

Vision Cast—Feedback Summary

The congregation's **excitement**

1. **Restoration and Preservation** – Many members expressed enthusiasm about addressing the long-overdue repairs, preserving the church's historic structure, and restoring it as a beacon in the community.
2. **Community Impact and Growth** – There is excitement about how this project will revitalize not just the church but also the surrounding community, enhancing its visibility and contributing to a positive downtown transformation.
3. **Spiritual and Symbolic Importance** – The steeple and church serve as a symbol of faith, history, and unity. Members appreciate the opportunity to restore “God’s beauty” and take pride in the church’s upkeep.
4. **Future Generations and Sustainability** – Many are excited about ensuring the church remains strong and beautiful for future generations, creating a lasting legacy.
5. **Momentum and Progress** – The fact that the project is moving forward, with steps in place and grant opportunities being pursued, generates a sense of motivation and shared purpose.
6. **Congregational Engagement** – The project is seen as a way to bring people together, foster involvement, and strengthen the church community through shared effort and events, such as church suppers.

Overall, the feedback reflects a deep appreciation for both the practical and symbolic significance of the project, with excitement about the church’s renewal and its role in the community’s future.

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The congregation's **concerns**

1. **Financial Burden and Fundraising Challenges** – Many are worried about the overall cost of the project, the unknown expenses, and whether the congregation has the financial capacity to raise enough funds in time. Concerns also include how much individuals can contribute, the potential for donor fatigue, and how to involve the broader community in fundraising.
2. **Timeframe and Project Longevity** – The length of time required to raise funds and complete the restoration is a major concern. Members worry about maintaining motivation and energy over an extended period, as well as the risk of costs increasing the longer the project takes.
3. **Urgency and Structural Risks** – There is anxiety about what could happen if the steeple deteriorates further before repairs can begin, potentially leading to catastrophic damage and even higher costs.
4. **Congregational Engagement and Sustainability** – Members fear burnout and stress among those leading and supporting the campaign. They also recognize the need to engage all members, including those with limited financial resources, and ensure no single group bears too much responsibility.
5. **Community and Public Perception** – Concerns exist about how the project will be received by the broader public, including how to engage local businesses and the community in supporting the church. Some worry about negative perceptions of churches and political/cultural barriers that might make it harder to secure external support.
6. **City and Organizational Involvement** – Questions were raised about the role of the city and church conference in the project, including historical preservation requirements and grant opportunities. Some are concerned about balancing city involvement with church independence.

7. **Messaging and Fundraising Approach** – Members emphasized the need to avoid an overwhelming or aggressive “hard sell” approach, fearing that constant discussions about money could discourage both current members and visitors.

Overall, the concerns reflect a mix of practical, financial, and emotional challenges, highlighting the need for clear communication, strong community engagement, and a sustainable long-term plan to keep the project moving forward.

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The common **questions** from the congregation.

Timeline and Process – Many questions focus on how long the project will take, from fundraising to construction, and what the first steps are to get started.

1. **Fundraising and Financial Strategy** – There is a strong interest in understanding how to raise \$1.5 million, how to market the project, and whether there are grant opportunities, sponsorships, or city contributions available. Members also ask how to explain giving beyond regular donations.
2. **City and Conference Involvement** – Members want clarity on the city's commitment to the project, potential funding, and whether the Conference will participate. Questions also address how city ownership of the clock might impact grant opportunities.
3. **Community Engagement** – There is curiosity about how to involve and gain support from the broader community, including non-believers, local businesses, and those with negative attitudes toward the project.
4. **Structural and Safety Concerns** – Some questions focus on whether the steeple is currently safe for repair and what protections or restrictions exist due to the church's historic status.
5. **Project Commitment and Buy-in** – Members are wondering how to generate excitement, get full church buy-in, and maintain momentum throughout the long process.
6. **Contingency Planning and Alternatives** – Concerns exist about unknown costs and construction issues, as well as whether the steeple could be removed if the project is not financially feasible.