

May 1, 2019

Statement Regarding Sale of the Former Woodlawn United Methodist Church

The Oregon-Idaho Conference of The United Methodist Church has received questions about the planned sale of our church building at 1425 NE Dekum St. From 1967 to 2016 this was the site of the Woodlawn United Methodist Church. It has also been the site of Albina Head Start and other non-profit tenants. In 2017 and 2018 the conference explored the possibility of starting new United Methodist ministries at the location. While bearing some fruit, in December of 2018, after thoughtful discussion by key conference leaders, it was deemed to not be sustainable and ended. The Conference Board of Trustees has since voted to sell the property.

The Oregon-Idaho Conference of the United Methodist Church is committed to helping neighborhoods be healthy places for their residents. Insofar as our congregations can contribute to that health, we encourage them to do so. We are especially mindful of the decline of communities of color in gentrifying urban centers, including Portland. At the Woodlawn site, we have been blessed for many years to be in partnership with the community, this has included the Albina Head Start program and more recently the Deliverance Center of Generation X.

With that in mind, the Conference's priority is to seek a non-profit or other service provider to purchase the property at or near market value. This option would ensure that our former church building continues to serve the neighborhood while allowing the Conference to re-invest the proceeds from the sale in future ministry projects. At the same time, the Conference has a legal and moral responsibility to carefully steward the donations and assets of the Church for on-going ministry.

It is the hope of the Conference that any sale of the property will be consistent with our values of serving the needs of our communities, helping neighborhoods be healthy places, and building a home of all of God's people.

Any person or organization, particularly those who are current tenants, who are interested in purchasing the former Woodlawn UMC property can contact Rev. Daniel Wilson-Fey, Conference Treasurer for more information about the process at 1505 SW 18th Ave. Portland, Oregon, 97201.

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