

A Season of Increase

First United Presbyterian Church Capital Campaign

First United Presbyterian Church is moving forward into the future with a great deal of excitement and energy. We are in a season of increase. Our average worship attendance is increasing. Our service and engagement with the community is increasing. Our support of local families in need is increasing. Our caring efforts for our own families are increasing. Our financial support of local, national, and international missions is increasing. Our spirituality is increasing as well. Through all of our efforts and God's blessings, we are increasing into the church that we are intended to be.

Our Past Success

One key part of this season of increase has been the lasting effects of our last renovation effort. Since the construction of Cornell Commons, Children's Chapel, the Communications Room, new office space and the new Youth Rooms in 2011, we have seen the clear benefits that updating our facility can produce.

In Cornell Commons, a crowd gathers each Sunday morning before and after worship filling the church with a feeling of caring fellowship. As one visitor recently described, "The minute I walked into your church I could feel the love and energy of this place. There was so much joy in that Commons area!" Cornell Commons has changed the feel of our church for members and visitors, setting the mood for worship and our other ministry activities.

The Children's Chapel, located just off of the Commons area, has been a blessing to many families and their children. During the 10:30 service, young children receive an experience of worship after their time with Pastor Rob and one of his "alter-ego" friends. The open, dedicated space for these children invites them into meaningful experiences with God while their parents can fully engage the remaining portion of the worship service.

The Communications Room is not very exciting to visit, but the improved internet capabilities have greatly increased the ministry potential of our church as we live in a technology age. Our online presence, where many visitors are discovering and learning about our church, is increasing. The new office spaces have increased our efficiency. We now have an accessible and improved workspace for the pastor and secretaries to meet with people, coordinate, and respond efficiently to the church ministry needs.

The new Youth Rooms are filled with excitement and activity each week. These dedicated spaces have created an inviting environment for the youth of our church. Weekly activities are drawing in our own youth and their non-member friends at a higher participation level than has been seen before. All three of the adult baptism requests that we received in 2015 came from individuals who primarily experienced our church through the programs that utilize these new youth rooms.

Our Next Steps Forward

As you can see, the renovations that were completed in 2011 are continuing to enable our season of increase. It is important that we complete what we have started and then look forward to what will next enable our increase. What are the next steps?

- 1) **We must finish paying for the 2011 renovations.** Through the generous support of the congregation, we have successfully paid for \$1.9 million of the previous \$2.4 million project. With just \$488,000 remaining, we have the opportunity to save the church tens of thousands of dollars by paying off this remaining debt in the next few years. By paying off the debt now, we can put more dollars into the ministries of the church and our mission to be the best church we can be FOR the community. It is time to complete what we started so that we can move forward.
- 2) **Eversull Hall needs to be renovated for our larger fellowship and community outreach events.** For larger fellowship gatherings and meals, we rely on Eversull Hall. Eversull Hall has served the church well for many years but it is looking worn and dated. For many, their first visit to our church is in Eversull Hall joining a friend for a fellowship group event, attending a funeral luncheon, eating a meal on Wednesday youth nights, or utilizing our space for their community group meeting. Poor lighting, deteriorating flooring, and insufficient storage space all contribute to a less than best impression. For many of us, we are used to what it looks like and have nostalgic connections that may cause our eyes to overlook the shortcomings. Conversations with visitors have revealed that they notice our need for updates. The proposed updates will increase our seating capacity by 20%. With over 100 new active members in the past 3 years, we need this additional seating.
- 3) **The Library needs renovation and an update.** Located right next to the fellowship space of Eversull Hall, the Library is used for several adult classes, Bible studies, preschool activities, individual study, and occasionally Eversull Hall fellowship overflow. The Library suffers from worn and dated issues similar to Eversull Hall. Improving the aesthetics while making room for more seating capacity is key as our church increases. Furthermore, we will be adding a large screen television along one of the walls to support the increasing use of video technologies in Bible Study, preschool, and Sunday class activities. The Library has the potential to be a wonderful, engaging environment filled with spiritual resources, able to host live music events, and available to larger groups as a natural, attractive expansion of our Eversull Hall space.
- 4) **The kitchen needs some minor remodeling work to fit our current use.** The kitchen has several unused appliances that take up a great deal of space while having others that greatly need enhancement. Removal of some of the serving units will free up needed storage space and a larger freezer will allow for more, much needed freezer space. With just a few minor updates, the beverage station in the hallway just outside the kitchen can be a great service to our meals. Furthermore, several of the existing storage areas in the kitchen need repairs or replacement.
- 5) **The windows facing our patio area from the Vista Room, Library, and preschool classrooms are leaking and need to be replaced.** Water damage is threatening the structure and look of these rooms that overlook the patio space.

The windows have several gaps in the joints and some of the tile panels along those windows are deteriorating. This is an issue of proper stewardship and property care that must be addressed for the long-term maintenance and appearance of our church.

- 6) **The patio area is in disrepair and could be better utilized.** Our preschool and young children utilize the patio area, but the concrete area is uneven providing a potentially unsafe and certainly less appealing play area for the kids. Providing safe and spacious play areas for children is a key component as we provide for our church's increase in young families. Furthermore, the remodeled patio will provide a great place for outdoor church gatherings near kitchen and restroom facilities. Large church and community events connecting Eversull Hall, the Library, and the patio could now be hosted as well during warmer weather months.

Our Response Together

And so, we are embarking upon another capital campaign this year to complete what we started and to provide the next steps of preparing for our increase. The remaining debt of \$488,000 plus the cost of the renovations, which is currently estimated to be \$400,000, leaves us with a \$900,000 goal for this capital campaign. If we have a successful campaign, we hope to have the remodeling done by the end of 2016 and the debt paid off by June 2019.

We are developing a reputation for being a place where worship, service, discipleship and fellowship are happening in ways that honor the tradition of our faith while engaging people in real and meaningful ways today. God is increasing our numbers, our faith, our spirituality, our caring, our serving, our mission, and our energy! We are in a season of increase and the church needs your faithful support of the growth ahead of us. If we burden ourselves with long-term interest or if we cease to update our facility, we threaten our ability to respond to the increase of today and undermine our ability to increase in the future. It will take all of us responding together through prayers, encouragement, and financial support to rise to the occasion and continue this season of increase that the Lord has entrusted to us.