

Facility Space Needs
UUCC Facilities Needs Team

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Recent edits in italics

The Facilities Needs Taskforce was appointed by the UUCC Board of Trustees to:

- Discern the will of the Congregation and the needs for facilities.
- Research practical solutions to these needs including the possibility of additional location(s)
- Present at least three well-researched options for meeting facility needs to the board.

The taskforce began meeting last November. The taskforce has been working to understand our special needs and to explore all possible options. In order to understand our growth potential, and thus, the amount of space we will need, we have analyzed attendance and membership records, and have made this report available. We have been analyzing our accessibility needs with the help of an accessibility assessment from an outside consultant, and with the help of the AIM Team's Accessibility and Inclusivity Survey from the fall. We have also been researching the experience of other recently expanded churches to understand the process they went through and any challenges they faced. In order to explore all options, we have examined the feasibility of purchasing another site, but have yet to find any options that make sense with regard to cost or location. Additionally, we have completed research into our ability to expand our current space. The taskforce will continue to use this research to examine all possibilities in order to enlarge, enhance, and improve the accessibility of our congregational space. We look forward to garnering congregant input this summer.

Attendance and Membership – Past, Present and Future

Our congregation has experienced about 6% membership growth per annum since 2013. This represents about 15 net new members per year. Current membership as of October 2017 was 264.

Projecting +15 net members annually for ten years results in a membership of 414. This is probably optimistic. Projecting 6% per annum growth for ten years projects 500, which seems unrealistically optimistic.

Note that projecting church membership has a certain risk. Bill Haney warned us that churches commonly experience periods of growth then periods of plateau. From 2013 to 2016 our membership was stalled at around 230 to 240, and surged after 2016 coinciding with the election. It is certainly true that some members explicitly stated that they joined due to geopolitical events after the election. However many others join because they have children that need religious education, or have moved here and are lifelong UUs, or are just finding us.

We believe that capacity of the sanctuary is one of the factors that can limit our projected membership and attendance growth. It is probably unreasonable to expect continued membership growth at the recent rates. If we experienced the same recent growth rates five years out of ten, and otherwise a

plateau, we could expect membership around 339. It might be more reasonable to project growth assuming we will hit a plateau, instead of assuming that growth will be continuous.

340-350 members in ten years is a projection in which we feel confident.

Records of Sunday attendance were analyzed from 2007 to 2017. These records are difficult to characterize precisely, as they vary widely from week to week, but there is a clear trend of higher attendance over these years.

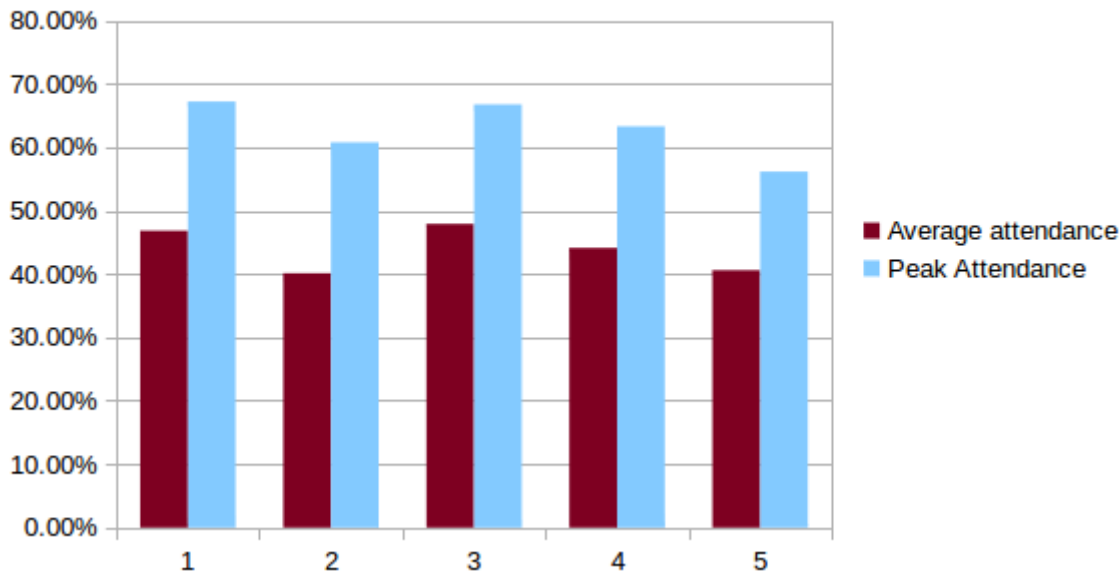
In 2006 our average attendance per Sunday was 78 with a standard deviation of 13. The highest attendance recorded was 102.

