



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WINTER PARK

“a traditional and nurturing church celebrating God’s grace through reason, education, diversity, inclusion, and social justice”

THE CASE FOR THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Our history is rich ... Our present is exciting ... Our future beckons ...

First Congregational Church of Winter Park (FCCWP) members are proud of their inspiring 123-year **history** in downtown Winter Park, Florida. Church founders, blessed with a pioneer spirit, built a community of faith in 1884 in the great tradition of the Congregationalists. These courageous and generous people had a **vision** of what might be and that vision became the heart of this great family of faith. Within a year of establishing the church, that **vision** expanded to include the founding of the first private college in the state of Florida – Rollins College. The Rev. Dr. Edward P. Hooker and those early settlers of the new village of Winter Park saw a **future** far beyond what any of them would live to see.

We stand at a similar moment together today! A ***Tradition of Response*** is our legacy:

- **During the Civil Rights movement, a seminary sprang forth within the church walls.** African-American clergy, excluded by segregation from higher theological education, received instruction from local and visiting scholars from around the country.
- **Seniors needed affordable housing and we built it for them.** The Plymouth Retirement Center of Winter Park was founded and guided for over 30 years by this community of faith.
- **Talents and resources coalesced around the dream of a new senior housing community.** The Mayflower was born through the generous resources of this congregation, its ministers, and excellent leadership.*
- **FCCWP ministries reach out to hundreds of young people and families.** In 2000, through efforts to reach out in “hands-on” ways to our neighbors on the West Side of Winter Park and provide greater ministries of education and spiritual growth for the church’s own community of faith, The Gurtler Center for Families, Children and Youth was founded.
- **The Community School of Music** was founded at Rollins College in 1993 by Dr. John Sinclair. In need of space, it relocated to the church campus in 2005. Today it serves nearly one hundred children and families with early childhood music education.



Sonie Richardson is a current Mayflower resident, former President of its Board of Directors and active church member. When asked what The Mayflower meant to her, Sonie said without hesitation, “It’s like a small town. Everything we need is there. There are all kinds of housing. I have been thinking about this a lot lately, and it has the feeling of family. Yes, The Mayflower is like a small town and it feels like family.”*

*Used with permission

And Now Is The Time ...

Now is the time for us to lean into the **FUTURE** to which God calls us. Even with great need, the spirit of this congregation's "Sacrificial Generosity" is greater still.

Shaped by our **HISTORY**, passed from our founders through the generations ...

Empowered by a **VISION** of where God is guiding us ...

We are poised to respond and secure the **FUTURE** for generations to come.

VISION



As we near the end of a year-long process of pondering our HISTORY, our VISION, and our FUTURE, we know that there is much to do. Church leaders, ministers, members, and staff are filled with passion and contagious enthusiasm for the future. The "FCC 150" visioning process involved all Boards and Committees and dozens of members in workshops looking at the past, considering current ministries, and envisioning the future. This process continues today as "Strategic Ministry Planning" and guides the path to a very exciting future together.

The FCCWP "Mission Statement," appearing at the top of this document, has been augmented through the visioning process. Over 100 members participated in the FCC 150 process and identified a spirit of openness and extravagant welcome as key to the culture of this church. Conversations led by Chris Sinclair and Rick Mellin clarified six key areas:

- Strengthen worship and ministry through *The Arts*.
- Provide *progressive* and stimulating *Christian Education*.
- Reclaim a historic relationship with *Rollins College*.
- Serve God's greater good through *Outreach Missions and Social Justice Work*.
- Foster *Christian Community* rich with deepening friendships.
- Be a beacon of hope and build even *Stronger Ecumenical and Interreligious Relationships*.

