

## **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PLANNING PHASE REPORT**

St. James Lutheran Church – Gettysburg, PA

Prepared by Pastor Renee LiaBraaten

Renaissance Consulting

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The Planning Phase for a capital campaign involved writing a summary of the proposed facility repairs and updates, and inviting members of the congregation to review the summary and participate in an interview or a focus group to share their input. To insure that input was received from a wide cross section of the congregation, the Capital Campaign Task Force was also tasked with scheduling interviews with people representing various demographic groups within the congregation. Pastor LiaBraaten conducted 43 confidential interviews and 5 focus groups during May 17-20, 2019. 55 people participated in the interviews and 34 additional people participated in the focus groups. A specific format was followed for each interview & focus group in order to gather quantifiable and comparable data in the form of perceptions, opinions, advice and other pertinent information.

### **INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES**

#### **1. How long have you been involved with St. James Lutheran Church?**

	Interviews	Focus Groups
Less than 1 yr.	1	1
1-5 yrs.	7	3
6-10 yrs.	0	4
11-20 yrs.	9	6
21-30 yrs.	4	4
31-40 yrs.	2	6
41-50 yrs.	7	2
51-75 yrs.	4	4
Life long member	9	4

In responses to the following questions, the first number on the right indicates the number of people out of 43 interviews who responded with this answer. The \* indicates that this response was also shared in the focus groups.

#### **2. What initially attracted you to St. James?**

1. Lutheran 18 \*
2. Came with family / Married a member 15 \*
3. Strong programs for children and youth 13 \*
4. The pastors 11 \*
5. Excellent music program 10 \*
7. Invited by a member 7 \*
8. All the service the congregation provided to the community 7 \*
9. The Early Learning Center 6 \*

10. The people were welcoming when I visited 6 \*
11. The congregation is open and affirming 5 \*
12. Hired as a staff member 3 \*

✚ *“Coming here was a very welcoming experience. I could be who I was with no conditions. It felt like coming home for me.”*

✚ *“I did not grow up going to church, but my kids go to the day care and I really liked the community feel of this place. I decided to learn more about the church, and I discovered that I like the Lutheran faith. I especially appreciate the open mindedness and acceptance, and all the stuff our kids can get involved in now and as they get older.”*

✚ *“We wanted an inclusive congregation and when we read the welcome statement in the bulletin, we said, ‘Wow! This is the church for us!’”*

### **3. What means the most to you about St. James now?**

1. Outreach programs / Service to community 25 \*
2. Caring people / Friendships / Sense of Family 24 \*
3. Inspiring liturgical worship 17 \*
4. Adult Sunday School Classes and opportunities for spiritual growth 15 \*
5. Opportunities to serve as a leader 13 \*
6. Excellent music program 12 \*
7. Emphasis on strong programs for children and youth 11 \*
8. Variety of opportunities for involvement—Choir / Stephen Ministry / Bible Study / Contemplative Prayer Group / Saturday evening worship / Creation Care 11 \*
9. Dedicated pastors and staff 9 \*
10. Fellowship opportunities / Dinner Groups 8 \*
11. Ministry of Early Learning Center 7 \*
12. Our Welcome Statement / Inclusivity 7 \*
13. Being a part of the choir 7 \*
14. The worship service led by our youth 7 \*
15. Advent / Lenten midweek services 5

✚ *“One of the things that means the most to me is that we are a giving church that makes an impact for good in our community and in the world.”*

✚ *“I really value and support the strong sense of connection we feel to the needy people in our community.”*

✚ *“I am very inspired by the way this church loves and embraces those who feel unlovable. Some of the interactions I have witnessed between members of this church and the homeless community have left me in tears—in awe.”*

✚ *“I love the inspiring people who make up this congregation, including our delightful, incredibly talented staff.”*

✚ *“I love the liturgical services and beautiful music, but the thing that means the most to me is the fellow Christians that I have learned to know over the years who have impressed me with their faith and actions.”*

✚ *“I really appreciate the number of people that are open to discussing ideas related to the social challenges of this time and this community.”*

✠ *“I love the worship experience and our Sunday School class so much that I feel badly when we can’t be here!”*

