

**ST. DAVID'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY**

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN ASSESSMENT JANUARY 9, 2009

The Rector, Vestry, and Assessment Committee are to be commended for their efforts of time and prayer spent in preparation for this study.

The Assessment included personal interviews with 43 members of the church, who represented 32 households. Written responses were received from 26 members representing 22 households. Overall, 69 members, representing 54 households, participated in the Assessment. The entire congregation is comprised of about 150 households, 90 of whom are pledging households. About 60% of the pledging units were represented by this study.

The first 3 questions asked of participants established demographics for the Assessment.

Responses were as follows:

19 participants have been attending St. David's 5 years or less,
12 participants have been attending for 6-10 years, and
37 participants have been attending for 11 years or more.
1 participant gave no answer to this question.

As to their overall view of St. David's:

44 rated the church as Excellent, 24 gave a rating of Very Good, and 1 had no opinion.

Levels of involvement found members to be:

22 Very Involved, 24 Involved, 13 Somewhat Involved, and 10 Not Very Involved.

These responses suggest the participants to be representative of newer parish families as well as those who have been with the church for a long while, some since its inception. People are very positive and well satisfied at St. David's. High levels of involvement suggest interest and passion for ministry and outreach. During my own brief exposure, I witnessed the congregation's heart to help others in need.

Questions 4 and 5 asked participants' opinions about space being needed for fellowship/social activities, classrooms, worship, storage, and parking, along with help in prioritizing these needs.

37 Strongly Agree that space is needed in these areas,
24 Agree,
6 are Neutral, and
2 offered no response to this question.

These answers indicate a POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THE NEED of 88%.

In prioritizing these areas of need, participants assigned ratings of 1-5, 1 being most needed and 5 being least needed. Ratings were assigned a corresponding point value of 1=1 point, and so forth. Ratings were multiplied by point values and totals were determined. The lower the total points, the higher the priority. Results are as follows:

Overall	1st=1 pt.	2nd=2 pts.	3rd=3 pts.	4th= 4 pts.	5th=5 pts.	Total points
Priority						
Fellowship/social	37	21	8	2	1	116
1st						
Classrooms	16	21	21	8	3	168
2nd						
Worship	16	15	19	11	8	187
3rd						
Storage	2	6	16	24	21	263
4th						
Parking	0	5	4	24	36	298
5th						

According to these results, participants suggested that Fellowship/social space is needed first, followed by Classroom space, Worship space, Storage, and Parking.

Questions 6 through 8 gathered input concerning a potential Capital Funds Campaign to generate funding for a possible expansion project. If input from this Assessment is positive, the following response to proceeding with a Capital Funds Campaign was gathered:

30 participants said they would be Very Supportive,
 25 would be Supportive,
 8 Supportive with Some Reservations, and
 5 Neutral about proceeding.
 1 offered no response to the question.

SOME LEVEL OF SUPPORT was offered by 91%. NO ONE WAS UNSUPPORTIVE.

Regarding the total amount participants felt the congregation could reach in a 3-year Campaign,
 3 felt more than \$1 million could be reached,
 17 felt \$750,000 to \$1 million could be reached,
 25 felt \$500,000 to \$750,000 could be reached,
 15 felt \$250,000 to \$500,000 could be reached, and
 9 had no idea or offered no response to this question.

The average of these responses tends toward the \$500,000 to \$750,000 level of what could be raised by the entire congregation over a 3-year period.

As to the preferred length of a Capital Funds Campaign,
 28 participants prefer 3 years,
 13 prefer 4 years,
 20 prefer 5 years,
 6 prefer longer than 5 years, and
 2 gave no response.

Question 9 asked for an estimate of financial giving to a potential expansion project. 50 of 54 participating households offered a response. Results are as follows:

- 1 above \$25,000 per year for 3 years,
- 1 at \$15,000 - \$24,999 per year,
- 0 at \$10,000 - \$14,999 per year,
- 2 at \$8,000 - \$9,999 per year,
- 1 at \$6,000 - \$7,999 per year,
- 5 at \$4,000 - \$5,999 per year,
- 3 at \$2,000 - \$3,999 per year,
- 17 at \$1,000 - \$1,999 per year,
- 16 at less than \$1,000 per year, and
- 4 specific amounts: \$1,000, \$2,000, \$5,000 per year, and \$60,000 total.

If actual commitments would come in at the low end of each range, the amount raised would be \$399,000; if at the middle of each range, \$496,500 would be raised: and if at the high end of each range, \$594,000 would be raised from this group. Experience tells us that the mid-range amount is usually closest to the actual commitments raised during the Campaign, in this case \$496,500. As this Assessment response represents about 60% of the church's pledged households, the potential for additional giving certainly exists. Conversely, the challenging economic conditions may cause some households to give closer to the low-range than the mid-range of their chosen level. This being said, a target goal of \$500,000, with a "stretch" or "faith" goal of \$600,000, would seem to be a possibility when involving the entire congregation.

Question 10 invited participants to share comments, suggestions, ideas, or concerns about the proposal to address the church's need of space. Following is a representative list of comments that were made by more than one participant.

