

# Top Ten FAQ's about a capital appeal

(taken from Rob Bertram's presentation at the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 28, 2018)

## Question 1: Is it true that a plan is already locked in?

- ✓ **Answer:** No!
- ✓ **What's true is this:**
  - An actionable plan does not yet exist
  - A VISION exists
  - The vision is NOT set and is generally subject to change
  - The vision was created because we can't consider going anywhere without some sort of a roadmap
  - The vision/roadmap is consistent with our strategic plan
  - The vision has also been informed by member feedback through meetings, surveys, interviews, and discussions, whether guided by Kairos and Associates or by Council or Committees or other church leadership

## Question 2: Wouldn't we be wasting a million dollars to move staff offices?

- ✓ **Answer:** No!
- ✓ **What's true is this:**
  - It is not inexpensive to move the offices — not \$1 million, but it could be half that amount
  - Spending that money would NOT be a waste. Trinity should be more secure, and moving offices is part of that objective
  - The recommendation to move the offices was made not only by our consultants, but also by others with knowledge and experience in these matters, including law enforcement
  - Our offices now are far from weekday entry/exit points, and not visible to folks who enter. Overall, unlike almost any other organization, there is no physical presence of staff to monitor entries and exits. Even with cameras, having no physical presence or visible office is a security concern

## Questions 3 and 4: We are barely making budget, right? So, isn't it irresponsible to think about spending more?

- ✓ **Answer:** No and No!
- ✓ **What's true is this:**
  - Trinity is healthy. But, like any organization, it needs to balance receipts and expenses. The tension between those two will never end, and we must always manage responsibly within a budget.
  - So, yes, we DO need to manage expenses just as any enterprise must do — whether for-profit or not-for-profit
  - While stewardship messages can sometimes sound dire, we need to remember that **Trinity is entirely funded by your donations**. Accordingly, it is not irresponsible to make spending decisions to keep giving strong, to grow it, and to make the case why all members should direct charitable dollars to Trinity's mission.

### Question 5: Aren't all these potential improvements simply cosmetic?

- ✓ **Answer:** No!
- ✓ **What's true is this:**
  - Every potential project that has been discussed makes dramatic improvements in one or more of these categories: safety, security, functionality, usage, design, efficiency, effectiveness, flexibility, and versatility, to name a few.
  - At the same time, yes, there is indeed beauty in the renderings we've shown you. But just because something has beauty does not make it solely cosmetic. Stated another way, wouldn't we be foolish to seek critical improvements that are unattractive?

### Question 6: Isn't the "vision" that's been discussed all about WANTS rather than NEEDS?

- ✓ **Answer:** No, but some would say yes.
- ✓ **What's true is this:**
  - A case can be made that anything beyond the need of basic survival is a want, so it could be argued that even safety and security needs might be considered wants
  - Hard work has gotten us to be as successful as we are today, and we need to continue that hard work if we want to remain vital and relevant in today's world
  - The additional structural changes comprise repayment for approved and needed projects (steeple and parking lot), as well as improvements to the physical structure of the church that are needed to make it inviting to families in 2018 and beyond

### Question 7: Didn't we already raise money to build a whole new church, so why now?

- ✓ **Answer:** Yes, that was in the 1950s, and we should think about why it's good to reprise the foresight shown then!
- ✓ **What's true is this:**
  - In 1956, Trinity's congregation authorized borrowing for the construction of a new church. That was a long time ago--Elvis was on the Ed Sullivan Show, Rocky Marciano was the boxing champion, Heartbreak Hotel was released, and the Supreme Court declared Alabama bus segregation unconstitutional.
  - The money borrowed then is equivalent to about **\$2 million today**. And since that time we've made additional improvements and renovations, including the very space we are in today.
  - What this all means is that, over the years, Trinity's members have recognized the need to move forward, acted on it, and worked hard to meet it. And now we need to embrace the foresight, courage, and hard work that got us to the point where we are today.

### Question 8: Isn't this still all just change for the sake of change?

- ✓ **Answer:** No!
- ✓ **What's true is this:**
  - We all know that change can be hard, and unsettling
  - Change for change's sake is NOT what is being proposed
  - Instead, changes are proposed to enhance Trinity's ability to remain a leader in the Church and larger community, and to remain relevant now and in the future

### Question 9: Will we go into debt?

- ✓ **Answer:** Maybe? Could be short-term debt
- ✓ **What's true is this:**
  - Yes, there could be short-term debt associated with a capital appeal
  - We have already requested approval for a short-term financing vehicle that will allow us to make the necessary renovations to the steeple and the parking lot
  - Debt is not necessarily bad, but it must be managed and entered into with consideration
  - Any additional debt requests will have to come before the congregation for approval and can be approved with conditions and/or limitations

### Question 10: Isn't this all going to cost billions?

- ✓ **Answer:** No, not billions, but we can't know exactly as we sit here today!
- ✓ **What's true is this:**
  - The actual costs can be determined once plans have been finalized and design work is completed
  - We have worked to be conservative in our numbers, but here is what we can relate to you today—knowing that these numbers are **NOT final**
  - Phase 1 of the appeal is expected to cost between \$2.7 million and \$3 million
  - Phase 2 of the appeal could cost an additional \$2.8 million
  - If we do EVERYTHING shown on the boards that are on the wall of the Gathering Space, the cost could be \$5.8 million