

# **FEASIBILITY Report and Recommendations**

**St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
3512 Clinton Street  
West Seneca, New York**

## ***“G.I.F.T.” Campaign***

*Gathering In Faith Together  
Growing In Faith Together  
Giving In Faith Together*

*January 31, 2010*



**Prepared By:**

**St. John's Vision and Data Committee**

January, 2010

Pastor John Klatt  
Congregational Council  
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
3512 Clinton Street  
West Seneca, New York 14224

Dear Pastor Klatt and Congregational Council:

As you know, members of the Vision and Data Committee conducted a needs and feasibility study. The results of that study are summarized in the following report. We wish to express appreciation to those who gave assistance in assembling the necessary information used in preparation for the Pre-Campaign Feasibility Study.

The information in this report is based on 76 respondents of the 325 questionnaires that were given to the congregation. Also included is a short history of the church and statistics of attendance and budgets.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Richard M. Lipka, Building Chairperson  
Vision and Data Committee

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# I. Introduction

## A. History

September 4, 1984, 16 people from a German community formed a new Lutheran congregation under the name of St. Johannes Evangelische Lutheranische Gemeinde. Services were held in German until 1/1/1912 when an English service was held on the 3rd. Sunday of every month.

12/12/1864 a house at 19 School St. was purchased for \$ 575.00, remodeled and dedicated in 1866. Land for a cemetery on Seneca Creek Rd. was acquired in 1865. 1/10/1869 four lots on Clinton St. were donated to the congregation by a member, a new church was built at a cost of \$ 2,200.00 and dedicated on 1/2/1870. 12/8/1872, parsonage and school houses at 3512 Clinton St. were purchased for \$ 1,200.00. In 1898, a large bell was installed in the tower at a cost of \$ 234.45. In 1901, heat and lights were installed costing \$ 103.00.

The congregation grew and 5/4/1913, a new brick church was dedicated. 4/5/1931 a new pipe organ was dedicated replacing the pump organ from the old church. The church interior was redecorated in 1942 and in 1952 the church basement was completed.

The congregation needed more space for church suppers, Sunday Church School and other activities so 5/2/1954, a new Memorial Hall was dedicated and a new parsonage purchased. A new pipe organ was purchased for \$ 6,723.00 in 1956 and another parsonage was purchased in 1958 as the Sunday Church School needed more room. 1/14/1968 a new Education Building was dedicated.

Between 1964 and 1980 the church interior was redecorated twice and again in 2000. A corridor and elevator between the Memorial Hall and the church was dedicated on 9/19/1990 and the rear steps were rebuilt in 1992. A new Austin pipe organ was dedicated 4/24/1994. In 2003, the Memorial Hall kitchen was enlarged and renovated.

1/20/2009 our church building was deemed unsafe for worship and we moved to Memorial Hall. Two new boilers were installed in 2009 and the swell section of the Austin pipe organ was installed in Memorial Hall and the sub-bass section placed in storage.

## B. Congregational Statistics

### 1. Attendance:

2007 5:00 pm service average attendance 24  
2007 8:30 am service, average attendance 48  
2007 11:00 am service average attendance 99  
2007 \*9:00 am service average attendance 106

2008 5:00 pm service average attendance 26  
2008 8:30 am service, average attendance 48  
2008 11:00 am service average attendance 105  
2008 \*9:00 am service average attendance 96

2009 5:00 pm service average attendance 27  
2009 8:30 am service, average attendance 40  
2009 11:00 am service average attendance 95  
2009 \*9:00 am service average attendance 95

\* - Summer Service

### 2. Budget

Total Budget and Non-Budget receipts for 2007 totaled \$265,176  
Total Budget and Non-Budget receipts for 2008 totaled \$269,929  
Total Budget and Non-Budget receipts for 2009 totaled \$262,775  
Current 2010 budget \$270,000

## II. Determination of Priority and Potential

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church has approved a program to assess support for raising funds for facility needs. Specific priorities, with an estimated cost of \$1,500,000, have been identified. Planning has begun to address these issues.

This plan includes:

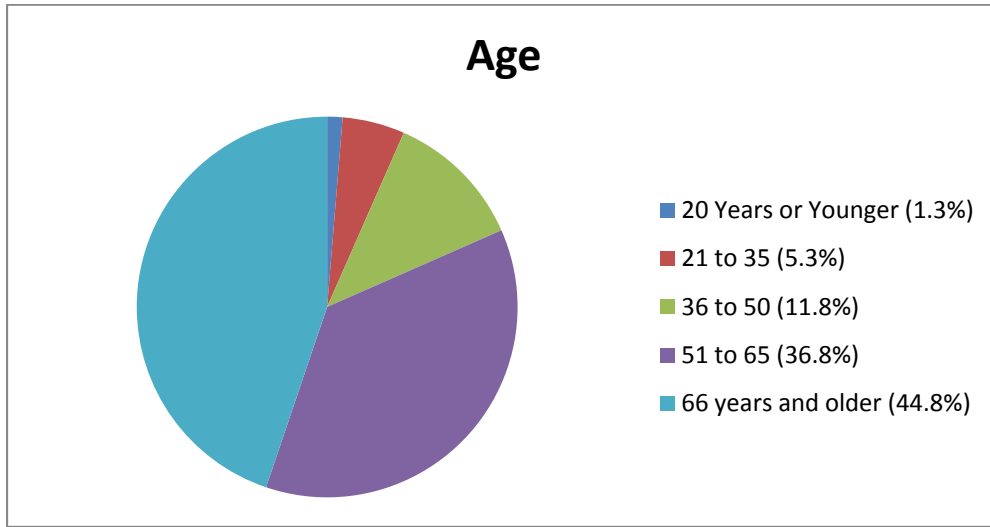
- \_ Church Demolition
- \_ New Sanctuary and Narthex
- \_ Update Parish hall
- \_ New Facility Heating Systems
- \_ Possibly move offices/ update current offices for reuse

A total of 76 households responded to the survey which represents 23.4% of the 325 households that are presently indicated as active. This percentage represents a participation level consistent with St. John's experience of conducting surveys.