In 2017 our average attendance per Sunday was 103 with a standard deviation of 28. The highest Sunday attendance recorded in 2017 was 164 over two services. The highest attendance recorded in 2017 for any single service was 143.

Seating capacity in our sanctuary is about 146, depending on how the chairs are laid out. We exceed this number at least once a year.

It is recommended to have a seating capacity about 25% larger than the expected number of attendees, lest people think the sanctuary is “full” and feel turned away. It is probably realistic to have a completely “full” event once a year, as long as most events have plenty of extra seating.

Average and peak attendance as a percent of membership



From 2013 to 2017, our average attendance on Sunday (two services summed) tended to be about 44% of our total membership. Our peak attendance for the year (any one service) tended to be about 63% of the total membership. These ratios did not vary significantly over this time, tracking membership.

Attendance Projections

The following projections are based on projected growth and attendance:

Projected Membership	Average Sunday Attendance ~44% of membership	Peak Attendance at any one event ~63% of membership
414 (Assumes + 15 members/yr 10 yrs)	182 (projected)	260 (projected)
339 (assuming current growth might plateau)	146 (projected)	214 (projected)
264 (Current Membership)	116 (projected)	166 (projected).
254 (2017 membership)	103 (41% of members)	143 (56% of members)
243 (2016 membership)	107 (44% of members)	154 (63% of members)
237 (2015 membership)	113 (45% of members)	158 (67% of members)
243 (2014 membership)	98 (40% of members)	148 (61% of members)
223 (2013 membership)	109 (47% of members)	156 (67% of members)

Our current facility is not large enough to comfortably accommodate our current expected peak membership at any one event given past trends.

Existing Facilities

This chart describes approximate areas of some of our existing facilities.

Existing Area	Square Footage
Sanctuary (all areas)	2795 sft – about 51’ X 55’
Actual Seating	2003 sft
Chancel	320 sft
Front Aisle	384 sft
Ramp	88 sft
Basement (all areas)	5016 sft
Centering	440 sft
Potter and Nursery	2448 sft
Forum	468 sft
YRUU	252 sft
Kitchen	266 sft
Greeting	1000 sft

Existing Area	Square Footage
Offices	1182 sft

Needs

Interviews with various members and stakeholders have revealed the following needs.

Sanctuary Needs

The sanctuary is often too full.

Although the current plan of two services has been helping the need for space, it creates problems. Additional volunteer energy is needed, musicians are asked to perform twice, it is a burden on the staff and the Minister. The early service has been poorly attended. The later service still tends to fill up the available space.

We need an upgraded projection system which can compete with the amount of natural light in the room. We need shades or curtains which can darken the room for projection, and also protect the piano from sun damage. We enjoy having live plants in the room, which require natural light. Natural light interferes with a clear view of the Chancel, sometimes causing glare.

Currently the Sanctuary carpet is in need of replacing. There are cracks in the gypsum board ceiling, that have been there for many years, that are unsightly, although there is no indication there is a structural problem. There is not enough insulation in the ceiling, as it was standard construction circa 1968, and the insulation has probably been compromised by squirrel nests.

Acoustically, the Sanctuary is “bright” with much sound reflection. This is ideal for live music, but detrimental to understanding speech. Some mitigation of the acoustics was done earlier, and sound absorbing panels were installed at the sides high on the walls. More should be done.

Sanctuary is cluttered with table and chair storage. When chairs are moved to create open space they take up a large section of the back or sides. Other clutter, such as microphone stands, sound cabinet and book carts, detract from a peaceful space. Often such clutter is stored on the ramp, interfering with accessibility.