✠ *“It means so much to me that this is a place where you can grow spiritually. The sermons are meaningful and pertinent to life today, and the people are warm and friendly. I have always prayed for a path that would give us peace and I find that peace here.”*

✠ *“This church is a big part of my life. I love the pastors and the people. It is my spiritual center and it does a great job of helping me grow.”*

✠ *“This church is the village that helped us raise our kids.”*

✠ *“I like our pastors and the sense of safety and sanctuary that I experience here. I also really appreciate the positive, upbeat, hopeful atmosphere. I feel grounded here.”*

✠ *“It means a lot to me that our church is open and affirming—that we are engaged in social issues and that we have a progressive approach.”*

#### **4. How would you articulate the mission or purpose of St. James?**

1. Share the love of Christ through serving those in need in the community and beyond 32 \*
2. Help people grow in faith and live out their faith 18 \*
3. Support and help each other 18 \*
4. Foster a sense of authentic community / belonging 14 \*
5. Unconditionally welcome and care for everyone 12 \*
6. Lead by example 7 \*

✠ *“We are here to live and love like Jesus...to offer a sense of connection and belonging to all, and to promote good things in the community.”*

✠ *“Our purpose is to serve all God’s children within the church and the community.”*

✠ *“Our purpose is to care for widows, children, orphans, the naked, the hungry and the dying. We come together in order to help each of us be Christ in this world. And I come away taking something of that Spirit of Christ with me. And the people here care for me, too. We see Christ in each other.”*

✠ *“We are here to make the teachings of Jesus come alive for ordinary people like me—to grow disciples—and to create a community where we gather to be fed, and then branch out to serve.”*

✠ *“Our purpose is to support each other in our faith journey and to support the vulnerable in our community.”*

✠ *“We are here to provide a safe space for people to experience God’s love, and also to provide opportunities for people to show and share God’s love through their actions.”*

#### **5. How do you feel about the proposed repairs and updates?**

1. Need more details on what is involved in each project and the urgency 19 \*
2. All of these projects are important and needed 17 \*
3. It is crucial to have sound infrastructure in order to carry out our ministries 13 \*
4. It is important to do the necessary repairs 11 \*

5. The kitchen definitely needs to be renovated 10 \*
6. How do these projects relate to new ministry initiatives? 10 \*
7. Is replacing the gate with a better solution part of this plan? 10 \*
8. The cost estimates seem high 8
9. The sound system in the worship area needs to be improved 7 \*
10. Would like to see some of the projects accomplished through volunteers 6 \*
11. Need a long range maintenance plan 6 \*
12. Important to be sure that all repairs and updates are more energy efficient 6
13. Not aware of these issues—never go upstairs or use kitchen 5

✚ *“This list needs to be more precise and provide more details. I’m willing to make a sacrifice and give more if I know what the vision is for and how accomplishing these things is going to make a difference. Will these repairs and updates support new ministry initiatives? This list seems more like a response to deferred maintenance than a forward thinking plan.”*

✚ *“This list is confusing because there is not enough detail. It would help to know something about the urgency of each item. What things do we need to do now? What can wait for a couple years?”*

✚ *“If we are going to go to the trouble of fixing and updating things on the third floor, I feel it would be helpful to discuss the vision for that space. We are fitting ourselves into what is there now and how the space was used in the past. But it feels like this is a good time to have a conversation about walls and rooms and layout and what we might use this space for now—both on Sundays and during the week. Our church is used as a shelter now, so how could this space be reconfigured to be more conducive to housing people? Or maybe one room could become a small chapel where we could hold alternative worship services? Rather than just repairing, it seems like a good time to rethink the usage and reconfigure the space to fit the vision for our ministries.”*

✚ *“This is the time for our congregation to make these improvements on the building so the future of the church is more secure. It is on us right now to preserve the investment. We need to take hold of this and make sure the vision of St. James continues to move forward.”*

✚ *“We want to have a high performing, sustainable congregation over time. In order to bring in new people, our facility has to be welcoming, functional, safe and attractive.”*

✚ *“I am thankful that our church is not a museum, but is used every day of the week. These repairs and updates represent normal wear and tear and it is important to maintain our building.”*

✚ *“We made the commitment to stay in town and serve the community after the fire in 1969, and that means keeping up this building. Our facilities are utilized quite extensively by community groups, so we are living out our commitment.”*

