

A close-up photograph of two hands, belonging to different people, cupping a large quantity of golden wheat grains. The hands are positioned in the lower half of the frame, with the fingers gently holding the grains. The background is a soft-focus field of green wheat plants under bright, natural light. The overall tone is warm and hopeful, symbolizing growth and generosity.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

FALL STEWARDSHIP 2025 **SOW GENEROUS**

NEW DISCIPLESHIP PATH

Pastor Michaela

LIVING & LEARNING TOGETHER

Discipleship Pathway



Consider this an open invitation to grow deeper, serve wider, and follow Jesus more fully.

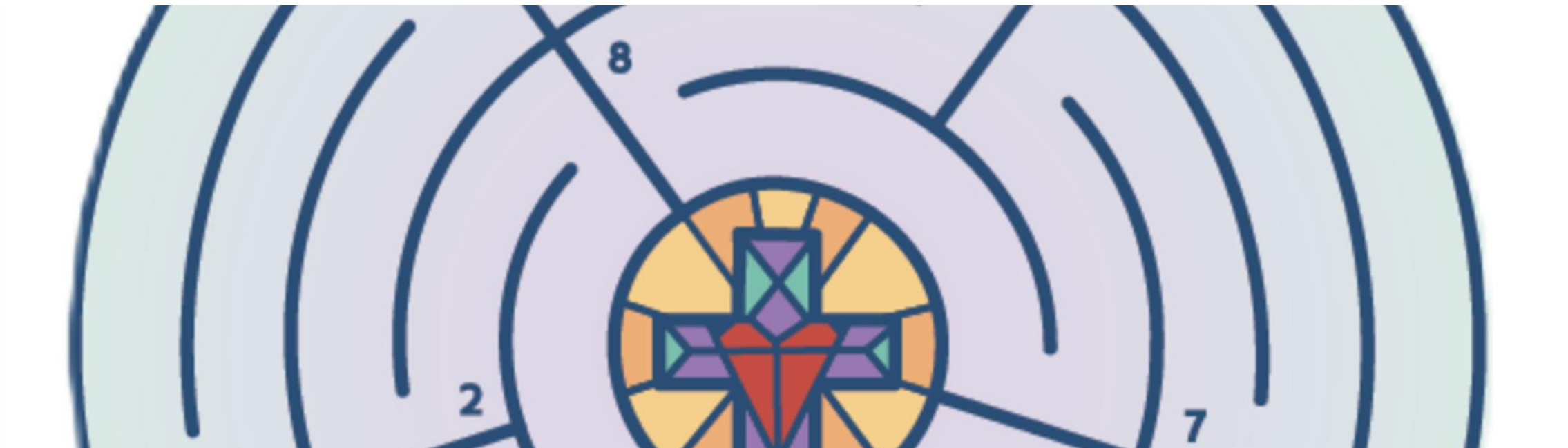
Our *Discipleship Pathway* is designed to help both new visitors and long-time members grow in their journey with Jesus. Whether you're just beginning or have walked with Jesus for years, this tool will help you prayerfully consider your next step—perhaps even one you hadn't considered before.



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Spreading the Word

As you head out into the world it is time to consider how you will share the Gospel, the good news of Jesus to others in our community. Evangelism isn't about having the perfect words—it's about sharing the hope you've found in Jesus through your own story. In this next step, we invite you to learn how to witness through storytelling and offering consolation to others. In community, we'll explore how your everyday experiences and compassionate presence can become a powerful way to share God's love with those around you.



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First Time Visitors

We are so glad that you have found us here at First Lutheran! Whether you come in person to one of our four worship services (8, 9:30, 10:15*, or 11), or worship with us [online](#), we are glad to have you join our church family this coming week!

If you come in person, don't forget to grab a cup of coffee and some sweet or savory snacks. Stop by our Welcome Center or fill out a [Connection Card](#) and we will be happy to connect you with all that is going on at First Lutheran.



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Newcomer Event

We know it's hard to grow in community at a new church! That is why we offer twice a year newcomer events to help you meet others that are new to this community as well. Anyone that has visited First Lutheran since the last Newcomer Event is welcome!