The sanctuary should have dedicated table and chair storage and these items should be stacked on carts, not dragged on the carpet wearing it out. There should be storage for mic stands off the Chancel and out of view.

The ramp, although absolutely necessary, takes up valuable floor space and causes a bottleneck in the seating areas on the left (west) side. Many elderly or physically disabled people sit in this area as it is close to the door, and may need extra room to maneuver wheelchairs or park walkers. In a renovated Sanctuary it might be possible to arrange the ramp so that it does not take up seating space.

Portable chairs are usually dragged on the carpet to rearrange them, wearing carpet unnecessarily. If a table and chair storage room off the sanctuary included portable carts that could carry a stack of chairs on wheels, the carpet would last longer and less heavy lifting by volunteers would be needed.

A modern projection system is needed in the Sanctuary, with commercial projectors permanently mounted, bright enough to be seen despite competition from ambient light. The projectors should be controlled from a wireless keyboard and mouse at the podium, without the need for plugging in a laptop, and should be permanently wired into the sound system. *Projection screens should be motorized and disappear behind trim or into a ceiling alcove.*

Currently the dimmers in the Sanctuary make a lot of electrical noise, which shows up in the sound system and especially on the Assisted Listening System, creating a constant buzz. There may be modern dimmers that create less electrical noise and would not interfere.

There are two windows adjacent to the Sanctuary chancel. These create glare, interfere with projection, but on the other hand create a welcome connection to the outdoors and nature. One of them allows sunlight to hit the piano, causing problems with the wood, and heat that causes it to go out of tune. A semi-permanent homemade curtain made of black polyethylene which does not meet the flammability requirements of section 806.4 of the IBC has been added in lieu of expensive commercial window treatments. The windows are an odd shape which requires expensive window treatments, if such were purchased. Windows, if used at all, should be designed considering competing glare, competition with projection screens, sunlight damaging interior surfaces, and should have permanent blackout curtains to allow the interior space to be dim.

The windows at the rear of the Sanctuary also create a great amount of interior light, which is normally an asset unless screen projection is used. The connection with the outdoors, and especially the prairie wildflower area in the back are assets.

The Sanctuary doubles as a fellowship hall when we have potlucks or other events. The portable chairs are a distinct advantage in flexibility. *We frequently re-arrange the sanctuary in creative ways, sometimes using a circle layout for chairs or using it for other functions. Flexibility is an important feature, fixed seating would be completely inappropriate.* Although a fellowship hall would be a nice asset, in fact the flexibility of the Sanctuary makes a fellowship hall less useful. In larger churches, the fellowship hall becomes a second sanctuary and can be used to have two different styles of service at the same time.

Forum Needs

Forum is a well-attended and long running program. Forum participants are proud of running a financially spartan program.

The Forum room is located directly under the Chancel stage, and has frequent interference from music, especially the drum kit, or vigorous movement upstairs. The floor has soundproofing insulation, however no amount of insulation can muffle the deep frequencies of a drum.

Forum does not have a dedicated air conditioner, and this means it is frequently stuffy. Several leaks in the adjacent mechanical room have created the potential for mold in this room. Mold

mitigation was done at least once and we have used dehumidifiers since to help the situation. Forum needs a dedicated air conditioner with fresh air supply.

Theoretical capacity for the Forum room is 31. We typically place 40 chairs in the room. Forum is often quite full. They need a room with 45 to 60 capacity and 15 square feet per seat.

Forum uses a projector on a rough concrete wall, and uses no sound system. They need a permanent projector and a real screen, as well as sound reinforcement or the ability to play sound from a video.

The forum room is also used for records and book storage, causing clutter.

Forum needs to be adjacent to a small kitchen, as they are now, to prepare coffee and snacks.

Forum needs to have a locked space where they can safely store items needed just for forum.

Table and chair storage, to allow the Forum room to be used flexibly for other events, would be needed.

Forum participants state that they need the chair and tables to be restored to their positions, as many elderly members of Forum are not able to move chairs safely.