✚ *“The cabinets in the kitchen have deteriorated to the point of not being safe and this lack of safety is concerning. We need a clean, functional, safe kitchen to carry out our ministries.”*

‡ *“I would like to see us find some creative ways to accomplish a few of these goals. Can we use our volunteers to paint and replace ceiling tile? Our building is used by a lot of different groups, so maybe we could reach out to them to help us.”*

‡ *“Do we have a long range plan going forward? We need to have a deferred maintenance schedule and put money aside for these sorts of things.”*

## **6. Should some funds raised through the campaign be designated toward needs in the community?**

1. No. Capital campaign money should be used to maintain our building. We support community needs on an ongoing basis. 27 \*

2. Yes 9 \*

3. Repairs & updates to the Slentz House (where Gettysburg C.A.R.E.S. is located) should be the outreach component 7 \*

4. Mixed feelings 4 \*

‡ *“We are a very giving church, but right now I feel that the attention needs to go to the church building. Water comes straight through the brick wall and runs down the wall. We need to focus on getting these crucial things repaired.”*

‡ *“It has been engrained in our personality and spiritual life to care for others, but I don’t think it is as essential to do this through the capital campaign. The focus of the campaign is to repair and prepare our home base, which allows us to have a dynamic ministry that includes a significant outreach to others.”*

‡ *“We already give from the annual budget to the community, and to add this to the capital campaign dilutes the focus of the campaign. More emphasis needs to be put on the fact that the building itself is a contribution to the community.”*

‡ *“This church is very good about responding to needs in the community. The campaign should address the building and not confuse people with giving some of the money to community needs. Right now, fixing our church building is the specific need we should be addressing.”*

‡ *“In this situation I am not a fan of this idea. We need to take care of the roots in order to keep serving through the tree.”*

## **7. How would you prioritize the proposed campaign goals?**

1. Securing the envelope of building & repairing infrastructure are top priorities 35 \*

2. Safety (Fire Alarm System) and security are high priorities 14 \*

3. Kitchen and dining area are high priorities and are important to our outreach ministries and fellowship 12 \*

4. Improving the sound system is a high priority 10 \*

5. Need more details about various projects and the urgency of each project in order to prioritize 7 \*

6. Repairing and updating the Slentz House is a high priority 6 \*

7. Painting is a lower priority 4

8. Trust our leaders to determine the priority of these projects 3

‡ “Securing and preserving our spiritual home is the top priority of this campaign so that we can continue to serve well. It supports the people within our congregation who are serving others, as well as the people we are serving.”

‡ “Necessary repairs to protect our building from further deterioration are the highest priority. Improvements to the building that support our programs and help our ministries move forward are the next highest priority.”

‡ “I prefer to let those who have the expertise prioritize this list of projects, but I’d like to see the gate go. It presents a barrier to those who want to use our building or desire to sit in God’s presence during the week. To me it says, ‘You are not welcome here.’ And this is the opposite of the inclusive, welcoming message we want to send. Resolving this issue is a high priority for me.”

### **8. Willingness to be involved in the Capital Campaign:**

30 out of the 43 households interviewed (70%) are willing to serve as leaders or members of the teams that would be formed to carry out the proposed capital campaign. Many of the focus group participants also indicated a willingness to serve on a campaign team.

### **9. Willingness to financially support the Capital Campaign:**

41 out of 43 households interviewed (95%) plan to support the campaign financially.

Anticipated Range of Financial Support:

\$ 45,000 - \$ 50,000	2
\$ 30,000 - \$ 50,000	1
\$ 12,000 - \$ 20,000	2
\$ 9,000 - \$ 12,000	3
\$ 7,000 - \$ 8,000	4
\$ 4,000 - \$ 6,000	6
\$ 2,000 - \$ 3,000	9
\$ 1,000 - \$ 2,000	3

