

Together Exploring Area Ministry Todos Explorando Areas Ministeriales

Report and Preliminary Plan

Report:

In May the Councils of Cristo Rey and Reformation Lutheran Churches each appointed three members and their pastors to a team to explore ways for the two churches to cooperate in ministry. In June the TEAM sponsored “Town Hall” visioning sessions for the members of both congregations, to understand each congregation’s vision for its future and to learn if the visions of the two congregations are compatible. The TEAM held an all-day workshop and a joint meeting for the church councils. The workshop studied seven options for congregational cooperation, along with a number of other topics. At a second meeting in June the TEAM narrowed the potential options for cooperation down to two: a shared campus/shared parish model or doing nothing. In August the TEAM held another all-day workshop to learn more about the shared campus model. At the end of that workshop the TEAM reached consensus on the direction and plan below.

Direction:

A Shared Campus for the two congregations at 800 Michigan Street.

“Shared Campus” is defined as follows:

- ◆ Two or more congregations use the same facility but maintain their names, their corporate structures and their individual identities
- ◆ Shared ownership—not landlord and tenant
- ◆ The facility is owned and managed by a Joint Board controlled by the congregations
- ◆ The congregations share some staff and programs

Preliminary Plan:

The congregations will form a Joint Board with equal representation from each congregation.

Cristo Rey will contribute its building fund and Reformation will contribute its building and land to the Joint Board, which will own and operate the facility.

The Joint Board will prepare a plan to renew and expand the facility.

The Joint Board will have a careful agreement that will spell out financial and governance details and anticipate potential future problems.

The two congregations may share programs, especially for youth.

Each congregation calls its own pastor, and both can call the same pastor if they wish.

The Joint Board will coordinate building use and communications with the congregations.

This preliminary plan will be presented to the councils on August 24. Each congregation will hold information meetings about the plan in September and will then informally vote on the direction they want the TEAM to take. The target date to approve the Joint Board will be January or earlier. The congregations may decide to start sharing the building before the Joint Board is formed.

Additional Possibilities:

The TEAM discussed two possibilities that could become part of a Shared Campus in the future. These possibilities are presented for information—the TEAM did not make them part of the Plan at this time.

Lutheran Ministry Center:

In addition to housing the two congregations, the campus at 800 Michigan could serve as a home for some of the following:

- ◆ Lutheran Services of Florida
- ◆ Lutheran Counseling Service
- ◆ Mission Investment Fund Office
- ◆ Multiuse Child Care Center / Latch Key
- ◆ Coffee Shop that could be used by the congregations evenings and Sunday morning
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Other ideas

A Place for a Third Congregation:

- ◆ Zip code has 5,100 family households
- ◆ Along with 6,900 non-family households
- ◆ Many younger, non-conventional
- ◆ Not likely to be reached by or comfortably fit into Reformation or Cristo Rey
- ◆ But may find that an “emergent” Lutheran church fits their needs
- ◆ The plan could create an opening for the ELCA to start a new congregation in the future to reach and serve even more people in the area.