

Feasibility Study

*Clarks Valley Zion Evangelical Congregational Church
Dauphin, Pennsylvania
April 2017*



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Clarks Valley Zion Evangelical Congregational Church
Dauphin, Pennsylvania
Prepared by Jeffrey Knauer, EVP, Kirby-Smith Associates

I. Introduction

Clarks Valley Zion Evangelical Congregational Church occupies a scenic portion of ground in view of the mountains surrounding the Susquehanna River, just north of Harrisburg. The congregation recently completed the payoff of the additional land they purchased and is considering future plans.

Some of these plans involve renovations to the current church facility. That building stands in need of some maintenance and repairs, as well as proposed upgrades in some areas. Other plans have to do with additions of outdoor facilities such as a picnic pavilion, playground and ballfield, as well as additional parking and a multi-purpose space. A long-term view includes renovating the parsonage for ministry use, assuming the pastor has his own home off site.

A number of the congregation's considerations have been the topic of discussion for a number of years. In prior years, action on these ideas has been curtailed primarily due to funding issues. As the church's debt has been eliminated, the Board has felt the time is right to more actively pursue progress on facility improvements. This course has also been assisted by the upcoming realization of a bequest that should net the church about \$120,000 towards improvements.

The remaining questions to be investigated include the following:

1. Is the congregation ready to proceed?
2. What specific items are of the highest priority to the congregation?
3. How much can the congregation raise to support the cost of these improvements?

The Board recognized the need for assistance in determining answers to these questions. They proceeded to interview and hire Kirby-Smith Associates, a church consulting firm with almost 80 years' experience working with congregations across the country. Jeffrey Knauer, Executive Vice President with Kirby-Smith, is serving the church to conduct the study.

Several meetings were held by Mr. Knauer and the Board to design the study and fashion a questionnaire for use by the congregation in individually offering their input. The purpose of the study was to measure support for addressing project items, prioritizing those items, and measuring potential financial support and possible volunteer assistance for a Capital Campaign or actual construction of some project items.

The study was introduced and explained to the congregation through letters from the Board and during two Sunday visits by Mr. Knauer on November 20, 2016, and March 5, 2017. All church households received materials and an invitation to participate in the study by scheduling an interview to discuss their responses or to submit their questionnaires in writing. Interviews were then held by Mr. Knauer on March 18, 22, and 23, 2017.

A participation goal was set at 50% of active church households, that being 50% of the total of 90, or a goal of 45 households. We are pleased to report that a total of 59 households contributed to the study, for a participation rate of 66%. This included participation from a total of 88 adults. Interviews represented 44 households and 71 adults, while written responses were received from 15 households representing 17 adults. This level of participation validates study results as very representative of overall congregational viewpoints and feelings.

All those who made time to be involved in the Feasibility Study are to be thanked for their time. The Board, Pastor, and church Secretary are also to be thanked for the many hours spent in preparing the study, and all associated communications. Thanks again to everyone involved.

II. Data and Analysis

Each question that was posed on the questionnaire employed by the study will be treated separately. Results will be shown for the group interviewed, those who submitted only written responses, and the overall totals. Brief comments will be offered while a more in-depth analysis of results will be offered later in the report.

Please note: not all participants responded to every question. Non-respondent totals will be noted but percentages will be based on only those who answered.

QUESTION 1: LENGTH OF TIME ATTENDING THE CHURCH

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
5 Years or Less	15	21%	0	0%	15	17%
6 – 10 Years	9	13%	4	24%	13	15%
11 – 19 Years	11	15%	2	12%	13	15%
20 Years or More	36	51%	11	65%	47	53%

This first question was asked in order to establish demographics for study participants. The question asked how many years the participant has been attending Clarks Valley Zion. Responses show that just over half of participants have been attending CVZ for more than 20 years. In many cases, this would suggest a vast majority of members to be senior citizens. While a healthy number of congregants are seniors, a number of these long-time attendees have simply been part of the church for all or most of their lives. Therefore, the demographics of the congregation feature a good mix of older, younger, and middle aged adults.

The other important trend we can see in these responses is a steady influx of adults over the past 20 years, a trend that shows influx on the rise. Fifteen percent (15%) of participants have been attending the church for 11–19 years, but if you add the number attending for 6–10 years with those attending 5 years or less, you find 32% having begun in the last decade. This is an indicator that the influx of adults is on the rise in more recent years.

QUESTION 2: LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE CHURCH

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Very Involved	18	25%	1	6%	19	22%
Involved	31	44%	6	35%	37	42%
Somewhat Involved	20	28%	7	41%	27	31%
Not Very Involved	2	3%	3	18%	5	6%
No Response						

This question was asked in order to measure how involved members envision themselves to be in the church. The value in asking this question has to do with the fact that, in many cases, those who are more involved tend to take more interest in projects and may contribute more to the positive outcomes of those projects.