FUTURE

This community already reaps benefits spawned by the synergy spun off of early efforts of the Strategic Ministry Planning:

- **Renewed tradition of commitment to social justice** led to the formation of a Social Justice Committee working on projects including: "Equal Exchange" fairly traded coffee, going "green" as a church, raising awareness of youth aging out of foster care and ending up homeless, and studying ways to end the genocide in Darfur, and to work towards global peace.
- **Jewish/Christian Dialogue to study similarities shared by our faith traditions** began with partners from the Beth Am Congregation with a total of 80 in attendance from both congregations and the community. Plans are to study our differences later this year.
- **Music, Science and Religion:** Exploration of "Music as the Common Ground for Communication between Science and Religion" is on the table as a collaborative project with Rollins College.
- **New Forms of Worship:** Many young adult seekers share the open, reasoned theology of this church and value independent thought. However, they do not find traditional worship helpful in their search for meaning. Staff is researching expressions of worship that embody the questions of young adults, use current technology, take a scholarly, progressive approach to biblical interpretation, and are faithful to the mission statement of FCCWP.
- **Expanding Spiritual Arts Ministries:** Building on an extraordinary music ministry, programs in graphic and digital arts, pottery, improvisational drama, and liturgical dance are available in the Gurtler Center. The vision is



to expand these further and provide a *Meeting Place for the Arts and Spirituality* in a multi-use center in downtown Winter Park.

NEEDS



For 123 years, First Congregational Church of Winter Park has been here for people. In just the past five years, sixty-seven received the sacrament of baptism, forty-six couples entered into the holy estate of matrimony, sixty-one memorial services were celebrated, and eighty-five found a final resting place in the memorial garden. (The garden is at capacity, with all remaining plots reserved.)

Today, as in the past, families find nurture in the faith, come to Sunday school and church, and deepen their relationship with God and Jesus through prayer, music, word and sacrament. Hundreds each year find comfort in crisis, illness or death, and overcome loneliness and find purpose through the covenant Christian community called First Congregational Church of Winter Park.

In its infancy, FCCWP founded Rollins College where many of the best and brightest are educated. The late Mister Rogers, a 1951 Rollins graduate and wintering worshiper here changed the world for four decades of children with the debut of *Mister Rogers Neighborhood* in 1968.

As a partner in a four-way covenant, Rollins College awarded a four-year scholarship for a qualified South African student leader to Lindinhlanhla (Lindi) Mngadi in 2007. Selected by FCCWP missionaries, Lindi came to Florida to engage in a western education, intent on returning to South Africa as a leader equipped to make a world of difference.

Always, FCCWP stands for social justice and today has an enormous role to play. From the 1954 cross burning on the parsonage lawn to recent Family Ties Programs serving minority Katrina evacuees, this open and seasoned congregation works for change in systems where injustice prevails. This is only the beginning of the work needed for the 21st century.

First Congregational Church of Winter Park is growing both in members and in the depth and breadth of its programs. Built for the Sunday school in 1964, the Christian Education Building today not only boasts a vital and growing Sunday school but also houses the First Congregational Church Preschool & Kindergarten, the Community School of Music, and a growing Wednesday night program for children and infants. Established over 50 years ago as a church mission, the FCC Preschool & Kindergarten is one of the finest early childhood programs in Florida. As young families bring children to the FCCWP campus for early childhood programs, many inquiries are made about Sunday school, Children's Choirs, and the new Sacred Dance program. Ultimately, some families find a church home and join, helping to create the next generation of the First Congregational Church family. Reaching across the tracks to west Winter Park, Eatonville and Margaret Square, the Gurtler Center for Families, Children and Youth provides excellence in its outreach programs for Middle School students.



Over the past ten years, the congregation's financial commitment to the operating budget has grown almost 60 percent from \$1,156 average per pledge in 1997 to \$1,848 average per pledge in 2006 in spite of the economy. Our members are very generous! So why with increased income and new members are we beginning a capital campaign? Just as this upward swing in financial commitment began, new stewardship dollars replaced declining income from endowments hard hit by 9/11 and its aftermath. FCCWP endowments plunged 27 percent in 2001-2002, grew slowly from 2003 to 2005 and are now in recovery. Urgent major renovations could not be done because funds were not available.

Replacement of the leaky roof became possible only because insurance funds from hurricane damage paid for it, but did not begin to cover other damage. Church facilities need to be primed for growth. This means: replacement of an ancient air-conditioning system (over 30 years old), repair of ceilings and bathrooms badly damaged from water, replacement of windows leaking both air and water, and the dome (on top of the steeple), damaged by the elements and age, must be repaired if it is to be saved. This has all been impossible, except for replacing the Christian Education Building air-conditioning and ventilation system, which was voted for by the congregation and financed with a loan.

