efforts from two campaigns into a building which we have said from the start will be temporary. We receive very little available ministry space in this option. Basically, we do what we are doing now with two sanctuaries.

Option 3: Build the Discipleship Facility and Part of Worship Facility at Hampton Park.

This option was actually suggested as a possibility by the bank. Theoretically, we would build out the Discipleship Center and build the outside shell of the Sanctuary. We would finish out the sanctuary with another campaign or as money came in during the next couple of years.

There are advantages. First, we are building as much as we possibly can and still holding to the original plan. This would enable us to get into our current plan much sooner. If people see a sanctuary on the outside, it might be motivation to give and finish it out. We also don't lose all of the expected "bump" in attendance on opening. There is a sanctuary there, even if we can't use it yet. Also, the bank is interested in this option and indicated that they would like to help in making it happen.

There are clear disadvantages. First and foremost is the debt load. In only building one building, we are something like 2 million in debt at the end. With this max possible build out, I am estimating that we will be something like \$3.5 to \$4.0 million in

debt. Our next campaign will, by necessity be debt reduction and how will we be able to finish construction? Additionally, by the time we are ready to finish our temporary facility, we might really need the permanent larger sanctuary.

Option 4: Build the Discipleship Facility Only at Hampton Park

This option would only build the discipleship building at the Hampton Park campus. There are several advantages. Again, we can do this one. We would save, again, something like \$2.5 million by not building the sanctuary. This is in our range of financing. This would enable our preschool to go forward. This would enhance our discipleship work with all the classroom space. We would no longer have to use the WCDC and the inadequate facilities. We would save approximately \$25,000/year in rental fees. We still have worship options, including our current sanctuary. We are still a two campus facility instead of three. Construction time is likely reduced from a year to less (unsure about that one). We can plan now for technological options to enable communication (video, etc.) between facilities. Additionally, this option gives us more future options. After we finish construction, we may very well see that a temporary worship space is not advantageous for us. That \$2.5 million might be better spent in constructing a nice and large sanctuary and substituting a much less expensive “family life” center in lieu of this temporary sanctuary. We have always wondered if we were putting too much architecture into what was eventually going to be a sort of fellowship hall.

There are disadvantages. We could potentially lose our “bump” in membership which we have been talking about for awhile. Fewer people are going to come to the grand opening of a discipleship facility as opposed to a sanctuary. The congregation will likely not be as excited. Additionally, we will continue to worship in our current facility or somewhere else, which will not be optimum. Also, we have paid a tidy sum of money to our architects to design this space and we have worked hard planning it. This effort and these funds could be potentially lost.

Additional Options Under Option 4

In the event we choose this final option, there are additional decisions that will need to be made. This goes beyond the Horizon Team. If we build the Discipleship Center only, we will need to think about where we will hold worship. There are two potential options and we need to begin the discussion about this now.

First, we could continue to do exactly what we are doing right now. We could hold five weekly worship services here at the Woodlake Campus. Basically, we would simply hold the line, substituting our new facility for the Woodlake Child Development Center. There are advantages. We would not disrupt our current practice. We would be able to make a smooth transition. We could use technology to enhance communication issues between the two campuses.

If we continue worshipping at Woodlake, there are disadvantages. First, we must continue to staff five worship services. We can do this, but the weekend workload is not

easy on some staff and lay folk. Saturday night takes four to five staff to make it run. That means that those staff have no weekend day with their families.

Additionally, we continue with the limitations we have now. Our current sanctuary is not the greatest. We have a painted cross on the wall. Our acoustics are extremely limited. It struggles to be a holy space. It cannot comfortably contain all the people and parking is inconvenient to say the least.

There may be a second option here. We could move all of our primary worship to Cosby High School. There would be some risk and disadvantage. We move out of a (sort of) perfectly good building. We pay something like \$52,000 in rent to use a space when we already have one that works. We don't enhance the "holiness" factor that so many are looking for. We have multiple set up/take down/sound/childcare issues for something like three years. We don't know how people will react to being in a High School for three years when the excitement and newness wears off. We become a three building campus instead of two. It is always a pain to have to work with the schools. People may think we are taking a step back instead of a step forward. Also, we don't know if we could get the space. I have heard there are others who would like to use it, although they have not taken it yet.

Yet there are tempting advantages. We could move into a brand new, 920 seat worship space, complete with outstanding lighting, acoustics, and parking immediately for \$52,000 instead of \$2.3 million. There would be room for everyone. There would be ample parking. This would be a new thing that we could begin the same time as the opening of the Discipleship building and thereby take advantage of the "bump". We would be on two campuses, but Cosby High School is virtually within sight of our Hampton Park campus. We could still do childcare and nursery at the Discipleship Center and tie in to Cosby via live video of nursery areas.

Additionally, we have the opportunity to combine services. We could theoretically take off Saturday night and change 9:30 to our Connect/Contemporary service. This would free up a substantial amount of our talent and be able to offer more options to more people on Sunday mornings. We could still hold 8:15 at our current facility if need be. We could also have two Sunday school hours at Hampton Park giving Sunday morning discipleship options to more folks.

We could theoretically see how it goes for a year. If, as we expect, the increased space increases our worship attendance, we could then make a good decision about the next step of construction. It may be very obvious that a small temporary sanctuary becomes obsolete. Perhaps the congregation will be used to a larger space and ready to build a similar one on our own in lieu of the temporary facility.

Conclusion

Again, let me stress that these are my initial thoughts. I do not intend to be prescriptive but to begin the conversation. Many of these thoughts may be obvious but it is important to remember that we have been in this for three years. Many of the congregation will have not have thought about any of this and part of our role will be to bring people up to speed and to have thought ahead on the options that will be on their mind. Either way, I think it important that we begin the discussion soon. We have momentum that we have worked for three years to build. We don't want to lose it and we

cannot sit on this decision. I hope that this is helpful and helps us to make careful and prayerful decisions. I am certain that God is in the front of all of this!

In Christ,

Pete