

Fall, 2020

# Preliminary Building Conversation St. Paul's Lutheran

*“Grateful and Growing”*



**St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School**

1201 Main St.

Onalaska, Wisconsin 54650

608-781-2064

[www.stpaulsonalaska.org](http://www.stpaulsonalaska.org)

## Introduction

The Lord has been so gracious to the 125 plus years of ministry at St. Paul's! We are grateful for the many blessings he has bestowed upon us, a body of believers, and wish to continually give him the glory for all things. Yes, "the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever!"

St. Paul's Lutheran Church has been studying and exploring options for a comprehensive building update and expansion program for several years. The current facilities are a blessing and have served us well over the years. However, our needs for ministry are changing. To best meet the challenges before us, we are considering a building program that updates and expands our facilities for both our school and congregational ministry.

To begin that journey we will...

Seek consensus from the St. Paul's families to better  
focus on our building update and expansion plans.

***Grateful and Growing*** is the theme chosen for our planning. As a body of believers we are grateful for the faith we have in Jesus and many blessings God has showered on our ministry. We strive to grow both in the strengthening of our faith through God's Word and by connecting more people to their Savior. God has blessed our growth – both numerically and spiritually.

The prayerful vision is for St. Paul's to expand our campus that fully supports all aspects of our ministry – for better functionality, flexibility and capacity that will allow for our growing ministry. The ultimate goal is a building, a tool for ministry, to better share Jesus with the Onalaska community. This building will enable us to continue connecting with those who need what is missing in their lives, a spiritual relationship with Jesus.

The cornerstone of a building determines the design and orientation of the entire building process. It is the most significant stone, a tested stone at the corner. Jesus is the foundation of all our earthly decisions, and it should be with him that we start to begin planning for any expansion effort.

It is important for everyone to be included in this process. Our ministry is founded on groups of people – individuals, parents, and children – all coming together for a common cause. We are so grateful to have you as part of the St. Paul's "family". Thank you for your partnership!

May Jesus, our Cornerstone, guide us through this entire endeavor. May he bless our work as we move forward with him at our side!

## Why are we doing all of this?

Before ascending into heaven, Jesus stated a mission which will occupy his believers until he returns: *Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you (Matthew 28:19–20)*. We believe in that mission and use it as a guide for our very own purpose statement.

*St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church exists to:  
Support each other with God's Word and sacraments,  
Share Christ with our community and the world, and  
Serve others in Christian love.*

Stated another way, our purpose is to make disciples. This effort of making disciples has two parts: reaching out and nurturing – **reaching out** to those who do not know Jesus and **nurturing** the faith of those who are already confess Jesus as Lord.

We **reach out** to others spiritually when we share with them the good news that Jesus, God's Son, is also their Savior. We do this by both telling them about God's grace and living out that grace so others will glorify our Father. Telling others about Jesus is a privilege our Savior has given to every believer individually; it also belongs to our congregation. We take this privilege seriously because sharing the gospel honors our dear Father and because without faith in Jesus only hell awaits.

**Nurturing** faith requires contact with the gospel. *Faith comes from hearing the message and the message is heard through the Word of Christ* (Romans 10:17). A key component to our ministry is gospel-center education where God's Word is shared with our children. Our buildings, which are simply tools, have been a significant blessing in helping us **nurture** the faith of our members and children over the years.

For St. Paul's to do our best at making disciples now and in the future requires action. Your leaders believe the bold action required at this time is to update and expand our facilities. We believe it is one that best serves the Kingdom for many years to come. The following pages outline our plan so that we can better support our mission of **reaching out** to those who do not know Jesus and **nurturing** those who do. These plans are open for discussion and debate. We look forward to your input and reaction as we march together in sharing Jesus with more and more people. May God bless the efforts of **Grateful and Growing**.

