



Wednesday 2 September 2020

A Little Necessary Reconstruction

There's been a bit of reconstruction occurring in the storage room and storage room/restroom across from the kitchen. It was unplanned but necessary. A few weeks ago, a state inspector did a walkthrough of the church building in order to qualify it for use by Little Indians Preschool. The

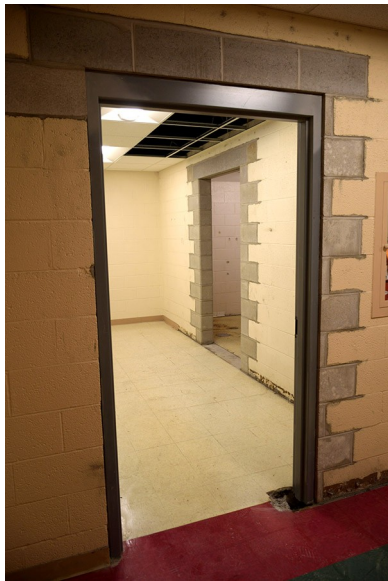


Figure 2: Enlarged door to storage room

The inspector found a couple small problems and two not so small problems.

The first notable problem was that we had no door on the storage (a.k.a. "Dish") room, which sits along the emergency egress through the back of the building. Should a fire break out and the children be sent through the Fellowship hall and out the west door, there would be a danger of one or more children accidentally wandering

into the storage room through its open door. Long ago we removed the door because with it in place we could not fit the chair rack through the doorway. To fix this, the doorway has been enlarged from 36 to 42 inches and a door is being installed.

The second, and more serious problem, is that the back storage room/restroom contains a water heater, which is gas fired. Building safety specifications no longer allow storage hear any appliance or equipment with an open flame. These must be in a separate mechanical room with a solid, rather than louvered, door (we had the latter). To fix

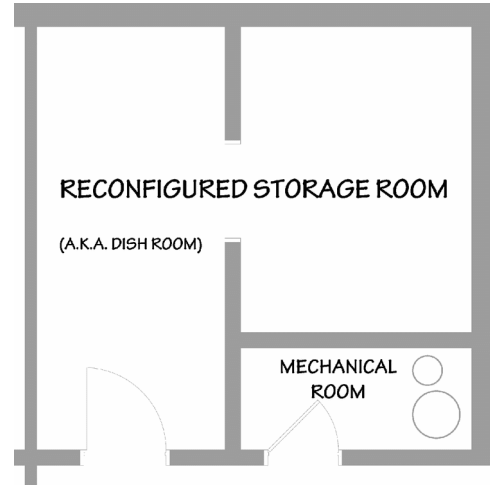


Figure 1: Reconfigured layout

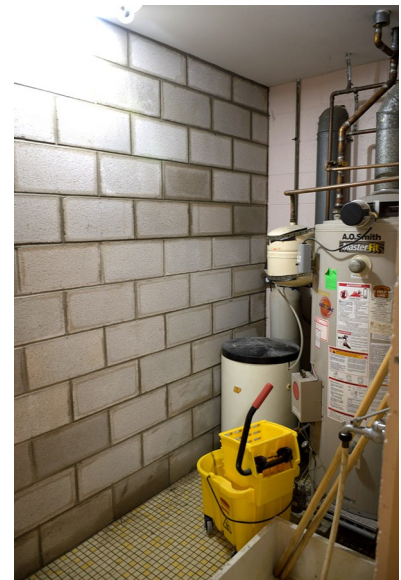


Figure 3: "New" mechanical room

this, a mechanical room has been constructed by placing a wall just beyond the water heater and water softener and a solid door has replaced the louvered door. To make the space behind it accessible an opening has been added creating a roughly “L” shaped space we will use for storage.

We have lost a restroom, which has had very little use for a while, but brought that part of our building up to spec and kept Little Indians.

Tecumseh UMC Generously Helped the Tecumseh Service Club During September and October 2020

(the above is not a typo . . . don't make a liar out of me)

Our ongoing local mission project, donations to the Tecumseh Service Club (TSC), is . . . well . . . ongoing! If you are unaware, the TSC helps people who have a variety of needs not met by government assistance. They work throughout north-eastern Lenawee County.

We gather and deliver specific items to the TSC the **2nd Sunday** of each month. Bring them with you to worship.

