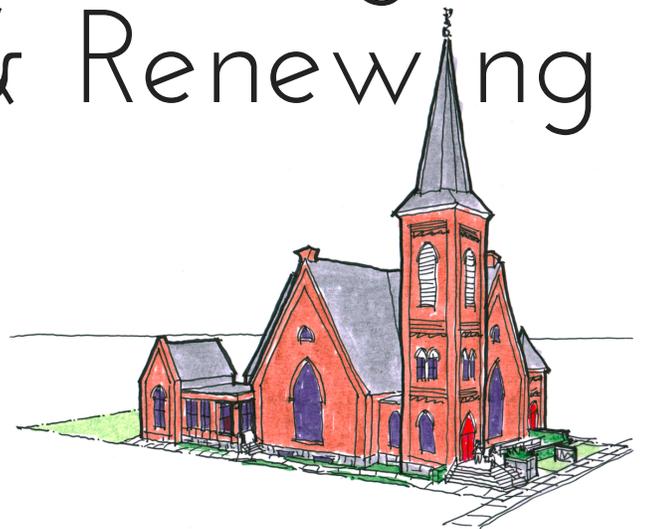




Zion Lutheran Church
Capital Campaign 2014—2017



Restoring & Renewing



Imagine the possibilities!





Dear friends,

I'm writing this opening letter to you from the sanctuary of Zion Lutheran Church. I'm sitting in the far left section of the pews, looking up. I see the gorgeous hardwood ceiling, with its perfect wainscoting. I look at the lanterns with their incredible detail. I can feel the light shining in through the stained glass windows. I smell the familiar scent of oil candles, and I hear the comforting *hiss* of the steam radiators firing up before Jazz Vespers.

I don't know another place like this. This is holy ground. I'm the tenth pastor to lead worship in this room. I can sense the presence of the hundreds—thousands—of people who have been baptized, been married, or offered funeral liturgies in this place. We've been here for 155 years, this room for 122. Buildings have risen and fallen around us. We are still here.

We are still here because God believes we have something important to contribute to our city and our neighborhood. In a world that likes to define who is “in” and who is “out,” we need a place—a community—that runs counter to that popular thinking. We are still here.

I am so incredibly excited by this master plan and the capital campaign. With the help of God, we will restore our building and offer new possibilities for the life and ministry of this congregation. No longer will we exclude those who deserve full access; no longer will we wonder if this space is truly safe; no longer will we ask “Do we stay or do we go?” We can move on in ministry. We are still here.

And when this campaign is complete and the project accomplished, this place where I sit, this place where I type this letter to you now, will still be holy. The gorgeous hardwood ceiling will be a canopy over our heads, the light from the stained glass windows will illumine our days, and the sanctuary will be a vibrant home for all of God's people.

God's peace be with you all.

The Rev. Timothy Weisman, Pastor

At Zion Lutheran Church, we approach our Christian faith in a particularly Lutheran way.

We are working to create a community in downtown Pittsfield where we trust we are always beloved and where we experience that we are always being made new.

We worship weekly on Sundays, and on Thursday evenings we host Jazz Vespers, blending elements of modern jazz, blues, and gospel with the centuries-old tradition of evening prayer. Our children come to know God through our faith formation ministries; our youth love the ELCA Youth Gathering. We sing hymns at Baba Louie's Pizza to raise funds for local charitable organizations. **This is how we build community:** we gather, we get to know one another, and we discover that we are stronger together than we are apart.

We collaborate with and support organizations who love the Berkshires as much as we do. We partner with and host several nonprofits, including the Barrington Stage Company, Berkshire Music School, Berkshire Concert Choir, Stockbridge Sinfonia, Downtown Pittsfield Farmers Market, and 12-step groups. We support the Christian Center, the Elizabeth Freeman Center, and Soldier On, as well as people around the world through ELCA World Hunger and ELCA Disaster Response.

Zion Lutheran Church of Pittsfield is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), one of the largest progressive Christian denominations in the United States. Together with nearly 10,000 congregations and over 4.5 million members, we share a "living, daring confidence in God's grace."

