

# Tipton First United Methodist Church

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## CONSULTATION REPORT

4/27/2014

### INTRODUCTION

It has been our privilege to work with the Rev. Paul Frederiksen, the leaders, and congregation of the First United Methodist Church in Tipton, Iowa. We appreciate the hospitality extended to the consultation team this week-end and all of the effort invested to gather the information necessary prior to the consultation. Our prayer is that God will use the Healthy Church Initiative and the information contained in this report to motivate this congregation to continue to do great things for the sake of God's mission in this community and beyond.

### STRENGTHS

God is at work in this church. The First United Methodist Church in Tipton has developed some amazing ministries that enhance the lives of those in and outside its walls. There is much to celebrate.

- 1. CARING, SUPPORTIVE AND WELCOMING FELLOWSHIP:** People connected to this church affirm that the congregation here feels like family. The people of First UMC care for one another in meaningful ways, and their care is especially felt in times of crisis. First UMC is a church that shows unconditional love. Diversity is accepted. The people welcome and are open to new people and new ideas.
- 2. DIVERSE WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:** The Tipton First United Methodist Church realizes that people receive God's message in a variety of ways and respond to the diversity by providing differing styles of worship with excellent music.
- 3. FINANCIAL GENEROSITY:** There is a spirit of generosity in this church. First UMC is a rainbow covenant church attaining third-mile giving. People have responded generously to make capital improvements. Because of the financial generosity, the congregation is free to focus on the bigger picture of mission and ministry.
- 4. EFFECTIVE CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES:** The Tipton First United Methodist Church provides a variety of ministries for children and the response has been tremendous. There are 60-70 children and youth attending Sunday School. A Kid's Choir sings every other week. On designated Sunday afternoons Kids for Christ, a time for fellowship and crafts, is offered. A monthly youth program for grades 7-12 has been started.
- 5. PASSION FOR MISSION:** The mission team is effective in informing and inviting the congregation to impact the lives of people in and outside the church. A Shared Blessings meal is provided the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Saturdays of a month. Community groups have been invited and have agreed to help in providing the meals. Mission trips to areas of need in and outside of Tipton are taken on a regular basis. First UMC engages in Habitat for Humanity Projects. The church provides the space and the welcome for a pre-school. A community grief group is offered. In addition, members of First UMC provide leadership in many community activities and endeavors.
- 6. FACILITIES:** Many facility improvements have been made and beautiful landscaping is maintained. With potential land next door and the generous spirit, there is room and means for First UMC to grow.

## CONCERNS

There is much effective ministry occurring at Tipton First United Methodist Church. The good news is this: First UMC is able to build upon a strong foundation from which to take Christ's message into the world from this time and place. The following are concerns to address in moving forward.

1. **CLEAR, COMPELLING, SHARED MISSION AND VISION:** First UMC provides many effective ministries, but the people involved find it difficult to articulate the overall mission of the church and how the ministry fits into a common vision. Because there is no clear and compelling vision that is shared by all, people revert to personal preferences rather than looking at the church's purpose in the work that is done. It is important to understand the "why" behind what is done.
2. **DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY:** While First UMC has a renewed emphasis on spiritual growth through the GIGs (Growth and Impact Groups), Sunday School for all ages, and ministries with children and youth, there is no clear, intentional process for meeting people where they are on their spiritual journey and inviting them to take the next step. An intentional discipleship pathway will help people connect to God and to each other.
3. **EVANGELISM AND RELATIONAL OUTREACH:** Our culture has changed. We can no longer say, "If we build it; they will come." There is a need to move from a purely "attractional" model (expecting people to come to us) to a more "incarnational" model (going to the people). Relationship building is the key to evangelism.
4. **INTENTIONAL PROCESS TO CONNECT PEOPLE TO THE LIFE AND MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH:** First UMC has multiple entry points in ministry opportunities and in physical entries to the building. These multiple entry points are good in many respects, yet they also provide a challenge. It is possible for people to come and go without making meaningful connections. Unless the church is intentional about connecting with people, they may not find their way in; and unless the church connects people with the church's ministries, they may not return.
5. **LAY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** While the Tipton First UMC has gifted laity serving in their areas of passion, there is a need to broaden the involvement of others for the sake of the mission and sustainability of the ministries. There is a need for an intentional process to identify gifts, equip, mentor, and empower laity.

## PRESCRIPTIONS

- 1) **CLEAR, COMPELLING, SHARED MISSION AND VISION:** On the day that the prescriptions are approved, should they be approved, the Tipton First UMC will claim as its mission "To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."
  - a) By June 15, 2014, Pastor Paul and the Leadership Council, in consultation with the coach, will declare a season of prayer, celebration, and renewal. During this time the people of First UMC will experience a Sabbath from all non-essential activity, becoming more like Mary who sat listening at Jesus' feet rather than like Martha who was busy working and felt distracted by many things. Opportunities to celebrate how God has been and is at work in the ministries of Tipton First UMC will be offered and the congregation will enter into a time of prayerful consideration and discernment of God's vision for the future.