Study results show that 95% of participants consider themselves to be involved at some level at CVZ. About 22% consider themselves to be very involved, 42% involved, and 31% somewhat involved. Some of those who consider themselves to be not very involved selected that category due to limited physical mobility or other age restrictions. Some spoke of how they had been more involved in years past.

The significance of these results is that one national measure has average church involvement levels at 60% compared to 95% at CVZ. Comparatively speaking, CVZ has a much higher level of involvement than the national average. This may suggest a high level of interest, satisfaction with church ministries, and a strong sense of Christian responsibility among members. Many positively spoke of the various outreaches the church offers to the surrounding community.

QUESTION 3: HOW WELL CVZ IS SERVING ITS OWN CONGREGATION

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Very Well	22	31%	2	13%	24	28%
Well Enough	46	65%	10	63%	56	64%
Neutral	3	4%	4	25%	7	8%
Not Very Well	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Well at All	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No Response			1		1	

This question was asked for the purpose of soliciting an overall opinion of the church apart from the capital projects. The reason for this question was to gain a sense of community among participants as their overall views of the church can have an effect on the forward movement of proposed projects.

Of the 88 participants, 87 responded to the question. A positive view is held by 92%, with 28% feeling the church is serving its members very well and 64% feeling the church is doing well enough. About 8% are neutral and no participants indicated dissatisfaction with how the church takes care of the members. This is a very positive response. More than a few members attributed their responses to the hard work and dedication of Pastor Mike. While no church is perfect, the comments made regarding possible improvements were given in a positive tone. Items mentioned are among those shared in responses to the following questions.

**QUESTION 4: IMPORTANCE OF CVZ HELPING TO ADDRESS
MINISTRY NEEDS IN OUR COMMUNITY**

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Very Important	46	65%	10	59%	56	64%
Important	22	31%	4	24%	26	30%
Neutral	3	4%	3	18%	6	7%
Not Very Important	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Important at All	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

This question was asked for the purpose of measuring the level of importance participants place upon helping to address ministry needs in their local community. Ministry examples were included with the question. These examples included distribution of food and clothes, activities for area youth and seniors, and lack of daycare and preschool options. Some of the proposed projects have much to do with continued or expanded ministries to the community, so input to this question is vital in helping to determine how the church may proceed in that direction.

Participants gave a high level of importance to addressing ministry needs in the community with a 94% positive response, 64% deeming this direction as very important and 30% as important.

This question also offered participants an opportunity to list comments or other ministry suggestions. Below are those responses along with how many participants asked or said essentially the same thing. These results reflect both interviews and written responses:

(Note on responses to this question as well as others: When responses applied more to one question than another, some were moved to be listed at the spot that seemed most appropriate.)

- 34 The church is doing a good job already in offering many outreach activities including the Easter egg hunt, fall family funfest, plays, etc., along with food distribution, sharing our building with other groups, and hosting funerals for those with no church.
- 18 A youth and teen center, a place to gather children would be useful.
- 15 Childcare for the community is needed: daycare, preschool, before and after school, perhaps helping with tutoring and mentoring.
- 11 Senior center or senior activities
- 10 More distribution of food and clothes for the needy, our own food/clothing bank.

- 6 We are committed to the cause but the challenge is finding volunteers with enough time to help with these additional ministries.
- 4 Community outreach is important but let us be careful to remember we are a church and each effort should maintain a spiritual focus or message as we serve the Lord.
- 3 More visits suggested to the elderly who are shut-in, perhaps sharing brief Bible studies, maybe addressing their needs for transportation to church or other appointments.
- 3 Provide a non-threatening environment for those who used to attend church somewhere but stopped going; we have a real opportunity to make an impact.
- 1 Programs available for those with financial needs.
- 1 Will the plays continue?
- 1 Regular prayer meetings available.

QUESTION 5: FEELINGS ABOUT PURSUING ADVANCEMENT OF MINISTRY AS GOD DIRECTS US

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Very Supportive	48	68%	6	35%	54	61%
Supportive	21	30%	8	47%	29	33%
Neutral	2	3%	3	18%	5	6%
Opposed	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Strongly Opposed	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

While the previous question measured participants’ feelings about the importance of their church helping to address ministry needs in the community, this question had the potential of including ministry to the church’s own congregation, as well as gathering importance of personal involvement in that ministry.

Again, a strong positive response of 94% was gathered, 61% being very supportive and 33% being supportive. Participants demonstrated a positive response on both questions pertaining to mission, service, and outreach. Comments heard during interviews expressed genuine concern for fellow members, especially youth, children, and seniors, as well as the same groups among those beyond the congregation. There seems to be a strong missions-minded spirit among the congregation with a desire to help others in the true example of Christ.

