

10.31.2018

MEMO

To

ECOB Congregation

Greetings Friends,

From

Building Team

We wish to share with you information that we have gleaned and discerned from the Define Stage of our building process.

Re

Define Stage Information

WHAT IS THE DEFINE STAGE

As you may have been following, ECOB, since April, has been going through a process to determine how our facilities are in line with what God may be calling our church to do. We believe we have a good framework for what God has called us through – due in part to our vision, mission, and purpose statements as well as the strategic plan we believe God has led us to. To understand further what God may be calling us to as a congregation, over the last two years, we have been intentionally listening and discerning next steps for our congregation's future.

As the Leadership Team (LT) has been patiently praying and listening to God in addition to listening to the congregation, there has been an overwhelming sense that God is calling ECOB to engage in the community more and more and that our current facilities are not able to meet those needs. The Define Stage (Define, Design, Develop, Do) is now completed. We have taken this stage to seek input from the congregation through Congregational Listening Sessions, Home Visits, and Survey. There were about 30 people who attended the Listening sessions, 50 who attended the Home visits and 150 people who participated in the surveys. This is an amazing outpouring of conversation and interaction from the congregation.

WHAT WE LEARNED

We learned that there is a lot we have in common and things that we don't always see eye to eye on. We are sure that is something that most churches must walk through, especially when it comes to the building.

We agree that this is to be bathed in prayer – that whatever we discern to do, that God is at the center and that God is the focus. That anything we do is to be about the kingdom and not about us.

We agree that this is going to be difficult – that we will have disagreements and perhaps not always connect on everything, but we are willing to walk together – relationships are important to us – more than this building.

Ephrata Church of the Brethren

We agree that our facility needs to meet what God is calling us to – to our mission, vision, and purpose.

We do not agree on some of the results of this project. There are always opinions as to how things should look and feel, and we will not always be together on that. Different people highlight different needs and that is great, because we need all perspectives. It is how we walk through those perspectives together that will define our lives together and our discipleship as followers of Jesus.

RESULTS

What are people concerned about?

We understand that surveys can be interpreted and read in many ways. We also understand that some people did not fully understand the questions – or – chose to not answer the questions. Either way, with the amount of people responding (almost 50% of our worshipping body), we believe we can safely share that we have some great information.

As we asked questions about how people felt about our facility, specifically, about certain aspects of our facility, we came to understand there were a few places that our congregation has concerns about.

1. There is little place in our facility for our congregation members to connect to one another – or have spaces for developing friendship and fellowship in the body (77%)
2. That our facility is not a welcoming place to be (please note we said our facility – we realize that our people are very welcoming, but that was not the question) – not easy to navigate, looks dated and old, not environmentally friendly – does not allow for easy flow of people – signage is poor – design issues (73%)
3. Our current facility does not meet the needs of what God is calling us to do through mission and ministry (74%)
4. Our heating and air conditioning is not adequate (78%)
5. We have an aging facility that needs an update (76%)

What are we called to do?

Through prayer and input from the congregation, we sense that, in order to accomplish the mission God has set out for us, that we need to address the following aspects of our facility. Numbers beside indicate where, on average, people ranked the priority (out of 13)

1. HVAC – 2.9

2. WORSHIP – 3.9
3. SPACES FOR PEOPLE TO CONNECT – 4.8
4. DESIGNATED (SEPARATE) KID-MIN SPACE – 5.3
5. ATMOSPHERE UPGRADES – 5.5
6. BATHROOMS – 4.3
7. KITCHEN – 5.9

We know that there are other items that were mentioned, like, classroom space, offices, safety, parking lot, ADA compliance and others. In looking at the main list, we recognize that some on minor list may need to be addressed to accomplish the main list items.

How are we called to help?

We also looked at how the congregation was willing to participate in this process, either through prayer, resources, or service. We discovered that 99% of those who took the survey will pray, 93% are willing to give financially, and 80% are willing to help serve in some way to help offset the costs.

Overall, we are ready to move forward in the Design Stage of our process. You will be hearing more about this in the weeks to come; however, please keep open the following dates for your opportunity to give specific input into the process.

November 4 and 18 – 12:30pm – 3:30pm (lunch and child care provided)

With the letter that was sent out a couple of weeks ago and this letter here, we pray that you have been informed about where we are in the process and how we are moving through this process. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Martin Kyper or Pastor Brian. In the meantime, please be in prayer for how you can participate in making God's mission for ECOB a reality and how our facility can help bring a greater kingdom impact for God in the community of Ephrata.

All for Jesus,