- b) Following the season of prayer, celebration, and renewal, the coach will lead a day of visioning for the congregation. This day of visioning will be held by Aug. 24, 2014.
  - c) Prior to the day of visioning, a vision team of 2-3 people will be named by Pastor Paul in consultation with the coach. The task of the vision team will be to take all that emerges from the day of visioning and craft a clear, compelling vision for the next 5 years of ministry. This vision will be presented to the Leadership Council at its September meeting for approval.
  - d) Once the mission and vision are clearly articulated and shared widely with the congregation, all planning for and evaluation of each ministry area will be done in light of the mission and vision. To that end, the Leadership Council will conduct an Annual Ministry Audit (such as the one offered by Paul Borden in Direct Hit). This audit will be completed each year by the time of the Church Conference beginning in the year 2015.
- 2) DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY:** By August 1, 2014 Pastor Paul, in consultation with the coach, will identify a team of 3-5 lay persons to create a clear discipleship pathway for moving people from where they are on their spiritual journey to being fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. The discipleship pathway will be designed for everyone whether they are a non-believer or one who is maturing in their faith. This discipleship pathway will represent a lifelong process. The plan will be presented to the Leadership Council by Nov. 1, 2014 and implemented by Jan. 1, 2015. Possible resources include: Deepening Your Effectiveness by Daniel Glover and Claudia Lavy and Charting a Course of Discipleship: A Workbook on Christian Discipleship by Teresa Gilbert, Patty Johansen, and Jay Regennitter. The pastor and team will also study other churches' discipleship pathways for ideas and inspiration.
- 3) EVANGELISM AND RELATIONAL OUTREACH:** By Oct. 1, 2014, Pastor Paul, in consultation with the coach, will identify a team of 6-8 people to lead and facilitate the "building of bridges to the community." The church will conduct two bridge events outside the building and off-site to share the love of God with the community. One bridge event will be completed by Easter of 2015 and one by Sept. 1 of 2015. The purpose of a bridge event is to build relationships with people not connected to the church, and they are p-free events (no preaching, public praying, pressure or pocketbooks). The Building Bridges Team will plan for invitation, radical hospitality, and follow-up with those who attend.
- 4) INTENTIONAL PROCESS TO CONNECT PEOPLE TO THE LIFE AND MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH:**
- a) **Radical Hospitality-**By Sept. 1, 2014, Pastor Paul, in consultation with the coach, will name a team of 3-5 people who will form a Radical Hospitality Design Team. Their purpose is to ensure that all who enter the doors of Tipton First UMC are intentionally and enthusiastically welcomed. Their efforts may include, but are not limited to, such things as guest parking and seating, trained greeters at every entry point, a staffed welcome center with information about the church's ministries and opportunities for connection, name tags, hosts who accompany guests to the fellowship time following the service, guest follow-up, exterior and interior signage, etc. Resources which may be helpful are: Beyond the First Visit by Gary McIntosh and The Race to Reach Out; Connecting Newcomers to Christ in a New Century by Doug Anderson and Michael J. Coyner. The plan for radical hospitality will be presented to the Leadership Council by its January 2015 meeting and begin implementation immediately thereafter.
  - b) **Connection-**By Sept. 1, 2014, Pastor Paul, in consultation with the coach, will name a team of 3-5 people who will form a Connections Team. The purpose of this team is to connect people, especially new people, with spiritual growth and ministry opportunities. Keeping in mind that the younger and less churched a person is, the more short-term and hands-on ministry opportunities need to be. This team will need to identify one-time and short-term opportunities for growth and service and to help the congregation shift from being a purely informational culture to an invitational culture. One way to facilitate this shift is to identify a host in every group who is willing to extend an invitation to any and all

who demonstrate a gift for or express an interest or desire to be engaged in that particular ministry. The plan will be presented to the Leadership Council by its January 2015 meeting and begin implementation immediately thereafter. The coach and field outreach minister can help resource the work of this team.

- 5) LAY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** Pastor Paul, in consultation with the lay leaders and the Leadership Development Team, will develop a plan to help people identify their gifts and passions, to equip and empower them for mission and ministry both within and outside the congregation, and mentor persons in new leadership roles. Possible resources include: Serving from the Heart by Yvonne Gentile and Carol Cartmill, Leading from the Heart by Yvonne Gentile, The Mentor Leader, Secrets to Building Teams that Win Consistently by Tony Dungy, Mentoring 101: What Every Leader Needs to Know by John Maxwell, Lay Servant Training, School For Lay Ministry, Walk to Emmaus, Five-Day Academy for Spiritual Formation, and the coach. The plan will be presented to the Leadership Council by its March meeting.

It is the recommendation of the consultation team, that should the church vote to accept the prescriptions of this Report, during the “implementation phase” of the prescriptions, a defined time-off for re-creation and spiritual renewal be set aside for the pastor, as well as for staff and lay leadership of the church. This time may include but not be limited to a specific Continuing Education and Spiritual Growth Leave (paragraph 351 of The Book of Discipline) for the pastor, as well as continuing education/renewal for staff and lay leadership that may be related to HCI prescriptions and/or apart from them. These arrangements will be made in consultation with the coach, SPRC, church council and district superintendent.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

We, the consulting team, want to thank you for the opportunity to serve your congregation through this weekend consultation process. Our hope for your congregation is that God will use this process to empower your church to continue to make a difference for Jesus Christ in the world.

#### **CONSULTATION TEAM:**

Jaymee Glenn-Burns, Lead  
Jill Sanders

Colleen Petaros, Coach

Becki Kenton

Mike Carey

#### **Open Forums**

Sunday, May 4 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, May 21 6:30 p.m.

#### **Church Conference**

Wednesday, May 28 7:00 p.m. with District Superintendent David Crow presiding

CC: David Crow, Conference Superintendent, EC District