Comments shared here included:

- 3 Would like to have more home visits by the pastor to those who cannot get out.
- 2 Pre-service prayer available for those who would like to gather.
- 2 Summer day camp provided for our own children and the community.
- 2 Members need to be flexible to different styles of ministry to children, music, etc. in order to reach more of our neighbors.
- 2 We need to move forward as God directs, anything less would be wrong.
- 1 Need a plan for ministry moving forward, then design our buildings to accommodate the plan.
- 1 Children are a primary concern – we may need to consider more technology in ministering to them.
- 1 Consider a pre-teen program.
- 1 Begin considering a part-time youth director.
- 1 Need to better communicate the needs of our seniors.
- 1 More fundraisers and dinners could support more outreach efforts.

QUESTION 6: FEELINGS ABOUT ADDRESSING UPGRADES AND PLANNING ADDITIONS TO OUR FACILITIES

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Very Supportive	46	65%	7	44%	53	61%
Supportive	25	35%	4	25%	29	33%
Neutral	0	0%	5	31%	5	6%
Opposed	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Strongly Opposed	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No Response			1		1	

This question was asked for the purpose of measuring a willingness on the part of the congregation to begin taking action regarding proposals made within the study to upgrade and possibly add to the church facility. The importance of this question stems from the fact that many congregations discuss improvements up to the point of taking action. When such action is imminent, however, more than a few congregations back away in light of impending financial responsibility and other required commitments.

Responses given show a strong sense of resolve to move forward with a positive response of 94%, 61% being very supportive and 33% being supportive. The remaining 6% were neutral with no negative feelings expressed. This response provides a strong basis of support to move ahead with whatever upgrades and/or additions that may be seen as priorities.

Once again, comments were solicited. These included:

- 6 It is important to make a good first impression, especially to guests. The church is showing wear and tear and needs attention.
- 6 We need to use the property that God has given to us.
- 6 Upgrade the current building now and add more space as we grow our attendance more.
- 3 The current facility is beginning to hinder our ministry.
- 3 A pavilion provided with sides that open could serve many uses.
- 2 Emphasize how to take good care of what we have in our facility.
- 2 Groups using our facility should adhere to biblical principles in their conduct.
- 2 Upgrades have been put off too long, these need to be done.
- 2 Prefer no mortgage but build as we can afford it.
- 1 More storage is really needed.
- 1 More space for all the events we do is really needed.

QUESTION 7: PRIORITY OF ITEMS ACCORDING TO YOUR VIEW

(Note: to simplify results, input from both interviews and written only responses are combined.)

Item	High 3 Pts	Medium 2 Pts	Low 1 Pt	No Response 0 Pts	Total
Current Facility Items					
New carpet for sanctuary and other areas	35	43	10		201
Upgrade HVAC in the original building area	22	42	18	6	168
Canopies over the entrance areas	15	28	45		146
Dividers, wall treatments in the Social Hall	30	34	21	3	179
Upgrade restrooms	36	38	12	2	196
Padding on pew seats and backs	32	31	25		183
Replacement windows, cover basement windows	20	37	27	4	161
Address water drainage onto parking area	47	26	13	2	206
Replace Social Hall radiator covers, blinds	25	32	27	4	166

Current Additional Needs for Space					
More storage space	31	33	20	4	179
More classroom space	29	37	17	5	178
More office space	15	41	27	5	154
Increase paved parking	52	23	6	3	208
Future Considerations					
Multi-purpose building - activities, office, storage, worship, classes	45	31	9	3	206
Picnic pavilion	42	38	8		210
Playground with equipment	20	35	31	2	161
Ballfields	6	17	63	2	115
Repurpose parsonage for ministry usage	12	29	38	9	132

Order of priority according to point totals – highest priority to lowest

- 210 Picnic pavilion
- 208 Increase paved parking
- 206 Address water drainage onto parking area
- 206 Multi-purpose building – activities, office, storage, worship, classes
- 201 New carpet for sanctuary and other areas
- 196 Upgrade restrooms
- 183 Padding on pew seats and backs
- 179 More storage space
- 179 Dividers and wall treatments in the Social Hall
- 178 More classroom space
- 168 Upgrade HVAC in the original building area
- 166 Replace Social Hall radiator covers and window blinds
- 161 Replacement windows, covers over basement windows
- 161 Playground with equipment
- 154 More office space
- 146 Canopies over the entrance areas
- 132 Repurpose parsonage for ministry usage
- 115 Ballfields

Participation in prioritizing proposed items supplied the following information. Topping the list was a picnic pavilion, followed by an increase in paved parking, addressing the water drainage onto the parking area, a multi-purpose building, new carpet for the sanctuary and other areas, and an upgrade to the restrooms. These six items form a grouping of items at the top, followed by another grouping which stretches from padding on pew seats and backs to

playground with equipment. On the lower end of priorities are four items including more office space, canopies over the entrance areas, a repurposing of the parsonage, and ballfields.