Next Newcomer Event: February __, 2026

Peel House Parlor?



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Alpha Course

Explore Life's Big Questions
No matter who you are or what you believe, there's a seat for you at the Alpha table.

Alpha is a 11 week course that discusses topics like "Who is Jesus?", "Why and How Should I Read the Bible?", "How Does God Guide Us?" and many more. There is dinner, a video to watch together, and then reflective discussion after.

Our next Alpha Course will begin on Wednesday, May 6th at 6 p.m.

New Members Class

You have been attending First Lutheran for a little while, you have started to invest your time into our community, and we would like to formally welcome you into our church family! Membership can seem like a big step, especially if you have never been a member of a church before. However, becoming a member of First Lutheran truly means that the community makes a commitment to come beside you, to celebrate your joys, commiserate in suffering and everything in between. *Our* pastors become *your* pastors. And finally, you have chosen to give of your time and talents to our small piece of Christ's mission in Colorado Springs. If you think it is time to make those commitments to First Lutheran, we would love to see you at our next New Member Orientation!

At First Lutheran you can become a member by attending the new member orientation class(es) of your choice and making the affirmation of baptism promises to the congregation. The next classes will be held in November 2025. The promises will be made on Sunday, November 16.

November 2, 2025 - Introduction to First Lutheran - Meet the staff of First Lutheran Church and get to know others looking into church membership. Noon in the Fireside Room.

November 9, 2025 - Lutheranism 101 - Pastor Travis will review what we "as Lutherans" believe and the promises you will make during the service of inclusion. This is a great time to ask questions. Noon in the Fireside Room.

Membership does require that you are [baptized](#). If you have not yet been baptized into the Christian faith, we would love to be a part of that chapter in your discipleship journey. Please reach out to one of our pastors to get that conversation started.

If you are not yet ready to join our church as an official member, we would still challenge you to move forward in the discipleship pathway. One of the ways that you can continue to support First Lutheran without becoming a member would be to [give charitably](#) to the mission and vision that we have here at First Lutheran. We are transparent with our finances and you can view this year's budget [here](#).

Volunteering and Growth Groups

Now that you have started to explore your Christian Faith and have become a regular at First Lutheran either on Sundays or mid-week, we are going to challenge you to join a small group and volunteer regularly.

If you are musically oriented, we would love to have you join our Sunday Morning choir or one of our handbell choirs. For more information and practice times, head to our [Music Ministry](#) page.

For other volunteering at First Lutheran, we understand that it can feel intimidating to lock yourself into a schedule of responsibility. However, growing in your faith does mean giving of your time and talents to the Christian community. We want you to feel at ease, sign up for something that works within your comfort zone whether that is the time commitment or the particular task you are considering. Fill out this survey and we will find a role that fits you and your availabilities.

Our Growth Groups are casual and take place every week. You can join at any time. At our growth group we discuss the previous Sunday's sermon, but if you haven't been to worship you can still participate in our reflective discussion.

- Bible and a Brew - Thursdays at ___, Location varies. For the most recent schedule check us out on [Meetup.com](#).
- Friends by the Firepit - Mondays at ___. Peel House

Preview

Find Your People. Grow in Community.

At First Lutheran, we believe that faith is meant to be lived in community. Whether you're looking for study and support, ways to serve, or simply space to connect socially, there's a place for you here. Explore our groups and discover where your gifts, interests, and faith can flourish—together.

Look through the list below to find a group. Try one, try many. Finding your community takes time and intention, don't give up!

Study & Support Groups**Men's Fellowship**

Now in its 25th year, the Men's Fellowship and Study Group meets Thursday mornings at 7:30 a.m. in Luther Hall to provide men of all ages with opportunities for spiritual growth, Christian fellowship, and learning from one another. Come join us on Thursday mornings for a shared breakfast. The coffee pot is always on.

MomCo

All moms and expecting moms are invited on the second and fourth Tuesday's at 9:30 a.m. of each month in the Peel House Lounge. Join us for mom community, which encourages fellowship, coffee, food, conversation, and much more!

