



NORTHBROOK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | ENCOUNTER. LOVE. SERVE.

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## Proposed Merger Q&A Notes

*Northbrook UMC leaders hosted a Q&A session via Zoom on August 9, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. The following is a recap of the meeting for those not present. Approximately 35 current Northbrook UMC members and staff participated in the meeting.*

### I. Opening

- Rev. Laurie Moeller opened with prayer and provided an overview of the timing and progress of the proposed merger with Christ UMC.
- Trey Kinney, Northbrook UMC member liaison with Christ UMC, spoke to the good cultural fit between the two congregations, additional resources that a merger could bring, and how as a combined church we'll be able to really think "big" and beyond.
- Ed Rogers, Northbrook UMC Church Council Chair, provided additional context around the merger and opened the floor to questions, some of which were submitted in advance of the meeting.

### II. Q&A

#### 1. **How many people total will join from Christ UMC?**

Members. There are 250 members on Christ UMC rolls, but there 54 active members likely to join.

Staff. Three staff members, including:

- Full Time, currently Senior Pastor, Dave Allen Grady will join the Northbrook UMC staff as an Associate Pastor.
- Part Time, currently Music Director, will join Northbrook UMC staff in a role to be determined
- Part Time, currently Children's/Student Ministry Director, will join Northbrook UMC staff in a role to be determined.

#### 2. **If we gain a pastor at Northbrook UMC, will we have to give one up?**

No, none of our current clergy will have to leave due to the merger. It is anticipated that Rev. Dave Allen Grady will be on staff and assist in ministry and the assimilation of Chris UMC until June 2021, at which time he will be re-appointed by the conference. Further, Rev. Allen Grady's compensation package is funded by the North Georgia Conference and will not impact Northbrook's budget for salaries.

#### 3. **What is the stance of Christ UMC on the LGBTQ issue?**

The viewpoint of Christ UMC lay leaders and ministry aligns well overall with Northbrook UMC. They can be characterized as a moderate to progressive congregation, which is similar to Northbrook.

#### 4. **A merger means an assumption of both the assets and liabilities; provide an overview of the anticipated assets and liabilities.**

Northbrook UMC will assume Christ UMC's monthly note during the term of August 2020 – January/February 2021 and there is the cash flow to do so. There is a letter of intent for the Christ UMC property to be purchased in January 2021. The sale of the approximately 8-acre parcel will generate \$5 million. After paying the realtor fees, note on the land, lawyers, and conference there will still be millions left over. Northbrook UMC should be positioned to pay off all its debts and leave an abundance for outreach and missions.



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**5. Will the name of the church change?**

No. The name of the merged church will be Northbrook United Methodist Church.

**6. Will Northbrook UMC be responsible for paying Christ UMC's apportionments?**

Christ UMC has not been in the position to pay its apportionments in years. Northbrook may consider paying it or another amount to the North Georgia Conference following the property sale in January 2021. This will be discussed further by the Finance Committee.

**7. What will happen to the Christ UMC buildings and property?**

It's anticipated that the property will be redeveloped into retail space. This fall a committee made of Christ UMC and Northbrook UMC members will work to inventory all church artifacts used in worship and transfer them to Northbrook. Additionally, this team will inventory all items (furniture, supplies, equipment etc...) and determined what to keep, sell, donate, or dispose.

**8. How will current committee leaders at Christ UMC be involved at Northbrook?**

All Christ UMC members currently serving on various CUMC committees will be added to the corresponding Northbrook committees in September. Then the Committee on Lay Leadership (a.k.a. Nominations Committee) will assure that one or more former CUMC members are included on all church committees for 2021.

**9. Will the Christ UMC members who are joining the merged church join in front of the congregation so we can see and know who they are?**

The COVID crisis will likely prevent us from having any in-person service with all new members, but staff will consider how to best accomplish this through video or pictures during our online services.

**10. What can we do to make the Christ UMC members feel welcome?**

The Northbrook UMC Love Committee is considering ways to do this.

**11. Will there be a de-consecration service for the Christ UMC building?**

Yes, a service of Thanksgiving and Leave Taking is currently scheduled for September 13.

**12. Is there an overall timeline for the merger?**

Yes, the following is as of Aug. 10, 2020:

Sunday, Aug. 9 - Christ Church Wide Meeting to present Covenant

Sunday, Aug. 9 - Northbrook UMC Q&A, 7 pm

Thursday, Aug. 13 - SPRC 6 pm; Finance 7 pm

Friday, Aug. 14 - All Staff to talk through new structure, 10 am

Sunday, Aug. 16 - Northbrook Charge Conference, 2 pm

Sunday, Aug. 23 - Christ Church Conference, 7 pm

Thursday, Aug. 27 - Possible SPRC and Finance

Sunday, Aug. 29 - Annual Conference - Churches officially merged

Tuesday, Sep. 1 - Combined staff meeting, 7pm

Sunday, Sep. 7 - First official worship as merged church

**13. Should the deal on the January 2021 sale of the Christ UMC property fall through, what is the contingency plan?**

There is a strong commercial tenant that has made the offer on the property, so the sense is that chances are high that the deal will go through. However, there were multiple bidders interested in the property and if the current deal fell through, the other bidders would have another opportunity to make an offer.



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- Suggestion made for Finance Committee to plan for at least an additional 3-month time period to continue to cover payments on monthly note if the sale doesn't go through

**14. What are plans to honor the legacy of Christ UMC?**

There are several ideas being considered to preserve the legacy of Christ UMC. One suggestion made is to establish a scholarship in Christ UMC's name.

**III. Closing**

- Ed Rogers invited members to feel free to email him ([edmrog@gmail.com](mailto:edmrog@gmail.com)) with any additional questions.
- Rev. Andrew Chappell closed the meeting in prayer.