



**FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
CLEBURNE**

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FIRST NEWS

A Note from Pastor Daniel

"We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us!"

1 Corinthians 3:12 (The Message)

There are many days in which I hold onto these words of Paul as one of the great promises of God. When fog clouds our vision, or — as other translations of this text put it — when we “see through a mirror, dimly” there is the promise of clarity. One day we will see God face to face. The fog will lift and we will know God just as he knows us. **What a day that will be!**

We know that Paul is speaking about our connection to and knowledge of God in these words, and this is the primary reason that it is one of the great promises I hold on to. That being said, over many years in the church, I have discovered that these words of Paul often provide the best description for how a big project comes together. We begin in the fog with a God inspired idea, convicted of the need for the project, but fuzzy in the details. Through prayerful discernment, God’s guidance and no shortage of hard work, the fog begins to lift and clarity begins to come.

This fall I shared with you the God-inspired idea for renovating our narthex and other hospitality spaces to create a space that says “you belong here” to every generation. I’m happy to report that the fog is lifting, details are becoming clearer, and plans are nearing completion.



Now that we are here, I wanted to give you a preview of the next couple of steps in this process. Once the plans are completed and the documents are done, they will be sent out to get bids from contractors. This will give us clarity on the specific cost of the project. At this point we will host a town hall like meeting in which we share the completed plans, costs, and name how we are asking you to partner to help make this happen. Further communication will be forthcoming as this timeframe gets closer.

As I’ve said previously, we intend to fund a significant part of this project from undesignated reserves (while maintaining more than adequate reserves to insure ongoing financial health) as an expression of thanksgiving for all of your faithfulness over the last two years.

I’m thankful all of our faithful leaders who have helped us get to this point, and I’m proud to be your pastor.

Grace and Peace,

Daniel



TREND SUMMARY

Financial Trends: Through 12/31/2021

2022 Giving: \$771,843
2022 Expenses: \$676,887

Average Worship Attendance 228

General Fund Balance: \$241,184

Spring 2022



DATE	WHAT?
1.12	SPRING MIDWEEK RETURN
2.11 - 2.13	WINTER CAMP AT GLEN LAKE CAMP
2.16	LOVE IN ACTION (MISSIONS MIDWEEK)
3.16	STUDENT OUTING (no evening activities)
4.6	GAMES & HANG (we know it's STAAR testing)
5.4	SENIOR NIGHT
5.11	SCHOOL'S OUT PARTY (final Midweek)
5.25	FAMILY SUMMER KICKOFF
6.5 - 6.10	MISSION TRIP: DESTINATION SAN ANTONIO

MIDWEEK WEDNESDAYS
6:30PM DINNER & HANG
7:00PM WORSHIP
7:30PM SMALL GROUPS

A Note From Keith Whitworth, Church Council Chairperson



Welcome to 2022! My life scripture for this year is Habakkuk 1:5, “*Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.*”

Habakkuk, the 7th century prophet, is having a conversation with God during a tumultuous time for the Hebrews. God reassures Habakkuk that He has amazing things in store for His people. Even if God told him what was planned for their future, they would not even believe God.

Wow! Believe it or not, this same promise applies to FUMC and YOU!

As the new Chair of the FUMC Church Council, I am excited about planning for 2022. God has amazing blessings in store for our church. In fact, if He told us about his plans, we might be tempted to say, “Really, I can’t believe that could happen at our church. We are just a small church trying to navigate a

pandemic.”

Therefore, as we plan, let’s have the expectation of God doing amazing things in the life of our church, members, and community. The FUMC Church Council will be working on developing a detailed vision for our children, youth, and adult ministries. Your input will be instrumental during this process. We want to hear your insight and your vision for FUMC!

We are using the below framework for planning and implementation.