Reasoning for the top items included a picnic pavilion that could be used on many occasions such as for church socials, outreach events, classes in nice weather, and a backup for outdoor events in case of bad weather. Suggestions regarding a pavilion included garage doors along the side to offer some degree of shelter if needed, a kitchen, restrooms, and a fireplace or fire ring. Increased paved parking was mentioned as a necessity by many for Sunday morning overlap of services to community events and funerals. The water drainage has proven to be hazardous during freezing temperatures. A multi-purpose building has been a dream for a while as additional space could be used to solve many current needs and offer space for many new or expanded ministries. New carpeting would create an improved first impression for guests while removing tripping hazards and allowing for easier vacuuming. Upgrades to restrooms could better accommodate those with special needs, as well as an aging population.

Much thought was given to all items with advantages seen in each one. Several factors will be considered before recommending how the congregation may choose to proceed. This advice will follow later in this report.

Participants were asked to suggest other items that should be considered or placed on the list. Many of those responses (made by 2 or more participants) follow:

- 5 Would be nice to have a choir at both services, give consideration to finding a music director
- 5 Upgrade the kitchen including a commercial dishwasher
- 4 Need more room for the praise team on the stage
- 4 Update safety equipment in the building, fire alarms, signs, emergency lights
- 3 Need to address some mold issues in the basement along the SE wall
- 3 Van or bus for outreach, group transportation
- 3 Replace front doors in need of repairs
- 3 Improve the electrical service
- 2 Repair and paint Narthex walls
- 2 Better lighting in the parking lot
- 2 Rent out new space to generate income
- 2 Nursery needs some upgrades and attention
- 2 Need more clarification on the parsonage repurposing idea
- 2 Prefer modern chairs to pews
- 2 Expand the narthex to accommodate a welcome desk
- 2 Upgrade the mower to a tractor, add a snow blower, and provide a shed to store equipment

2 Office and storage really needed, a couple of offices and a conference room would be ideal

Plus 20 additional suggestions, each from one person; list available if the Board desires it

QUESTION 8: RANGE OF POTENTIAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Estimated commitments to a 3-year Capital Campaign
(Numbers ending in 9 are rounded to next higher numbers)

Per Year Amount	Interviews	Written	Total	Low Range	Medium Range	High Range
Above \$25,000	0	0	0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
\$15,000 – \$24,999	0	0	0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
\$10,000 – \$14,999	0	0	0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
\$8,000 – \$9,999	0	0	0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
\$6,000 – \$7,999	0	0	0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
\$4,000 – \$5,999	2	0	2	\$ 24,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 36,000
\$2,000 – \$3,999	4	0	4	\$ 24,000	\$ 36,000	\$ 48,000
\$1,000 – \$1,999	11	3	14	\$ 42,000	\$ 63,000	\$ 84,000
Less than \$1,000	19	5	24	\$ 0	\$ 36,000	\$ 72,000
Fixed amount stated	2	0	2	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
Undecided	2	0	2	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Not giving to campaign	4	4	8			
No response given	0	3	3			
Total	44	15	59	\$ 94,000	\$169,000	\$244,000

This question was asked for the purpose of measuring potential contributions if forward movement is initiated and a Capital Campaign is engaged. Though no firm commitments were registered at the time of the study, responses give an indication of possible financial support and can be used to determine the extent to which the proposed projects may progress.

Of the 59 participating households, 48 offered a response of potential giving to a possible Capital Campaign. This is a positive response rate of 81%. Of the 48 positive responses, 44 contained estimates within suggested ranges while 2 supplied stated or set amounts or targets for their giving. Where no response was given, there may yet be potential for a positive decision to be made. Some did indicate support depending on which items may be chosen and when their employment situations may improve.

Responses were measured within the ranges indicated, using the low, medium, and high extents of each range. Figures were also rounded up to even numbers to make estimates even numbers. Should a Capital Campaign move forward, estimated giving from study participants may be realized at the low range of \$94,000, the medium range of \$169,000, or the high range of \$244,000.

In order to determine a reasonable campaign goal from the data received, several factors should be considered. Historically, the medium range estimate is closest to what campaigns usually realize. In this case, that amount is \$169,000. Another factor to consider is that most successful campaigns raise between 1.0 and 2.0 times the congregation's annual non-designated giving over the course of a 3-year campaign giving period, with some campaigns raising as much as 3.0 times if some major gifts are experienced. In the case of CVZ, the annual operating budget amount is in the range of \$180,000. The medium range of \$169,000 represents slightly less than the annual giving, so the initial amount identified by the study is within reasonable expectations.

Another factor to consider is the 31 households yet to be heard from who did not participate in the study. While not all may contribute to a possible Capital Campaign, some will. The potential total of giving from this group may be used to support those who may give below the mid-point of the range they selected. Or, giving from this group may be conservatively estimated and added to the totals suggested by study responses. A conservative estimate could be gained by projecting that 50% of those yet to be heard from may participate – that number being 15 households. If those households contribute within the range of \$1,000 or less, a mid-range projection of additional potential would be \$22,500.

