

January 24, 2024

Dear friend in Christ,

We hope life finds you well in the first month of this new year. For nearly four years, your church leadership has been diligently working to plan for our future as a congregation. A key aspect of this work has been to secure funding for a new worship space. Our work in 2023 was almost entirely focused on attaining FEMA funding. This was slow and difficult work. The FEMA process is now coming to an end in the next few months which prompts this important update.

Simply put, we have repeatedly obtained competitive bids for two different rebuild approaches: 1) the church as it existed previously (with code upgrades) and 2) our newly designed building. Our builders and subcontractors have agreed that to accomplish either sort of rebuild, the cost will be anywhere between \$14 to \$18 million. On the other hand, FEMA has asserted their estimation that we can accomplish the task for much less. We have not been able to reconcile the difference between these two opinions. With our current level of proposed FEMA funding, we estimate having a total building fund of \$7 to \$10 million. This means we will have to make some difficult and important decisions in the coming months as we consider our future.

Three primary options appear to be on the table, and your Admin Council, Building Committee, and other lay leaders are already hard at work investigating each option. These include:

- Cutting at least 1/3 of the cost out of the currently designed rebuild project
- Drawing up new plans for a different sort of worship space rebuild on Holly Street
- Relocating to a pre-existing building that allows us to retain our ethos and character (please note, such options would be confined to our traditional East Nashville location)

We want to assure you we are currently only in a **fact-finding stage**. We need to know the various options available to us. In the coming months, as decisions need to be made, this will be opened to a wider church discussion. In the meantime, we encourage you to ask our lay leaders and Pastor Brandon any questions you may have, share any concerns with us, and share your ideas with us. Pastor Brandon may be reached at brandon@eastendumc.org or 615.227.3272.

We continue to be excited and hopeful about our future. As disappointing as this news may be, we trust God can work through all things to bring about God's greater purposes for EEUMC. We now have funding parameters and can move forward. Have faith that God will see us through and watch church communications for updated news in the coming weeks and months. Thanks, as always, for your continued love and support of East End UMC and our vital ministries.

In constant hope and Christian love,



David Petrelli
2024 Administrative Council Chair



Daniel Foster
Building Committee Chair



Rev. Brandon Baxter
Lead Pastor