Pray – We begin with asking God for His vision for our children, youth, and adult ministries so that we can fulfill the FUMC mission of “*Making deeply committed disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, one life at a time.*” We are committed to spending time in prayer to seek God’s vision. One of FUMC’s strengths is our prayer ministry and commitment to prayer. **Will you begin praying for God’s detailed vision for our church?** (Proverbs 15:29; Matthew 18:19-20; 1 John 5:14-15; Psalm 145:18)

Plan – This is the nuts and bolts of planning – moving from the vision to the specifics. How do we specifically accomplish God’s vision? What new ministries and programs do we need to create or alter? How do we measure whether we are successfully carrying out the vision for our ministries? **Will you consider joining us in the planning process?** (Proverbs 16:3,19:21; Luke 14:28; Jeremiah 29:11; Psalms 20:4)

Plant – It will be important to clearly communicate the vision (sowing the seeds) within our church and community. Everyone should know the vision for each ministry and what to expect if they participate in any ministry within FUMC. We must sustain this communication through signage, media, handouts, and announcements in our services. **How can you help plant the vision?** (Proverbs 25:1, 29:18; Habakkuk 2:2,3; Matthew 5:13-16)

Plug-in – One important key to church growth is creating opportunities for connection. We are proposing a **CONNECTION Booth** in the narthex that offers First-Serve opportunities, which are time-limited opportunities for service and ministry. This provides easy entry into plugging into our church.

We are proposing a one-hour **CONNECTION Class** that communicates the vision of the church, assesses the individual’s spiritual gifts, introduces opportunities for training to use one’s gifts, and provides information about First-Serve and long-term opportunities for service and ministry.

Are you ready to plug-in? If you are already plugged in, are you ready to help others plug-in? (Proverbs 22:9; John 3:18; James 1: 23-25; I Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:25)

Push – This reflects that it will require effort and time by the Church Council and church members to develop and implement God’s vision. We can’t overburden our pastors and staff to accomplish this on their own. The Church Council will work together during monthly meetings to pray, develop, implement, and measure progress. **Will you join us in pushing (working) toward our goals?** (Proverbs 14:23; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 4:13; Psalm 90:17; Hebrews 6:10)

Pivot – A key component of planning will be to gather ideas from church members on how we can accomplish the visions we have developed through our prayer process. Any idea is welcome. Let’s be creative and try new ideas. In essence, let’s throw ideas against the wall and see what sticks. We can always pivot and decide it did not work and then try a different idea. **Once the visions are developed, will you share your creative ideas?**

Snapshots For December



PrimeTimer’s Christmas



Angel Tree



Methodist Men Coat Drive



Kid’s Christmas Pageant



FUMC Staff



Christmas Eve

A Note From Keith Whitworth, Continued

In summary, the framework involves:

Pray, Plan, Plant, Plug-in, Push, Pivot

I shared this framework during the January Methodist Men’s breakfast. The feedback was positive and it generated an air of excitement. One comment stood out that I sincerely appreciate. The individual said, “Let’s make sure our planning is scripturally based.” I wholeheartedly agree. The beginning of the process is bathed in prayer and we should look to scripture as we move through the process. Above are scriptures that are directly or indirectly related to each phase of the process. I hope that as you read the scriptures that you will ask God to open your heart and mind to his wisdom and guidance.

I am trusting that God will perform amazing things for FUMC during 2022, and it will be even more amazing knowing that it was divinely inspired and accomplished during a pandemic. When many others will be overcome by inertia, FUMC will be moving forward making disciples and serving our community. Thank you in advance for beginning to pray for a detailed vision. My prayer is:

“God, we know you want us to make deeply committed disciples and transform the world, so please give us your wisdom and insight on how we can develop a vision for our children, youth, and adult ministries that accomplishes this in amazing ways at FUMC and within our community.”

Thank you for reading my long missive and please don’t hesitate to contact our pastors or me at k.whitworth@tcu.edu if you have questions or want to join with us in prayer and planning.

In His Service, Keith Whitworth
FUMC Church Council Chair