"God is creating a much deeper sense of community and friendship. I feel more comfortable here now than I ever have, and I don't want to miss a Sunday!"





When Zion Lutheran Church was founded in 1859, its first members resolved to build and maintain a home, a sanctuary, in downtown Pittsfield for worship and community. Through the last 155 years, building projects—which have ranged from restoration to demolition to new construction—have been a crucial part of keeping that vision alive.

Our current building at 74 First Street in Pittsfield is really two buildings: a sanctuary and basement space built in 1892; and offices, program space, and function space built in 1960. Our current building, while once a triumph for this congregation, no longer fits our founders' vision: with 5 floors and no elevator, our building is not handicap accessible; it does not have a hard-wired smoke detector system or a sprinkler system; our aging sanctuary boiler is unreliable; our heating costs are inexcusable; and our basement, affected by mold and mildew, is a health hazard.

But we love our historic sanctuary: our 9 stained glass windows, which bring vibrant color into our sanctuary; our pulpit, baptismal font, altar table, hymn boards, and other fixtures that date from the turn of the century; and, of course, the wainscoted hardwood ceiling constructed with great care and precision. These physical elements—the hardwood floors and ceilings, the historic fixtures, the colorful glass—all contribute to a warmth in the room that brings warmth to our community and to our gatherings.

We also love our location. The ELCA describes what makes a strong location for a church, and our location at 74 First Street is nearly perfect. We enjoy a central location in the county seat; we're located along a major arterial roadway; we're near other churches, community centers, and even a 7-acre park. We have incredible frontage—and our historic building makes a real impression on those walking along First Street. Ours is the only 19th-century building still standing on First Street.

In 2012, we began a master plan process with EDM Architects in Pittsfield to discover a way to realign with our founders' vision: making our building fully accessible, safe, and energy efficient, while still keeping our building, keeping our location, and taking steps toward sustainability for the next generation.

In the early stages of the master planning process, our team made several important discoveries. We have a lot of unneeded space. Our current building is about 25,000 square feet, while our actual requirements for ministry are much smaller—around 10,000 square feet, and this space is used only a few hours per week. Our current building can legally accommodate 1,500 people, though our average worship attendance is about 80.

We learned that to fully renovate the entire building would cost over \$6 million. Installing a five-stop, two-door elevator, as well as hard-wired smoke detectors and a sprinkler system across 25,000 square feet, is an unwieldy project.

We also learned that we have an incredible opportunity. We are in the heart of the city, in a place where we can form rich partnerships and intertwine our work with others. Our sanctuary is a wonderful venue for concerts, and this could be expanded beyond music to theater, education uses, social services, and even health care. Our gorgeous sanctuary furnishings, hardwood ceiling and floors, and stained glass windows, partnered with a new, efficient heating system, new insulation, wiring, and plumbing, air-conditioning, a better acoustic, and movable, flexible seating, **will create an unparalleled place for the community to gather in downtown Pittsfield.**

On September 14, 2014, the congregation of Zion Lutheran Church voted to endorse the master plan described in the following pages. This master plan removes the majority of the 1960's addition, retaining approximately 800 square feet for accessible bathrooms, new emergency exits, and a small meeting space. Above all the master plan retains the original 1892 sanctuary, restoring it and renewing it to maximize its potential.

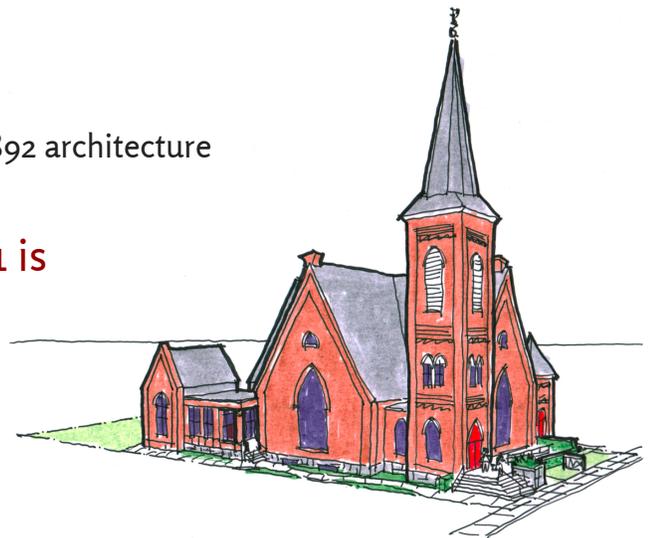
"We are a city church—a downtown church—that offers a gathering place for community groups and tries to be a force for good."



