Bothell UMC Urban – FAQ’s

**Why do we want a presence in downtown Bothell?** There is a noticeable lack of Human Services for people in our Northshore area. City staffers, the school district and human services agencies all recognize that people in Bothell find it difficult to find assistance nearby. In addition, current research shows increasing numbers of people who are lonely, disconnected from their neighbors and have a mistrust of religion. Homelessness is at a crisis point, and a lack of affordable housing is a part of that problem. Increasing density, Senior Housing and the University of Washington and Cascadia College are bringing thousands of people to the downtown area in the next few years. Transit centers are increasing allowing mobility in the downtown area. The Church is called to be a faithful presence in the midst of this.

**Why are we selling property?** There is property on the West side of our parking lot that has not been used for an intentional purpose for over 50 years. It does get used occasionally for games, and so we do have wonderful volunteers who do their best to maintain it. There are other options for people who need a large space to play games across the street at the high school and on our front lawn. The property is zoned for residential use and we do not see it as a part of our mission to build and develop residential property. This property is a financial asset that could be repurposed for our purpose of *Becoming Christ in the Community*.

**What about the Community Gardens?** It is not our intention to sell the gardens. The gardens are an asset to the community and provide real tangible benefits to the neighborhood. At this time, the property that will be appraised is the parcel that includes the gardens. The appraisal will help us determine how where we can subdivide the property according to the zoning for that lot. It is a possibility that the gardens may need to be adjusted in some way if we do this.

**Are we selling ALL our property, are we moving?** No. We will stay on Westhill. Purchasing property in downtown Bothell would be in addition to the property on which our church building currently sits and our parking lot.

**Who will buy our property?** The buyer for this parcel would likely be a residential developer. There are city zoning codes that regulate what can be built on the property. Our goal would be to engage interested parties in conversation so that their vision aligns with the current housing styles in the neighborhood and a desire to maintain good relations in the neighborhood.
**What will we do in downtown Bothell?** Bothell UMC Urban needs to recognize the needs in the surrounding community and be able to respond. With a downtown presence, we could begin by being a gathering space, open to all people. In addition, we could offer activities and programs on topics that offer people paths towards wholeness. Worship and spiritual growth could be offered in creative ways. Partnerships could be developed that offer job training in a restaurant, deli, or café. The opportunities are endless!

**How will we build on the downtown property?** The vision of purchasing land in downtown Bothell includes partnering with a developer who is experienced in building affordable multistory housing. In a ground lease agreement, the developer could build on our land in exchange for granting us the use of the ground floor space.

**How will we afford to be in downtown Bothell?** There are likely a few possibilities of how the Bothell UMC Urban project would be sustainable. These include being a ministry of Bothell UMC, applying for grants, creating revenue opportunities with other non-profit agencies, sub leasing space, and more.

**Who can I contact with all of my great ideas?**

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