

Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church

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Dear Friends,

During Lent we renew our new life in Christ. The Season of Lent is a sacred time to focus on the presence of Christ in our life, to engage in the disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. This season allows us to more intently listen to the Word of God, meditate on the Passion and Death of Jesus, and seek the Lord's guidance.

Also, in these first days of Lent I have set aside time for prayer and reflection on the results of our Parish Survey, the experience of our Town Halls, and the responses received throughout the Feasibility Study. Again, I want to offer my sincere gratitude for the ways that you have prayerfully participated in our recent Feasibility Study.

As we continue to engage this exciting time of envisioning the future of our Church building and Parish grounds, I am so very happy that we have had such a strong response to our Parishioner Survey.

Your responses are the driving force in this process! This is our Church, we are a Parish Family. Because of your participation in the process, we are making adjustments to our scope and priorities. We have narrowed the focus of our proposed vision, in response to your input. The Parishioner Surveys revealed that there is strong support for Phases I, II, & III: to address the Church Sanctuary, the Church Building Shared Spaces, and the Parking Lot. Your responses made it clear that these efforts are the top priorities and they need to be addressed before any other projects should be considered. Also, from your surveys, it is apparent that we are not ready to initiate Phases IV & V (proposed expansion to the Church building or any new building projects). This portion of the proposed vision will be tabled at this time, until after we address your top priorities. In the years ahead, we can re-evaluate these phases and re-open a discussion about these opportunities.

Further, because of your prayer and participation in the Feasibility Study process, you raised important questions where more information was needed. In response, the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Sheet was created to answer your questions, give more information about this process, and to address concerns that were raised during this part of the process.

It is my hope that this FAQ Sheet is both helpful and informative. As we continue to move forward with this proposed vision, I ask for your continued prayers: please pray that the Lord will continue to guide and bless every aspect of our Parish Life!

Saint John the Baptist, pray for us!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Fr. Mark T. Wilke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Mark T. Wilke, Pastor

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
Capital Campaign
Frequently Asked Questions

Campaign Cost, Timeline, and Process

What is the scope of the Vision?

Based on the Feasibility Study results, which included parishioner feedback through surveys and interviews, we have determined that the Capital Campaign scope would include portions of Phases I, II, and III. In response to the parishioner feedback, Phases IV and V will not be a part of this Capital Campaign goal and scope.

What is the timeline moving forward?

All campaigns must be approved by the Diocese of Harrisburg. The required documentation, including the Feasibility Study, was submitted to the Diocese on March 2, 2022.

Once approved, St. John's would begin the campaign planning phase immediately. It is our intent to continue the momentum from the Feasibility Study with the commitment phase beginning in late spring 2022 and finish the commitment phase in summer 2022. Based on Feasibility Study feedback and Kirby-Smith Associates recommendation, this campaign would occur over a three-year timeframe.

Is the timing for this Vision right given that we are dealing with Covid, supply chain issues, and inflation challenges?

We have partnered with Kirby-Smith Associates as a strategic partner. Kirby-Smith, our campaign consultants, are experienced working with and for churches for over 80 years. They have also worked extensively in our area and within our own Catholic diocese. While the Covid pandemic has made running campaigns unique, we believe that it is wise to continue to move forward. While we will continue to keep an eye on costs and adjust plans as needed, we believe this is the right time to begin investing in the discerned needs of St. John's as we look toward the future.

What is the cost of the Vision?

Following the recommendation of Kirby-Smith Associates the campaign goal is \$1,000,000, with a stretch goal of \$1,400,000. Given the volatile costs of materials it seems prudent to be prepared with a stretch goal.

Who will oversee the process if the priest(s) move on?

While priests are an essential part of the parish, and of the Capital Campaign, the campaign is composed of more than just one person. A pastor's main role through any campaign is to clarify and cast the vision which, if needed, others on the Campaign Committee can fulfill. It is important to remember that in our Catholic faith, we are the church and that our buildings and

grounds, investing in our facilities is a responsibility that we all share as we look toward the future of our Parish Family at St. John's.

What about our Church debt?

Currently, the church has no debt. At the recommendation of the Parish Finance Council all debts have been paid using funds received from both the first and second Paycheck Protection Program (PPP1 and PPP2), as well as a few very generous bequests that have been received during this fiscal year (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022). This decision was made after careful evaluation of the status of our Ordinary Income and anticipated expenses, for the benefit of all in the parish. The Monthly Debt collection continues to allow us to build up our savings accounts so that we can maintain a savings account to meet all anticipated expenses and on-going maintenance issues.

Will the cost associated with the vision impact the school?

Our Parish School is an important ministry of our Parish, providing a Catholic Education to many of our Families and a facility for Religious Education for the children of our Parish. The proposed campaign is focused on renovating our Church building and grounds, this should not impact the operations of our Parish School or the upkeep of our School Building.

Campaign Projects

Why do we need to implement these building projects through a Capital Campaign rather than maintain current facilities and upgrade?

While maintaining our facilities falls under the General Operations budget, this budget does not have the capacity to implement the types of upgrades that are required to fulfill the vision. A concentrated Capital Campaign effort is the most effective way of communicating and explaining the benefits of these projects, and collecting the pledges and funds to map out the pathway to address the projects in each phase. This effort will be over multiple years.

Following feedback received from the Feasibility Study, how are the projects mentioned in the various phases being prioritized?

After evaluating the parish needs, church leadership have determined several projects which would take priority. Priorities take into account the logistics of the overall scope of work, cost benefits, and impact on church life.

The proposed vision mentions ADA issues. Is this really needed?

St. John's desires to be a welcoming community including all regardless of ability and mobility issues. In order to create welcoming spaces to all, projects highlight accessibility and welcoming to our elderly, infirmed, and persons with disabilities throughout the church campus.

Capital Campaign & Fundraising

Will there be a committee formed to guide the process and can I be on it?

Yes, a Capital Campaign Committee will be formed. During the Feasibility Study, question #7 of the survey was “Would you be willing to serve on the Capital Campaign Team?” If you indicated your interest on your survey, and included your name, we will be in touch once formal approval is given. If you did not mark this, but are interested in serving on the Campaign Committee please reach out to Richie Musser at 484-364-0781.

Does the Diocese of Harrisburg bankruptcy issue affect this?

No. Any monies collected in a fundraising/capital campaign are **restricted** contributions and cannot be used to cover any other projects or costs, including bankruptcy costs.

Is this campaign feasible and will it be successful given that we struggle to meet our Diocesan Annual Campaign assessment (formerly Lenten Appeal)?

A Feasibility Study was completed so that we set our goal on a realistic expectation of funding. It is important to remember that this vision is a multi-year vision. Any funds that would be raised would be through a Capital Campaign effort. Any funds raised through this effort goes directly back into our own parish.

What is the three-year pledge and how is it implemented? Is it legally binding?

The pledge is not a promissory note. It is a declaration of intent, a commitment made in faith, a Faith Promise. It is understood that your gift may be revised should circumstances make it necessary.