Phase 1 of the master plan for Zion Lutheran Church is pictured at the right. Here are a few key features:

- A new, fully accessible main entrance under the steeple, where all may enter
- A smaller sanctuary (occupancy 300), oriented to the south and facing the beautiful Jesus and the Children window, reflecting the original orientation
- New, comfortable wooden chairs instead of fixed pews, allowing the sanctuary to be a multipurpose common room available for a variety of uses
- A comfortable gathering space on the Pittsfield Common side of the sanctuary, outfitted with the current parlor furniture and lots of power outlets
- Two fully accessible restrooms are located right outside the sanctuary, with additional bathrooms available in the basement
- A small room (“green room”) for conversations with the pastor
- A back lawn, with access to the Pittsfield Common, for outdoor events
- Five parallel parking spaces and a safe drop-off spot
- Hard-wired smoke detectors and a fire suppression system
- All public spaces are on the first floor—no new stairs or elevators needed
- New heating and A/C system throughout (including the restrooms!)
- All the asbestos-containing materials in the building removed
- New plumbing and wiring throughout
- New, attractive exterior, congruent with the 1892 architecture

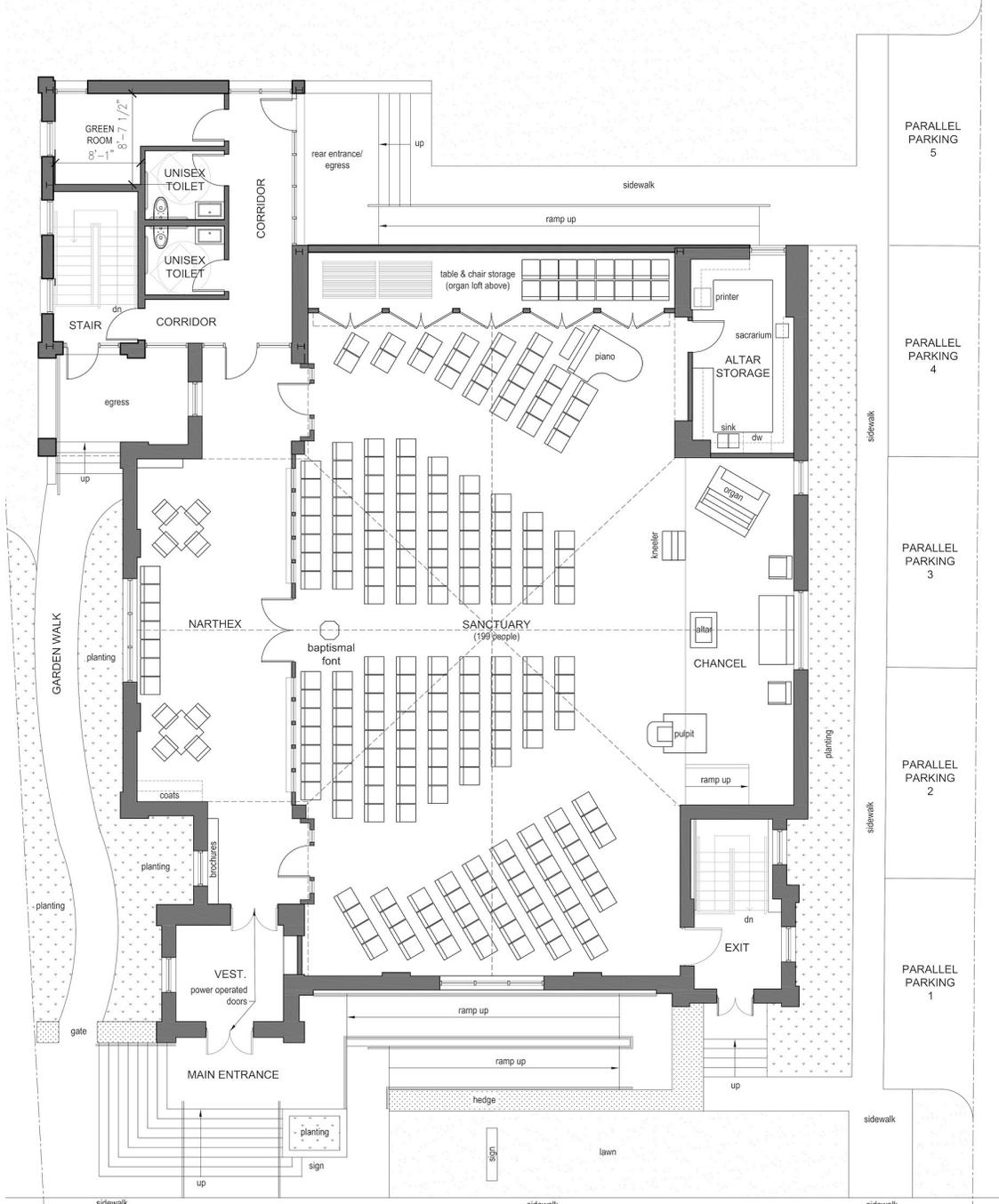
The total estimated cost for Phase 1 is \$1.68 million. Our goal is to raise \$600,000 through the Restoring & Renewing campaign.