Wayfarer's Group

A support group for women who have experienced the loss of a partner.

Women's Circle Groups

The Circles meet monthly to include Bible studies, the nurturing of spiritual life, Christian education concerning God's call to mission, along with fellowship, fun, and service.

- **Deborah Circle**,
- **Lydia Circle**, first Tuesday of each month at 11 a.m. in Room 201 of the Peel House
- **Rebekah Circle**, second Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in Luther Hall

Service Groups**Busy Bag Ministry**

Members refresh the activity bags that FLC provides at the back of the Sanctuary to help families entertain their children during worship.

Care Tote Bag Ministry

Use your sewing skills to assemble tote bags for the Christian Care Giving Ministry. Meetings held the second Thursday of the month.

Carving Club

People of all ages and experience are invited to bring their carving tools to the Wednesday evening. Meetings in Joseph's Workshop.



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Spiritual Retreat

Sometimes, the next step in your discipleship journey is to slow down. Our spiritual retreats offer intentional time to step away from daily distractions and reconnect with God and community. Whether you’re seeking renewal, clarity, or simply space to listen, these retreats create room for deeper reflection, meaningful connection, and spiritual growth. Come with an open heart—and see what God might reveal.

January Spiritual Retreat: January 31st, 2026, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Worship Center and Peel House

August Spiritual Retreat: Dates TBD

Regular Rhythms of Formation

Spiritual growth doesn't happen by accident—it takes rhythm, intention, and community. We invite you to establish a regular practice of formation by joining a Bible study, exploring spiritual direction, or participating in adult education classes. Whether weekly or bi-monthly, these rhythms create space to deepen your relationship with God, ask meaningful questions, and be shaped by Scripture and the Spirit over time. Look at our offerings below and consider where you will make intentional time for your spiritual growth in this season.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Join one of our Pastors at 10 a.m. on Wednesday mornings in Luther Hall for a lively discussion of the scriptures for next Sunday's worship. (This group does not meet in the month of July).

Spiritual Direction

We are blessed to have Lori Duncan, our Minister of Spiritual Care, on our staff. She would love to meet with you regularly on your own schedule to help you deepen your relationship with God through Spiritual Direction.

Ignatian Imaginative Prayer

Three times a year, Lori Duncan, holds a four-week meditation practice of Ignatian prayer. Our next dates are in Advent.

Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. (December 2, 9, 16, and 23)

Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m. (December 3, 10, 17, and 24)

Adult Education Classes

Quarterly we offer adult education classes on topics that help Christians to consider their faith in deeper and more relatable ways. Check out this year's topics.

- **"Faith and Science"** Led by Ron Furstenau. Sundays from 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. in the Peel House Parlor. January 4, 11, 18, and 25.
- **"Praying the Psalms"** Led by Joanne Larson. Sundays from 12 - 1 p.m. in the Peel House Parlor. April 12, 19, and 26.

B.A.S.I.C. Training

This self-guided educational class allows you to learn one-on-one from our pastors and spiritual staff on a variety of Christian topics. B.A.S.I.C. stands for Bible, Adoration, Salvation, Imitation, and Church/Call. This class is currently being updated and re-recorded and will launch in Spring of 2026 with optional discussion small group groups. If you are interested in our first version, you can watch all our videos [here](#).



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Lead Others as You Follow Christ

If you've experienced the power of community and spiritual growth through small groups, consider stepping into leadership. Leading a group isn't about having all the answers—it's about creating space for others to grow, connect, and walk with Jesus together. Whether you're facilitating discussion, offering hospitality, or guiding prayer, your leadership can make a lasting impact in someone else's journey of faith.

It also might be time to consider volunteering in a larger capacity. Check out our survey [here](#) to see if you might be feeling called to serve at a higher level in our community.

Spreading the Word

As you head out into the world it is time to consider how you will share the Gospel, the good news of Jesus to others in our community. Evangelism isn't about having the perfect words—it's about sharing the hope you've found in Jesus through your own story. In this next step, we invite you to learn how to witness through storytelling and offering consolation to others. In community, we'll explore how your everyday experiences and compassionate presence can become a powerful way to share God's love with those around you.

