

**“Listening Session”**  
**Sunday, July 8 and Wednesday, July 11**  
**Regarding Building Priorities**  
**in Response to the Building Priorities Needs Task Force**  
**Convened by Gay Hatler, Spring 2012**  
**at the request of Moderator Nancy May and Senior Pastor Chuck Blaisdell**

**Task Force Scope:**

--After input from staff, Facilities Committee, Executive Committee, and General Board to prioritize into long, medium, and short-range priorities (with understanding that short-range hopefully means by the end of 2012)

-Keeping as the first criterion for assessing and prioritizing the congregation’s Vision and Mission Statement:

*“We seek to be a congregation where spiritual growth is the norm, where growing in faith is expected, and that expects and respects a diversity of opinion. We will be a community of faith, **radical in hospitality**, outrageous in generosity and joyful in service to God and neighbor.”*

with priority attention given to how or building does or does not aid in being “radically hospitable”

**Historical Context:**

--FCC’s building has a long history of changing in response to congregational needs, mission opportunities, and hospitality needs. E.g., originally the education and main church buildings were not connected. There were no handicap-accessible restrooms. The fellowship hall (then in the basement) was neither adequate nor accessible; the kitchen (also in the basement) was inadequate for congregational hospitality. What is currently the parlor has not always been that space and the library was located elsewhere in the building. The north doors were not the main doors, but became so upon the improvements a decade ago. The chancel area in the sanctuary was completely remodeled (and the organ added) to better serve the value of spiritual growth. **Clearly, in the past, FCC folks have responded to the mandate that the building needs to serve the mission, never vice versa.**

--In 2007, there was a “Design Team” that also did some thinking together about some of these sorts of issues. The current “Building Priorities Needs Task Force Report” (below) agrees with and appreciatively builds on (pun intended) several of their key insights (even if some of the specific proposals are different, in part because the congregation’s “Mission Statement” that the Design Team was using was superseded by the “Vision and Mission” Statement”):

--Building projects must be based on “spiritual needs.” Hospitality is one of those!

--The Parlor/Library in its current incarnation does not serve our spiritual values well of hospitality and “welcoming-ness”

--Some of the “history displays” need to be in a better space.

--The narthex and area across from the welcome center is dark and not welcoming

### **Report of the Building Needs Priorities Task Force.**

Three main short-term priorities:

1. Re-model the “I Do Room” into an attractive, functional, state-of-the-art (AV and computer projection, e.g.) conference room. Could also then be used – radical hospitality! – as a venue for other non-profits to do small day or half-day retreats. A \$10,000 gift has been pledged to this effort!
2. Re-model the narthex. The carpet is dark and increasingly on the verge of being a safety issue. The lighting is dismal. It is not at all “welcoming.” Re-do the floor and lighting treatments.
3. Parlor/Library. In its current incarnation, is based on the assumptions of another era. It is not welcoming, it is not “family-friendly,” it is not child-friendly. It does not serve our evangelistic mission of radical hospitality. It needs to be completely re-done with an eye toward a) making it a space that visitors and others with children would feel comfortable repairing to during worship with a fidgety child. Needs to have a much less “formal” feel. Furniture needs to be more accessible and inviting, with a children’s corner. 90% of the books should be removed. The Senior Pastor portraits (along with other historical memorabilia should be re-located to a new “Heritage Room” that would be created in the current children’s library (on the mezzanine

overlooking Fellowship Hall) or another suitable location to be determined. This will allow much better visibility of these and other (currently filed away) historical materials.

### **Funding:**

The Trustees have committed \$25,000 of the “signing bonus” received from the leasing of the church’s mineral rights on the land in Kiowa County. With the anonymous gift of \$10,000 for the “I Do Room” remodel, this totals \$35,000. The Trustees specified that the expenditure of such money for these projects will be under the direct accountability of the Executive Committee in consultation with the Senior Pastor.

### **Next Steps**

1. Report and Listen (today’s effort)
2. Moderator appoints a “project manager” for each of the three projects. This project manager will then, as needed, involve others in design and building work.
3. The overall process will be under the direction of the Moderator in consultation with the Senior Pastor.