Master Plan Phase 1

SHED

LAWN



What does this mean?

When Phase 1 of the master plan is complete, Zion's sanctuary will be welcoming to all and completely flexible for a variety of activities, from a large Easter Sunday worship service, to a smaller, more intimate Jazz Vespers service, to a gala dinner, to a major educational event, to a wedding, to a theater rehearsal, and more.

The gathering space outside the sanctuary will be a comfortable conversation space, food-serving space, and casual meeting space.

The support room off the sanctuary will feature a double sink, a refrigerator, a microwave, and even a dishwasher. In addition to serving as a sacristy, the room will meet the needs for preparing and cleaning up a potluck on Sunday mornings or on Thursday nights before Jazz Vespers.

The small meeting room near the fully accessible restrooms will act as a study space for the pastor, for both meetings and private conversations.

The back lawn will serve as worship space, an event space, and a food-serving space (think a grill, a tent, and a bouncy house for the kids!).

But what does this really mean?

This is a pivotal moment in the life of Zion, when we are given an opportunity to enliven and renew our ministries. In fulfilling this master plan, this congregation will have reconciled its storied relationship with its building and the limitations it carries, while offering the sanctuary to the community as a unique gathering space in Pittsfield.



"I see unity and excitement around the direction Zion Lutheran is moving, including forming partnerships with other congregations and community groups and a stronger focus on community outreach and service."

Imagine the possibilities!

We've made a lot of discoveries while forming our master plan. One additional discovery is that we've only begun to **imagine the possibilities** for how we could cultivate community in our fully accessible, safe, energy-efficient, flexible sanctuary. Here are some of our latest ideas:

- What if our space were available for theater groups, like Shakespeare in the Park, or dance or musical groups that need space for rehearsal and performance?
- What if we hosted an educational movie night with a local nonprofit?
- What if Zion Lutheran hosted a food and toiletry bank right in our sanctuary, where everyone from the community is welcome?
- What if we held low-key "get out of the house" music nights for parents, right in our sanctuary, filled with jazz, coffee, and community?
- What if we hosted more musical concerts in our space that featured movable choir risers, a spruced-up organ, a warmer acoustic, and even air-conditioning?



- What if we had a big German BBQ under a tent on our new back lawn?
- What if we were able to host a gala event for a fellow community organization?
- What if the sanctuary actually became a sanctuary—meaning a fully accessible place for refuge and safety as a community?

.....
What ideas do you have? Help us imagine the possibilities!

