

frequently asked questions

There are many questions about the *Build Up the Body* capital appeal. Here are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions (FAQs).

Why are we conducting the *Build Up the Body* capital appeal now?

Through a self-study with the church consultant group, Kairos and Associates in 2015, we learned that our church is experiencing a time of health, vitality, and excitement for the future. People believe that we are an open and welcoming congregation. However, our current facility is a barrier to our welcoming spirit, our desire to deepen our connections with each other through study and fellowship, and to developing ministries that serve our surrounding neighbors. In January 2016, our congregation voted unanimously to remove those barriers through pursuing and funding the Accessibility Enhancement Project.

What are our church's physical barriers to our welcoming spirit?

Our current building has five levels only accessible by stairs, and there is only one accessible bathroom for people with limited mobility. The fellowship hall, kitchen, classrooms, preschool, and offices are very difficult, unsafe, and sometimes impossible for those with limited mobility to access. People either choose not to attend events or need to be carried up and down the stairs. Our facilities' inaccessibility limits the number of church and community groups that can meet at our church at the same time.

How did we decide on the current renovation plans?

For many, many years, Immanuel has dreamed of adding an elevator. In May 2013, twenty Immanuel members met to address our congregation's 2013 Strategic Plan goal of "Developing a Plan for Accessibility." They defined accessibility as "creating an atmosphere where everyone feels welcome, and where everyone can participate in the mission and ministries of our congregation." In early 2015, the Church Council hired Kairos and Associates Church Consultants to seek direction and input from congregation members and to determine the church's capacity to finance a project. Feedback from the congregation indicated that uniform awareness and

overwhelming support existed across the congregation to address the current facility need for accessibility. In response, the Church Council re-convened the Accessibility Team with the goal of having a clear and defined project design and cost estimate to present to the congregation. At the annual meeting of the congregation in January 2016, the congregation voted unanimously to proceed with the Accessibility Enhancement Project.

What facility renovations are included in the *Build Up the Body* appeal?

- An elevator outside the existing floor plan of the church that reaches all five levels along with a backup power source in case of power outages.
- Six new ADA accessible bathrooms.
- Basement Level: Elevator equipment room, small lobby, and large storage room.
- Fellowship Hall Level: Two new ADA accessible restrooms, shower/tub/laundry room, and dishwashing room. Renovations will remove issues with current drainage in the kitchen.
- Main Sanctuary Level: Two new ADA accessible restrooms, expanded front entry area, and expanded musicians area.
- Office Level: Two new ADA accessible restrooms, relocation of offices, reorganization of classrooms, and air conditioning for the entire level.
- Loft Level: Expanded meeting/lounge area with windows to sanctuary for youth/family space, door to block sound from choir loft, remodel office, and air conditioning for entire level.

Why can't we just add an elevator?

The five levels of our church make adding an elevator complicated. The best location for the installation of an

elevator will take up needed classroom and office space and the current family room/nursery. Therefore, the elevator itself necessitates other renovations. In addition, we still would only have one accessible bathroom for all 5 levels. The construction of an elevator offers the opportunity to make several long hoped for renovations for relatively low cost including: expanded narthex and musicians area on the southeast side of the worship space, proper plumbing and space for a dishwashing room, laundry and showers for Family Promise guests and others, increased storage, youth/family room in view of the worship space, and air conditioning for offices and meeting spaces.

What are the specific goals of the *Build Up the Body* appeal?

Our goal over the next three years is to raise \$600,000—above and beyond our current annual giving—to fund the renovations.

What is the giving period for the *Build Up the Body* appeal?

The giving period for this appeal will be May 8, 2016 through May 8, 2019.

What is the timeline for the project?

The *Build Up the Body* capital appeal will take place April 17 & 24, and May 1 & 8, 2016, and the giving period through May 2019. In the summer, construction documents will be developed followed by a loan application and construction bids. We hope to start construction in late 2016. Construction will take 10-12 months.

Is Immanuel financially capable of a project of this size?

Our church is in good shape financially, and we are fiscally responsible. Annual giving has increased each year, and we have no debt. We already had \$61,000 donated for the project before it was even approved. Our congregation indicated a willingness to financially support the project through the Kairos Listening Process. Standard budget for a capital appeal is two times a church's annual operating budget; this project is near that range. Churches that start a capital appeal typically experience increased giving to the annual operating budget because it creates a sense of mission, ministry and momentum. In addition, the Immanuel Endowment Fund is approximately \$500,000.

Will we use a loan?

Because most gifts will extend over a period of three years, a construction loan is necessary to start and complete the project in a timely manner. At the 2016 Annual Meeting, the congregation authorized the council to pursue a construction loan of up to \$600,000. If we wait, the project will cost us

more. Our architect estimates a 10% increase in cost for each year we delay the project. Loan interest rates are at a generational low, and we do not need to make loan payments until construction is complete. The payments for the loan can be paid over a number of years and will come from funds already donated to the capital appeal, not the annual operating expenses. The Council plans to use the Mission Investment Fund (MIF) to finance our loan. MIF is a ministry branch of the ELCA; it's our church. They re-invest loan interest into other ELCA church projects and ministries similar to Immanuel. MIF does NOT use the church's building as collateral against the loan.

How will I/we be asked for our commitment?

You will be mailed your response packet the week of April 29. We are asking that you fill out your commitment card and bring it to worship on Sunday, May 8. We will celebrate and give thanks together that day for what God is doing for us and through us.

Can we give in ways other than cash?

Absolutely! You are encouraged to think of assets in addition to cash. For many people, this is the best way to give. Giving stocks, property, jewelry, cars, or other appreciated assets as a charitable donation is beneficial to you and the church. If you think you would benefit from more information on this topic, call our Kairos and Associates consultant Kristin Wiersma at 651-815-1516.

How does this affect my annual giving to Immanuel Lutheran's ongoing ministry?

It doesn't! Your *Build Up the Body* capital appeal commitment is a new and totally separate commitment, above and beyond what you currently give to Immanuel's ongoing ministry needs.

How much should I give?

Pray about what amount would represent a generous, sacrificial gift to the *Build Up the Body* appeal. What gift could reflect your commitment to the future vision of Immanuel Lutheran? Trust in our God of faithful abundance and generosity. Any and all commitments that are given with a joyful heart will be blessed by God and be a blessing to Immanuel's ministry!

What if my financial situation changes during the giving period?

At any time during the giving phase, you may adjust your commitment. No matter your circumstances, we ask you to support the congregation in your prayers and to remember that you are always welcomed and loved.