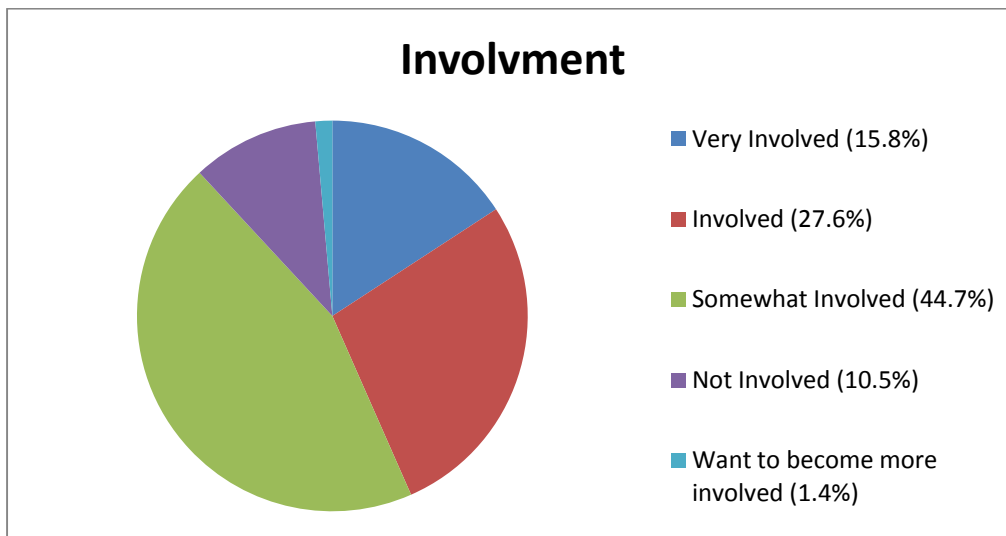
For the study, individuals responded to a series of questions concerning parish relationship status, awareness levels, personal involvement, and future parishioner needs. Respondents offered comments to some questions and are included as written on their questionnaire. The comments are summarized by listing the most frequently noted statements. The results of the Feasibility Study Questionnaire are published in this report.

# III. Compilation of Responses

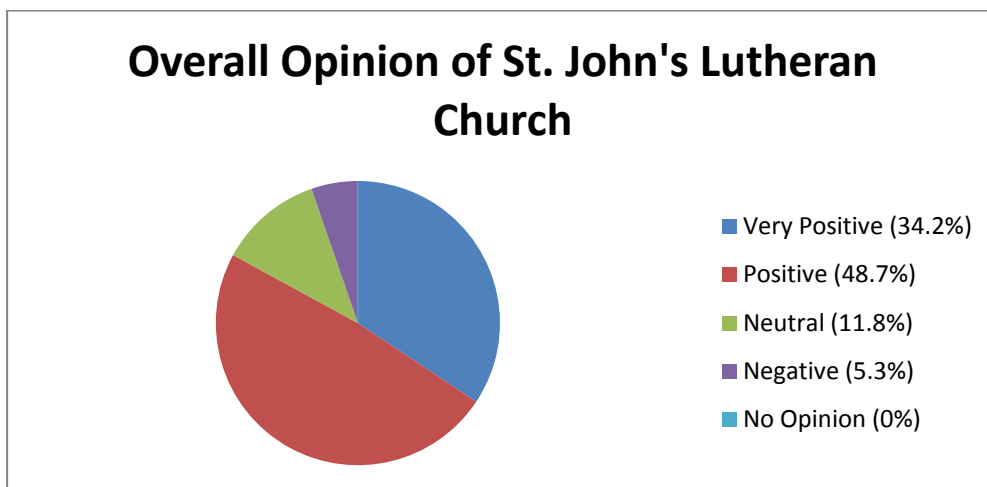
## 1. Your age?



## 2. How involved do you consider yourself to be in the church?



## 3. What is your overall opinion of St. John's Lutheran Church



## **COMMENTS:**

*I hear people talking with each other and comments are not very positive. The comments I hear about are building a new church and the pastors specifically his preaching.*

*Same problems-Cliques. Same people as leaders, most members not involved, visitors ignored, members ignored, getting better but not there yet!*

*We need to watch our spending – no new unnecessary purchases! I know change is inevitable but I look to my church for stability and a sense of tradition and feel we have changed a lot in the last few years besides the obvious change of worship space.*

*I think for the most part, everyone tries. But council needs to be more active in decisions members & not just putting rubber stamps to decisions .That should get us through this very emotional & turmoil time. We all have deep feelings for our congregation.*

*I am pleased by the direction we have been moving in the last few years to become more open to others and their needs. Esp. through the knitting ministry, Family promise, Chili Dinner and other needs than just our church.*

*I love our church and congregation; it has built me into the person I am today.*

*In spite of differences, members have the ability to reach out to those in need.*

*A lot of involvement by many.*

*We should be saving more money instead of buying unnecessary items, eg. Office furniture & equipment, organic wine for communion.*

*Offered lots of growth (spiritual) possibilities. Become our family. Helped raise our children. Supported us thru difficult times.*

*The ELCA Vote*

*Since attending St. John's, I've felt closeness to Jesus that I haven't felt before. I feel that St. John's is on the right track.*

*Was very positive before the sanctuary was closed. Hard to believe the structure is as unsafe as we are led to think it is. Don't like the direction we are taking!*

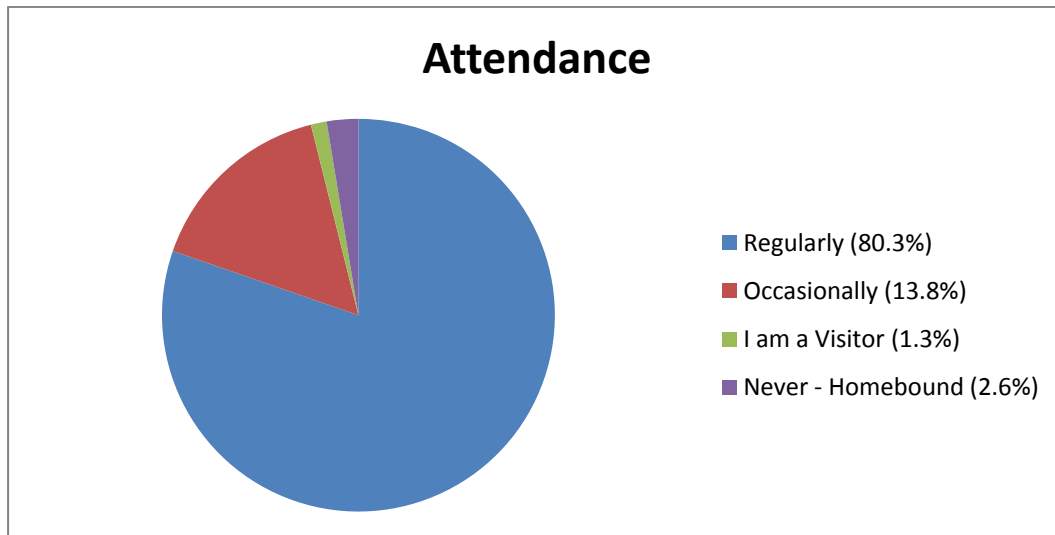
*It would be nice to see people look at what could be done, not what is being done.*

*A close knit group. Unfortunately as with most large organizations, many opposing factions that don't see eye to eye. The Sunday school leaders serve out of tiny crowded office and do not get the respect and attention they deserve.*