Ramps and a new sound system will make the buildings fully accessible. Many cannot benefit from Rev. Fulwider's sermons, prayers, or the glorious music because they cannot hear. The faulty sound system prevents some from hearing the Word. Improvements must be made to make the church fully physically accessible.

On Easter Sunday, Kitty Nixon, a long-time active church member and former occupational therapist, went into Fellowship Hall. She asked where the coffee was being served. On that morning, coffee hour was in the Courtyard. Kitty could not get there because of her walker.*

* Used with permission

Spending over \$30,000 each year, staff and trustees make repeated and valiant efforts to patch up the buildings, mop up floods, put buckets under leaks to prevent further damage to facilities, move the new grand piano to protect it from roof leaks, and keep the ancient air-conditioning system going. The air-conditioning system is shared by the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall. Only one location can be cooled at a time, which may answer the question often asked as to why it is so hot or so cold.

A huge amount of staff time is wasted dealing with these problems, keeping staff running in place because of all the daily work that still has to be done. Even the ability of ministers to deliver vital pastoral care to members suffers at times because clergy time is squandered on often overwhelming facility emergencies. These conditions interfere with vital ministries of the church thus preventing enough time for pastoral care, missions, and programs.

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At times, programs are in danger of being cancelled – and would be – were it not for the creativity and determination of staff and volunteers to make them happen. These conditions put tremendous pressure on dedicated staff. They, like members of the congregation, are committed to the future of FCCWP. With the combination of poor air-conditioning or lack of heat and leaky windows and doors, the cost of electricity is enormous. New systems will save an estimated 40% annually on utility costs and will cease the flow of an average of \$30,000 per year in wasted repair costs!



- *Today is our opportunity to determine the future direction of First Congregational Church of Winter Park.*
- *The Capital Campaign represents vision put into concrete plans to fix our problems.*
- *Together this congregation can restore First Congregational Church of Winter Park to its former beauty and dignity.*

Today is the time...

Now is the time...

Together we can – and we must – move into God's future!

Vision, accompanied by wisdom and decisive action now, will shore up the buildings and infrastructure. First Congregational Church of Winter Park will again be an outstandingly attractive facility drawing people to both its beauty and clean, safe atmosphere. For years to come, FCCWP facilities will be safe from the elements and continue as a place of magnificence and holiness providing a safe space for people of all ages. “Phase I” of this Capital Campaign will build a solid foundation for moving forward and is designed to address three functional areas:

- **Preservation** projects that upgrade or repair existing facilities. There is an urgent need to stop deterioration and extend the useful life of the systems and buildings.
- **Transition** projects that expand or create facilities to support existing and future ministries and programs.
- **Foundation** funds that support our future with a planned replacement reserve and a potential growth opportunity reserve.

Funds raised for each of these areas will be used to provide the infrastructure needed to fulfill the church's mission, ministries, and programs for the 21st century. The following projects, listed in priority order within each category, will be accomplished in Phase I. **Funds needed for these projects total \$3,000,000.**



Preservation Projects (\$1,595,000)

Campus-Wide Heat, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) Replacement – \$1,400,000

Problem: As the church campus evolved, the HVAC for each building or area was built to serve that specific area. In addition:

- Some of these systems are now over 30 years old.
- Frequent repairs require parts that are exceedingly difficult to find and expensive.
- Current systems are very energy *inefficient*.
- Codes have changed to reduce health problems such as “sick-building syndrome” that are just now being fully identified.

Solution/Benefits: The Trustees, aided by building professionals in the congregation, carefully evaluated the looming failure and health concerns regarding the Education Building HVAC and the deteriorating condition of the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall HVAC. The best option was to replace all of the HVAC systems throughout the campus with a modern, cost-effective, central chilled-water system. Creating a comfortable, healthful, and safe environment requires more air volume, which requires more equipment and ductwork, but will in turn require less electricity. When complete, we will have a system with capacity to handle the entire campus with modern controls and redundancy. It is estimated that we will save up to 40% of the energy costs we are currently spending for HVAC.