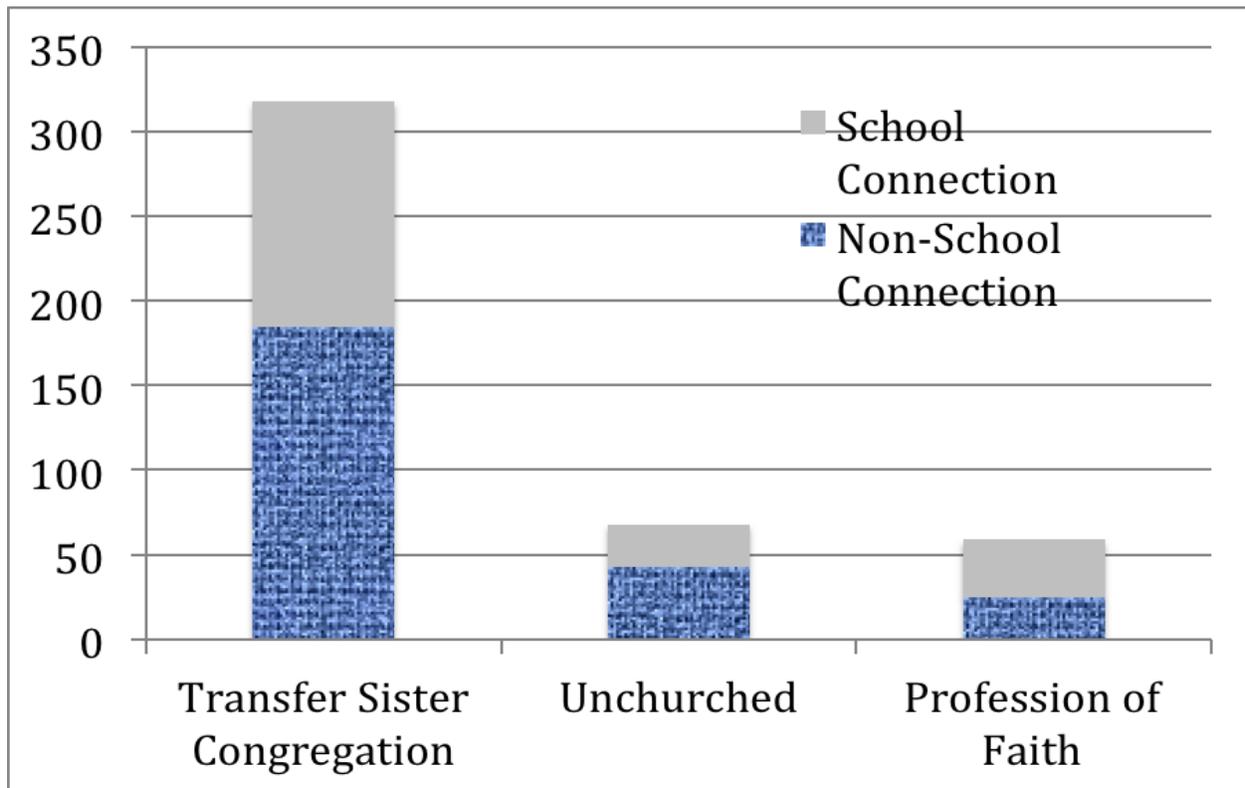
## A Ministry Making Connections

Our desire is to connect with as many people in as many ways possible. Our buildings are tools for making these connections.

St. Paul's Lutheran School exists to nurture the Christian faith of children whose parents are members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Around 70-75% of St. Paul's Lutheran Church school age children are enrolled in the school. We rejoice that a good majority of our parents are making use of the school assisting them with their parental responsibilities of teaching their kids about their Savior.

St. Paul Lutheran School is also a major draw for new members joining our church. During a recent 13-year period, a large percentage (around 50%) of our new members had some type of connection with our school. The process of identifying, encouraging, and assimilating non-members through our school is part of our congregation's overall evangelism effort, one of our major outreach efforts. Investing in our school is investing in our church.

St. Paul's Membership Transactions  
(2007 – 2019)



## What are the identified limitations with our present buildings?

We view St. Paul's as an outreach-focused, welcoming, family-oriented congregation. In order to carry out that vision, we rely on our buildings as tools in assisting us, God's people, for ministry work. When buildings interfere or become a barrier to ministry work, it is most prudent to assess the situation. Your leaders believe an expanded campus will provide more space for making connections with our own members and those who are not yet directly connected.

The following are identified as objectives to help improve the effectiveness of our overall ministry effort. Our desire is to have:

### **Community connections and outreach**

- Welcoming entrance for contemporary worship and community events
- Additional meeting, worship space and Bible study room for adults and teens
- Gymnasium with adequate space, equipment and safety to invite the community to join our events and youth activities.