We should have a Forum room that can accommodate 60 people, with good projection equipment permanently installed, with access to a kitchen, table and chair storage and a lockable cabinet, and a dedicated air conditioning system. It should not be located directly under the Chancel stage. *It would double as a large meeting room for the Religious Education program.*

RE Needs

Religious Education in general, has enough classrooms to accommodate most classes, however they do not have an area that works for larger gatherings. Mentoring, where an adult is paired with each teen in the program, needs a room that can accommodate 40 people with room to move about. A 65 person conference room is probably right to accommodate movement in such a crowd. *Some of the existing classrooms (Adams) are quite small and do not get utilized as classroom space. This room is currently being used as an office for our intern minister and music director.*

YRUU has a comfortable, cramped room stuffed with couches and bean bags. Such informal seating is liked by the participants. It seems that a larger room is needed for the numbers that occasionally show up. The room appears very cluttered and full.

RE has items stored in a number of closets around the building, and they exceed the capacity of the current RE closet in the center of the basement hallway. For example, the “bridging” prop is usually stored in the video closet. The basement “Elevator Closet” is a central RE storage area.

Lighting throughout the basement RE Space is stark fluorescent fixtures, without dimming. This is inappropriate for most of the uses of these spaces, for example Yoga classes or Chalice Circles which are intimate social gatherings. Lighting should be multi-level, a bright setting for reading, a second level for general use and a dimmable setting of indirect lighting on the edges of the room to set a spiritual tone. Two-level fluorescent fixtures for general lighting plus dimmable cans at the edges of the space would serve these needs. All lighting should be LED type.

HVAC in the Centering Room has inadequate distribution, resulting in stratification of hot air at the top four feet of the space and cold air at the bottom. People who sit on the floor (often children) are freezing while folks who stand up (often adults) are baking. Air should be distributed at the far end of the room with a throw that will hit the floor and mix air, instead of being stratified near the ceiling. Other rooms have similar poor air distribution but the Centering room has the worst problems. On the other hand, Centering is the only meeting room with dedicated HVAC which should be used in other rooms.

The basement HVAC is mostly controlled from one common thermostat, which is in the hallway and does not sense crowds in the rooms. Air movement is often stagnant and rooms stuffy, while the hallway is comfortable.

We should have a larger YRUU room, more storage areas for RE equipment, and a larger meeting room that can be used for large RE events such as mentoring or youth cons. It is possible that, if the church grows in membership, we will need to add classrooms.

Offices

The RE office in the basement is dark, moldy, and does not serve the needs of the current RE director. The RE director needs to have their own workspace, with supplies storage and a large worktable, that isn't in the way of volunteers. There is a dehumidifier in the basement RE room now to mitigate moisture. Currently the RE office downstairs is basically used for storage and as a large craft table.

Our ministerial intern and music director are sharing the Adams classroom as a temporary office. It is possible we may, at any time on short notice, need to house a sanctuary family, and this space will be re-purposed for them. We do not have a good plan where the offices will be relocated but will find a way to make do.

The Volunteer office, which is also for the copiers and supplies, is too small for more than a four person meeting and does not include a work table large enough to make collating and organizing easy. The pass-through window, while it has its uses, makes locking the office insecure. Currently the RE director uses this office, which conflicts with its use by others frequently.

Office records are now stored in a crawl space under the main stairway and are at risk of becoming moldy.

We should add two offices, and have a larger "volunteer office" that doubles as a small meeting room, and can be locked. There should be storage space for records that is dry and locked.

Kitchen

The kitchen uses residential appliances and cabinets. Although this gives a familiar feel to the space, it can become crowded on potluck days or teen events. The central island tables, while practical, take up most of the floor space allowing for a very small aisle around the edges. A four foot aisle between counters and workspace is required for “two to pass” in a kitchen, currently we have two to three feet of workspace. The dishwashers block this aisle when the doors are open for loading, and people have tripped on the open doors. Some of the items that have to be regularly loaded out of the dishwashers, such as tableware and kitchen tools, are stored across the room from the dishwashers resulting in inefficiency. *Storage of tableware should be directly accessed next to the dishwashers and the dish drying area without more than a step.* The number of kitchen ranges (two, both with large ovens) and refrigerators (2 large residential) are adequate. Newer refrigerators might be more efficient, and commercial refrigerators (walk-in or reach-in) might allow more storage. On the other hand, there are a lot of small items (mayo, pickles, etc) stored in the door shelves of these residential refrigerators that might get lost in a commercial refrigerator, made more for large items. *Commercial refrigerators are often poor efficiency, so large residential refrigerators might actually be a good fit.*