For the purpose of this study, we will choose to remain conservative and use the potential giving from households yet to be heard from as support for the middle range estimate of \$169,000. This will supply more upside potential to this projection and less downside risk. This will also help to cover any change to current demographics that may fluctuate as any families move in and out of the church in the near future. Should the church desire a range for what may be realized in a possible Capital Campaign, a range of \$170,000 – \$190,000 is most likely from the total of households.

When an entire project budget is formed, the amount contributed by the congregation is usually the key component in that budget. However, other sources of revenue inside and outside the church may play important roles in completing a budget. In the case of CVZ, other sources of revenue may exist inside and beyond the church. These possibilities include donations of labor and materials, which will be pursued should a project be initiated and a Capital Campaign engaged.

QUESTION 9: INTEREST IN CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS A SPECIFIC PROJECT ITEM, MEMORIAL, OR HONORARY GIVING

This question was posed to participants to learn of interest in making all or part of potential commitments towards a specific project item or giving in memory or honor of someone. Should there be sufficient interest in these options, choices for these types of giving may be developed as choices for campaign commitments. Responses are as follows:

For a specific project item:

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Yes	8	12%	1	7%	9	11%
Maybe	31	46%	6	40%	37	45%
No	29	43%	8	53%	37	45%
No Response	3		2		5	

In honor or memory of someone:

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Yes	8	11%	0	0%	8	9%
Maybe	30	43%	8	47%	38	44%
No	32	46%	9	53%	41	47%
No Response	1				1	

For both options, a majority of participants expressed a positive interest in at least considering contributions towards specific items or in honor or memory of someone. For specific project items, 56% have a positive interest. In honor or in memory options had a 53% positive interest. Given this level of interest, it would be wise to include a variety of options should a Capital Campaign be engaged.

QUESTION 10: DONATIONS OF TIME, LABOR, AND/OR MATERIALS

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Yes	26	37%	1	6%	27	31%
Maybe	16	23%	6	38%	22	25%
No	29	41%	9	56%	38	44%
No Response			1		1	

A total of 49 participants offered construction and other skills that may be useful in helping with or completing some proposed projects. Several have connections that may be able to secure certain building materials at a discount or less. Some have equipment that may be useful in the construction process.

A separate list of individuals, skills, and other details will be supplied to the Board.

QUESTION 11: WILLING TO ASSIST WITH CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE WORK OR TASKS

Study participants were asked if they would be willing to help with the work of a Capital Campaign if that process moves forward. If willing, they were also asked about specific areas of interest. Results are as follows:

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Yes	33	46%	3	18%	36	41%
Maybe	25	35%	6	35%	31	35%
No	13	18%	8	47%	21	24%

Areas of interest:

Overall planning	16
Communications	14
Prayer	52
Literature preparation	10
Youth and Children	16
Visitation	5
Event planning	24
Prepare mailings	36
Other skill or anywhere	13

A majority of study participants who offered a response, 76%, said they would be or may be willing to help with the work of a Capital Campaign. A breakdown of interests in specific areas of service is included above. It should be noted that some participants indicated interest in more than one area.

These responses show that more than enough volunteer assistance is available to staff a Capital Campaign effort if a campaign is engaged. In fact, such a strong response is often an indication that participants are expecting that a project will take place and a campaign be engaged. Members are seldom so strongly moved to volunteer for something they do not believe will occur. A list of names will be supplied to the Board.

QUESTION 12: ANY FURTHER COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, IDEAS, OR CONCERNS

This question was meant to offer participants a final opportunity to comment on any aspect of the proposed projects or a possible Capital Campaign. This includes comments, suggestions, ideas, or any concerns. All comments noted or recorded are included. Those of a similar nature were combined. The number of those offering similar comments is recorded. Comments made by two or more participants are included in the report.

- 16 A multi-purpose building and the other outside items are important to accommodate and attract young families to grow our congregation, providing a safe place to play, a place to gather in the winter, and a place for adults to stay fit.
- 9 Excited to see what God has in store for our church family, good to see this happening.
- 7 Get as much done as possible, phase if needed.
- 4 Will go with the flow – this needs to be done.
- 4 Curious to see the results of the study and the plan that is developed.
- 3 It is very important to be involved and show love to the community. Service opens people’s eyes to God and to the church.
- 3 Need ways to get more volunteers for various projects. Commitment to what we want will be key in going forward.
- 3 Need an overall plan to address both present and future concerns.
- 3 We are going about this process the right way.
- 3 Concerns about a campaign being handled the right way so as not to cause division.
- 3 Need H/C restrooms on the sanctuary level, upgrades to those on the lower level.
- 2 Upgrade HVAC when needed – put money aside for it until that time.
- 2 Develop a coffee bar to fund mission projects, which can be open on Sundays and maybe at other times to the community – may be the start of hosting social events.
- 2 Provide help for families when natural or other disasters occur.
- 2 Host concerts in the multi-purpose building.
- 2 Pastor Mike really does a great job; he puts his heart into it.