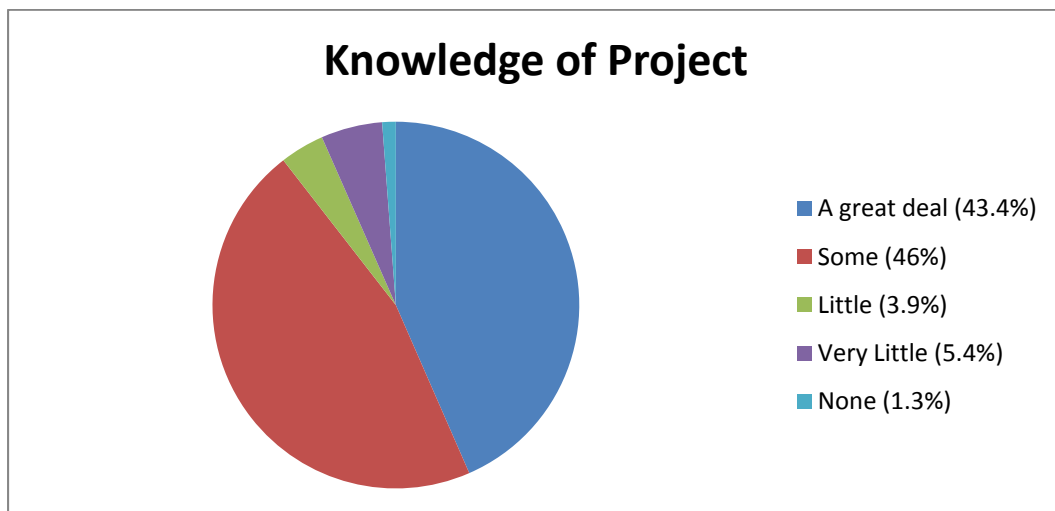
*St. John's has many dedicated members but worshipping here is often a challenge since every week there are liturgical changes, leaders can't follow, congregation can't follow, organist can't follow & lack of focusing on worship. We need continuity so when visitors come; we look like we know how to worship here.*

*I think the size of our congregation is great. We can still welcome new members without becoming such a big congregation that you don't know who anyone is.*

4. I attend worship St. John's Church:



5. There is a current plan to build a new church and renovate our facility. What level of knowledge do you have about this plan we are considering?



**COMMENTS:**

*I know the overall scheme but would like to see some plan options now.*

6. Is there any aspect of the project on which you would like additional information, or any part of the project that needs further clarification?

**COMMENTS:**

*Where is the new church going to be?*

*I actually thought this questionnaire was going to ask what we would like to see in the new church. I would like to know if the office area is still the first priority and what footprint the new church is planned to have now. I would like to see some preliminary drawings.*

*Entrance and church foremost!! We want basics- not projection screens. Business center – back burner- unless someone rich dies and leaves us a bundle or wins the lottery.*

*By “project” I understand that we are moving forward to build a church that has yet to be designed, that will make our facilities multi functional and use as much “green” as is possible for the purpose of disseminating God’s word to the community in a variety of ways.*

*Fundraising more.*

*Why does it take three years before they start anything?*

*Why do we have to do anything but the church at this time?*

*Would much of the pews, etc. of old church be used in design of new church?*

*Would like concrete proof that the sanctuary is unsafe structurally, and how it became so dangerous all of a sudden.*

*How much will the “church” itself fund? I do not feel it is fair to put it all on the “back” of the congregation.*

*Is the plan still moving forward according to what the church voted on?*

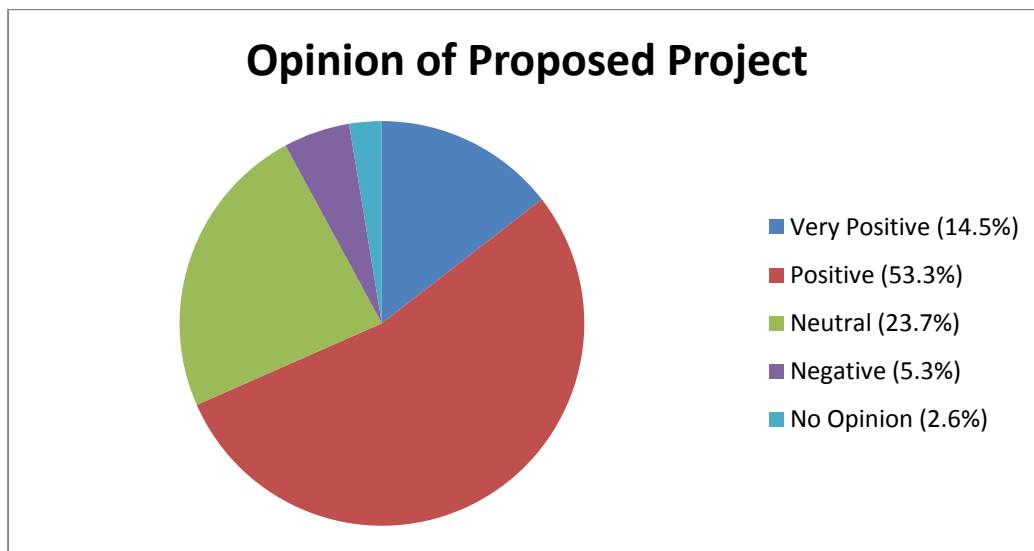
*Not at this time but the communication committee should still have the “ask me” tags on so people can ask the correct people what is going on.*

*I think we need to see some sort of a concept plan so we know what we are doing before we can support an unknown plan.*

*There are so many questions that need to be answered that it is difficult to define.*

*Drawings or layouts on what we would like to be done.*

**7. What is your overall opinion of the proposed project?**

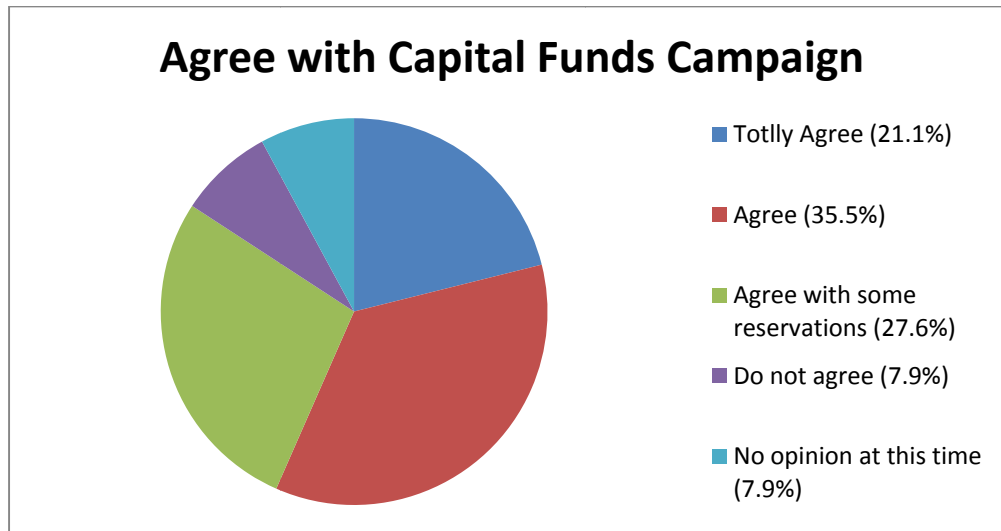


**COMMENTS:**

*I am sad to lose the existing church building but understand that this is for the best.*

*Positive but would not take much to change that – building office first or to modern a sanctuary.*

8. The estimated total cost for all the aspects of the project is in the range of \$1,500,000. Would you agree with the church leadership's recommendation that a three year Capital Funds Campaign be considered as one means of generating funds for this project?