The pass-through window onto the greeting area is a key positive feature. The existing exterior window is the only ventilation, as the fans over the stove do not vent outside. *These are low quality fans with little airflow. This is problematic when there is a lot of cooking happening, such as for Easter brunch. Fans over the stove should vent outside and be good quality (not commercial hoods, which are very expensive, but higher airflow residential units).*

A number of larger items such as urns or large bowls are stored on top of the cabinets, hard to reach. *Better storage for large pots and kitchen items should be planned that does not require a ladder.*

In general a larger kitchen that we currently use is recommended by rules of thumb, and would better serve more people. Storage for larger items, as well as a commercial dishwasher could be considered.

Greeting area

The Greeting area combines several functions. It is used as circulation space to connect the front doors to the Sanctuary. It is a “crying room” for those who would like to participate in the service without being in the Sanctuary (this includes folks who like to move around, folks who may be doing computer work, folks with fussy children, or folks who may need to have a conversation). It is where we serve coffee and have informal conversations after services, and serves as one of the favorite meeting spaces in the church.

The Greeting area does not meet any of these needs very well. As an after-service coffee space it is too noisy and crowded. Bad acoustics make it inaccessible for those with poor hearing or hearing aids – it can just be a wall of echoing sounds. It can be too crowded for after-service coffee. Cross traffic between people getting coffee and people leaving the sanctuary creates a bottleneck in the middle of the room. Often tables are set up to promote an event and there is not enough room for these. There are two large cabinets in the room that store books and other supplies. Walls and layout can seem cluttered.

The Greeting room is just small enough that it does not serve effectively as a fellowship hall, it has only enough room to lay out and serve all the food for a potluck in the Sanctuary.

The chairs, usually arranged around the curved windows, provide a nice conversation area. The chairs with arms are appreciated by several people with limited mobility, but they are fragile. Conversation areas like these are valuable and there should be more of them, if there was room.

As a meeting room it has too much natural light, and no shades or curtains, to use a projector effectively. Otherwise it can be a very nice meeting room due to the view out the curved windows and is often a preferred space.

As a “crying room” it offers no visual connection to the service.

A space that would allow us to serve coffee, with better acoustics, large enough to accommodate after-service crowds or small meetings, with window treatments, adjacent to a kitchen, with traffic flow that does not concentrate people in the way of the exits is needed. A visual connection to the service through windows or clear doors, along with audio connection to the service as we have now, is needed.

Parking

Current parking capacity on our site is 43 including 4 accessible spaces. Only one accessible space is adjacent to an upstairs exterior door, the others require a walk of 50 or so feet.

At a recent Sunday when we had 150 people attending upstairs at 11:00, including 128 adults and 19 children, plus 3 in the greeting room, we had a total of 38 parked cars in our lots. None were parked downstairs, but 48 more parked on the street. It seems that most people are coming two-to-a car. The downstairs parking is handy for loading, and is often used by less able people to drive around in lieu of an elevator, but is not used even in a full upstairs service.

We have developed a sketch showing that by increasing paving area on our site we could increase the parking capacity to 66 without cutting any major trees. This plan, however, has not been reviewed by anyone familiar with City ordinances and requirements for easements, particularly the Tree Ordinance. Depending on expansion, it is likely we can find a way to increase the parking on site to 60-80, and create accessible spaces immediately adjacent to entryways. Such a parking renovation would certainly eliminate some current landscaped areas.

Increasing parking area would almost certainly trigger new stormwater regulations which could require a large stormwater retention pond on site. Although this creates a great opportunity for a native plants rain garden, it also creates expense and may take up space we currently use for other purposes. There are some major utilities (gas lines) running across the street (south) side of our property that may prevent us from paving some of that area due to easements. *A quick review of the new parking regulations shows that angle parking off the street is probably no longer allowed.*

If we increased parking on site to 66, moved 4 accessible spots adjacent to the entrances, and 48 people still parked on the street, then we would have enough parking for 194 people to attend a service and park at the same rate of car passenger use they have now. Increasing parking

beyond this level is possible, but could require cutting several large pines at the southeast corner of our lot.