An Evangelism Class led by Pastor Michaela, Pastor Travis, and Pastor Glenn Zimbelman will be held in **March 2026**.

As you are sent out at the end of the discipleship pathway, we encourage you to take this next step of bringing someone new into the church community and experience the discipleship journey anew through the eyes of a new brother or sister in Christ!

COUNCIL NOMINEES

- Bruce Carlson
- Stacy Gatto
- Chris Lieber
- Corby Meyer
- Diane Millburn
- Betsy Pimentel

FACILITIES UPDATE

- The sanctuary roof was inspected and found to be in really good shape with need for only a few minor repairs. Those repairs have been made.
- The HVAC system that services the sanctuary was inspected and found to have cracks that make it irreparable and in need of total replacement. The system is 60+ years old and has been repaired for many years. One of the air conditioning units was replaced last year. The cost for replacing the system is estimated to be between \$300,000-500,000.
- We have a team working to get a more detailed quote and leadership has put in a plan to pay for the repairs. We keep a cash reserve for scenarios just like this and have over \$400,000 in reserves.

GENEROSITY ANNOUNCEMENT

When a member of our congregation found out about the need to replace the heat exchange system, they gave a \$300,000 donation to the project! That will allow us to replace the unit and still have a healthy reserve. Thanks be to God!

Financial Review

- The First Lutheran Financial Review Committee conducted a thorough review of the 2024 financial books, records and operations.
- They submitted a report to council
- Council received their report and noted significant improvements over the previous year.

Recommendations

- Continue to build employee handbook with written policies based on 2024 recommendations.
- Develop a file on each position with position description and appropriate salary range for that position.
- Develop a system so that supervisors sign off on expenses before they are made.

2025 Financial Status

Year to Date Income : \$1,612,431 Year to Date Expenses: \$1,558,705

Current Reserves: \$480,500

Reserves are the churches savings for unexpected or unbudgeted expenses and a safety net should offerings fail to cover budgeted expenses. Our goal is to have at least \$500,000 in reserves.

Current Memorial Fund:\$130,223

The Memorial fund consists of gifts given to the church in memory of a loved one. The monies are used to improve the church facilities especially in relationship to worship.

Current Endowment Fund: \$176,300

The Endowment Fund consists of gifts given to the church and invested so that the gifts can grow and the interest be used to advance the mission of the congregation. This is where people desiring to leave a legacy gift to secure the future of the congregation can contribute.

2026 BUDGET

\$2,294,985 increase of \$643

- 1) Our projection for 2025 led us to set our target income for 2026 at roughly the same number as 2025.
- 2) Inflation has made it more expensive to do the same things. For instance, our health benefits cost have increased by over \$19,000. Food costs have also increased considerably driving up the cost of fellowship events.
- 3) We are not currently on track to meet this year's budget, although we will likely meet expenses.

2026 BUDGET

BENEVOLENCE \$208,422 9%

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America/Rocky Mountain Synod - \$98,550

Supports the shared work of ELCA congregations in our area and country. 4.50%

Missionary Support - \$12,000

Supports global missionaries stationed around the world through ELCA Global Mission. 0.53%

Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp - \$9,900

Supports the closest Lutheran Bible camp to our congregation. 0.45%

Lutheran Family Services - \$10,000

The local Lutheran agency which works with unplanned pregnancy, foster care, adoption, and refugee and resettlement services. 0.45%

Catholic Charities which includes the following - \$20,900

The Marian House Kitchen and *Hanifen Center* at Marian House. First Lutheran volunteers run the Soup Kitchen on Fridays. The *Hanifen Center* offers programs in housing, employment, life skills, education, mental health, transportation, and childcare referrals. 0.95%

2026 BUDGET

BENEVOLENCE \$208,422

MOSAIC - \$5,280 Support for those with intellectual disabilities. 0.24%

Habitat for Humanity - \$7,700

Addressing homelessness one house at a time. 0.35%

Care and Share Mobile Pantry - \$5,500

Ministry enacted by downtown churches to feed clients fresh foods. 0.25%

Family Promise/ IHN - \$12,100

Helping homeless families into permanent housing. 0.55%

One Nation Walking Together - \$5,500

Helping Native Americans living in impoverished conditions in eight western states. 0.25%

