

# FAQs

## General

### **Is the renovation project an “all or nothing” proposal? (Is the scope of the current proposal set in stone?)**

No. The final scope of the project will be impacted by the amount of commitments received. Congregational feedback will also be incorporated into the final plan.

### **When will Mount Olive make the final decision on the renovation plan?**

The scope of the project will be discussed at the congregation’s voters’ meeting on **December 18th at 7:00 p.m.** If revisions to the plan are required, an additional voters’ meeting will be held.

### **When are the commitment forms for *God’s House, Our Home* due?**

Commitment forms are requested to be returned by December 7. However, any forms returned before December 18 will still be included in the total reported to the Voters. All pledges (and gifts) received after that date will be applied to whatever project the Voters approve.

### **Why would we consider reducing the number of seats if we are expecting growth?**

The proposed plan will increase the space between the pews by 4 inches and reduce the total seating capacity by 33 (From 445 to 412, not including overflow to the narthex). The average attendance for our most well-attended service is 227. This represents 55% of the proposed capacity. In 2025, we had only 3 services with an attendance of more than 400. Bottom line: The new layout will still leave room for more worshippers (sitting more comfortably).

### **Why are we only renovating the sanctuary? Didn’t the 2005 master plan call for an expansion of the sanctuary?**

Our current attendance levels do not require an expansion of our worship facility. This project upgrades our worship space to a level of the rest of the building. It puts us in a position to address whatever future space needs may arise (e.g. classrooms, fellowship, offices, worship, etc.)

### **What is the long-range plan for our school?**

After completing the preschool and gym additions, Mount Olive's school enrollment has increased to near capacity, about 330 students. This enrollment already requires a large amount of staffing. Increasing school enrollment would necessitate even more building projects. The current ministry plan is to focus on discipling our expanded student body and their families, thereby growing the spiritual health and engagement of our congregation and school.

## **Finances**

**Can/should we complete this project in phases, rather than borrow money to do it all at once?**

While there is always the added cost of interest on borrowed money, there are also added costs associated with segmenting or delaying a project (e.g., inflation creates higher costs in the future). In addition, it is far more cost effective to do some components together (e.g., when the pews are removed, we have easy access to the flooring, lighting; restricting access to the school must be coupled with providing access to bathrooms, etc.)

**Will we pay off our remaining Forward in Faith 2 debt (\$820,000) before starting this project?**

The proposed plan is to roll our existing debt into a new construction loan and then use dollars received for *God's House, Our Home* to pay down the debt as quickly as possible.

**Why not delay this project until the new pastors come on board?**

15 months of planning have already gone into this project. Current leadership is better positioned to carry out this plan rather than asking new pastor(s) to take it on. The goal is to give our new pastor(s) a refreshed worship space that is functional and inviting for ministry moving forward.

## **School Security**

**In the proposed plan, are all the doors between the church and school going to be secured?**

Yes. All doors (on all three levels, including the elevator) will be equipped with locks to restrict public access between the church and school during school hours.

**Will funeral lunches still be served in the commons? Won't this give visitors free access to the school?**

The proposed plan to improve school security is designed to prevent easy, direct, and unaccompanied access to our students (e.g., a stranger walking directly from the atrium into the school during a funeral visitation). In practice, after worshippers sit through a funeral service, they will be escorted directly to the commons by the pastor, ushers, and funeral directors. We may not be able to eliminate every risk, but we are taking steps to reduce them.

**Do we really need more bathrooms in the atrium?**

When we conduct worship services during school hours, the doors to the school will be locked, thus restricting access to the bathrooms typically used by worshippers. The proposed plan addresses this need by installing 2 bathrooms in the space where the library is. Other options may include constructing bathrooms elsewhere or directing worshippers to bathrooms in the basement.

## **Altar Area (Chancel)**

### **How will the proposed plan affect our procedure for communion distribution?**

The elements will be consecrated on the altar, which will be positioned closer to the pews. Rather than a double line of communicants receiving the sacrament on each side, there will be a single line on each side. All communicants will approach the front via the center aisle and return via the side aisle on each side. This simpler flow is made possible by the increased space between the pews (vs. the old spacing, which essentially forced communicants to “escape to the nearest end.” Newcomers found this procedure confusing.)

### **Will the John the Baptist statue be retained on the new baptismal font?**

The plan is to incorporate the statue into a newly designed baptismal font.

### **Are the proposed cut-outs for Joyful Noise and the baptismal font necessary?**

The committee is reviewing feedback from Joyful Noise and other members to determine the most effective use of the space near the chancel.

## **Worship Space (Nave)**

### **What kind of flooring will be installed in the aisles of the sanctuary?**

The proposed plan calls for the installation of luxury vinyl tile. However, the committee continues to review feedback from members and is exploring various options, including carpet.

### **Can we refurbish the current pews?**

While we could replace the cushions, our current pews are particle board with a veneer finish and can not be effectively refinished. Refurbishing also doesn't solve the issue of limited legroom and spacing.

### **If we install new pews, where will the hymnal racks be located in the pews?**

The design of the pews the committee is considering allows the hymnal racks to be on the back of the pews, without reducing the space between pews.

### **What will we do with the old pews, furnishings, etc.?**

We will attempt to find a new home for them (e.g. a mission congregation?)

### **Will the half wall between the narthex and nave be removed?**

In the proposed plan, all (except structural supporting pillars) of the half-wall would be removed. However, feedback received from the congregation will be taken into consideration in the final plan.

### **What changes will be made to the lighting?**

The proposed plan includes new hanging pendant lights, additional lights mounted on the beams to fill in dark areas, and redesigned chancel lighting.

## Quiet Room and Library

### **If bathrooms replace the library in the atrium, where will the library go?**

The proposed plan moves the bookshelves into the new “quiet room” to allow the former coat room to serve the dual purpose of a parenting room and library. Other options for the library are in/near the fireside room or elsewhere in the atrium.

### **We already have a mother’s room. Why are we adding a second one?**

The current mother’s room has space for a nursing mom or two. Parents have expressed a desire for additional space to “practice church” with their children, without disrupting the congregation. Congregational feedback will help us decide the final value of this space.

## Construction

### **A price tag of \$1.27 million seems awfully high. Can that total cost be reduced?**

The Building Renovation Committee is continuing to work with the architect, contractors, and others to eliminate unnecessary costs and create the most cost-effective plan possible. Changes already made, plus large contingencies expected to go unused, make us confident that the final cost will be less than originally estimated.

### **Will we solicit multiple bids on work to be done by subcontractors?**

Yes.

### **Will there be opportunities for volunteers to assist in the project?**

The Building Committee is coordinating opportunities to assist with demolition, painting, and remodeling work. These efforts will help reduce the cost of the renovation.

### **When will the construction take place, and where will we worship during that time?**

The proposed plan is for construction to occur from late April to late June. We will set up chairs in the gymnasium and worship in that space as necessary. This will not impact school activities like the spring musical.

### **How will we ensure the renovation doesn’t lose our church’s character?**

The design team is committed to honoring the church’s history by retaining the stained glass windows and segments of the wood panelling, while also creating a brighter, more functional space, with the cross prominently displayed.