1. We need to do this. The congregation is growing. (8)
2. Move slowly because of the economy. Consider doing it in phases. (4)
3. More outreach can be done if we have space to store food, clothes, chairs, tables, and welcome new ministries. (4)
4. We should develop a 10-15 year plan. (4)
5. Karin is a spark plug. If she appeals to the congregation, people will follow. (4)
6. We trust in our leaders. This study is a good way to go about the process. (4)
7. We would like the building to be greener. Promoting an energy-efficient green building may bring community support. Consider LEAD certification. Make sure our project is not overlooked when the DEP wastewater buildout survey is done. (4)
8. Our children need space. They are paramount. (3)
9. Increased space can be used by both the church and the community. (3)
10. Storage areas are needed for all the organizations and outreach ministries. (3)
11. Expansion will benefit everyone - children, J2A, families and seniors. (3)
12. Let's not go deeply in debt. (3)
13. Kitchen and social space needs to be expanded if the church keeps growing. (3)
14. If we don't get on with this, interest will be lost. Much study has already been done. (3)
15. Don't skimp on the project. Have faith that God will provide. (3)
16. Provide a play area for the children near the patio. (2)
17. It is not the time to ask for extra money. (2)
18. People are ready to go with this, but afraid of the economy and loss of jobs. (2)
19. The choir needs space to practice and robe. (2)
20. Expansion of worship space needs to include increased choir area. (2)
21. This is exciting for us. We have a young family who will take full advantage of the expansion. (2)

22. We should consider ministries attractive to the community of Cranbury, giving us a greater presence in the community. (2)
23. Don't expand the worship space too much or the congregation will seem lost. A fuller space appears more exciting. (2)

In addition to the adult participants, time was spent with the J2A group discussing their ideas. Input received was lively and enthusiastic. Many comments centered around the youth's need of space. Lack of a large enough room is seen as a deterrent to inviting friends and makes it difficult to participate in, and offer, certain activities. The youth would like to see more styles of music offered on Sunday mornings in which they could possibly participate. They are also willing to assist financially in an expansion project that is seen as beneficial to some of their needs.

Question 11 asked participants to submit questions they would like to have addressed. A total of 19 questions were given. It is our recommendation that leadership responds to these questions, listing answers in a format to which all members may have access.

1. Could the front facade be designed to look more like it fits with local architecture? (4)
2. Will the narthex be expanded? (2)
3. Can we consider replacing the organ as part of this project? It is on its last leg. (2)
4. Can we borrow funds in this economy? Can we borrow from the diocese? (2)
5. Could we consider a contemporary worship service at 11:15? Youth could participate more in a service geared for them. (2)
6. Could the outside groups who use the building help pay for its expansion? (2)
7. Could construction be done in such a way to keep the classrooms and kitchen usable during the process?
8. Can any addition have a basement to provide less costly space?
9. Could the nursery be wired for sound so that the service can be heard by those who tend the children?
10. What is the plan if there is no consensus on which priority to address first?
11. Have we investigated off-site storage?
12. Could a second floor be added?
13. How many of our congregation are retired?
14. Have we considered the need for an ordained assistant if we continue with 3 services?
15. How do new people react to a crowded sanctuary where it is difficult to find a seat?
16. Has a "cry room" for babies and parents been considered?
17. Where would extra parking be located?
18. What happens to regular giving during a capital campaign?
19. Could (Hillyer, Hillard?) architects be asked to donate time or a design for the project?

Question 12 asked participants to indicate their availability and interest in helping with a Capital Funds Campaign should such a campaign take place. A list of volunteers will be supplied to the Vestry along with this report.

Observations and Analysis

The pool of participants were representative of the congregation as a whole. The number of participants was more than adequate to provide sufficient data to formulate conclusions to this study.

A positive response of 88% was given to the idea of expanding the facility. No negative responses were given. Fellowship/social space was deemed to be the most needed space; followed by classrooms, worship space, storage and parking. Fellowship/social space was chosen as most needed by a majority of participants, so a consensus seems to be clear.

Should the results of this study demonstrate a positive response toward building expansion, 91% would be supportive of a Capital Funds Campaign. Again, no negative responses were given. The largest number of responses favored a campaign that would be 3 years in length. On average, participants believe that the entire congregation could raise \$500,000-\$750,000 over a 3-year period. A mid-range estimate of potential commitments from 51 households amounted to \$496,500, suggesting a campaign goal of \$500,000-\$600,000 would be within the realm of possibility.

Judging by these responses, along with the positive tone of most comments and questions, it would be fair to say that the congregation is much in favor of moving ahead with building expansion. People are in agreement with the need for more space, have identified priorities, and have indicated strong financial support. There is a note of caution concerning the economy, as would be expected. However, this is not seen as a deterrent to moving forward.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Support to move ahead with building expansion is strong. Parish growth has necessitated expansion and people recognize the needs. Adding a third Sunday service has taken some pressure off the immediate need for worship space, so focus has been given to fellowship/social space as well as classrooms. As a positive attitude towards expansion has developed, it would be wise to proceed as opposed to allowing positive momentum to be lost. Churches that hesitate or postpone progress at times such as this often fail to regain the same level of enthusiasm later on. Some even lose members as disappointment takes a toll.

This being said, we do not recommend forging ahead with reckless abandon. Consideration must be given to current economic conditions as well. Most churches are finding it wise to proceed one step at a time, by phasing their projects - building first what they need most, and building within their means with a minimum of long-term debt.

In keeping with this train of thought, we recommend the following steps:

1. Initiate a Capital Funds Campaign immediately. Financial commitments that are received will determine a project budget and help decide how much space can be afforded.
2. Develop a basic site plan to determine where all needed space can eventually be located.
3. Utilize the project budget to determine the size of the project to be built, and have appropriate plans prepared. Use the results of this study to determine which space is added first.

We further recommend that the congregation be kept informed of all progress made in a timely fashion. Thank you very much for the privilege of serving your church.

Respectfully submitted,
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