COSILoveYOU - \$3,200

A local ecumenical organization aiming to help churches in Colorado Springs partner with business and government to improve our city. 0.15%

2026 BUDGET

BENEVOLENCE \$ \$208,422

Prison Fellowship/Angel Tree- \$4,500

Providing Christmas party, summer camp, gifts and other support for children of the incarcerated. 0.20%

Faith Table- \$1,200

Local collaboration of faith leaders working to solve issues like hunger and homelessness through public policy
0.05%

Scholarship Programs - \$6,600

Provides payment for church events for members unable to afford them. 0.30%

Emergency Discretionary - \$5,500

Allows church to respond to emergency needs in the community. 0.25%

2026 BUDGET

MINISTRIES - \$149,285 (decrease of \$11,043)

Worship & Stewardship

Includes communion supplies, candles, altar flowers, and bulletins.

Music Ministry

Includes music for our vocal and hand bell choirs and instrumental groups and provides opportunities for instrumental groups at special services. Includes music ministry items related to contemporary worship including musicians, instruments and technology.

Adult Christian Education

Includes curriculum and material for Lunch and Learn and other adult classes, both in person and online.

Evangelism

Includes materials to encourage our congregation to witness, announcements of special events in the local newspapers, and advertisements on social media. Includes new gift for visitors.

Christian Caregivers

First Lutheran Caregivers provide support to our hospitalized and homebound members.

2026 BUDGET

MINISTRIES - \$149,285

Transportation

Includes operation and maintenance of the vans and buses owned by the church that are regularly used in all areas of ministry.

Children & Youth Ministry

Provides Sunday Church School, Vacation Bible School, Kids Kamps, Confirmation curriculum, and educational materials. Provides program and activity funds for the junior high and senior high youth ministry programs and retreats.

Fellowship & Events

Includes fellowship supplies, refreshments, and paper products needed for all gatherings of our church family.

2026 BUDGET

STAFF \$1,512,364 increase of \$12,647

Our staffing this year includes the open positions of a part time assistant for our Minister of Music, a part-time bookkeeper. It includes a full-time Minister of contemporary worship and professional musicians for our new contemporary worship service. We've added a part-time property manager.

In 2023 Council developed a benefit policy that all new hires would be offered an 80/20 split on health benefits for themselves and a 20/80 split on health benefits for their children. Our current staff will be eased into this new policy over 4 years time.

After this budget was prepared we received news that our full-time contemporary worship leader is leaving. We will aim to make this a part-time position in 2026.

2026 BUDGET

STAFF (with benefit policy) \$ 1,512,364

Staff Compensation Benefits

We've added a 2.5% cost of living increase for all staff. This line item includes personnel costs for all clergy, lay, administrative, childcare and support staff, FICA benefits paid on behalf of the staff, Workmen's Compensation, and benefits including retirement, medical, dental, disability and life insurance for full time staff. Health benefits increased by over \$19,000 for 2026.

Conferences/Continuing Education

Includes sending representatives to the Synod Assembly yearly, larger church pastors' conference, and staff continuing education including retreats, webinars, and books.

2026 BUDGET

ADMINISTRATION \$135,914 Decrease of \$10,118

Legal/Audit Expense

We are not budgeting for an audit for 2026.

Communications and Office Equipment

Includes the cost of all office operations, communicative efforts, and maintenance of all office equipment; in order to have an informed, knowledgeable congregation. This includes paper, printing supplies, telephone system, postage, equipment rental, purchase, and replacement. We have realized some savings in software costs recently.

2026 BUDGET

PROPERTY \$289,000 Increase of \$9,145

Property Maintenance

Includes upkeep of all buildings and grounds, custodial supplies, and elevator service contract.

Insurance

Includes comprehensive coverage of church property and vehicles.

