

## Sacred Heart Catholic Church – Elk Rapids

### Campaign to Build a New Church

#### Frequently Asked Questions

***Are there less expensive alternatives than building a new church? Can the existing building be remodeled?***

For more than five years, the Worship Space Committee, established by Fr. Bob to investigate ways to address church facility concerns, negotiated with contractors and realtors, worked with an architect, and met with the diocese to develop the best solutions. The committee comprises parishioners who bring much expertise, including civil engineering, construction management, building codes, real estate, and major construction project management. The committee developed a plan and budget, incorporating feedback collected through town hall, parish family, and diocesan leadership meetings.

Together as a parish community, we reflected, deliberated, and prayed.

Through these efforts, the project's goal emerged to build a sanctified faith home that glorifies God and inspires all who come to worship. To accomplish that, the space needs to address the current needs and anticipates future growth.

Rather than construct a new building, we could replace the roof and add a couple of bathrooms. We could repair and strengthen the foundation. We could also knock a hole in the north wall to add a few more folding chairs for summer visitors. Pursuing these options would leave us with an inefficient building that is still disconnected from the center of the parish's social life – and not viable in the long run. We have concluded that remodeling may be somewhat less expensive but will *still not achieve our vision of a larger, more accommodating sacred space connected to our social hall.*

***What will happen if the project's cost exceeds the planned amount of money?***

Construction experts developed the project budget in February 2022, considering the current inflationary circumstances. The worship space committee will keep apprised of the current situation and update parishioners accordingly. If the costs outpace fundraising efforts, parish leaders will modify the project to fit our budget while preserving the overall vision.

***Will the new church honor the history of our parish?***

Yes, absolutely. The building plans to honor our parish's history while making much-needed upgrades to our space. We hope to relocate the Sacred Heart window into the new facility.

***Will the cost of the new space be worth it long-term?***

Our sincerest hope is that building a bigger, more inclusive space to worship will accommodate our entire parish family for celebrations and funerals, invite new parishioners to worship with us, and welcome back those who have fallen away from the church. We envision a church that brings people of all ages together to honor the glory of God, and we look forward to the hope of growing our parish



# Faith in Action

Honoring our legacy.  
Building our future.

family. The newly designed proposed church addresses all the current needs and anticipates future growth.

We imagine those who originally envisioned Sacred Heart in Elk Rapids more than 140 years ago may have wondered if their efforts and sacrifice were worth it. We can all agree that we are truly thankful for their work, and we believe future generations will also be grateful for our efforts.

***Why not use the social hall for Mass regularly?***

The social hall was never intended to be regularly used as a worship space. It was not designed as a worship space for sound, environment, visibility, kneelers, reverence, etc.

We need the hall for the many activities that take place there regularly, especially now that the pandemic has seemed to wane. It would be counterproductive to convert our social hall into a worship space and then build another hall when we already have one that is the envy of many other parishes in the diocese.

***What happens if we lose Fr. Bob?***

When Father Bob is reassigned or retires, another priest will be assigned to replace him, at least for masses, if a residential priest is not available. There will likely be fewer weekend masses, which is all the more reason to have a larger worship space to accommodate more parishioners. The future of Sacred Heart Parish, or any parish for that matter, is not dependent on the priest who happens to be there at present.

***What role does the diocese plan in building the church?***

The diocese is involved in every project stage as there are many renovations and new church construction guidelines. They made changes to the original plan developed a few years ago. We modified our plans accordingly. The bishop and his advisors will make all final decisions on constructing a new worship space in consultation with parish leadership.

***What will be the additional costs to maintain the new building?***

Because of the inefficiencies in the current church, utility and maintenance costs have been exceedingly high. It is expected that maintenance costs will remain the same or even go down when advances in modern construction are considered.

***Can we make gifts by stock, mutual funds, or IRA distribution? What about giving through my Donor Advised Fund?***

There may be tax advantages to making your pledge payments through appreciated securities, retirement funds, or other means. Please contact Des Worthington (231) 313-0574, who will provide any information you or your financial advisor may need to facilitate your gift.