

Proposal Regarding the Relationship between Minnehaha UCC and Spirit of the Lakes UCC

As passed by both communities on October 25, 2009

Joint worship that includes communion every week

- Barb H, Bruce F, Pastor James, Patsy P, David L, and Jim C from SOTL met with Judy S, Cindy W, and Bob M from MUCC to begin joint worship discussions. It was a very collaborative meeting.
- This team will continue to meet and plan our new worship services. Ideas or input are welcome.
- The highlights of the first meeting include: we have very similar theology, we agreed to weekly communion, we will ensure the worship service is welcoming for new attendees, we will solicit input from as many people as possible, we will provide several methods for people to share joys and concerns, we will determine what is precious and comfortable to both communities and ensure we have these included in the new worship service.

Share staff

- SOTL and MUCC will share James and David as the pastor and minister of music for our combined community.
- The plan is to move James from current $\frac{3}{4}$ status to full time at conference guidelines.
- We will have volunteer office staff to start with and plan to hire a part time office manager at a point where it is financially viable.

Share building with collaborative and on-going discussions about the space

- We will create a process to share with everyone any ideas raised on how to live together at MUCC.
- We will be transparent with all changes and have a method for individuals to share feedback about changes (e.g., suggestion box, retreat, collect written feedback after service).
- We will try different areas and methods for conducting service.

Share programming, including Christian Education

- Programming has not been planned at this point

Separate finances

- See the last page of this document titled: Financial Plan Expanded

Close SOTL building

- Move all things out
 - some to MUCC and storage, some to recycle, some to trash, sell some
- Close building in preparation for proposed December demolition for PRG project if approved
 - drain water pipes
 - shut down electric, water, gas
 - continue snow removal and space maintenance as required

Separate councils, possibly a joint operations group or other joint group with representatives from each council, open meetings

- SOTL and MUCC will have independent councils meeting at current time and frequency.
- The council members will determine a method to share information/solicit input across councils.

“Courageous Conversation Circles” and possibly quarterly retreats

- These Circles would be opportunities for education, personal healing, and dealing with issues that come up as we live together as “Sisters.”
- The Circles would be frequent (especially at first) and be for a variety of demographic groups.
- Quarterly retreats will be considered as a means for developing community and individual relationships.

Intentional ongoing assessment of the relationship (standing agenda item at every Council meeting)

- This assessment will take place formally at Council and Community meetings and informally through conversations and other feedback.

There will be a means for immediate confidential feedback

- This will probably be something like a "Suggestion Box".

Continually work towards working out the details of public relations, outreach, and membership (How do we do PR? How do we bring people in? Which church do new people join?)

- These issues have not been resolved at this point and are very much on the radar for joint consideration

Pay separate dues to MN Conference, based on membership

Continue to talk about merger or non-merger

- This will be a discussion about changes in our relationship that will continue after we have had an opportunity to live together and get to know each other.
- Areas for consideration will include (but not limited to):
 - Going our separate ways
 - Legally becoming one church including location

SOTL will continue their contract with PRG.

- While the housing/church project has been moving slower than expected, it is still alive. PRG continues to explore various opportunities and options to move the project forward and we will continue to be involved with this process.

MUCC will continue to pay off their elevator

- The regular monthly payments will be part of the joint expenses
- MUCC can choose to accelerate payments through designated gifts or MUCC funds

We will hold the existing mission statements of SOTL and Minnehaha in mutual respect.

This relationship will begin on December 1, 2009 with the exception of sharing expenses. Financial agreements will begin January 1, 2010.

- Because both churches have budgets and financial commitments through 2009, it works much smoother to begin sharing expenses at the beginning of the 2010 fiscal year.

If either congregation decides this relationship is no longer viable, there will be a minimum of 120 days notice to the other congregation and staff. David and James would be employed by SOTL. SOTL Council will have responsibility for determining a process for finding a new space.

- This is an "Exit Plan" if it becomes necessary.

Financial Plan Expanded

SUNDAY OFFERING AND OTHER INCOME PROJECTIONS

INCOME;	SOTL	MUCC
Total Income	\$96,000	\$68,000
Less Conf.Dues and OCWN	-3,500	-4,000
Net Income	\$92,500	\$64,000

SOTL	\$92,500	Approx 60%
MUCC	64,000	Approx 40%
TOTAL INCOME	\$156,500	

- SOTL's income includes \$6,000 for parking lot rental
- SOTL's income includes income from Mark H Brazen Theatre
- SOTL'S INCOME INCLUDES \$300 in rentals to other groups
- SOTL is assuming we would maintain the current level of pledges
- SOTL is assuming we would maintain the current level of fundraiser income.

EXPENSES

Payroll (Pastor, Minister of Music, Office assistant, 15 hrs. per week)	\$112,000
Assumes office assistant later in the year	
All other expenses	47,500
Total joint expenses	\$159,500

The above Income and expenses will be continued to be examined by a joint financial committee and be presented to MUCC and SOTL for Stewardship and budget approval by MUCC AND SOTL.

Both the elevator payments and expenses for SOTL parking lot are included in joint payments 60/40.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

40/60 split of expenses (40%MUCC, 60%SOTL based on historical data)

- Number of regular attendees
- Average worship attendance
- Number of pledges
- Actual income

Both communities will use offering envelopes to identify income

SOTL to pay all personnel, payroll taxes, staff benefits, pension

MUCC pays all other bills.

At the end of the month both will trade checks for their % owed to the other church.