### **Streamlined campus entrance**

- Addresses entrance (safety and security) concerns providing a safe environment for our children
- Maintains the current number of parking lot spaces for church functions
- Streamlined traffic flow and safety for both school and church drop-off/pickup

### **Classroom space meeting the needs of a growing school .....**

- Sufficient minimum of 15 classrooms providing adequate instructional space for current classes; 3 specialty rooms (STEM, art, science) to meet expectations of today's community
- Removes classrooms from basement, library, and fellowship hall

### **Multipurpose and Gymnasium Areas augment additional gatherings.....**

- Specific space for 1) contemporary worship services; 2) groups associated with St. Paul's – concerts, adult groups, teens, Jesus Cares, seniors; 3) fellowship events for all!
- New gym provides needed space for educational purposes:
  - removes safety concerns due to the tightness of court boundaries to seating
  - provides more student options for physical activity relating to growth and development
  - allows more to be accomplished for recess and physical education during inclement days (rain, cold and snow)
- Permits more space options for plays, talent nights, practice events, and other large venues

The reality we are confronted with is central to our mission:

*Our facility is not adequate for growing our ministry.*

## A Vision Prayer for St. Paul's Lutheran Church

A church's vision is what a congregation prays it will become in the future. St. Paul's vision is more than just a statement. It is a prayer that our congregation will pray often and boldly, yielding only to God's will. For the next five years this is the vision and prayer for the members of St. Paul's:

*Heavenly Father, we ask you to bless our congregation as you have in the past. We humbly ask you to use us, the members of St. Paul's, as your servants to advance your kingdom. Using the gifts of reason and intellect you gave us, these are our bold plans for the future:*

- **Worship** – *You are worthy of our praise, and yet, we are the ones who benefit from worship through Word and Sacrament. We will enhance our worship by **utilizing as many musical gifts of the congregation as possible**. We will plan for an **additional worship space** for a growing congregation.*
- **Spiritual Strengthening** – *You have made us your children through baptism. Now we pray that you build up our faith through **additional bible studies, and an expanded small group program**. Use these programs and others to develop meaningful Christian relationships.*
- **Outreach** – *You have made us a light in this dark world. We plan to equip our members with **friendship evangelism training**. We ask you to give us an enthusiasm for this ministry and the boldness to speak. Use our **expanding school** as a way of reaching those who do not yet know Jesus in our community. We ask you to bless our **exploration of summer care and expanded early childhood ministries** to give us more opportunities to share the gospel.*
- **Building Expansion** – *You have blessed us with an abundance of people in our congregation and school. We **plan to update our facility to support expanding ministries for both church and school, as well as reaching out to the community**. We pray that with additional classrooms and worship space, you would allow us to share your Word with more children in our school, more adults in bible study and more fellowship opportunities with each other and the community.*

*These are our plans, yet we pray that your will be done and your blessings continue all for the love of Jesus. Amen.*

This vision statement summarizes our hope for the future all under God's blessings.  
We invite your input and reaction!

## What are the preliminary cost and income projections?

The first step in developing a financial plan for building updates is to implement a funding appeal. Once it is known what our members will give toward a 3-year over-and-above gift, we will be in a better position to determine how much to borrow, the rate and the term. A financial plan, including cash and commitments, will be developed prior to moving forward. As always, the congregation has final decision each step of the way.

Capital Improvement & Expansion Fund	\$250,000
Current mortgage	(\$300,000)
Initial fund appeal	\$1,800,000 to \$2,500,000
Foundation grants	\$100,000 to \$250,000
Commercial loan	\$4,300,000 to \$5,100,000

Estimated cost of building expansion: \$7,000,000  
(Includes cost of construction, soft costs, FFF, and all other expenses)

### Mortgage repayment plan:

Current yearly mortgage payment in budget:	\$26,000
St. Paul School building investment:	\$35,000 to \$50,000
Surplus funds from school operating:	<u>\$90,000 to \$100,000</u>
CURRENT MORTGAGE TOTAL:	\$150,000 to \$175,000

\* Above estimates are based on zero growth with current church and school membership