**COMMENTS:**

*I agree we need a campaign – DO NOT AGREE that we should hire someone to do a campaign – we have already done this twice with poor results.*

*I think most members realize the responsibility ahead of us.*

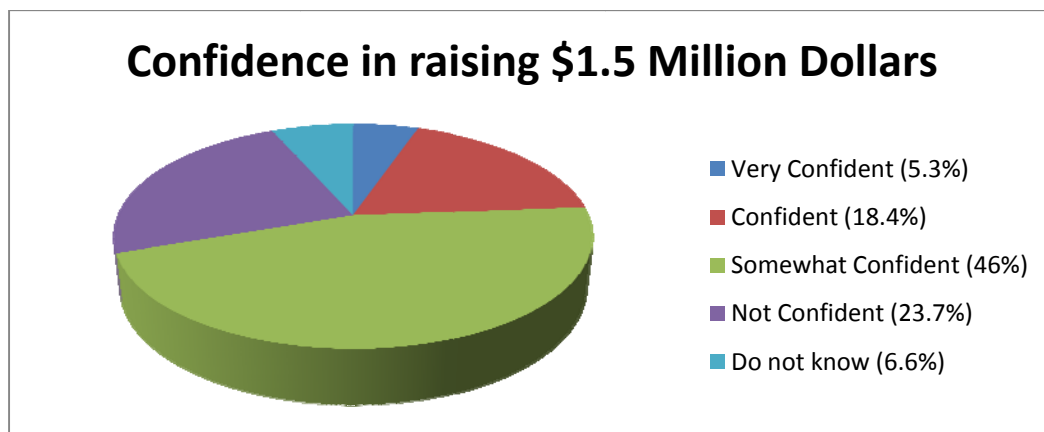
*Start with just the church at 1/3 the cost.*

The cost of a campaign Mgr. vs. what we could do ourselves without the added expense- past history is that it cost more than what we could take.

The result of paying for a professional to come in for running this area have been disappointing in the past. I would not support wanting to do that.

We don't feel paid professionals are needed.

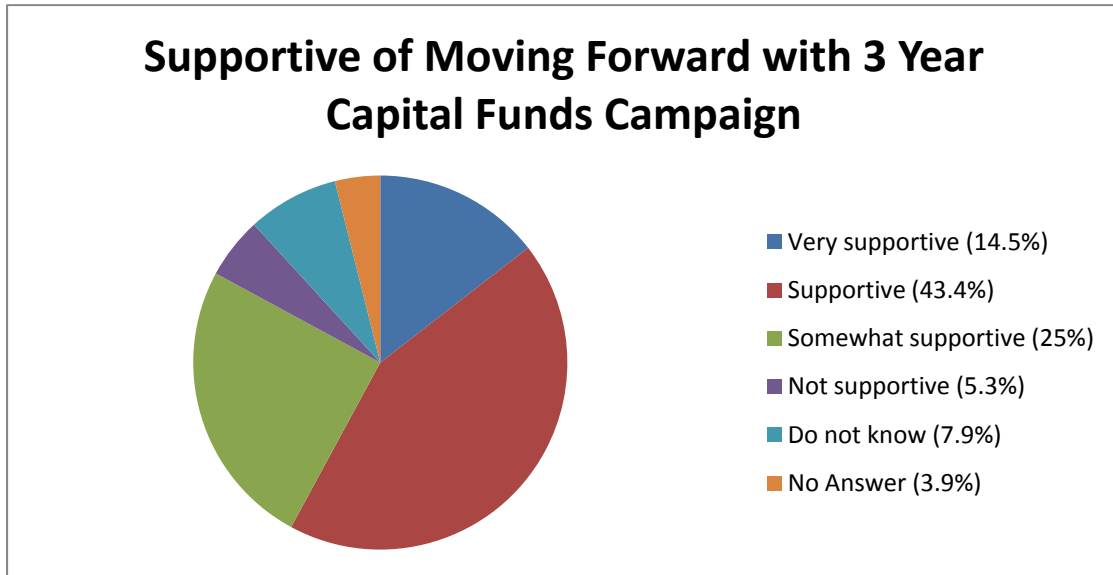
9. How confident do you feel that our church community could raise \$1,500,000 over a three- year period?



**COMMENTS:**

*Considering the size of our congregation it's a lot of money.*

10. How supportive would you be of the church moving forward with a three-year Capital Funds Campaign to reach the congregation's goal of \$1,500,000?



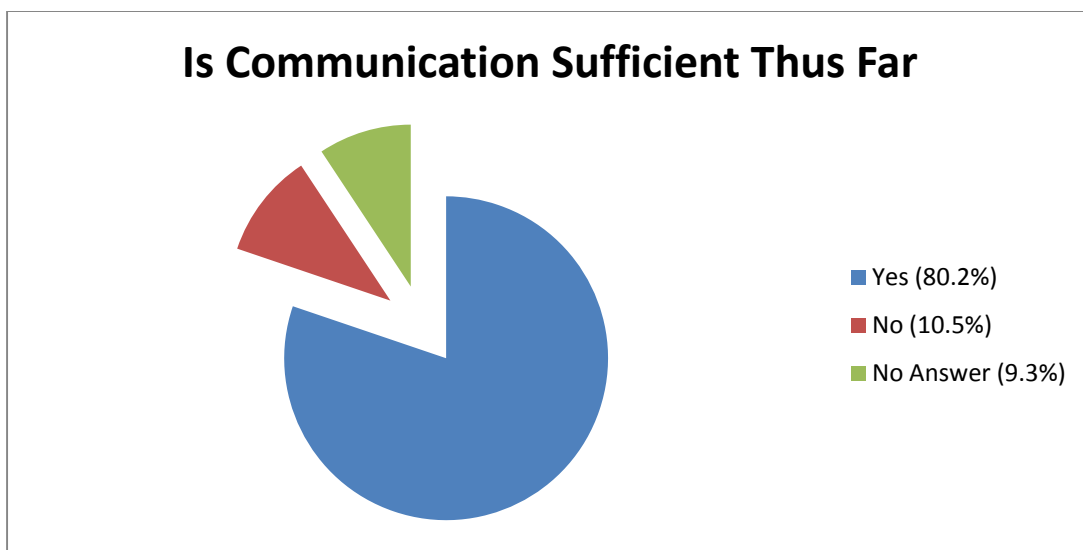
**COMMENTS:**

*Very supportive if we do it ourselves, not supportive if we hire someone.*

*Again we are asking people to add to the R & R & all this money is paying a salary!! Feel this should be a line under General Budget & not R & R.*

*I do not believe we should be hiring a Capital Funds Campaign person – we should be using that money for a new church.*

11. Do you feel that the communication thus far regarding the project has been sufficient? Do you have suggestions for improving or changing the communication process?



