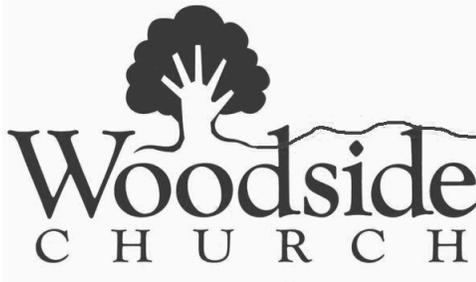


# Woodside Church of Flint is on the move.

(11-15-2016, for immediate release)



## Summary:

- Woodside to sell its building in College Cultural neighborhood
- One of the most architecturally important buildings in Flint
- A constant and consistent Voice for Social Justice since the Civil War
- Proud to be an “impossible church”
- Where we’ve been—throughout Flint
- Interested parties should contact Scott Galloway at 248-397-5507.

## Woodside Congregation to sell its building

The congregation of Woodside Church has voted to solicit offers for the purchase of its current building in the College-Cultural neighborhood; this is the first step toward establishing a new home and focusing its efforts and resources on the needs of the broader community.

In an October 30<sup>th</sup> congregational meeting, the Church voted to market the building and begin its search for a new home. In this way, the congregation expects to invest itself more deeply in what the church stands for.

“It is wonderful to make this decision in a time of growth,” said the Rev. Dr. Deborah D. Conrad, Woodside’s Senior Minister, noting that the congregation received 15 new members this month, and continues to welcome a steady stream of new people, drawn to Woodside’s progressive theology and social activism.

## One of the Most Architecturally Important Buildings in Flint

The Woodside Church building at 1509 East Court Street was designed by noted architect Eero Saarinen and completed by his brother-in-law, J. Robert F. Swanson. It is regularly named one of the most architecturally important buildings in Flint.

Karen Eaton, Moderator, said “It has been a wonderful home for many years; but, with a heritage of over 160 years dedicated to social justice, we must ensure our resources can be fully devoted to our mission.”

## A Constant and Consistent Voice for Social Justice

From its earliest days, Woodside has been a forceful community presence— a stop on the Underground Railroad in the time before the Civil War; an advocate for fair housing, civil rights, and an end to Jim Crow in the 1950s; ruffling feathers over its welcome of people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender from the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and most recently acting as a catalyst for examination of policies of mass incarceration, poverty and water rights.

“We know these battles are never really won,” said Conrad, “and Woodside will never abandon our brothers and sisters most likely to be marginalized and targeted by oppressive social policies and politics. This move will free up resources of money and energy to help us focus.”

## An Impossible Church

As formative pastor Rev. Dr. Franklin Elmer stated in the 1940s, “Woodside is not a spectator church. For those who do not wish to become involved in the difficult issues confronting our contemporary world, or for those who do not wish to be disturbed about their own condition or the general state of the world, this is an impossible church. Participation means more

than attending worship services, being responsible to our pledges or serving on a committee; it means joining in on the adventurous and exciting process of life itself.”

“Those are timeless words for a community, for a world, in pain,” said Conrad. “As we build on the legacy of former generations, a new home will allow us to be a powerful force for generations to come. We are merely selling a building; we are not losing our voice. We will continue to be the church.”

### **Where We’ve Been**

The building on East Court Street was the third church home of what was then known as First Baptist Church of Flint. The congregation’s first building was located at corner of First Avenue and Lyon Street; the second, at the corner of Beach and Second Streets, was dedicated in 1890. But before those, in the very beginning, in 1853, the congregation met at the courthouse and in a small room over the “Scotch Store” on Saginaw Street.

After the move to East Court Street in 1952, the congregation determined to become interdenominational, and members of the Congregational Christian Churches were welcomed into membership. In 1961, the congregation assumed a new name, Woodside Church; it is a member of two denominations, the United Church of Christ and the American Baptist Churches.

### **Interested Parties Should Contact . . .**

Galloway and Collens, PLLC, of Huntington Woods, has been enlisted to oversee sale of the building. With a keen understanding of the building’s unique architecture and intrinsic community value, the congregation is confident the firm will help another congregation or other organization make its home on Court Street. Interested parties should contact Scott Galloway at 248-545-2500.