



## **Questions and Answers**

Valdosta First United Methodist Church  
**Under This Roof** Capital Campaign

### **What is the significance of “Under This Roof”?**

The cost of our historical roof replacement is by far the majority of the money we need to raise at this time. But also the roof is a symbol of the covering for all the wonderful ministries and missions that go on within and emanate out from our building.

### **Why a capital campaign now?**

The deferred maintenance, repairs and roof replacement have caught up with us and can no longer be postponed. The resulting internal damage will continue until the repairs are made.

### **How did we arrive at the monetary goal?**

Estimates have been gathered for the repairs and the roof. Needs and requirements have been gathered from all ministries.

### **What exactly is the state of the roof? Why does it have to be a complete replacement, and not repair?**

Our roof is approximately 100 years old and there are leaks in multiple areas. Due to its age, the entire membrane under the current roof shingles will continue to develop leaks in the future. Our Roof Committee has recommended replacing the entire roof which will include an entirely new membrane underneath all the shingles. (Our Roof Committee consists of an architect and other building professionals who are also church members).

### **Please give me some more details on the whole roof replacement project.**

The roof replacement project will include replacing the membrane and shingles on the sanctuary building, including the steeple, the Strickland building and the fellowship hall. Rotten wood decking and framing will be replaced. There will be a new parapet wall, new metal cornices, and new gutters and downspouts installed. The outside walls of the sanctuary will require a new exterior cementitious layer and paint. New windows and trim will be added to the steeple. An exterior scaffolding system will be required for all the above. In the interior, we must repair/replace plaster and ceiling boards and then paint to repair water damage.

### **Which windows need repair?**

There are approximately 50 windows in the Strickland building facing Valley Street. Some, but not all, are rotting and need to be replaced. We are looking at options for repairing or replacing the windows that require it, including the type of material that we would be allowed to use.

### **What about the stained glass windows?**

We recently learned from a building inspector that the large stained glass window on Valley Street does not need to be re-enforced, which had been a previous concern. We believe all the stained glass windows are OK for now.

### **What's included in the "other general maintenance and repairs"?**

The major items are our nursery and preschool classrooms. They are dated and must be upgraded to be more appealing to new parents and more suitable to the needs of our children. There are other minor repairs needed throughout the buildings. Slade McCranie and his committee are compiling a full list of all needed repairs.

### **How did we arrive at all of these estimates?**

King Smith, a professional architect and a member of our church, worked with several other building professionals who are also church members to secure estimates for addressing our roof. This is very specialized work and there are a limited number of roofers in the area who are capable and willing to handle a job of this magnitude.

Other estimates such as window repairs were obtained from building professionals on our roof committee.

### **Once we have pledges to cover all the costs, when will the various projects start and end?**

We will most likely begin some of the projects in 2020. Regarding the roof aspect of the project, we will try to ensure that we begin during favorable construction market conditions to secure the best pricing possible.

### **Please explain the line item about "seed money" for new ministries.**

Our church ministries have submitted requirements lists for new and expanded activities not currently covered in the operating budget. If the Council on Ministries approves these new activities, there needs to be a source of funding to underwrite them. These are exciting times and there are numerous new ideas for service to our church family and our community!

### **This is the first I've heard about an endowment fund. Do we have one now? Is this the best time to start one?**

Our Church does not currently have an endowment fund. This is an important strategic step that we should take as soon as possible. It is our hope that we will exceed our campaign goal. Any excess funding would be utilized to begin building for our future financial security.

### **My pledge commitment is for three years? When can I start giving to the campaign?**

Because we are asking our members to prayerfully consider "digging deep", to give considerably more in addition to their usual annual giving, that we are spreading the pledge period over three years. You are welcome to start giving to the campaign at any time. Because of the new higher standard deduction in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, some may find it advantageous to pay their entire pledge commitment in a single year rather than spreading it out over multiple years.

**Would a gift to the capital campaign be in addition to what we're already giving to the annual operating budget?**

Yes. Our annual operating expenses remain unchanged.

**Can gifts be made from investment accounts, in stock, and in ways other than cash?**

Yes. For example, if you are over 70.5 years of age, up to \$100,000 per year may be donated directly from an IRA to a qualified charity such as First United Methodist Church of Valdosta. This amount is not included in taxable income when written directly from your IRA to the church and will count toward your annual required minimum distribution (RMD).

You may also choose to donate appreciated investments. With the stock market at historically high levels, you can donate appreciated stock to the church, deduct the entire market value of the stock and completely avoid capital gains taxes.

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There are also other tax-advantaged strategies regarding property, life insurance, etc., that you may want to explore in consultation with your tax professional. Please remember to always consult with your tax professional when planning your donation.

John Lastinger and John Williams, both members of our Capital Campaign committee, have both offered to be available to answer questions for you along these lines.

**How might the General Conference vote in May affect VFUMC's ownership/occupation of our church buildings?**

The Book of Discipline was amended, effective the close of 2019 General Conference, to allow for local churches to disaffiliate over issues related to human sexuality and in such cases retain their property. While the Book of Discipline is always subject to amendment and while it is likely that at some point in the future (this year or in future years) the UMC will split into two separate Methodist churches over the issue of human sexuality, the widespread belief among UMC leadership is that churches which exit the UMC will be allowed to keep their property as part of the exit plan. Indeed, the primary proposed plans to date address this issue. So, whether VFUMC remains a part of the UMC and a more "progressive" Methodist branch splits off from the UMC, or whether the UMC becomes "progressive" and VFUMC is part of the "traditionalist" Methodist branch that splits off, we should not be concerned with maintaining the use and occupation of our church.

**So what's the current schedule for the campaign itself?**

Around February 1, members of the campaign committee will begin visiting church members in their home or by phone. If you would like a personal campaign visit in your home or a phone call, please call the church office or Hansell Watt, our committee chairman, at 229-563-5215.

The campaign will become much more visible during church services in March and April when everyone will be asked to participate by making their pledge. Regular communications and updates will keep the congregation informed of our progress.

**And we plan to celebrate our success shortly after Easter!**