- 2 Expand our view of world missions. Want our children to grow up with a service mentality.
- 2 Need Christian daycare with a Christian curriculum.
- 2 Clarification – does the HVAC need to be replaced? We do not know.
- 2 With 2 buildings, it will not be as easy to move people in bad weather.
- 2 If we do not add space now, then the current lower level needs to be renovated.
- 2 Build a larger Social Hall then renovate the current one into classrooms.
- 2 Do not build too big so that we have rooms that will not be used.

III. Observations, Conclusions, Recommendations

OBSERVATIONS

Definition: Observations are based on comments, suggestions, impressions, and various written materials reviewed, along with an interpretation based on our previous experience. The following observations were noted during this study:

1. Clarks Valley Zion Evangelical Congregational Church is situated in a rural setting near Peter's Mountain with a view of the mountains on either side of the Susquehanna River. The church has enough land to expand its facilities and has worked hard to liquidate all debts on the property.
2. The congregation consists of quite a few lifelong attendees with others who have returned to the area or relocated there due to the appeal of living in the picturesque area. Members of the congregation travel from several communities to worship at the church, some as far away as a 20-30 minute drive.
3. The Church Board has a balanced mix of younger and older members similar to the mix in ages found within the congregation. Pastor Mike is respected for his dedication and hard work.
4. When discussing ministry, many members are quick to mention the very successful outreach efforts of the church to the community. These efforts include an egg hunt, a fall family festival, various plays, distributing packs of food, and sharing of their facility. These efforts have had a positive effect in bringing some new members into the church, providing a place for those without a church to hold funerals, and a positive reputation of the church.
5. While there is some sense of caution in moving forward to address upgrades and possible additions to the facility, many mentioned that most proposals offered are not new items. They have been discussed for a number of years. It is time to take action as opposed to just discussing these items again and again. It may not be possible to do

all the items on the list but it should be possible to do some of the items and get the process moving forward.

6. Members of the congregation are ready to contribute with finances, time, and labor.

CONCLUSIONS

Definition: Conclusions are based on direct interpretation of personal interviews and written surveys. After analysis, study, and prayer, the following conclusions have been reached:

1. This study began with a desire on the part of the Church Board to gather input from members and attendees regarding the matter of moving forward with proposed upgrades and possible additions to the church facility. Opinions, as well as contributions of finance, time, and labor were to be measured in order to decide how the church may proceed.
2. A participation goal for the study was set at 50% of all active and engaged households, both members and attendees. Study results are more strongly validated when the level of participation exceeds a simple majority of supporting households. As 90 households currently fit this definition, the goal was set at 45. A total of 59 households actually participated in the study, which is nearly two thirds, 66%, of the congregation. This included members of 44 households who were personally interviewed while 15 sent in written responses. A total of 88 people participated, including 71 who were part of the interview process. Participation at this level is quite helpful in determining how to proceed with a project.
3. The congregational makeup of CVZ demonstrates a balance in tenure. About 53% of members have a history with the church that spans more than 20 years. Conversely, 47% have been attending for less than 20 years. A key group is the 17% who have been in the church for 5 years or less. This group represents an upswing in newer members that is essential to the element of church growth. Many regard young families and children as very important to the church's future. Also to be noted are those young adults who have filled leadership positions on the Church Board.
4. About 92% of participants believe the church is serving its members well. This would contribute to the fact that 95% see themselves involved in the church at some level. While there are always areas that may be improved, study participants expressed many more positive opinions of their church than negatives. There is currently a positive attitude and spirit at CVZ.

5. Ministry inside and outside of the church walls is very important to the congregation. There is a sense of satisfaction in the outreach programs offered to the community. Yet there is also a feeling that more should be done. This feeling is a primary motivator in considering the addition of more space. Ninety-four percent (94%) of participants believe ministry to the community is important and 94% agree with pursuing the advancement of ministry however God leads.
6. Regarding participants' feelings about moving forward to address upgrades and additions, 94% were in support. Items that drew the highest levels of support included a picnic pavilion, increased paved parking, addressing water drainage onto the parking lot, a multi-purpose building, new carpet for the sanctuary and other areas, and restroom upgrades.
7. Potential contributions to the project extended from a low range estimate of \$94,000 to a medium range estimate of \$169,000 to a high range estimate of \$244,000. As the medium range estimate is usually closest to the amount a campaign realizes, a conservative campaign goal would be within a range of \$170,000 to \$190,000 over a 3-year giving period.

This projection takes into consideration those yet to be heard from 31 church households. It also bears in mind that not all households may contribute at the middle of the range they selected. Not included in the projection are any funds that may be raised outside of the congregation from friends or the community, nor does it add the anticipated funds from a bequest that should amount to about \$120,000.

