

Renovation Feasibility Report Executive Summary

December 2009

Background

In early 2009, St. Christopher's hired Mr. Kevin Shaw, Director of Development for the Diocese, to conduct a feasibility study to determine whether attitudinal and/or financial support exists for a proposed \$430,000 renovation project as developed by the parish's Renovation Team. Study respondents included two segments of St. Christopher's membership in a ratio of 1:3:

- Individuals specifically selected because they held strong views about the proposal (either favorable or opposing), or have an ability to contribute resources (financial or skills) to a renovation project.
- Individuals selected at random from the parish membership by Mr. Shaw. Special efforts were made to ensure a demographic mix (race, gender, age) that reflects St. Christopher's membership.

Forty-seven individuals were invited to participate in the study. Of those, 40 accepted and 7 refused. All respondents were given the same opportunity to review the proposal and discuss it with Mr. Shaw in a similar, structured manner. Mr. Shaw met or spoke privately with all respondents and used the same survey questions, in the same format, with all respondents. The 40-person study pool represents approximately 8.5% of adult parishioners at St. Christopher's. This percentage comfortably exceeds 7%, which is considered "statistically significant" by research industry standards.

A complete demographic analysis of respondents, along with correlations between responses and demographic trends, can be found in the full report at www.stchristophers-mn.org.

Study Summary

- St. Christopher's members overwhelmingly endorsed the needs outlined in the Renovation Proposal. Further, there was no significant differentiation of attitude or support indicated across the spectrum of tenure, age or gender.
- St. Christopher's members are generally accepting of the changes the proposal would bring, with some pointed reservations.
- St. Christopher's members are divided on whether the renovation would lead to growth in the congregation.
- St. Christopher's members do not indicate personal financial and/or material capacity to support the renovation in its current scope. There is support for the concept of debt financing (i.e., a loan) if it is done responsibly.

Study Details

1. St. Christopher's members strongly agree with the reasoning behind the proposed renovation.
 - Approximately four out of five respondents "strongly agree/support" the following justifications for sanctuary renovation: improving accessibility; enhancing worship access/inclusion.

- Approximately three out of five respondents "strongly agree/support" the following justifications for sanctuary renovation: improving aesthetics/ambiance; improving/augmenting lighting; easing maintenance & mitigating hazards; enhancing liturgical and "people" flow; expanded flexibility of use.
2. St. Christopher's members like the majority of changes in the proposed renovation.
 - Approximately three out of four respondents "like/strongly like" the following proposed changes: new gable/window in North and South walls; relocation and inclusion of choir on main floor; relocation of altar; reduced sight/sound distances to altar/pulpit; updated lighting, paint, decor; and new, safer floor finish.
 - "Moving the choir to the main floor" was by far the most polarizing aspect. While 72% of respondents "liked" the concept of moving the choir (and more than 56% strongly liked it), roughly 24% of members disliked the concept. Also, respondents indicated the least amount of ambivalence on this topic, as compared to all others (nearly 95% of respondents had an opinion about this aspect).
 - While 75% of respondents like the proposal to "relocate the altar," there is a shared concern over the Rector's ability to maintain focus on a congregation that surrounds him/her nearly 180 degrees.
 - Although a majority of respondents (60%+) like the idea of replacing current pews with pew-chairs, those who are opposed to this aspect are very opposed (nearly 20% indicating strong dislike).
 3. A majority of St. Christopher's members (70%) said they personally support the concept of renovation.
 - Respondents support or strongly support the proposal in nearly equal numbers for the following reasons: they agree with the stated priorities; the as-defined scope is appropriate; it meets our current needs.
 - Support among respondents decreased to 60% on the basis of aligning with and enabling growth for the congregation.
 4. St. Christopher's members are not willing to actively/personally participate in the renovation.
 - Half of the respondents indicated they were not willing to work on any aspect of the project team.
 - Less than 20% of respondents said they would be willing to work on fundraising for the renovation, and an even smaller number would be willing to take a leadership role.
 - Approximately 25% of respondents would be willing to work on construction for the renovation, while approximately 30% of respondents would be willing to work on communications support.
 5. Financial contributions by St. Christopher's members will not support the renovation in its current scope.
 - Nearly 60% of respondents reported a general likelihood of making a gift.
 - Less than half of the respondents indicated they would "absolutely" make a financial gift to the project.
 - No respondents indicated an ability or willingness to give at a "leadership level" (\$50,000-\$65,000).
 - Roughly 75% of respondents indicated a willingness to rely on debt-financing (i.e., a loan) for a portion of the project *if* 65% of the proposed cost could be raised through private fundraising.

For more information on the Feasibility Study Results, go to www.stchristphers-mn.org.