The focus items to bring in during **September** are **laundry products**.

The focus items to bring in during **October** are **shampoo, conditioner, and dish washing soap**.

Groceries needed by the TSC anytime:

- canned fruit
- canned meat (chicken, tuna)
- canned soups
- canned vegetables (no corn or beans)
- oatmeal
- Hamburger/Tuna/Chicken Helper
- jams & jellies
- jello & pudding
- macaroni & cheese
- pancake mix & syrup
- pasta & spaghetti sauce

Laptop and Desktop Computing on the Cheap

by Pastor Mark

I don't like expensive software. I find it annoying that the makers of industry and office “standard” applications such as Microsoft Office and the Adobe Creative Suite (which includes Photoshop and InDesign) have not only made their already too-expensive software more expensive, they now make the user subscribe to use it. That is, they now make even more money by charging the user to rent Word, Excel, Photoshop, and others. It feels like the artificial inflation we've experienced with prescription medicine.

So . . . I don't use Microsoft Office or Adobe Creative Suite or any of the other popular software packages that are cash-cows for Microsoft, Adobe, and all the rest. Instead, I use open-source software that performs the same functions but costs **nothing**.

Primary among these is **LibreOffice** (<https://www.libreoffice.org/>), which operates very much like Microsoft Office. Like MS Office, LibreOffice is segmented into a word processor, spreadsheet, slide presentation app, drawing app, and database manager. It is almost fully compatible with

Microsoft Office and does everything I need it to do. And it is free (although donations are welcome).

Although I haven't found anything that is quite the same apples-to-apples match to Adobe's Photoshop, I use another freeware application, GIMP (<https://www.gimp.org/>), to do image processing. It does what Photoshop does but with a user interface that is a little less intuitive as Photoshop's.

These are just two of the open-source, freeware applications out there that

perform the same functions we otherwise pay Microsoft, Adobe, and others for. There are lots more out there and the more you do with your computer the more you can save.

There is one caveat I need to mention: I willingly pay for firewall/antivirus software to protect my computers. I have yet to see freeware alternatives to products like those by Kaspersky or Norton. Malware protection is like a good pair of shoes. It's worth paying for.

Christian Ethics in Brief (and a wee-bit oversimplified)

by Pastor Mark

As Wesleyan-Methodist Christians we are established in the faith and grow in knowledge and love of God internally. But what happens on the inside doesn't stay bottled up there. Instead, our internal spirituality is expressed in our thoughts, words, and actions every day. How we decide what we think, what we say, and what we do is down to our ethics. When a decision is made it is done by applying a particular ethical calculus. For example (and a timely one at that), if you are in Meijers or Walmart and see someone not wearing a face mask, how you react, from your emotional reaction to what you might do about the situation, is down to an ethical calculus. Depending on that ethical calculus your reaction may range from having little or no reaction at all to tackling the maskless individual and hog-tying a mask on their face. Whether you are willing to cheat a little on you taxes, speed through a yellow traffic light, steal a car, correct a store clerk when undercharged, or hog-tie masks on people is dependent on your ethics.

Our ethics fall into two broad categories, which I'll list and unpack as follows:

1. Utilitarian Ethics – the fundamental question asked within this ethical frame is “Which decision leads to the best outcome for me or for those who are affected by my decision?” This generally comes down to “the end justifies the means.” The primary interest is the outcome of any decision made. A utilitarian calculus has the upside of leading to desired results since the primary concern is the outcome. The downside, and it's a large one, is that one may compromise one's own character or sense of morality in order to achieve the desired outcome. The popular term for this is “having to hold one's nose.”
2. Virtue Ethics – the fundamental question asked within this ethical frame is “What kind of person am I and want to be?” It matters how an end is achieved. There is no nose-holding here. If a way to get to a particular outcome violates ones character or sense of morality, then that way will not be taken. The upside of this is one maintains a high moral stance. The downside is that the desired outcome may be much more difficult or impossible to achieve.

Christians apply, or should apply, virtue ethics, largely because that's what Jesus did. We are called to be a holy people who exemplify the ethics and morals of our Lord. Unfortunately, Christian history is replete with a lot of nose-holding, which continues among some who claim Christianity today. It is up to each of us to decide—each time we need to decide something—which ethical calculus we will use.

I am a virtue ethicist (as much as possible). Which kind of ethical calculus do you use most?