



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN CASE STATEMENT

Our Vital & Growing Ministries

East Longmeadow United Methodist Church finds itself in the enviable position of being a leading congregation in the Pioneer Valley. We are a welcoming community with many young families, optimistic about our future and guided by four key words in our mission statement: **risk, welcome, hope, and justice**. This year, we had two groups complete the 24-week in-depth Covenant Bible study reflecting on our covenant with God and forging relationships. We've had 9 baptisms this year with 2 more planned. We are one of only four United Methodist Churches with full-time pastors in the Pioneer Valley, down from 11 just ten years ago.

We continue to be leaders in regional ministries. We founded the Pioneer Valley Free Health Service and still play a central role in its weekly free health clinic. In the last couple years, we have coached four congregations in the reconciling process as we seek to live into our inclusion statement to truly open hearts, minds, and doors. More recently, we have become a vital part of the New Hope Regional Ministries working with them in urban initiatives such as Revitalize Springfield.

Along with the joy and gratitude for this church's 162 years of ministry, 45 years of which have been at the corner of Chestnut and Somers roads, we find ourselves with a building in need of major repair and updating to enable the future we envision. We want our members and the many visitors we've been receiving to find a welcome environment here. There are many vital needs that will be supported by your generosity.

Our Facilities

Our most immediate need is the exterior of the building. We must replace sections with serious deterioration and install new siding on the entire structure except the Chestnut Street side that was replaced thanks to the Harris family donation. A few years ago, we began replacing windows including those in the social hall, parlor and kitchen, and now we must replace the remaining windows, some of which are literally falling out. Finally, we must update our accessibility at the rear entrance of the church to meet building code requirements, including the entranceway, walkway, and marked parking spaces.

Our Children

Our Education program is continuing to grow with more youngsters and we'll eventually need to expand into another classroom. The closing of the Montessori School was financially challenging for us but has provided a wonderful opportunity to envision how we might use this space for our own youth and children's ministries. The Education Team is "over-the-moon" excited about the possibilities and look forward to renovating the wing specifically with their needs in mind. While our members can provide much of the labor, money is needed for flooring and other supplies.

Worship Space

Our sanctuary is in need of updating and improvements. The carpet is in need of replacement and the walls need a fresh coat of paint. In addition, funds from this campaign will be combined with a grant we recently received so that we can upgrade our video projection system and screen.

Going Solar

Solar seems a natural extension of this congregation's long history of being "green" and we have a great roof design for solar panels. While there would be minimal cost to us for the solar equipment, the roof needs updates before we can move forward. This is about exploring energy choices that allow us to be more responsible stewards of creation while lowering our utility costs.

Parsonage Garage

When we bought our parsonage in 2005, we made a commitment to the New England Conference to build a garage in accordance with parsonage guidelines. While \$28,000 has been raised for this project, it is only about half of what will be required to fulfill this commitment to provide suitable housing for our pastor.

Reaching Out

A 10% tithe of the monies raised will go beyond our walls for community outreach. The **New Hope Regional Ministry** supports collaborative urban ministries in our region, such as sponsoring Revitalize Springfield's rehabilitation of Mason Square neighborhoods, Justice for Our Neighbors legal aid clinic for immigrants, and the Wesley Prison-reintegration Ministry. Our own Gary Richards got New Hope off the ground and Tom McGowan now chairs the Board of Directors who have their eyes on funding larger collaborative social justice ministries in our region.

Every gift counts!

Through this capital program, we're hoping to raise \$225,000. Siding, windows, and expanded accessibility will cost approximately \$125,000 and will be our first priority. From there we will move onto the other projects as our funds allow.

We hope you will prayerfully consider how your financial resources can help this faith community follow God's call and raise the level of hope for those who cry out for love and justice.

In summary, our combined resources will:

- address building needs like replacing windows and repairing siding
- update the education wing for our growing Sunday School program
- update the sanctuary and video system
- make solar energy a possibility for a greener energy future
- live up to our commitment to provide suitable housing for our pastor
- go beyond ELUMC with outreach to regional ministries

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