

## CONNECTIONS

Dear BUMC Friends,

Our Stewardship team has been thinking outside the box. Rather than lament our debt, they asked the question “Could we pay off the \$300,000 loan and save the \$27,000 per year in payments. Could we devote those funds to ministry?” The team (Al Cada, Kathy Abernathy and Tammy Ashby) asked the rest of the congregation that question and the answer came back - YES!

During the survey many people offered to make a gift right then and there. We were greatly encouraged by the generosity expressed by our members. We feel like we are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, and it feels good.

In the next two months we will be launching our Mini-Campaign, to pay off the debt. We will have some volunteer activities, some behind the scenes tours of the sanctuary renovation, and everyone will be asked to make a donation towards debt reduction.

It is a great time to be a member of Batavia United Methodist Church!

Sincerely,  
Pastor Cynthia and Pastor Josh

### **Meet Church Development**

To give us the best chance for success in our mini-campaign, the Board of Trustees hired Church Development to assist us. We selected them three years ago to help us with our capital campaign for our new facility, which we put on hold for now. Denis Greene has met with our Stewardship team monthly for the past three years on a volunteer basis to assist with our year round stewardship activities. Please welcome Denis and his co workers to BUMC when you see their smiling faces.

## **The Case For A Mini-Campaign To Pay Off Our Debt**

We have big plans for our facility in the future, but we need to get our ship in order before we launch the new project. Proverbs 29:18 “Where there is no vision the people perish.” Is a good guide for planning our future. Our long term vision is to welcome new members, especially young families, as they seek a faith community, and then to serve them with relevant ministries as they grow in faith. To increase our investment in our ministries we need to pay off our debt.

- Our debt currently stands at \$300,000
- Our regular payments amount to \$27,000 per year
- Our children and youth ministries need additional resources, including some staffing help, in order to attract and meet the needs of today’s families.
- Our online ministries and social media present need additional staffing resources to help us continue reaching new people and connecting them to our church.
- If we pay off our debt now, that means over the next decade we would have \$270,000 to invest in our ministries.
- If we ask all members to prayerfully consider making a gift or pledge to pay off the debt, then some members may choose to make a gift of appreciated assets in a one time gift, others may choose to make a pledge that concludes by December 31, 2021. Each person will be asked to prayerfully discern their gift.

## **BUMC April 2021 Survey Results**

In April 2021 we surveyed our members to determine support for an effort to reduce our debt. We had over 50 survey participants over the course of 11 days. Here are the key findings:

- The things people are most looking forward to are: worship in person,

connecting with friends, service activities, and small group activities.

- Considering our transition to meeting in person again, here are some of the most common concerns: masks, vaccines, will distancing be required, and will we continue to adhere to safety protocols.
- Would you support a mini-campaign to pay off our debt in order to increase our investment in ministries? 74% said yes.
- Would you be willing to volunteer on the mini-campaign? 52%, or 26 people, said yes, they would volunteer.
- Would you be willing to make a special gift to the mini campaign? 49% were ready to make a special gift, with 12 people offering a total of \$56,000 at this moment.
- What days of the week and times of the day would you like a tour of the sanctuary renovations? Sunday evenings/mornings/afternoons, then Saturdays were the preferences.
- In summary, these statistics indicate a high level of support for our mini campaign.

### **Calendar of Activities**

Please join us as a volunteer for one of our brainstorming sessions. Your ideas will be put into action. You do not have to join a committee! (Praise the Lord!) You do not need to sign up, just click on the Zoom link.

**May 3** at 6:30p.m. - Event/tour brainstorming session, to plan how we can show our members a behind the scenes look at our renovation

**May 4** at 6:30p.m. - Brainstorm ideas for creating - brochure, video, social media, newsletter to publicize the campaign

**May 5** at 6:30p.m. - Prayer activities brainstorming session

**May 6** at 6:30p.m. - Thanks activities brainstorming session

**May 9** at 6:30p.m. - Youth activities brainstorming session

**May 13** at 6:30p.m. - Train tour guide volunteers

**May 23** Tours of the sanctuary renovations (times TBD)

**May 30** Commitment Sunday - All members make a gift/pledge towards paying off the debt.