**COMMENTS:**

*Communication is good*

*Crossbeam articles so everyone knows not just those who go to church.*

*I think it has been sufficient*

*The communication before the vote was good – since then we really haven't heard much. The committee sheets were only out at summer Sunday services when many people are away. Why are we waiting to start fundraising? It seems like more could be done in that area fairly easily.*

*Communication is sufficient.*

*Try a meeting between services – for info-not in general service announcements-say 10:30am so you can catch parents of SSC kids, coffee drinkers & attendees of 8:30 & 11 service.*

*I am willing to support whatever is best to carry out God's ministry at St. John's.*

*Wish I had some suggestions. Some members just don't read or listen. Just repeat, ask for Email addresses on Sunday & in the crossbeam.*

*St. John's has provided a lot of information through the tools it has-crossbeam, bulletins, website. No idea what can be done to encourage members to access & take advantage of these communication efforts. Maybe ask people who do not access it.*

*Set up some vehicle either on Sunday morning from the pulpit or a printed report in the bulletin that gives us weekly updates on our progress to date.*

*Communication has been great!*

*There should be a continued progress report given every Sunday.*

*No! I have heard the "phrase"-what was discussed in this room/ meeting stays here – Why? A Church should be open to all members including all meetings and what is discussed.*

*Not reaching those who can't come to church.*

*You are doing a great job. How are you contacting members who aren't very active for whatever reason?*

*Nothing has convinced me that we need a new church building. If we really do, then take out a mortgage now, rather than wait three years.*

*I feel there has been much info-but from the majority from the same agenda sources. Little "balanced" info.*

*Forward momentum of the project seems slow thus a lack of communication to the congregation.*

*Monthly updates even if nothing has changed would be nice (who did we meet with, interviews, etc.)*

*Starting with Finance Committee- All meetings must be in the bulletins. Only a few people are making too many suggestions as to a Campaign manager & the rest of the congregation has no idea what it all costs & involves.*

*Again, I think it would be easier to support if we could see a plan if we could see what we are building.*

*Put info in bulletin and crossbeam as needed.*

*I don't think it has been sufficient in getting information to the newly/ recently confirmed. Our church is very important to me and I would have liked to know more.*

*The congregation has not been real informed as to the status of the process. The work that has been done has been all cosmetic and is not necessary to build a new church.*

**12. Are there any specific changes, additions or deletions to the plan that would significantly change the contribution you plan to give to the Capital Funds Campaign?**

**COMMENTS:**

*Church project first, surrounding areas after the completion of the sanctuary.*

*I can't give more than I have so, none.*

*Yes – If the office & Chapel are a priority I will not give. If we have chairs and no pews I will not give. If our focus is on this flexible idea as opposed to making worship space I will be inclined not to give. Listen to the congregation (the whole congregation) or you will antagonize the very people who will help pay for the project. I do not want a high tech auditorium – I want fairly traditional and that will affect my giving and membership.*

*Our family would like to see more “belt tightening”. It's hard to give extra \$ when we see donations going to outside sources for the next 3 years. We need to work on “Charity begins at home”.*

*I trust the leadership to make the best decisions in these areas.*

*I believe we should do things in phases. A church should be our main objective. When that is paid for, we can consider making improvements to the Parish hall as the next step. We do not need new office area or chapel. Auto openers and intercoms would be much cheaper. A portico is a “dream” we can consider after necessary improvements are made.*

*If we must rebuild start now, not in three years. We donate \$50.00/ month for building fund and that may stop soon if we see no progress.*

*Changing the site of the new structure would change our contribution.*

*The current fundraisers don't work for me. Who is deciding what fundraisers to complete? It should NOT be one person. It should be a group of people. I have ideas that will raise some but not sure how one person will accept it or not.*

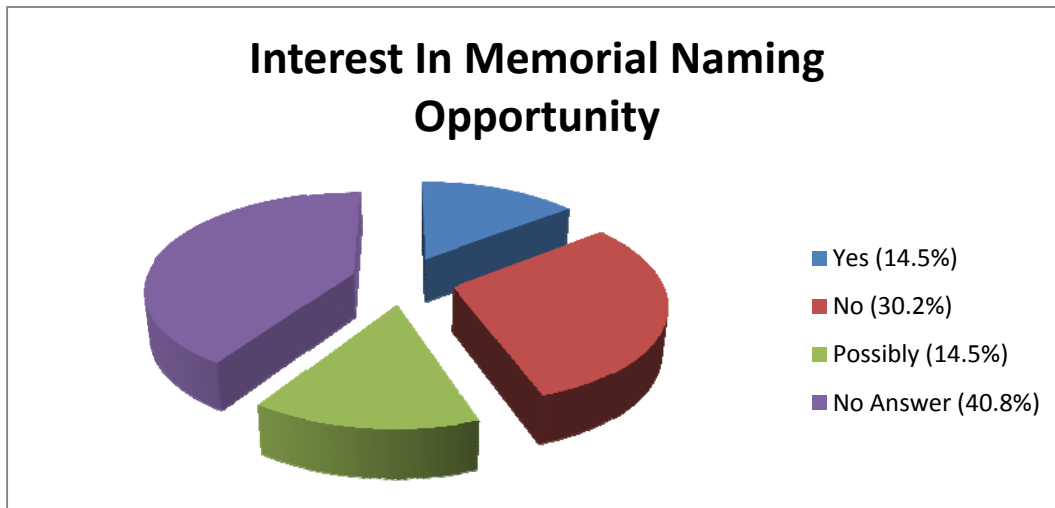
*We did fundraisers before-let's put our past experience, past notes on what to do, put our brains together & do \$ raising ourselves. This “person” gets paid big bucks & only tells us what to do. The Nov. 15 congregational meeting to vote for this idea will be a short vague arm twisting event.*

*I do not feel office space should be included. Also, a basement, though costly would ease much of the storage crunch we may face. I would like to see a dedicated choir room.*

*Design of worship area.*

*Don't know as a plan has not been presented. I hope a basement will be included for utilities and storage.*

**13. Would you be interested in a memorial or naming opportunity as part of your gift?**



**COMMENTS:**

*Maybe if it was in our ability to give.*

*Only in an outside memorial walkway.*

*I think some sort of memorial tree is absolutely essential to raising the funds we need.*

*I have given permission to use Gary's memorial money for the new church.*

**14. Do you have any other comments, concerns, questions or thoughts concerning the project?**

**COMMENTS:**

*Keep elevators for handicap, handicap bathroom at least four stalls, keep padded pews, wheelchair entrance.*

*Install pews in the new church, no chairs please. Need to have a variety of dinners for fundraising, raffles.*

*I'm not sure we need a new church building; I enjoy church in the current hall. I feel with some renovation this would be a fine place to worship.*

