

1) What do you believe is the focus of the Long Range Plan adopted by St. Paul's last July?

Pastor Wray introduced the main focus of the Long Range Plan in his comments at the Forum. Quoting from the Long Range Plan:

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we will strive to make disciples of all nations.

We respond to all people with the love and acceptance of Jesus, offering solid biblical truth, quality and relevant sermons, and a great learning process from cradle to eternity, which builds the home and strengthens families. We will lead people to a vibrant relationship with Christ and a strong fellowship with other believers, through responsible participation in this community of faith.

Our intent is to be recognized as a leading congregation in growing the family of faith, in spiritual maturity and in numbers.

The main responses were given by the table groups to this question:

Fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus to go and make disciples of all nations (outreach focus rather than inreach).

To grow the membership of St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

To have greater influence in the community.

Unity – being able to have this family of faith in one place (under one roof)

Leave a legacy/growth for future generations

Buy and build a big facility

Make seekers more comfortable

Have a place that can accommodate growth

GO!

Attain Long Range Plan

*Among the blessings identified by people at the forum are these: The fellowship shared, the LSA, the Christian support received, seeing people brought to Christ through our ministries. These blessings illustrate responding to people with the love and acceptance of Jesus and making disciples of all nations.*

2) In what ways do you think a building is related to fulfilling the mission God has given us?

Responses to this question from the tables were:

Nothing, the church is people, not a building, and the people need to be caring/accepting

A building is a tool, not the focus (it is a place that keeps us warm and dry).

Building is something that adapts to the times.

It is a place for people to gather to worship.

A building can be welcoming/visitor friendly. The correlation to this is also true, a building can be difficult to navigate and not welcoming or friendly to visitors.

A comment was made that we need to grow where planted. The purpose of this comment was to say that we need to do a better job reaching the community within which we are currently located.

Room for God's family/accommodate growth

Sound foundation to support the people who come

It should not look like a tavern  
Extra events/exciting features attract – but not necessarily grow as we intend  
Meeting future needs of community  
Cohesiveness  
Serving needs from cradle to grave  
Safety/feeling secure

*A building can be a tool God uses, but the church is people. Blessings that emphasize this truth are: Church friends; the kids at St. Paul's Daycare; it is not the building; the pastors and staff.*

3) What are the most significant questions you have about the Bachrach building?

**Are there any other buyers for the Bachrach building?** The property was listed through a commercial realtor for 30 days, but the Bachrach family asked to enter into exclusive negotiations with our congregation and that a decision be made by the end of July.

**Will people support both the LSA and this initiative?** We do not know what individual people will do, but as a congregation we will continue to support the LSA fully even as we do now. The LSA is one of the most significant aspects of our ministry. The Long Range Plan acknowledges this and encourages steps that keep the connection and support strong.

**Why has a deadline been put on this decision?** At the May voters meeting we presented the top five sites to the congregation from the Site Committee and Elders. At that time we told the congregation we would like to come back with a recommendation for a decision in July. The reason for this specific deadline is the request of the Bachrach family. When they approached us in May about having more serious discussions they asked if we could work on a contract to be completed by the end of June with a congregational decision by mid-July. Since they are in exclusive negotiations with us they would like to resolve this quickly. We asked for more time to be able to communicate to the congregation and agreed to call the congregation together for a vote by the end of July.

**Is God really leading us there? (Is this a door really opening from God or are we forcing something?)** In the end, that is for the people of God at St. Paul's to decide. We believe that God speaks clearly through His Word, and His Word clearly calls us to bold discipleship, reaching out to all people with His love, but God has not specifically told us to purchase the Bachrach property. However, as Pastor Wray stated, the pastors, staff, and elders of this congregation believes this opportunity is from God. Many things have happened to open this door that cannot be explained except to say that God has been at work in it.