Current Outside Unit near the Kitchen



Roof Unit above the Office Building



New Chiller Unit serving the Education Building



Dome/Steeple Repair - \$35,000

Problem: The dome and steeple were damaged in the hurricanes of 2004. Water leaked into the Balcony, bringing down lathwork and plaster that remains unrepaired. A portion of the Balcony seating is currently unusable.

Solution/Benefits: The source of the leak will be repaired and the structure inspected and repaired, easing future concerns regarding continued structural deterioration and safety issues.

The dome and steeple were slightly dislocated during the 2004 hurricanes. Cracks opened and water leaked into the Balcony area of the Sanctuary.

Exterior Paint, Caulk, Repair, and Ramping - \$75,000

Problem: Our buildings sustained considerable wind and “wind-driven water” damage from the hurricanes of 2004. It has also been quite some time since routine exterior maintenance has been performed. Many areas are chipped, peeling and bare. We also need at least one access ramp on the north side of the building.

Solution/Benefits: Exterior trim must be painted and caulked to prevent decay and water infiltration. Replacing rotted trim, decaying window frames and sills, and other building components is far more cost effective than continual maintenance.

Adding an access ramp on the building’s north side will improve access and increase the usefulness of staff and church parking lots for the mobility-impaired members and guests on Sunday mornings and at other times.



Cracked concrete in areas invites accidents and exposes the building to further damage from the elements.



Gutters above the New England Avenue portico dangle and are ineffective.



This entrance to the Music Building does not say “Extravagant Welcome”.



Christian Education Building Windows Replacement - \$35,000

Problem: The Education Building windows are warped and leak air.

Solution/Benefits: Replacement will further improve the energy efficiency of the newly installed HVAC system.

Sanctuary A/V System - \$30,000

Problem: Our current rental sound system is not adequate for our needs. It sometimes picks up transmission from local area radio stations during Sunday services, weddings, funerals and other events. The quality of sound is also inadequate to our needs.

Solution/Benefits: New audio and visual equipment will serve a variety of needs beyond quality and reliability, including digital recording of Sunday services and other programs for use by shut-ins and website downloads, video projection for meetings and classes, and a level of sound amplification which will provide auditory accessibility.



The current audio system provides sound amplification and tape recording services only. It is very inadequate for today's digital world.



Our sign on New England Avenue is literally rotting away.

Exterior Signs - \$8,000

Problem: Our signage is not only outdated, but is virtually invisible to the public. Further, it is literally rotting away!

Solution/Benefits: First impressions are everything! More and more residents and visitors are passing the corner of Interlachen and New England. Our signage must reflect our substantive history as well as our spirit, vitality, and extravagant welcome.



Our church sign viewed from the Southwest corner of New England and Interlachen Avenues. Can you see it?

Our church sign viewed from the Southeast corner of New England and Interlachen Avenues. Does it speak of an "Extravagant Welcome"?



Remaining Preservation Projects - \$12,000

Problem: These are smaller, routine maintenance projects which include Sanctuary front door replacement, Education Building door repair, and paint and plaster repair in various interior spaces.

Solution/Benefits: Completed projects will improve the appearance, efficiency, and safety of our buildings.



Rotted interior window in the second floor lobby bathroom that needs immediate replacement.



Damage from wind-driven water from 2004 hurricanes.



Deteriorating, chipped paint invites more extensive and costly repairs!



Some Sanctuary Balcony seating is currently unusable.



Wind-driven water damaged the paint and plaster below the windows in our Sanctuary.



We need a better solution for a leaky roof!

Transitional Projects (\$905,000)

Fellowship Hall Expansion and Bathrooms - \$230,000

Problem: The joy overflows, literally, as Fellowship Hall is often overcrowded because of our many family and congregational functions. The first *Joyful Noise! Wednesday* of 2007 attracted 125 adults, youth and children. Furthermore, many of our sanitary facilities are cramped and inaccessible to the handicapped.

Solution/Benefits: Moving the Chapel and relocating the Library to that area would allow the expansion of the Fellowship Hall space towards the west parking lot. Additionally, adequate handicap-accessible bathrooms are needed to serve the entire area.