What if _____

_____?

(If you wish, please detach at the line above and include your ideas with your capital campaign pledge in the envelope provided)

Some frequently asked questions about the Restoring & Renewing campaign:

1. What is a capital campaign?

A capital campaign is a way for congregations to raise funds for accomplishing large projects that cost more money than a congregation could generate through increases in annual giving. During a capital campaign, members are asked to make an additional commitment, over and above their regular giving to the congregation, in order to fund the project. The giving period for a capital campaign is typically three years.

2. What are we hoping to accomplish through the capital campaign?

In 2014, EDM Architects completed a two-phase master plan for Zion Lutheran Church. We are conducting a capital campaign to raise a portion of the funds needed to complete the first phase. Phase I restores the historic 1892 sanctuary, adding necessary life-safety improvements such as a smoke detection and fire suppression system, and, most importantly, our building will be made fully accessible. Contributions to this capital campaign will help our congregation create a safe, secure, clean, welcoming building. The ways in which our renewed, flexible sanctuary can be used to strengthen our community are endless. Imagine the possibilities!

3. What is the plan for financing the project?

Our Restoring & Renewing Capital Campaign is scheduled for completion by the end of the year. We hope to raise \$600,000 over a three-year period and qualify for a mortgage of up to \$600,000 from either Thrivent Financial or the ELCA Mission Investment Fund. An additional \$250,000 on hand will give us the needed funds to complete Phase I of the master plan.

4. What is the timeline for accomplishing the project?

Following a successful capital campaign, the church will hold a congregational meeting in spring 2015 for the purpose of engaging architect Tim Eagles and his team to complete the design documents. When the design documents are completed, our building contractor and lender will be identified, and the church will hold a second congregational meeting for the purpose of approving the final design and financial plan. Following congregational approval, a construction loan will be processed by our lender. If our congregation is able to move steadily through this process, construction may begin as early as spring 2016. At this time, our architect estimates that the project will take 7–9 months to complete.

5. How does my response to the capital campaign affect my annual giving to the church?

Your giving to this campaign is a totally new commitment, and is over and above your annual giving to the church. All the money received through this three-year campaign will be directly applied to the building project. We trust that you will continue to support the current ministries and outreach of our congregation by undiminished, ongoing regular giving through your offerings.



6. When will I make my commitment?

Gatherings will be held in the homes of some of our members in early November for those who would like to consider returning their commitment form in the Advance Commitment Phase of this campaign in order to build enthusiasm and momentum. Everyone will have the opportunity to hand in their confidential commitment form (found inside this packet) during the worship service on Commitment Sunday, November 23. If you are not ready to make your response on November 23 or cannot attend worship that day, you can simply return your confidential commitment form to the church office in the envelope provided.

7. How much should I give?

This is a personal decision, but here are some guidelines for your consideration:

- Be informed by reading all the literature sent or delivered to you during this campaign.
- Study the Guide for Giving provided on your commitment form.
- Reflect on the blessings given to you by a generous God, and give out of joy and gratitude.
- Ask God for direction, pray and meditate, be open to the Spirit.

8. How long will my campaign commitment continue?

The commitment can be spread over three years and is over and above your regular giving to the congregation. Your commitment form gives you options on how to configure the timing of your gift, since not all people will want to give in the same way. Some will give one large, upfront gift, while others might give so much each week or month.

9. May I give stocks, real estate, insurance, IRA transfers, or other gifts in addition to cash gifting?

Absolutely! You are encouraged to think of assets in addition to cash. For many people this is the best (and smartest) way to give. Giving stocks, property, jewelry, cars, or other appreciated assets as a charitable donation is beneficial to both you and the church. If you think you would benefit from more information on this topic, call our capital campaign consultant, Pastor Renee LiaBraaten, at (207) 751-7371.

10. What if my financial situation changes before the end of the three-year giving period?

At any time during the giving phase, if your financial circumstances change, your commitment may be changed by notifying the financial secretary.



With God all things
are possible.

Matthew 19:26



Zion Lutheran Church of Pittsfield
Never perfect. Always beloved. Always being made new.

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