**How many square feet would we renovate and what is the cost?** Initial plans from the architects call for using all of the front finished area (28,000 square feet) and approximately 60-70,000 square feet in the warehouse. The estimated cost to renovate these areas is between 3-4 million dollars. That would include a sanctuary capable of

seating up to 1100 people, children's ministry area, early learning center, adult education, fellowship areas, and administration. That is a general estimate; the specifics of what would go in each area have not been determined. This leaves us approximately 40,000 square feet of unfinished space in the warehouse area. These rooms would all be on one level with more rooms built on a second level.

**What would it take and can we get the county and city to remove this from the tax roster?** Pastor Rob has talked with a member of the congregation who serves on the county assessor's board. We would need to file a request and the board would need to approve that request. While the board has the freedom to deny that request, we believe it is possible they would agree to remove it from the tax roll.

**What would utilities, insurance, and maintenance cost?** We do not have specific numbers. Utilities (gas and electric) last year were a little over \$62,000. Insurance currently costs us approximately \$31,000. That would increase because of the size and value of the building. Much of the initial maintenance would be included in renovation costs. Grounds keeping would be an additional cost that we do not currently have.

**Considering the age of the building, starting with a warehouse, etc., will we be satisfied with the building when it is done?** Even new construction could leave a person dissatisfied. The building is 19 years old, is very structurally sound, and has been well maintained. We believe the size and layout of the building allows the flexibility to do what we would want in order to develop a facility that honors God, is useful for our ministry for many years to come, honors our heritage, is appealing and accommodating to all people, especially visitors.

**Will there be a feeling of "sacred space" for worship? (Also related is "Do we want an auditorium feel or a traditional, gothic layout?" And, "Will it feel warm/welcome or like we are worshipping in a metal building?")** One of the appealing factors about this particular facility is that it is well designed, well built, and conveys an image of excellence. This is consistent with our goals for a space for worship and ministry. We are committed to a sanctuary that will reflect the best of our worship, from the traditions of our congregation and Lutheran heritage to the best in contemporary worship. Because of the size of the sanctuary, the fan-shaped design is most conducive to visibility and sound, but with plenty of features that make it much more than an auditorium.

**Have we found out about financing?** Both Church Extension Fund (CEF) at the District level and Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) at the synodical level will lend us the money. The current fixed rate for a 25 year loan from CEF is 5.875%.

**What does CEF require for the loan?**

**How soon would we begin using the building?** Depending on the decision of the congregation, we would close on the contract in October and begin using it as soon as possible for some aspects of our ministry. We believe it is possible for those who

worship at Shilling to lead the way with worship services in one of the larger areas on the first or second floor.

What all is included in the cost estimates? Are the other concepts in the sketches included?

How does a capital campaign work?

Are the estimates accurate?

Can we make it look like a church?

How does the location impact our ministries (daycare)?

Is the size/scope too much?

What would the costs be to change heat/AC for our purposes?

Will the vote to purchase give authorization to borrow the money or will it be a separate vote?

4) What are the greatest concerns you have about leaving this site?

**We would be leaving a central location.** Wood and Edward is somewhat central for the city of Decatur, and was certainly at the center of business and housing in the past. Site committee and Long Range Plan studies have determined that a northern location is more central for our church demographics and for more effective outreach.

**Would the congregation split if another Lutheran Church purchased our existing property? How many would leave SPL?** Our goal and hope is to lose no one. We do believe that the move to a different facility will allow us to reach even more people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and draw many more into the kingdom of God who are not currently in a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

**A different facility could change our identity.** Our identity is defined by God. We are a chosen people, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a people belonging to God. We have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father who is over all and in all and through all.

**Will it feel like home?** That depends. We hope to carry over a number of elements from the current building that will make it feel very familiar. And the same people will be there. It may, in fact, feel more like home since we will be able to see more people we know in one place and at one time. But it will be different.

**How long will it take to pay off the debt we will incur?** This will depend entirely on the faithfulness of God's people. If this is indeed God's will for us, then He will provide

all we need to accomplish this. In the past the people of St. Paul's have paid off debts for major building projects (1949, 1989, 2001, 2004) in less than 10 years.

**Will our current property sell?** We have not pursued the sale of our current building, but we do know that other congregations who have moved their ministries in recent years were able to sell their buildings within one year of moving.

