



Aug. 21, 2023

Greetings FUMC,

Paragould First United Methodist Church met for a Charge Conference Sunday, Aug. 20 under the direction of District Superintendent Rev. Zach Roberts. The Church Council voted to share in a “Permissive Occupancy Agreement” with the Greene County Historical and Genealogical Society for the property at 320 W. Main beginning September 1st.

FUMC stopped using the home at 320 W. Main as a parsonage for pastors and families last fall because of some challenges with the layout, especially the basement and laundry access. The home has a neat and historic appearance and the main floor is in good shape. However it is a poor fit as a modern parsonage.

This Spring an FUMC Trustees subcommittee studied the future of the 320 W. Main property. The group considered many options including repairs, removal, renting, etc. The Trustees were not enthusiastic about any of these options.

This past month the Trustees were made aware of the Greene County Historical & Genealogical Society’s need for a new facility. Eventually the FUMC Trustees & GCHS Leadership agreed to basic terms. FUMC member & attorney H.T. Moore served as a legal aide on the church’s behalf including drawing up the necessary documents.

The agreement can be summarized as follows.

- \* FUMC will continue the lawn service.
- \* GCHGS will be responsible for utilities and maintenance.
- \* GCHGS typical hours of operation are T, W, Th 9a-4p.
- \* FUMC will not charge rent for the property use. If rental income is received, the church must pay property tax and possibly file income tax as a business. There is no benefit to the church receiving income.
- \* The annual agreement will continue month to month following 1 year with 90 days notice to terminate on either party’s behalf.

- \* The use of the facility will be limited to the first floor and den.
- \* FUMC will complete a “Conditional Use” zoning permit application which will be reviewed by the City Planning Commission in September. City officials and neighbors have indicated their support of this arrangement.
- \* FUMC will maintain property insurance. GCHGS will maintain liability insurance, insure their assets, and name FUMC on their insurance.

The motion to enter into this agreement was presented by the chair of the FUMC Trustees Mike Bruce and passed unanimously. All parties are enthusiastic about this arrangement as it is both a help to the Greene County Historical and Genealogical Society and makes use of the house at 320 W. Main which is good for FUMC. Further, our historic church has many times to the Historical Society and its leadership. This is an ideal partnership.

Questions or concerns can be directed to Trustees Chair Mike Bruce or Attorney HT Moore.

Grace & Peace,

Rev. Dane Womack