

Dear Friends,

At our meeting, last Sunday night, the Session voted to recommend to the congregation that we sell the Youth House and the adjacent lot.

For the last 9 months, a facility planning group has been working on a master facility plan. That group will be presenting a proposal to the Session in August to make additions and improvements to our current facilities which will allow us to support and grow our mission and ministry. After feedback from the Session on this proposal, we will hold a series of small group meetings in the Fall to share those plans with you.

Both our facility planning group and Christian Education staff have concluded that we can accommodate the needs of our youth and other ministries without the Youth House and the adjacent lot. Before the facility planning group started, we spent 18 months exploring options for the Youth House, but ran into several challenges. The renovations needed to bring the building up to code were more expensive than the value of the property. In addition, a significant number of neighbors expressed concerns about adding parking in the adjacent lot, which the building code requires.

For all those reasons, the facility planning group recommends selling the youth house and adjacent lot as soon as possible. We considered waiting until we can share the plans for additions and improvements to our facility, but the Administration and Finance Committee and the Session believe it is better to move forward with the sale now to take advantage of favorable market conditions and to repay debt that was incurred purchasing the property.

In the Presbyterian Church, most decisions are made by the Session, but there are a few decisions which need approval by the congregation with concurrence by the Presbytery such as calling a pastor, electing elders, and buying or selling property. So, the Session has called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, August 13, 2017 after the 9:30 and 11:00 worship services during which the Session will seek authority from the congregation to move forward with selling the property. The final terms of the sale will also be approved by both the congregation and the Presbytery.

During our "Next Steps" small group meetings last fall, I had a chance to receive feedback from many of you about various aspects of our life together as a church. Plans for the Youth House came up at many of those meetings. The consensus I heard was that if we do not need the Youth House, we should sell it. We are now acting on that consensus.

If you have questions, concerns or suggestions, please contact me by email, phone or call me to arrange a meeting with you.

Your pastor,

Ernie