If we expand the building, we should consider increasing our parking and making better accessibility.

Storage

We have calculated storage needs rather closely. One could certainly argue for larger areas than the ones cited below. Our building lacks sufficient storage in several areas. Storage needs have been mentioned above, but include:

RE Storage, about 150 square feet would be needed, especially if storage in the lower elevator closets is eliminated.

Record storage for the office, in a secure location, not located on the basement floor, about 50 square feet in a room that isn't a crawl space under a stair.

Table and chair storage off the Sanctuary, 230 square feet, with table and chair carts.

Storage for banners, ladders, vacuums, easels, and other support equipment 150 square feet, near the Sanctuary, especially if storage in the upper elevator closet is eliminated.

Forum storage, locked, about 30 square feet.

Forum table and chair storage – 30 square feet, with chair carts.

Accessibility

It is a clear consensus that an elevator is needed. In many other respects our church is very accessible, and an audit by an independent consultant identified only a few areas other than the elevator that do not meet current ADA standards. A power operated front entry door would be of great assistance to some of our members. Reducing sound echoing problems, especially in the greeting room, would be appreciated by members with hearing aids which cannot decipher such noise easily. *We need handicapped accessible parking closer to the front door. A covered entrance would assist many members when it is slick outside.*

Deferred Maintenance

The chief item in this category is the carpet, which is becoming threadbare and stained in a number of areas. Replacing the carpet with a good grade of high-wear commercial stain-resistant carpet is a priority. Other types of flooring could be considered, but many of them do not absorb sound well. We have been quoted a budget of about \$30,000 to replace our carpet.

The parking lot is due for resurfacing, and this expense has been deferred, choosing to continue to fill cracks yearly.

Overall Facility

Our building is sided with wood. This material is high maintenance, needs painting every few years, is frequently damaged by woodpeckers, and deteriorates in the sun on the south side, necessitating replacement every time the building is painted. There are areas where the wood has rotted and has been replaced, mostly on the north where it is cooler and wetter. Squirrels have also occasionally found a way in through the wood siding and have nested above the

sanctuary in the insulation. A stain on the ceiling of the Sanctuary is thought to result from the squirrels, not from water entry.

We expect two more air conditioning units, which were original to the 1998 renovation, to need replacement soon.

We have issues with water entry along the foundation wall to the south, in the stairwell and near the elevator pit. These have been treated but are not completely mitigated. Water entry in the old furnace room has been successfully mitigated.

Building was reroofed in _____ (check number – about 2010?) and is not due for re-roofing for some time.

Long term it would be desirable to use a more durable siding and a metal roof that would require low maintenance and long life.

How best to meet these needs?

There are basically two ways to meet a need for more space, build or move. Interim measures, such as having two or more services, can help with crowding but cost volunteer energy. Using temporary off-site facilities, rented or owned, to meet specific needs might also help. For instance a separate campus ministry might benefit from a separate location. Additionally, the option of doing the minimum to the current building to “get us down the road”, until a major expansion has been funded, is always possible.

Master planning

Projecting out our needs for ten years, and creating a phased approach to achieve that plan would be a wise start. For example, the placement of an elevator, which might be part of a phase one, should coordinate with the eventual expansion of a new sanctuary so that it serves that new need well and is centrally located after the expansion.

Minimal Work

This could serve as phase one of a longer-term expansion plan

This option would involve installing an elevator, replacing the carpet, and adding a few other unidentified deferred maintenance items, and items that would satisfy the needs for accessibility. Some amount of storage space, or storage and office space could also be considered under this option if storage space is being removed for an elevator. Another option is to build a new elevator shaft outside the current building, retaining the old “elevator closets” as much needed storage. Most other needs for more space would go unmet for now.