This bathroom is so cramped the door cannot be fully opened.



Kitchen Renovation - \$75,000

Problem: The Kitchen has served us well over the years and the staff and volunteers have managed to keep the equipment running for our many events.

Solution/Benefits: It is time to improve flow and access by opening up the Kitchen to the Alcove and by replacing old equipment with high energy-efficient and more reliable equipment.



Kitchen equipment is old and inefficient. Linoleum flooring is wearing out, slippery and difficult to keep clean and sanitary.

Our dishwashing equipment is old, leaks, and is in constant need of repair.



Courtyard/Memorial Garden Development - \$275,000

Problem: The Memorial Garden is at capacity.

Solution/Benefits: Preliminary research identified the need to expand the Memorial Garden and reconfigure the entire Courtyard. The concept involves expanding the Courtyard beyond the breezeway toward Interlachen and creating defined gathering areas and reflection areas. If the Administration Building is converted into a Chapel, that entry will be redefined. A layout will be completed when the overall campus map is finalized.



The beautiful Courtyard and Memorial Garden.

Entrance to potential new Chapel.



Administration Building Conversion to Chapel - \$275,000

Problem: Our Chapel is buried in Fellowship Hall and underused.

Solution/Benefits: Conversion of the Administration Building to a beautifully designed Chapel would provide a much-needed space for a variety of worship experiences and other sacred functions as well as a place equipped for music, dance, and displaying art work. An expanded Courtyard would provide a serene pastoral setting.

Administration Relocation - \$50,000

Relocation is required by other projects. The likely location will be downstairs in the Music Building.

Foundation Funds (\$500,000)

Bill Slavens' Maintenance Reserve Endowment - \$250,000

Problem: Every year our Board of Trustees wrestles with the development of a budget that supports the programs we have come to expect and the operating costs of keeping the lights and air-conditioning on and the facilities maintained. Each year, they budget for a reserve and replacement fund to accommodate future maintenance and replacement costs such as carpet, paint, roofing, and the systems necessary to operate a church. Each year, the 1st item to be removed from the budget is the reserves for replacement.

Solution/Benefits: Bill Slavens was a constant champion for proper planning for our needs and tried time and time again to create a dedicated reserve fund. Upon his death, his family made a contribution to initiate such a fund in his memory. It is intended that the annual income from this fund will be set aside annually to fund future repairs and replacements. It has been estimated in the past that our church should set aside at least \$40,000 to \$50,000 annually to fully fund anticipated repairs and replacements.



Opportunity Fund - \$250,000



Problem: Over the years, the church has been in a position to participate in worthwhile projects or acquire additional property. Often, we have risen to the challenge and identified necessary seed funds to create projects like The Plymouth and The Mayflower. All too many times we have had to pass on an opportunity because we didn't have the funds readily available.

Solution/Benefits: This fund is being set up to be available for "opportunity events." Two potential opportunities to consider are acquisition of the remaining adjacent parcel that would square off our block and give us the land to expand our music and arts capabilities. The

other is the ability to partner with the City of Winter Park, Rollins College, or someone else in the development of properties that affect our church.

Our Promise

All costs are estimates. Our promise to you is that your contributions to this Capital Campaign will be used only for the purposes described. Project cost overruns, if any, will be paid for with funds designated for lower priority projects and other means will be sought to fund those efforts. If the cost of a project is less than its estimated budget, the excess will be assigned to a lower priority project, the Foundation Fund, or the Opportunity Fund at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and the Church Council.

Phase II

Phase II of the Capital Campaign is in the envisioning, listening, and planning stage. Our Strategic Ministry Planning group, after gathering the final input from our FCC 150 process, will develop a plan for Phase II. It will be based on program and ministry plans that will lead us to our 150th Anniversary as a congregation in 2034. The "what, when, and how" for this phase has not yet been defined; but we know that it will have much to do with the expansion of "Worship," "The Arts," and "Christian Education" ministries. When the Strategic Ministry Plan is in final draft form, it will be presented to the Congregation for approval, and it will be our guide into the future.

**Together we can...
Cherish our heritage as we build for our future...**