Utilities

Covers cost of total utilities for all buildings in which ministry takes place.

PROPOSAL FOR RENOVATION

Phase One



EXPANDED GATHERING PLACE

EXPANDED NARTHEX

- *2 Stories
- *Spire of Stained glass
- *Three floor to ceiling windows on either side of the spire.
- *A holy space to prepare for worship
- *A large space to extend a better welcome



CHARTER FOR RENOVATION PROJECT

Objective

- Renovation of the Church's Sanctuary, Gathering Place and Narthex. We are a bright, growing, energetic, and welcoming congregation. We need our building to communicate that truth by addressing the dark small narthex, small hard to find bathrooms, difficult navigation on entry, aging elevator, outdated sanctuary windows and church finishes.

SCOPE

Includes:

Sanctuary and Gathering Place

New elevator/stairwell addition

Gathering Place addition and expansion

Gathering Place bathrooms

Gathering Place kitchen

Excludes:

Upper floor bathrooms (2nd phase)

Sunday School Rooms (2nd phase)

Nursery (2nd phase)

Storage (2nd phase)

Sexton's Closet (2nd phase)

Sacristy (2nd phase)

Upper Floor Office Remodel (3rd phase)

Remaining portions of Landscape Master Plan (3rd phase)

Increase in parking availability

APPROACH

- Develop Master Plan across all three phases, with detail in the 1st phase.
- Develop “As Is” Assessment of moving forward with ‘Phase 1’.
- Finalize this charter for Phase 1.
- Develop Implementation and Schematic deliverable from architecture firm (CRP Architects).
- Define and kick off governance and communication plan for 1st Phase (roles, progress reporting, problem solving).
- Develop and publish schedule of work; detailed milestones, deliverables.
- Track and manage against project plan for 1st phase.
- Celebrate success and develop plan for 2nd phase.

DEPENDENCIES

- Capital campaign.
- City approvals and necessary exceptions to building codes.
- CRP architects work schedule

ASSUMPTIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

- Capital campaign will deliver monies necessary to fund 1st phase beginning April 2026.
- We will use project management best practices to manage this initiative. This means a formal communication plan, work plan, risk mitigation, and status reporting.
- Cost of phase one is in the 6-million-dollar range

RESOURCES AND ROLES

- Pastor Travis – Executive oversight
- Gary Bradley – Renovation Committee Chair
- Tad Goodenbour – Capital Campaign Chair

BUSINESS CASE

- Renovation will allow us to attract and retain people into the life of the congregation. Renovation will help prevent the decline of membership noted in neighboring churches.

KEY MILESTONES

- Council receives proposal for master plan development and determines to move forward.
- Contract signed with CRP architects for developing Master Plan.
- Congregational Town Hall with architect Bruce Smith to receive input from the congregation.
- CRP works with staff, Council, pastors to flesh out master plan.
- Plan reviewed by congregation. Specific elements for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd phase are debated and prioritized by congregation.
- Pastor Travis meets with members who are willing to be lead givers (over \$100,000).
- Church Council finalizes Feasibility Assessment for 1st phase, its scope, and estimate of its costs. Council identifies leaders for a Capital Campaign and a Building Committee.
- ***Congregation reviews and votes on recommendations from Council.***
- If approved by congregation, capital campaign begins with the quiet phase. Prospectus is drafted, information is organized, Inspiration and Lead Gift teams kicked off.
- CRP architects develop "As Is" assessment, schematics and then construction designs. Timeline for construction of 1st phase is published and estimated for 2nd and 3rd phase.
- Public phase of the capital campaign is kicked off
- Charter for 1st phase is updated, work plan for 1st phase is published.

KEY RISKS

- Not having commitments for estimated spend
- Unexpected but necessary hazardous material mitigation.
- Failure to maintain open periodic communication with congregation.

COORDINATION POINTS

- CRP Architects
- City and local councils and commissions
- Congregational ministries
- Capital Campaign

GENEROSITY ANNOUNCEMENT

- A generous member has made a pledge and already given a donation towards the campaign in the amount of \$1,000,000!

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer for the week of June 10-16, 2024