

MAXIMIZING CONFERENCE VITALITY

Submitted by The Reverends David Felten, Doug Handlong, Mary Bullis (retired), Jeff Procter-Murphy, Dan Hurlbert, George Cushman (retired), David Rennick, Candace Lansbury, Evelene Navarrete, Joel Bullock, Matt Ashley, Mike Kerr-Osman, and Bob Mitchell (retired); and Mr. David James (UMM)

The Conference Board of Trustees supports exploration of the possibility of selling the Conference Headquarters building and moving Conference office operations to Central United Methodist Church or another appropriate local church in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

“Through our collective sharing and work together, we have come to understand that each ministry setting is unique and requires a plan for transformation that is authentic to its identity and context.”¹ Living into the vision of being a courageous church in uncertain times, we are inspired to re-examine our collective resources—especially our brick-and-mortar resources—in order to maximize the vitality and effectiveness of our conference and transform our shared ministry.

Acknowledging that our Conference owns an office building in an increasingly desirable residential area and has received at least one inquiry into the possible sale of that property (May 2015)² and acknowledging a small income stream from the leasing of space to other organizations (approximately \$8,000 per year)³ and acknowledging that the net building cost for 2017 was \$115,000⁴, and

Acknowledging that the historic Central United Methodist Church:

- has a large, underutilized facility with multiple flexible office and meeting spaces (including spaces for small to large worship and other events), and
- is in a prime, accessible location (adjacent to light rail and convenient freeway access), and
- has an onsite state-of-the-art digital video studio, and
- is at the heart of a newly revitalized downtown cultural, educational, and residential neighborhood, and,
- offers a meditative, reflective, and outdoor-event-ready courtyard, and
- has plenty of parking, and
- is the site of the founding conference of the Conference, and that
- the trustees of Central United Methodist are open to negotiating usage agreements with the Conference, and that
- the CFA of the DSC has already discussed the possibility of “downsizing” the Conference office, and that
- revenue from the sale of our current Conference Center would be used for renovations necessary to convert existing space at Central United Methodist, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Desert Southwest Conference, represented by a committee appointed by the Bishop, will explore the viability of selling our existing Conference Headquarters building and moving Conference operations to Central United Methodist Church. A report of this committee outlining advantages, disadvantages, and recommendations will be made no later than the 2019 Annual Conference of the Desert Southwest Conference.

The Conference Secretary has the ability to make editorial changes that do not change the intent of the petition.

¹ Desert Southwest Conference “Initiative for Growth and Vitality”

² Via Treasurer Randy Bowman (2/26/18): An offer was received from the developer building apartments North of the Meadowbrook property. The offer was for \$2,250,000 and was contingent on them also acquiring the two office buildings contiguous to us (which they ultimately were not able to accomplish).

³ Via Treasurer Randy Bowman (2/26/18): Rent from the Credit Union is \$8,000 per year. Our other 2 tenants (the Foundation and Arizona Faith Network) are provided space rent-free.

⁴ Via Treasurer Randy Bowman (2/26/18)