*Not sure how the teams were chosen.*

*Small group meetings in our homes within neighborhoods might be helpful to promote discussion, information and ideas.*

*Stick to building a church and not try to do it all now. Save some for later. The Catholic churches have it down to a science, always have a project in line.*

*Planning team doing a great job.*

*I think the congregation must have a lot to say in how the new building is designed. I think we need a new sanctuary first and foremost and although having everyone wants done at one time might be the best it might not be the feasible way, considering how much money is available. Many in the congregation do not like to speak out in meetings – so give other options to get their opinions and use ballots for votes not a voice vote as was done in August for Family Promise.*

*I feel we need to utilize the young men of our church family who have Architectural skills to start sketches of a possible church building so people could see an idea on paper. We don't need fancy just basic, functional church. A general meeting to share ideas or sketches should be considered then the professional can start drawing that can be twitted later.*

*Cleaning of the main Altar & preserving some of our older pieces of art works. Contact Buff State & ask some of their art preservation students would be able to help lower cost/ no cost possibility. Really think radiant floor heating would be great!*

*Plan sufficiently into the 21<sup>st</sup> century to allow for the future needs of our youth.*

*More fundraising.*

*The Altar area should be moved out to the courtyard, that way that area could be covered and the Parish hall used for dinners. Our dinners and Election Day luncheons are the only fundraisers that make the most money!*

*I think we should concentrate on just our church at this time. Why hasn't an Architectural design been in the works?*

*As part of the new church I would like to see a decent area for the choir to practice, store music and choir robes and also have an area for the Altar Guild.*

*We believe in these economic times, more than three years is needed to raise enough money for this project.*

*A Barometer or graph showing priorities i.e., demolition, etc. when we reach certain levels.*

*We need to get out of the Parish hall/ coffee shop ASAP; it is not a church sanctuary. We spend thousands on an elevator, crying room, roof repairs etc, and now that structure is unsafe?*

*Yes-the "government" of the church i.e. council need to get serious- a few suggestions. 1) 2 year wage freeze as many have experienced. 2) Freeze on converting anymore non-paid positions into paid positions. 3) Freeze on any purchases other than necessary supplies or upkeep.*

*I do come home sometimes to visit and will sorely miss my old church. I hope the new one will have some of the features of the old one- the Altar, the pews, the windows to name a few. I would also like to mention how much I miss the fellowship time between services-it was a wonderful way to visit with all of my church family-it saddens me the way it is now. I am also "disjointed" when I come to church. It is very hard to follow, don't care for the revised Lord's Prayer & Creed. A "real" visitor must have a hard time worshiping here now.*

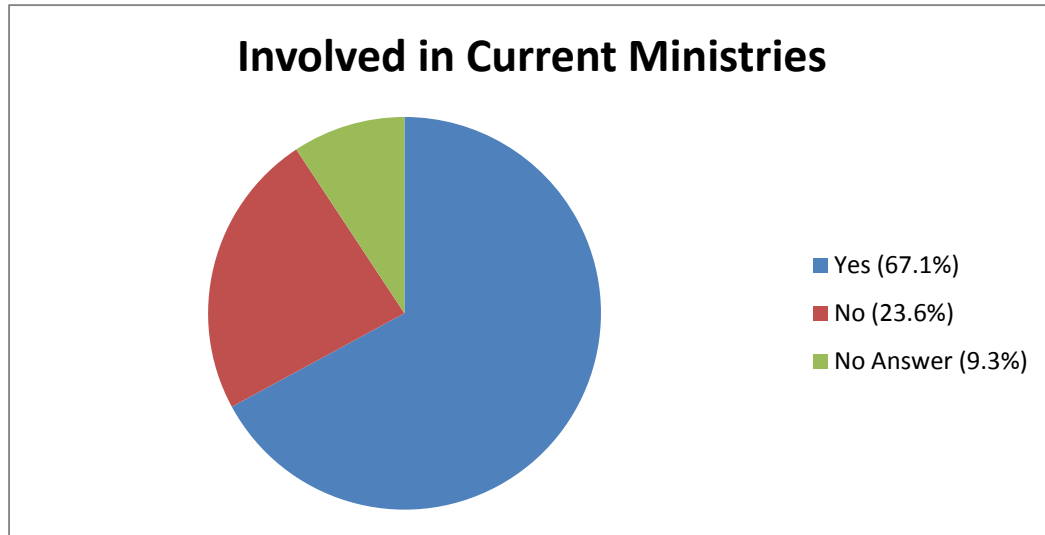
*I would hope that our new space will capture the warmth & Charm of our former church. People join St. John's because they liked what they saw & the people who worshiped there. I hope the new space will not be cold & dull looking and will have many of our beautiful stained glass windows in it.*

*What happens if we can't meet the goals of the congregation?*

*I would like to keep in mind the style of building of the old sanctuary as we build the new one. I think the older style of building made us unique and gave the church character; I would like to keep that.*

*In terms of financial goal – I believe that \$500,000 to \$750,000 is very reasonable. To double or triple that amount may take more than one Capital Funds Campaign.*

