

What We Learned

Our What Went Right and What Went Wrong (WWR-WWW) page will help steer you to making informed decisions for maintenance and repair on the parsonage, church and property, with the belief that there is value from learning what others have tried.

Scott Church tried an experiment with rotation assignments in 2007 and we love it and have continued this practice since then. We currently have 7 Trustees, at our first meeting each January, each Trustee gets to pick a month based on their schedule (vacations, wedding, etc.) for the year. If you select January and August for that month you are the responsible person or “go to” person for the entire church for that month. If our maintenance person cannot open the church for a function you are the person who will handle that. If ministry teams want additional days or times to use the church, you will handle that, etc. The name of the Trustee for each month is placed in the bulletin. This allows flexibility in our schedules, eliminates duplication of activities, and only ties up each Trustee approximately twice per year. We love it compared to always trying to figure out who’s going to be available for a project.

Pearl L., Scott Memorial UMC

We recently replaced the lights in the sanctuary using a contractor and a trustee that did not take into account that the lights need to be positioned properly for the bell choir to read their music. Recommendations for future reference are: 1) schedule replacement for nighttime, or later in the day, if possible, or 2) make sure that a person who has been involved with past spot light positioning is present.

Further, we continue to deal with a major roof issue resulting from using both the least expensive contractor and going with a 30 year rated shingle vs. a 40 year. What little we saved on labor/materials is a pittance compared to the financial and human expense of constantly addressing this issue.

Tim T., Troy: First UMC

Out of the spirit of that (church trustee) meeting First United Methodist Dearborn and Good Shepherd have joined together in looking for one snow removal company to handle both properties. The thought was that with the two churches working together in a collective bargaining agreement with contractors, that it would reduce both of our costs. So far things have gone well.

Lee E., Dearborn: First UMC

For construction, we always try to do our homework; checking referrals, requesting Certificates of Insurance and checking to see that General Liability and Worker’s Comp are included. Checking builders license, BBB, etc. Do not just rely on word of mouth referrals.

Unless you are completely comfortable with an appointed Trustee handling a project, all direction to a contractor must come from the Trustee chair. Reduce the number of bosses to one person. Never allow a trustee member overstep his boundary and possibly implicate the church.

Ron K., Newburg UMC