8. Slightly more than one half of participants expressed interest in considering contributions for specific project items or in making honorary or memorial contributions. Offers of labor, time, or materials came from 49 study participants. If a Capital Campaign is engaged, 67 of the 88 participants said they would be willing to assist with campaign tasks. There would be plenty of volunteers to run a successful campaign and assist with many specific tasks, including a number of the actual projects.
9. Participants took the opportunity to offer many additional comments, suggestions, ideas, or concerns. Most are included in the study text. Those of a similar nature have been combined in order to focus on the most concerted ideas. Top comments had to do with satisfaction over current outreaches to the community, along with ways that more space could assist in ministries.

10. Summing up the conclusions, a strong majority of participants are ready to move forward in addressing upgrades and the possible addition of new space. They are willing to contribute financially and to lend a hand with labor. And they are willing to be involved in the campaign process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Definition: Recommendations are based on our observations and conclusions. The following recommendations are respectfully submitted:

1. Based on the level of information gathered in the study, we recommend a summary report of the results be shared with the entire congregation. We suggest a verbal report be arranged, along with a distribution of the summary section. The entire report can be made available electronically for those who may be interested in details. Hard copies can be produced for those who may not have internet access. This step will maintain an ongoing sense of open communication throughout the process.
2. Since forward progress to address proposals is strongly supported, we recommend that the Board sets a course of action. This course of action may include activity in several directions:
 - A. First, we would recommend initiating or continuing the pursuit of an approved site plan. This step is necessary before planning or constructing any projects beyond the current church facility. This plan will guide the size and positioning of any future additions of space or other facilities such as a pavilion or playground. It will also indicate any site improvements required such as drainage and water retention.
 - B. Second, we would recommend that project stages be determined. Dividing the overall work between the current facility and projects beyond the facility may allow some progress to be addressed while other items are being planned.
 - C. Third, we recommend that a Capital Campaign be planned with components for both congregational giving and use of volunteer labor. Regardless of exactly when all plans to proceed will be ready, funds will need to be available. We recommend that these steps begin in close succession as conducting them one after the other could extend the timeframe of projects well beyond the point where momentum has been initiated. If too much time is taken before progress is made, the effort could stall.

3. As the projected plan for implementation of projects will depend highly on actual campaign commitments and anticipated cash flow, we recommend that the planning of the campaign be implemented as soon as possible. Some upgrades to the current facility can also be carried out even as a site plan that will affect other items is under way. Subcommittees with one or two assignments can keep specific items moving forward. The goal is to get some items accomplished while others that will require more time for planning are being addressed.
4. Examples of how the previous recommendations may be carried out include the following:
 - A. Appoint a subcommittee to follow through with the development of the site plan. Get an estimate of costs early in the process so funds can be set aside. As any required site work is identified, consider setting aside funds to accomplish that work. Top priorities identified by the congregation that will be affected by the site plan include the picnic pavilion, increased paved parking, and a multi-purpose building. Planning of these items may be held for a bit, or developed more slowly, as the site plan is being developed.
 - B. Another subcommittee may be assigned the task of addressing upgrades to the current church facility that are not dependent upon the site plan. Top priorities selected by the congregation for such upgrades include addressing water drainage onto the parking lot, new carpet for the sanctuary and other areas, and restroom upgrades.
 - C. When approaching all of these possibilities, an assessment of available funds and where the funds should be allotted should take priority. This will also help determine priorities, how much work may be done in the near future, and which projects may require additional funding to be completed.
5. As part of any campaign process, we suggest helping the congregation to understand a broad spectrum of ways to contribute, including creative methods of giving, memorial and honorary opportunities. A variety of giving choices will encourage a greater level of participation through a broader appeal. This approach will also reduce the stress associated with an additional request for contributions. Those with limited incomes may learn of non-cash ways to contribute so that they may be part of the effort and not feel excluded. These features can be easily woven into the campaign process.

6. Following the receiving of commitments, cash flow can be determined based on how households decide to make their contributions. Together with outside monies that may be raised, the full extent of a project or any phasing may then be fully determined and set in motion.
7. If church leaders accept the recommendation to proceed, campaign planning can run concurrently with project planning and can begin ASAP. If campaign planning gets underway before summer begins, a kickoff may be possible in early fall. Contributions and progress could commence before the end of the year. This would be very positive for those wishing to take advantage of tax consequences for 2017.
8. As all aspects of planning move forward, we recommend that regular updates be communicated to the congregation. A clear picture of progress is of utmost importance. Accounting of any campaign amounts committed, received, and spent should be noted along with attention to items completed. This will maintain trust in leadership and momentum in project giving throughout the commitment period. As a project moves forward, a reiteration of benefits gained and their importance may prove helpful in maintaining enthusiasm and sense of purpose.
9. Kirby-Smith Associates is familiar with the project, the community, and all data gathered. We are prepared to guide CVZ through a Capital Campaign process. While some members may be concerned over the cost of professional guidance, churches are not often equipped to navigate a major fundraising effort alone. Results show that churches conducting campaigns by themselves only raise 50-60% as when professional guidance is engaged. Members are more comfortable discussing their giving with an outsider than with fellow members and appreciate creative ideas for making contributions. Increased results quickly absorb costs associated with such assistance.
10. Results of the study indicate support for a project and a willingness to support it financially. Our recommendation is to proceed as soon as possible so as not to lose momentum established by the study process.