**15. Are you involved in the current ministries of St. John's?**

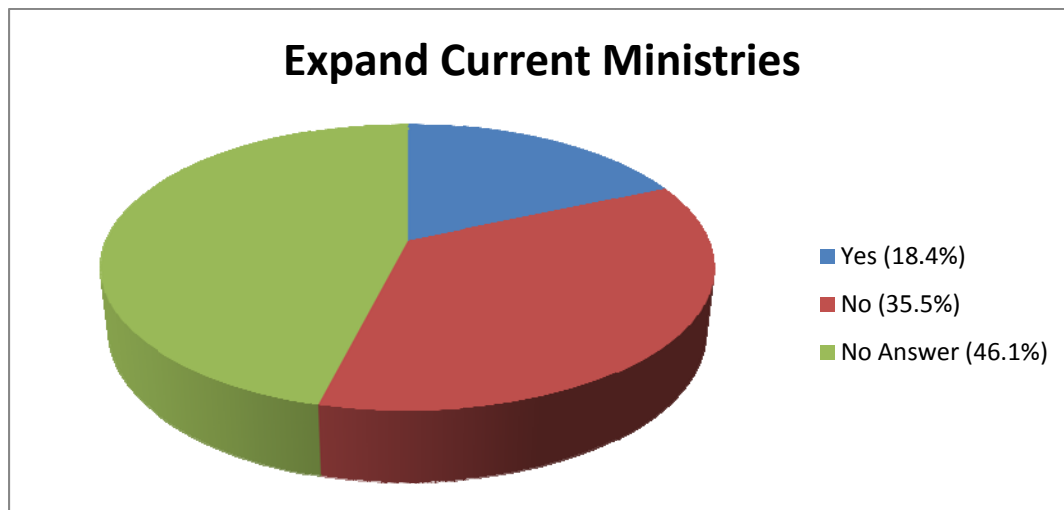


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|---|---|
| Prayer Chain (5.9%)                       | Cemetery (2.0%)                           |
| Morning Prayers (11.7%)                   | Hands & Hearts Knitting Ministry (17.6%)  |
| Christian Education (15.7%)               | Health Cabinet (3.9%)                     |
| Sunday Church School (9.8%)               | Parish Nurse (3.9%)                       |
| Pre- School (3.9%)                        | Ladies Aid (11.8%)                        |
| Sunday Morning Bible Study (7.8%)         | WELCA (11.8%)                             |
| Sunday Morning Adult Forum (27.5%)        | Property/ Monday Morning Work Crew (3.9%) |
| Tuesday Evening Bible Study (2.0%)        | Senior citizens (3.9%)                    |
| Thursday Morning Bible Study (7.8%)       | Social Ministry/ Missionary (3.9%)        |
| Thursday Evening Bible study (2.0%)       | Stewardship (7.8%)                        |
| Saturday morning Men's Bible study (3.9%) | Cornerstone Mission Fund (3.9%)           |
| Worship and Music Committee (15.7%)       | Family Promise (2.0%)                     |
| Altar Guild (9.8%)                        | Faith & Fitness (2.0%)                    |
| Acolytes & Crucifiers (0%)                | Congregational Council (15.7%)            |
| Assisting Ministers (11.8%)               | Young Adult Fellowship (0.0%)             |
| Band (5.9%)                               | Group Fellowship (27.5%)                  |
| Choir (17.6%)                             | Parish Social Life (3.9%)                 |
| Deacon Ministry (5.9%)                    | Crossbeam (15.7%)                         |
| Gatekeepers (0.0%)                        | Friends in Deed (2.0%)                    |
| Ushers & Greeters (41.2%)                 | Youth Ministry (13.7%)                    |
| Hospitality (3.9%)                        |   |
| Membership Committee (11.8%)              |   |
| Vacation Bible School (7.8%)              |   |

**COMMENTS:**

*Tried but the ladies were not receptive to new members.  
Encouragement for all.*

## 16. Can St. John's expand or add new Ministries?



### **COMMENTS:**

*Church use to have Elijah's table that would assist our members with food.*

*Meals on wheels for homeless if possible if not soup kitchen.*

*Outreach to lower income areas*

*Outreach to the community*

*We used to have Elijah's table that assisted our members with meals.*

*By paying attention to the needs of the members.*

*Benchmark with other churches (compare notes)*

*I would like to see Social Ministry involved in more than just raising money. Put social ministry/ justice issues into our worship and in our learning opportunities and make the congregation aware of how involved the ELCA is in world issues and how they too can be involved.*

*No, not at this time. We don't have the room or the dedicated volunteers. The same "old" folks are the only ones who jumped in when needed.*

*We should be open to the needs of our community and let the Spirit guide us.*

*Start a "MOPS" group. It stands for mothers of pre-schoolers. Wish I had some suggestions. Some members just don't read or listen. Just repeat, ask for Email addresses on Sunday & in the crossbeam. Moms can meet on a semi-regular basis for support. Go to [www.mops.com](http://www.mops.com) Or google "mops international".*

*In planning- Family promise- will need to consider showers in the new construction plans.*

*Liturgical drama-consider planning the Chancel area to accommodate drama and major choirs traveling throughout the USA (especially from Lutheran colleges).*

*Not at this time. Let's concentrate on building a new church and our needs , not wants.*

*I believe we should be concentrating on just the new church. Charity begins at home and until we finish this project, I believe we should put all outside missions on hold.*

*Let's decide on a permanent place of worship – then expand/ add new ministries!*

Let's focus on the building project.

We don't seem to go out into the community to serve very much. I.e. work at food pantry, serve/ supply meals or food at mission. Help as group at an area of devastation, etc.

I think we need to develop the existing ministries and try to involve more church members.

Reaching out to the community. I don't see an immediate large scale effort with everything that's going on but if things can be put into the design that might help with future, should be considered.

Coffee house (St. John's coffee house)

In the power of the Holy Spirit and with the attitude of compassionate and loving service.

Become more mission minded – more outreach that is local & global.

### **17. How can St. John's provide better outreach (Helping others) in the community?**

**Of those answering yes, the percentages are as follows:**

Community Mission Works (14.6%)	Red Cross Shelter (22.0%)
Compassion Center (56.1%)	More Church Dinners (31.8%)
Youth Outreach (43.9%)	Blood Mobile (26.8%)
Lutheran Disaster Response (39.0%)	Meals on Wheels (26.8%)
Reaching out to the Un-Churched (34.1%)	Nacel Open Door (hosting foreign students) (19.5%)
Interfaith Hospitality Network (29.3%)	Food Pantry (49.0%)
Summer Music or Sports Camp (7.3%)	Other (4.9%)
Special Choir (12.2%)	Children's Church(es) (19.5%)
Mission Trips (17.6%)	

#### **COMMENTS:**

*Six of these require storage areas & Equipment which we would need to plan for.*

*Support the West Seneca food pantry in place at St. David's. We should reach out to families on the inactive list- not just a letter – a real phone call! Social Ministry Committee can address all these. Prioritize then Focus!*

*Many of these community activities are already active in other churches-perhaps we should actively support them. Especially things that are donation driven – food pantry, clothing, etc.*

*All of the above can be used as outreach programs. The type of program is dependent on current time & need within the community.*

*I don't think we should add any additional outreach programs at this time.*

*All of the above are good but many are not practical at this time.*

*Communion to shut-ins & those in nursing homes.*

*We can't support any of the above. Not enough members.*

*NOT NOW!!! Concentrate on Sunday school Families- Shut-ins & drop offs. Miss gathering between services- fellowship is so necessary.*

*All the items have some merit.*

Mission trips members can attend.