Any given Sunday we might have a dozen folks who really need to use the elevator, whether for accessibility or to move large items. A “Limited Use Limited Access” (LULA) elevator would meet our needs. Unlike the high-use commercial elevators one might find in a hotel or a hospital, these are smaller, allowing space inside for a wheelchair and an attendant or someone pushing a cart of dishes. Otherwise they look, operate and function just like their larger

cousins. We have been quoted a rough cost of \$30,000, not including architectural renovations to accommodate the elevator, from an elevator company. We have been quoted a rough estimate of \$20,000 to add an elevator shaft, from a company that had done this work, if we chose to put the elevator in a new location to preserve storage space. \$30,000 to \$50,000 is a reasonable budget to add a LULA elevator.

We have been quoted a budget of \$30,000 to replace all of our carpet.

It may also be possible to combine such an option with a parallel fundraiser that would expand our programming to meet a need that is not met now. What if we split a capital campaign 50-50 between infrastructure and programs? This might be an idea that could add spice and interest to an otherwise boring (carpet) campaign, adding a new program such as fulltime paid staff for campus ministry, offsite ministry in a less well-to-do population, or supporting far flung fledgling congregations in places such as Kirksville. The specifics of such a ministry are not yet imagined.

There is nothing that says we couldn't do minimal work now, while contemplating a longer term effort to raise money for an expanded building. Raise money to build an elevator (and a few other items) this year, with a long term campaign to expand the building.

If we do minimal work to the building, including an elevator and new carpet, a budget estimate would be about \$100,000 to \$150,000. Double that, \$300,000 and we could also fund a bold offsite program that might reach people not now included.

Moving to another location

There is a desire among some members to move to another location. The advantages of this could include a more visible location, and a location that might attract a more diverse group. However, we have yet to find a practical plan to achieve this goal. There would be significant resistance to such a plan based on emotional attachment to our current site that could well prove overwhelming. Unless an overwhelmingly convincing argument could be made, for example if it was impossible to expand in place or our congregation had grown too large to be served by our facility, moving may be an impractical goal.

A compelling reason to move, chief among them being a donated lot in a more desirable location, would be required in order to make the option of moving feasible financially. A possible swap with another religious congregation would be another compelling reason to consider the other advantages of moving. None of these windfalls appear to be forthcoming.

Moving would be quite expensive. Currently our infrastructure occupies about two acres, with another two acres of forest on the steep area to the North. A survey of commercial lots of 2 acres or larger in Columbia available for sale found properties available with or without an existing building for \$1.1 million to \$4 million. None of these was in a desirable location (near downtown) and if they had a building, it was an unattractive abandoned storefront. Renovating such a storefront to be a church building might cost between \$2 million and \$4 million more. Building a new structure on undeveloped land which would duplicate what we have plus add room for growth is estimated at least \$3.5 to \$4 million (14,000 square feet or more at \$250 per square foot). Total budget for a new building on a greenfield site downtown might be \$5 to \$8 million including the lot. We do not believe that the current building would bring a buyer on

the real estate market. Assuming it does not, or the cost of tearing it down and turning our current plot into salable residential lots would not generate a profit, the current building would not be an asset. All of these assumptions could change in the right circumstances, the perfect spot to move could come on the market just when another congregation approaches us to buy our building. Things change quickly in real estate.

Unless we could find a willing buyer, our current building would become a liability if we move. Would we continue to maintain it? Because of zoning, only a church could use the lot, unless the building was torn down, rezoned, and converted to residential lots.

The pressure to move would be different if we grew to be a much larger church. Our site could probably not accommodate a membership of more than 500. In this case the reasons to move would become more compelling.

The emotional calculus of moving would be complex. It is likely a passionate conflict would arise if the reasons to move were not obvious and compelling. Such a conflict brewed the last time we considered moving. Many people are attached to our building. We have a memorial garden which would need to be considered.

A \$5 to \$8 million budget would be necessary to duplicate and expand our current facility in a more desirable location. The existing building becomes a liability. The reasons to move need to be very compelling for us to consider this idea to overcome strong and valid emotional arguments for staying. A windfall, such as a donated lot, would be required to make this option feasible. Staying and expanding would be less expensive by half. The committee has not been convinced that there are enough compelling reasons for us to move.

