

Frequently Asked Questions



1. Why expand our facilities at Grace United Methodist Church?

For many, the church is just the right size—there is generally space in the pews and ample parking on Sundays, and each week we see a wonderful mix of people of all ages who are involved in any number of vital ministries. But the truth is, this building is pretty much full to capacity every day of the week in the key ways that we grow in our faith and that we live out our calling from God to serve this community.

Consider the following:

- Weekly activities are tightly scheduled to the point that requests for meeting space must be turned away
- Current activities regularly fill or exceed capacity in the fellowship hall
- Many Christian education classrooms are operating at capacity and require reconfiguring each Sunday so that adults can be accommodated in spaces that serve preschool children during the week. Additional meeting spaces are needed for youth and adult Sunday school
- The Caring and Sharing ministry (Grace's outreach to the poor) needs proper dedicated space to better serve growing needs in the community
- 16 different choirs and ensembles will benefit from additional dedicated rehearsal space
- Additional space is needed to accommodate the activities of vibrant and growing children's, youth, adult and senior adult ministries
- Many current church staff share offices and some offices are actually in Sunday school rooms

Grace UMC is blessed to be a growing church—in faith and in mission and in numbers. To respond to this growth, we need more classrooms, large event and gathering spaces, and more storage and workspace. When a church runs out of space to serve people, it is a wonderful problem and opportunity!

2. Why begin an expansion project now?

When we moved to our current location in 1994, the hope was to continue with a "Phase Two" expansion to include a chapel, more classrooms and a large event space. It has taken us some time to get to this point where we can implement a "Phase Two," but with the mortgage on our existing building now paid in full (December 2010) we are excited to make this dream a reality and grow so we can serve our neighbors and engage them in a life of discipleship.

3. What is planned for this next phase expansion?

The Building Committee put together the needs of 22 ministry areas to propose ways to expand or repurpose our space. These include the following:

- a multiple purpose hall to hold 400+ people (for church wide fellowship meals, recreation opportunities, music events, and expanded worship possibilities)
- 15 new classrooms and repurpose 14 existing classrooms
- expanded music rehearsal spaces
- convert the choir room into a chapel
- dedicated space for the food pantry and other mission efforts
- a covered entrance to the building

4. How long will it take to build the expansion?

It will take approximately 18 months to build; however, construction will not begin until after a down payment is raised and the Church Council approves final full construction plans.

5. How much will the expansion cost and how will we pay for it?

The cost of the entire expansion is approximately \$8 million. The intent of this campaign is to raise a down payment of 25%, which will greatly reduce the interest paid on the mortgage. Additional campaigns will follow to satisfy remaining indebtedness.

6. Can the proposed expansion be phased?

Potentially—phasing has benefits (we could occupy new space sooner rather than later) and drawbacks (it costs more in the long run). Proposed expansion would take place in different areas around Grace, which makes phasing appealing, although there remain other issues that will need to be addressed, i.e. city permits, church and builder scheduling, etc.

7. What is the name of the campaign and its goals?

“Lighting the Way...Building by the Grace of God”—The goal of the upcoming campaign is to satisfy the congregation’s desire to raise a down payment for the expansion, 25% of the total cost over the next three years. The intent is that giving for this campaign goes beyond our regular congregational giving that supports the ongoing general ministry operating budget.

8. What are pledges and why are they important?

Pledges are how we will commit ourselves to the campaign. Similar in function to our annual estimate of giving, pledges will serve as a way to gauge our progress throughout the campaign.

9. What are the important dates for the campaign?

We will begin collecting pledges on Sunday, May 5, 2013. While giving to the campaign can begin at any time (many have already made gifts and these total \$31,000 as of January 2013), the official start of giving is June 1, 2013. Also, as this is a 3-year campaign, giving will continue through May of 2016.

10. How can I give to the campaign?

You can give any way you would like—weekly, monthly, yearly, or even a one-time gift. Electronic giving is also available. Additionally, we are able to receive non-traditional gifts such as stocks, bonds, life insurance, and estate gifts. Information about these methods of giving is available from the church office.

11. What is it going to take to reach our goal?

We have about 500 households that give to the ministry at Grace. Dividing the down payment equally would mean that each household would need to give \$130 per month over the course of the campaign. This is not an expectation! We encourage everyone to make a commitment as they are able and led—that will necessarily mean some will be able to give larger or even leading gifts and some will give less.

12. How else can I get involved?

There are a number of ways:

- Pray
- Help with events
- Provide testimonials
- Share the excitement of this project with neighbors and friends

If you would like to help, please contact Larry Byers at lbyers66@comcast.net.

13. Where else can I get information about the “Lighting the Way” campaign?

More information can be found at umcgrace.org/lightingtheway.