**What growth could we expect?** There are 40-50,000 unchurched people in Macon County. How many would you like to invite?

*Some things will not change, and these blessings will remain: This is a spiritual family – and lots of spiritual support is given from the people; the Men's ministry; MOMMYs ministry.*

5) What are the greatest concerns you have about moving to a new site?

**How can we afford both?** We have run an initial cost analysis based on very good information from Aspen Group, the Bachrach family, and our own members. We believe the impact on our ministry in the first year would be an increase of \$354,000 to our budget for loans, maintenance, and other operational expenses. We estimate this would be covered entirely by money received from the capital campaign. Other money received from the capital campaign would go toward the initial loan and long term debt, reducing expenses in the following years. Yes, we believe we can responsibly afford both.

**Do people at Shilling want to move anywhere?** The people who have chosen to worship at Shilling have demonstrated a willingness to accept change and lead the congregation forward. Most of the people at Shilling who have commented on this are very positive.

**This action seems too fast.** We have been discussing this for at least ten years, ever since the first Long Range Planning committee was assembled in 1999. The current Long Range Plan calls for much of this to be done within the time frame we are now in.

**Will programs be ready to move into a different space and to do these well?** That question is addressed by the Long Range Plan, which the elders, staff and congregation have been working to implement. The specific steps to be ready to implement various ministries are being developed constantly.

Leaving the needs of those in the downtown area, not fulfilling God's purpose for us here.

What will we be taking from this facility? Will this add to the costs?

Emotional attachments (I'll miss home!)

The history connected to St. Paul's – the feeling of what a Lutheran church "should be."

Having a careful, smooth transition

What timeframe are we working with (from start to finish)?

If we stay at our current site, can we grow? (worship, daycare, youth, seniors, elderly, various ministries)

*The ministry to children was identified as a blessing, particularly the LSA and Sunday School. This allows families in our ministry to have their children begin their walk of faith early so that it continues to carry them throughout their lives.*

6) What information do you need in order to make an informed, god-led decision?

**What percentage of vote is needed to go forward?** A 50% plus vote is necessary for the congregation to go forward. The board of elders will use great discretion in gauging the desire of the congregation to move forward. The elders are keenly aware of the needs of our congregation and its desire to continue to serve God's purpose.

**Have other churches who have moved to new sites grown?** Of the churches we have talked to they have all expressed that they have added new members since their moves.

**When does capital campaign money come in?** We would begin a capital campaign this fall which should be completed in 3 years.

**What will happen if the congregation votes "no"?** St. Paul's will move forward with our Long Range Plan and continue to search for the right location from which to grow our ministry.

**What happens to the Bachrach building if the congregation does not approve the vote?** Bachrach's will market the building to others at their discretion.

**How do we set the price for the Bachrach property?** Through careful negotiations we have researched a fair price of the building and property. We believe \$4 to \$5 million is what Bachrach's will accept for the 47 acres and 130,000+ square feet building.

**What is the financial cost per member of our projected capital campaign?** We will need to raise approximately \$4.5 to \$5.0 million in our capital campaign. In general terms we have a current membership of over 2,000 and are worshiping approximately 900 per weekend.

**Have we exhausted the potential of the current building?** This was thoroughly examined by the Long Range Planning Committee and the Site Committee. Both groups agree we have maximized this building and that in fact the current location is a detriment to growth.

**Who is involved in the negotiations of purchase details (i.e. price, etc.)?** At the request of Mr. Bachrach, a small group has been involved up to this point including Pastor Wray,

Pastor Rob, Malcolm Head, Kevin Highley, and Jim Czuprynski. The Board of Elders has been informed of the progress.

**What are the expenses if we stay in our current facility?**

What advantages are there in moving to Bachrach?

How does this site address the needs of the Long Range Plan?

None

What will be the process for the vote?

What is the trend in our attendance now?

- 7) What are some of the greatest blessings you have experienced at St. Paul's? Have these come because of the place, the people, or something else?

These blessings are listed at the bottom of each section. Please see the italicized remarks.