Building Expansion Discussion

An expanded Sanctuary, with an expanded greeting room, offices, additional restrooms, storage and of course an elevator, would meet our projected needs for a long time to come.

The costs quoted here might seem intimidating. They are quite rough, and intended to be on the high end of the range of estimates. More accurate estimates would be developed as part of a capital campaign and subsequent work with professional architects. If our ability to raise funds does not equal the task, then we set our sights lower.

Expanding our building would require a mix of fundraising and mortgage. Using rules of thumb developed at other churches, \$1 million in fundraising and \$1 million in mortgage costs might be a practical mix of funding. It is likely that we would need several years to raise the funds needed, in addition at least one year for construction. A goal of having an expanded building in five years would be a minimum if we decide on that path.

Very rough estimates were developed for square footages that might be needed for an expansion. These have not been reviewed by an Architect, but were informed by square foot costs for recent additions by other Columbia area churches and rules of thumb developed by other congregations and church consultants.

The Campus Lutheran Church, for example, recently expanded their facility and made some renovations to existing rooms. Their total area of expansion was 8440 square feet, budget was \$2.9 million, or about \$200 per square foot. Given the mix of renovation and new construction, the new part would be \$230 to \$250 per square foot. We have used \$250 per square foot as a rough construction budget guide.

We believe that a budget of \$1.7 to \$2.6 million dollars would be able to construct a renovated sanctuary and expand other ancillary spaces. The following charts illustrate the high end of that estimate in rough numbers.

Sanctuary Projected Size	
Projected Congregation members	339
Maximum attendees at a single event (63%)	213
Typical Sunday attendance	149
# seats including 25% empty seats	186 seats for attendance of 149 213 seats for overflow capacity (no empty seats)
Recommended Area of required sanctuary at 15 sq ft /seat x 213	3205 square feet
SRO capacity if seating increased to 12 SF/seat	266 (still meets fire code 7 SF/seat)
Area of Current sanctuary (seating area only)	2003 square feet
Area of current Sanctuary including chancel and circulation	2795 square feet
Recommended Area of Sanctuary seating, + Chancel, + circulation and ramp	4250 square feet
Rough dimensions of recommended Sanctuary	51' wide, 84' long

Ancillary Spaces	
Recommended Greeting/Narthex/Foyer, recommended at 33% of area of Sanctuary, minimum	1057 square feet
Current area of Greeting room	1000 sft
Recommended Fellowship Hall 12 sft per person, assume 182 to 260 person capacity	1793 to 2562 square feet
Current Sanctuary, assume converted to Fellowship Hall	2795 sft including all circulation areas and chancel
Table and chair storage, assuming stacked on rolling carts and trolleys	235 square feet to store 260 chairs in 26 stacks of 10 to a cart and 40 tables on 4 carts at 12 per cart

Ancillary Spaces	
Restrooms	At least 3 additional WCs upstairs (IBC 2902.1).
Mechanical Space	144 sq ft
Kitchen at 25% of fellowship hall size	547 square feet
Existing Kitchen	266 square feet

Projected Construction Costs	
New construction estimated at \$250 per square foot, renovation at \$150 per square foot	New areas: 5129 square feet Renovated areas: 1986 square feet
New Construction	\$1,694,000
Elevator	\$30,000
Replace all carpet	\$30,000
Remodel Kitchen, Forum, Greeting area	\$298,000
Architect fees @ 12%	\$203,000
Furniture, fixtures, equipment @ 15%	\$254,000
Contingency at 10% of construction cost	\$169,000
Total budget	\$2,680,000
	This number compares closely to the cost of a similar size project currently being built at Campus Lutheran Church.

References:

How to Calculate Seating Capacity for a Church - Bertolini Sanctuary Seating <https://tinyurl.com/y8n3ux9q>

Counting the Cost – T&W Church Solutions <https://tinyurl.com/y85x6zka>

Rules of Thumb for Worship Centers – Baptist General Convention of Texas - <https://tinyurl.com/y7f377fd>

Rules of Thumb – Lifeway Architecture - <https://tinyurl.com/y752hjf2>

Construction Costs for Churches, 2013 RS Means Construction Data - <https://tinyurl.com/y8o9mojp>