IV. Summary

Pastor Mike, the Church Board, and Gail are to be thanked for their time, efforts, and prayers in preparing for this very important step. Plans to address the need for upgrades and more space were placed before the congregation for their feedback along with an opportunity to submit their own comments and ideas.

In order to make study results viable, a participation goal of 50% of active church households was established. As 90 households fit that criterion, the goal was set at 45 households. A total of 59 households (66%) participated in the study, including a total of 88 individuals. There were 71 people representing 44 households that took part in the interview process with 15 people representing 17 households submitting written responses. This level of participation strongly validates study results as being a fair representation of overall congregational views.

Fifty-three percent (53%) of participants have been part of the church for 20 years or more, while 32% have been attending for 10 years or less. This points to a strong experienced core, as well as an upswing in growth in recent years. There were 92% who believe the church is serving its members well and 95% consider themselves involved in church activities at some level. This compares to a national average of 60% seeing themselves involved in their churches. In addition, 94% of participants believe that ministry to the community is important and the same 94% support advancing ministry as God leads.

Moving forward to address upgrades and possible additions to the facilities is supported by 94% of study participants. Topping the list of priorities is a picnic pavilion, increasing paved parking, addressing water drainage onto the parking lot, a multi-purpose building, new carpet for the sanctuary and other areas, and upgrades to the restrooms. A second tier of priorities followed closely to the top tier. All are listed in the full report.

Forty-six (46) of 59 participating households (78%) offered an estimate of potential financial support. Those estimates spanned from a low range of \$94,000, to a medium range of \$169,000, to a high range of \$244,000. As the medium range is usually closest to the amount raised in a campaign and considering that one third of the congregation has yet to be heard from, a conservative campaign goal would be in the range of \$170,000 to \$190,000 over a 3-year giving period. Not included in this projection are any funds that may be obtained from sources outside the congregation, through donations of labor and materials, and the bequest of around \$120,000.

An average of 54% of participants would be interested in seeing options to contribute toward specific project items or to contribute in honor or memory of a loved one. Forty-nine (49) participants offered skills in construction or other helps, with some connections to discounted or donated materials, and 67 of 88 participants said they would or may be willing to assist with campaign tasks should a Capital Campaign be engaged. This assures that sufficient volunteer labor is available and suggests members are anticipating a campaign will take place.

Given an opportunity to share final comments, suggestions, ideas, or concerns, participants' primary thoughts had to do with the benefits of additional space and a positive outlook on finally moving forward with ideas that have been discussed for quite some time.

It is recommended that the Church Board presents the findings of the study to members during a forum after or before services, accompanied by a copy of the study summary. Full versions of the study may be made available online or by hard copies to those without internet access. Based on the positive results, it is recommended that the Board develops plans to move forward including the development and approval of an overall site plan, some upgrades to the current facility while additional space is being studied and planned, and the initiation of a Capital Campaign to generate the necessary funds. We recommend that steps moving forward be conducted simultaneously so as to move projects forward in a timely fashion and not lose momentum generated by this study.

Though it may not be possible to immediately accomplish all projects envisioned by the congregation, projected funding suggests that a number of items can be done. Others can enter the planning stage with possible timelines identified as a site plan is completed and funding materializes. Another key component will be the amount of labor that members can add.

Since a relationship with Kirby-Smith Associates has been established through the Feasibility Study process, it is recommended that professional guidance for a Capital Campaign be retained. This will ensure that preparations will proceed in a timely manner, volunteers will be equipped for their tasks, the broadest scope of ideas for contributing will be made available, and results can be realized in a timely fashion so a project can move forward as soon as possible.

A final word of thanks is extended to all those who made time in their schedules to participate in the study. Your help was appreciated and key to the success of this study. Thank you!

V. Thank you

It is with great appreciation that we thank you for allowing Kirby-Smith Associates to assist you with this Feasibility Study.

A special note of thanks is extended to Pastor Mike, the Church Board, and to Gail. Their hours of planning, preparation, and communication were key to the success of the study, as well as the commendable level of participation by members.

As a decision to proceed is made, Kirby-Smith Associates would be honored to conduct a Capital Campaign for Clarks Valley Zion Evangelical Congregational Church. We will work with you, exerting the same diligence and care to design and conduct a campaign that will achieve the highest level of your potential. Advantages to professional guidance include presenting many options for giving, including “Creative Ways to Give”, and assisting with making sure all households are contacted. Churches guided through Capital Campaigns consistently raise more funds and experience fewer problems with the process than those who attempt a major fundraiser by themselves.

Again, thank you very much. It has been a distinct pleasure to serve you. We will join you in prayer for the success of your journey. God bless you.