

2018 “Big Projects”: An Outdoor Classroom at FW Gilbert School

The General Committee has been looking for some “big projects” that might stretch the congregation. We have done some dreaming as a congregation and as a General Committee and one of those projects has come to a stage where we need a decision.

Rob and the Worship Committee have been exploring ways to extend the success of our outdoor services at Easter and Pentecost. It’s exciting to move worship into the woods or down to the Riverside, but it isn’t for everybody. We have wondered if there might be ways to connect the outdoors to “regular” worship from time to time. Meanwhile, the Gilbert School Parent Advisory Council (PAC) has been working on an ambitious plan to renovate the school grounds. They want to do some extensive landscaping and refurbish play equipment. One item on their wish list is an outdoor classroom, essentially a sheltered area, open on the sides, that would provide shade and rain protection.

We imagine being able to use that space for worship on nice days, moving worship out of the windowless gym. We have had some conversations with the PAC about what could make that space more useful for us. We emphasized accessibility, a hard surface that would make it easy to move chairs and that people with mobility issues would find easy to navigate. We also suggested that it would be useful to have power for plugging in a keyboard or sound system.

The PAC’s vision is for the structure to be located behind the school, just outside the doors by the storage room where our equipment is kept. The plan to begin work soon (this Fall or Spring).

The General Committee would like to recommend...

“that the PCF donate \$5,000 through the Pinawa Foundation for the use of the Gilbert School Parent Advisory Council to assist with the building of an accessible outdoor classroom “