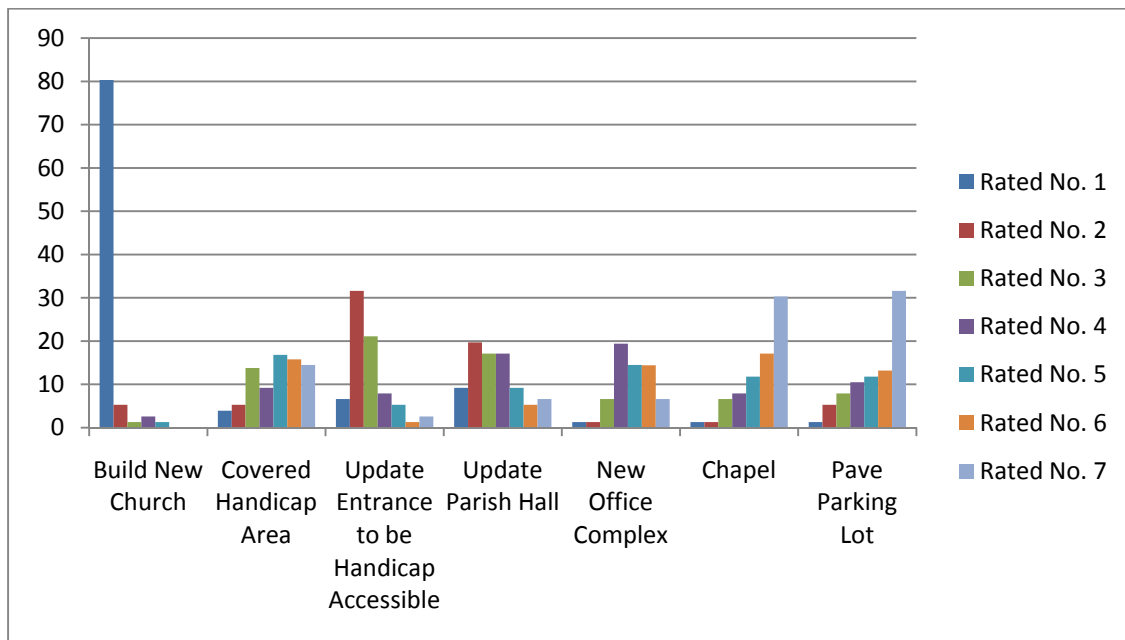
Habitat for Humanity

Don't worry about the community. Build the church first then worry about the others.

**18. The Basic project consists of the following seven facility improvements. Please rank them in order of importance with number 1 as the highest and 7 being the lowest.**

The result of question 18, prioritizing the facility improvements, ranks them in the following order:

- 1. Build a new church**
- 2. Update entrance to be handicap accessible**
- 3. Update the parish hall**
- 4. New office complex**
- 5. Covered handicap drop off area**
- 6. Chapel in place of existing offices**
- 7. Pave parking lot**



**Comments:**

*Begin process to remove trees & sell wood during heating season.*

*This could overwhelm our members, no mention of a mortgage.*

*Although I think Rick Lipka has done a wonderful job and I'm sure will be a great asset as we actually get into the project I do not think he should be paid that large salary until we are into the project. He does not have to do everything now I'm sure there are people in the congregation willing to do some of this preliminary work.*

*The August Minneapolis vote will definitely affect or tear apart our church both emotionally and financially. This commitment, I feel, will affect the true mission of keeping us together to raise money. I hear a lot of negativity after many of the sermons that somehow steer in the direction of politics. Those comments from the pulpit need to stop. It causes many in our congregation to turn it off instead of taking a Bible based message home.*

*Please do not change our parish hall when planning the new church. It's a beautiful building. I would like the new church built where the old one exists.*

*We need a basic church at this time without a lot of frills such as screens to be pulled down during worship, etc. We should be checking with Mike about finances before buying organic wine compared to the cost of regular wine. – We only get a thimble full anyways or buying books without making sure we are reimbursed for them, at least the postage. CHECK WITH MIKE FIRST!!*

*I have no hope of a new church the way our pastor spends money. We do not need organic wine that costs three times the price of regular wine. That is only an example. I see no hope with the way clergymen vote for accepting gay clergymen in the church.*

*Shouldn't there be an emphasis on evangelism? Bringing back the inactive to regular attendance and bringing in new members? Also, a reduction in current expenses is needed.*

*We need to focus on what is most important first, and then concern ourselves with improvements, outreach programs, etc.*

*I feel the church has been wasteful of R & R. Recent memory updates in church proper – wasted. I.e. new lavatory, pew cushions, breezeway etc. etc., etc. Perhaps updates were unqualified & not researched properly.*

*Certain members tend to chase me away by "owning" and being to bossy. I've tried helping in some things and they are not too nice. It has been certain women and more than one of them. I want to be more active but don't like how I'm treated some times.*

*I look forward to coming to St. John's and hope the new church and worship experience will not disappoint me.*

*Boiler install will do for now. Church warmth will satisfy most-modern equipment center is not what will bring in people. Type of preaching & clergy & members will draw in families for growth.*

*I am not able to give to the building fund. I only get Social Security and that is not enough to live on.*

## IV. Observations

### *Programs and Ministries*

Respondents indicated feelings of moderately high to very high enthusiasm about the work and programs of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Respondents indicated the congregation communicates well to very well with the congregation involving events, plans, and programs.

Respondents indicated that, even through our transitional time, they would like to see support for a food pantry.

### *Giving/Indebtedness*

Of those returning the financial intention form, many indicated their giving decisions are based on a dollar amount or what is affordable. This is another indicator that stewardship education is needed. "What is affordable" is not a Biblical principle.

### *Facility Expansion/Improvement*

A New Church (80.3%) was identified as the first priority by respondents and Handicap Access (31.6%) was identified as the second priority.

Structural concerns closed our existing church building and there is need for other facility improvements, however, a \$1,500,000 price tag created a great deal of anxiety in the pew. The majority of those who responded to the study would like to see the renovations done in phases with the new church constructed first.

### *Capital Funds Campaign*

(46%) of respondents were semi-confident that a three-year Capital Funds Campaign could raise \$1,500,000.

(43.4%) of respondents were supportive of moving forward with a Capital Funds Campaign.

## V. Recommendations

A. In light of the Pre-Campaign Feasibility Study, the Vision and Data Committee recommends that St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church proceeds with a three-year Capital Funds Campaign beginning in April 2010.

1. The committee recommends that the project involve demolition of the existing Church building, Corridor and Foyer, build a new Narthex, Sanctuary and Office structure, pave parking lot only as required to complete new construction, hold renovation of the Parish to a future date, and take time in determining the use of the old offices.

2. The committee recommends that the first phase of the project should not exceed \$900,000.

3. The committee recommends that the campaign should center on raising the maximum dollars for the project between April 2010 and April 2011. During this phase, the Building Committee will work with an architect and finance institution to devise a building and financing plan for leadership approval by June of 2010. This approach takes the guesswork out of the project and allows the congregation to build what it can afford.

B. Capital Funds Campaign adhering to the Key Leadership program will produce the following:

1. A clear *vision* of the congregation's future ministry and mission based upon following will of God.

2. *Ownership* in the congregation's vision by members of St. John's.

3. Increased *involvement* by a greater number of members in the development and support of the congregation's ministry and mission.

4. *Motivation* of members to grow in their level of stewardship commitments.

5. *Encouraging* members to make generous contributions supporting their commitment to the congregation's vision.

St. John's Lutheran Church needs to passionately promote stewardship among all members, especially those not regularly supporting the ministry/mission of the congregation. Newer members usually have a two-year "lag" time before they become fully involved in supporting St. John's. Stewardship promotion will speed up this process for newer members and create a broader giving base while a disciplined follow-up to the Capital Funds Campaign will enable the congregation to achieve all that is committed to the building project.

All involved in the building project and Capital Funds Campaign will need to continue developing and utilizing a comprehensive flow of information to the congregation. We recommend that St. John's Church prepares and mails statements of giving to all contributing households on a quarterly basis for the duration of this project. Such a practice will be a reminder of giving needs and stimulates greater participation.