Planning to support, but unable to designate an amount at this time 5

Planning to support, but need more details to determine the amount 3

Plan to support as able 3

Undecided 1

Not planning to support at this point 1

### **10. What additional information do you need to fully support the campaign?**

1. More details about the proposed repairs and updates 17 \*

2. Do not need additional information at this point 15

3. A better security solution than the gate 11 \*

3. A vision for how the completed repairs and updates would lead to enhanced ministries / programs 8 \*

### **11. Concerns for the future of St. James?**

1. Lack of interest in church among younger generations—Who will carry on? 11 \*

2. Decline in worship attendance and involvement 10 \*

3. The aging of our membership 9 \*

4. Losing our current pastors 9 \*
5. Losing members during staff transitions 8 \*
6. We do not have a vision for creative ministries in today's culture 8
7. Loss of our youth director and the need to continue offering strong programs for children and youth 8 \*
8. No concerns 7 \*
9. The general decline among mainline churches 7 \*
10. The retirement of our music director 5 \*
11. Lack of parking 5 \*

† *"I have faith and that gives me hope for the future. No matter what lies ahead, we have a guarantee of God's love and presence with us."*

† *"I have concerns, but we have young people in our congregation, and they give us all hope."*

† *"I admire the decision our congregation made to remain downtown. But, lack of parking is a huge concern of mine. It is an increasing problem as our members age and for our young families. To not have parking is a real detriment to our growth and appeal. Would it be possible to enter into a contract with the parking garage on Sunday mornings?"*

## **12. Greatest hopes for St. James:**

1. That we would continue to grow, thrive and serve the community 24 \*
2. That we would find ways to attract and engage more young families 10 \*
3. That we would continue to nurture faith in younger generations 9 \*
4. That God would continue to provide us with good pastors 8
5. That we would continue providing strong, vibrant children & youth programs 7 \*
6. That we would find a solution to the lack of parking 7 \*
7. That we would continue to be a leader and strong presence in the community 7

† *"I would like to see us continue to be a vibrant, welcoming and joyful congregation that people are excited to come to. I hope that people are aware of the impact we make on the community and on the support and grounding that we provide for our children and youth."*

† *"My hope is that we continue to be a Christ-centered, positive presence in the community and that we become increasingly more diverse."*

† *"My greatest hope is that the people we serve would become more a part of us."*

† *"I would love to have more younger families and a more active youth program. It provides a jolt of energy for everyone in the congregation—including the older people."*

† *"My hope is that we can maintain and secure our building and get more of our younger people into leadership in our church."*

† *"My greatest hope is a parking garage with a sky bridge!"*

† *"I hope the excitement of working together on this campaign and the energy this generates will propel us into the future and provide us with new opportunities to be God's church."*

## **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The input from the Planning Phase indicates the following:

- † High regard and gratitude for the dedication of the pastors, staff and lay leadership of the congregation;
- † Deep appreciation for and a strong commitment to the excellent music ministry at St. James;
- † Thankfulness and enthusiasm for the adult education classes and many opportunities for involvement and living out faith that are provided at St. James;
- † A strong commitment to providing engaging, faith-nurturing ministries to children and youth;
- † A passion for inclusivity and serving those in need in the community and beyond;
- † A dedicated core of talented lay leaders and volunteers;
- † Strong consensus around the need to address necessary repairs;
- † A desire for more details about the proposed repairs and updates;
- † A lack of consensus around designating a percentage of funds raised through the campaign to needs in the community;
- † A willingness to volunteer time and make financial commitments to the capital campaign.

### **Recommendations:**

- I. That St. James Lutheran Church move forward with a three-year Capital Campaign in the fall of 2019 with a financial goal in the range of \$1 Million to raise funds for the proposed repairs and updates;
- II. That over the summer the Capital Campaign Task Force prepare for the capital campaign in the following ways:
  - Clarify the details in terms of scope, urgency, costs and benefits of the proposed repairs and updates;
  - Conduct tours following worship services on several weekends to increase awareness of the need for the proposed repairs and updates;
  - Explore alternative solutions to the security gate;
  - Provide more information on how the repairs and updates will strengthen ministries of the congregation.
- III. That the communication materials for the campaign provide the following:
  - † Information on the scope, urgency and timing of each of the proposed repairs and updates;
  - † Pictures of deterioration of infrastructure and current damage;
  - † Answers to the questions and concerns raised in the interviews and focus groups;
  - † Information on planned giving and various ways to contribute to the campaign.

Sincerest thanks to all those who participated in the interviews and focus groups for taking the time to share their insightful and helpful input, and to the members of the Capital Campaign Task Force.