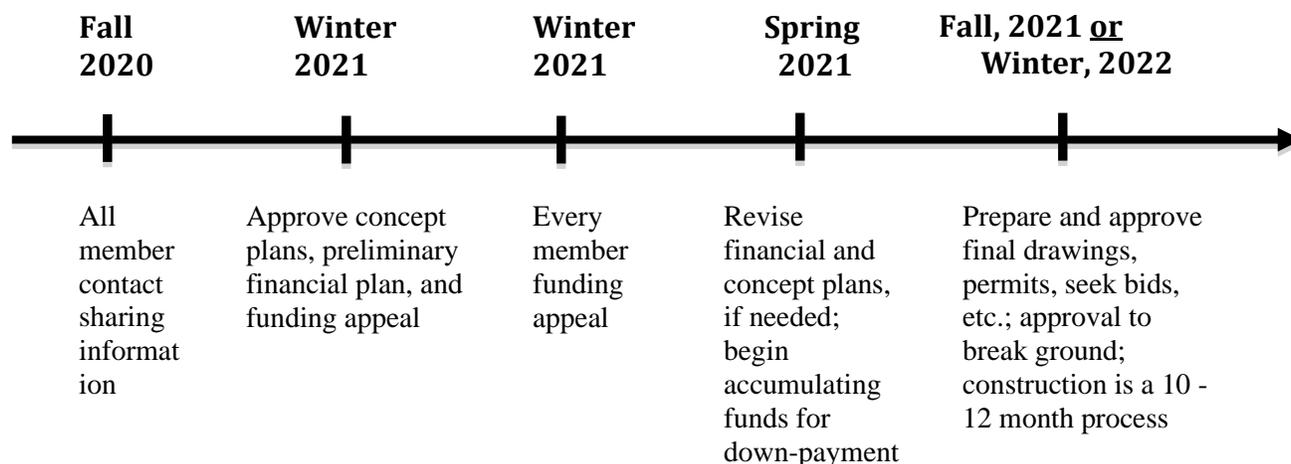
## Our Guiding Assumptions for Planning

- ♦ St. Paul's places emphasis and priority upon **outreach** in order to better share Jesus with more and more people in a welcoming atmosphere (Mark 16:15).
- ♦ Christian **education** is a major and integrated ministry of St. Paul's Lutheran Church.
- ♦ St. Paul's understands the importance of ongoing **spiritual growth** through Bible study, as well as Christian fellowship and support.
- ♦ None of these important areas of ministry should be hindered by physical limitations of our facilities.
- ♦ Major decisions and plans of God's people always require a high level of **trust** in the Lord (Proverbs 3:5).
- ♦ Any plans by St. Paul's for facility updates and growth will reflect consideration of the congregation's **financial resources and blessings**, with reasonably attainable funding goals. St. Paul's will strive to be wise stewards of any resources God provides.
- ♦ Building expansion and update plans should strive to address **long-term ministry vision and goals**, reflecting a desire to support St. Paul's ongoing ministry to a growing community.
- ♦ The **voice of St. Paul's members** will be a guiding force in any decision-making process.

## What are the next steps?

The Lord has blessed our work to this point in time and we trust his guidance for the future! We have a good start, but know there is still much to be done.

The following steps are offered as tentative guides. At every step of the way, the congregation has the decision to stop, place on hold, or move forward with each action or proposal. The timeline below is actually a series of events leading up to project completion. The timeline may be modified or adjusted per congregation decision.



## We Need Your Input!

The decision to further the purpose of St. Paul's through an updating and building expansion project is not an easy decision, nor is it a one-time decision. Rather the process involves several smaller decisions along the way.

We now invite everyone's input to ensure that we are heading in the right direction. In order for us to continue with the *Grateful and Growing* effort, it is important for all of us to be involved. In the days and weeks to come, please freely give your thoughts on the best options for St. Paul's to further the kingdom. May God bless our efforts!

Drew Gronholz, Chair 608-769-9782  
drewg9782@gmail.com

Dave Meyer 608-780-4678  
meyerda@outlook.com

Terry Burkum 608-518-6253  
tburkum@gmail.com

Wade Hackbarth 608-386-1744  
hackbarthw@westerntc.edu

Joel Degner 608-317-4240  
joelandlori@gmail.com

Pastor Brett Ehlke 608-799-2717  
behlke@stpaulsonalaska.org

Pastor Shane Krause 608-217-5660  
skrause@stpaulsonalaska.org

Pastor Dan Olson 608-769-9782  
dolson@stpaulsonalaska.org