



Questions and Answers

Q. Why do we need to raise another \$1.6 million? Our 2017 *Bold Step Forward* goal was \$1.7 million. And we've already raised \$1.1 million.

A. The goal for the initial campaign was set at \$1.7 million, but we knew we would need more to finance the improvements. That's why, in 2017, the congregation authorized borrowing up to \$2.4 million. At the time, we were already paying off a loan of approximately \$300,000 assumed to cover the costs of roof repair, brickwork and stained-glass window restoration done several years earlier. We subsequently rolled that loan into a single mortgage of \$2.7 million.

Q. When did the congregation authorize spending more than \$1.7 million?

On Sunday, June 11, 2017, at a Special Congregational meeting, members voted in favor of the following motion: "The congregation of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, meeting June 11, 2017, authorizes the Vestry to initiate

construction loan not to exceed \$2,400,000 at the most competitive rate possible with Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America to finance the installation of a geothermal-source system for heating, cooling and ventilating the nave and undercroft, restoration and upgrade of the parking lot, remodel the Parish House entry with improved lighting, canopy and door with remote operator to completely meet ADA standards, and to repair/replace failing façade pipes of the organ."

Q. Who authorized a new funding appeal?

A. At the end of the three-year *Bold Step Forward* capital appeal in 2020, the Vestry voted to initiate a second funding appeal to retire our debt. The pandemic interrupted plans for fundraising last year. In Spring 2021, the Vestry appointed a *Boldly into the Future* Steering Committee to lead the funding appeal.

Q. What is the capacity of our membership to reduce our debt?

A. We will find out through the appeal, but, given a challenge, the members of Mount Olive have a history of stepping up to meet it. Over the years, the congregation has set big goals – and it has met them. Our three-year *Bold Step Forward* appeal in 2017 was no exception. Members pledged and gave gifts of more

than \$1.1 million. And over the 15 months away from Mount Olive due to the pandemic, members continued to give generously. We pray that, once again, the members of Mount Olive will step forward with love and generosity.

Q. Has Mount Olive reduced its carbon footprint? By how much?

A. Yes, we have reduced our carbon footprint. Installing LED light bulbs, generating electricity with the solar array on the Parish House roof, and switching to our geothermal system to not only heat, but also cool and ventilate, the sanctuary and undercroft have greatly reduced Mount Olive's carbon footprint. Through these improvements, we are preventing almost 20 tons of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere each year. To match this reduction in carbon emissions, we would need to plant 300 carbon-absorbing trees annually.

A special note on the solar array: The panels produce more power than the church uses, especially in the summer. So each year we are able to return to the electrical grid about 21,000 kilowatt hours, substantially reducing our energy bill.

Q. Has our energy budget decreased? If so, by how much?

A. In 2017, before installing the geothermal and solar systems, we budgeted \$33,000 for gas and electricity. For 2021, we budgeted \$27,600. We continue to purchase electricity to run the heat pumps that are integral to the geothermal heating and cooling system.

Q. In what ways has Mount Olive expanded its service and outreach to the community and the congregation as a result of the 2017 building improvements?

A. With the improvements, Mount Olive is now a safer place for many people: Individuals who were previously hesitant or unable to worship at Mount Olive due to conditions related to heat sensitivity are now able to do so with confidence, and in comfort, even on the hottest Sundays. The broader community can now look to Mount Olive as a resource to shelter from the heat. And with our new and improved ventilation system, our building offers greater safety during the pandemic for members and community groups in need of a place to gather.

Questions? Comments? Contact Chandler Molbert, chair, *Boldly into the Future* Steering Committee, at pres@mountolivechurch.org or (612) 247-2945.