



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are we undertaking this capital fund drive now?

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. Like any 45-year-old home, our building requires updating to make it safe and sustainable. In addition, we must plan for the future needs of our growing ministries as described below.

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.

What is in scope for this ambitious project?

There are many vital needs that will be supported by your generosity:

- Exterior siding and replacement windows
- Handicapped accessibility at the rear entrance of the church, including the entranceway, walkway, and marked parking spaces
- Renovation of our education wing
- Renovation of our sanctuary worship space
- Solar and other green energy initiatives
- Parsonage garage commitment
- Giving back in the form of a tithe for community outreach

How much money do we need to raise?

Through this capital campaign, we're hoping to raise \$225,000. Some members will want to offer their gift up front, and others will elect to spread their gift over a three-year period as a supplemental pledge in addition to their normal annual stewardship pledge.

In what order will these projects be initiated?

Siding, windows, and expanded accessibility will cost approximately \$125,000 and will be our first priority. We must replace sections showing 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. From there we will move onto the other projects as our funds allow, beginning with accessibility improvements at the rear entrance of the church to meet building code requirements, including the entranceway, walkway, and marked parking spaces. Beyond that, the other projects listed above will be undertaken depending on the level of funding we receive with guidance from the Trustees and input from the congregation.

Should I reduce my annual stewardship pledge so I can pledge more to help the capital campaign reach its goal?

Please don't! We're hoping that you will think of your annual stewardship pledge as "front pocket giving" from your ordinary income and continue to grow toward tithing as you support our annual operating budget. The church cannot continue to function and fund its ministries if you shift your giving from staff salaries and other operating expenses to the capital campaign. Instead, we want you to think of the capital campaign as "back pocket giving" in the same way the you might think of funding your own home improvements or other important life events.

Is cash the only acceptable form of giving?

In addition to cash gifts, some alternatives may include stocks, bonds, and other equities, employer bonuses, retirement savings, insurance policies, inheritances or bequests.

What gives us the confidence that we are ready for a project of this magnitude?

ELUMC is in the enviable position of being a leading congregation in the Pioneer Valley. 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 and 2 more are 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, including the Pioneer Valley Free Health Service and the New Hope Regional Ministries working on urban initiatives such as Revitalize Springfield.

Will all the money be used to fund our own ministries?

10% of the monies raised will go beyond our walls as a “tithe” 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.

What are the needs identified for the education wing?

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.

What are the needs identified for the sanctuary 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.

What are the needs identified for solar and green energy?

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.

What are the needs identified for the 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.

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