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Spiritual Assessment and Feasibility Report – Draft Copy

Prepared for

St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church

Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey

A. Introduction

The Vestry of St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church has been studying the possibility of addressing a list of capital projects for several years. A number of repairs represent critical needs, such as a roof that is leaking. Other projects represent ongoing maintenance or upgrades in equipment. The major item on the list centers on the rectory, and the question of addressing that building's needs by renovation or replacement. Total cost of the proposed list of items is estimated at \$456,700.

A decision to proceed with, or even study the possibility of a Capital Funds Campaign to underwrite the cost of repairs and renovations has been complicated by a series of circumstances that have affected the spiritual climate of the church. These circumstances have led to the departure of some members, the disengagement of others, and an overall climate of uneasiness within the congregation.

An initial meeting with Jeffrey Knauer of Kirby-Smith Associates was enjoined by church leaders on July 18, 2010. Additional contacts and conversations were held through the remainder of 2010 in an effort to determine how the church might attempt to proceed. Capital repairs need to be addressed. But the spiritual climate is prohibitive to place building issues ahead of members' concerns. After much consultation and prayer, it was finally determined that the membership would be invited to participate in a combined Spiritual Assessment and Feasibility Study. This combined effort would seek to determine the reasons for spiritual discontentment, along with measuring the response towards needed capital projects. The goal of the report would be to suggest positive steps to resolve spiritual issues, as well as make recommendations to deal with capital projects.

Leadership chose Jeffrey Knauer to lead the study effort because of his background of 30 years in ministry, including 22 years as a successful pastor. Mr. Knauer had also been a member of the American Association of Christian Counselors for a number of years. For most of his pastoral ministry, he served as a church "trouble shooter," working to resolve congregational issues and leading three churches to resume a positive course.

Mr. Knauer met with members of St. Mary's in a Town Hall Meeting on May 22, 2011, to introduce the concept of the proposed study, and to answer questions. Members offered a positive response and a decision was made by leaders to proceed. Mr. Knauer, Executive Vice President of Kirby-Smith Associates, was retained to conduct the study.

A Feasibility Study Committee was formed to prepare for the study. Members include Diane Buckley, Al Fecci, Jack Greene, Marie Lucier Woodruff, and Michele Trenkle. Planning and preparatory meetings were held on July 6, July 26, and August 23, 2011. During these meetings, the Spiritual Assessment and Feasibility Study was planned, including six phases, five instruments to communicate with members and collect data, and a timeline for enactment.

The six phases were as follows:

1. Planning and composition of materials.
2. Distribution and mailing of letters and a survey questionnaire
3. Collection of data
4. Tabulation and analysis of data
5. Verbal report to leadership
6. Submission of a written report and communication of information to the congregation.

The five instruments used to communicate with members and collect data were as follows:

1. An introductory Town Hall Meeting, held on May 22, 2011, to introduce the study idea.
2. Opening letter dated September 1, 2011, from the Feasibility Study Committee, and a list of suggested building capital projects from the Building and Grounds Committee.
3. Interviewee letter and questionnaire from the Feasibility Study Committee distributed to attendees of the Town Hall Meeting on September 11, 2011, with the balance mailed the following day.

4. A Town Hall Meeting held on September 11, 2011, to explain and illustrate the list of potential capital projects, as well as to explain the study process.
5. Personal interviews using the Feasibility Study questionnaire, conducted at the church by Mr. Knauer on September 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25, 2011. Members who were unable to schedule an interview were asked to complete the questionnaire in writing and return it to the church by September 25, 2011.

In addition to the composition of Feasibility Study materials, the committee also made telephone calls to members inviting them to participate in personal interviews. Other volunteers prepared refreshments for interviewees as they arrived at the church and awaited their scheduled appointments. Cherisse Petruzzi, Parish Administrator, prepared rooms for interviews, signage for directions, and handled messages to keep appointments flowing smoothly. Questionnaires were also offered during services on September 25, 2011, to those who had not yet participated in the process. These efforts were made with the hope of involving as many members as possible.

A goal for participation was set at 50% of the number of church households who are active participants in church life and regular contributors to the church budget. Of the 204 households listed on the church roster, it was determined that 150 households are engaged according to these criteria. The goal for participation, therefore, was established at 75 households. The goal for the study was exceeded as 83 households participated. The total included input from 107 people. This level of participation strongly validates the findings of the study as being representative of the overall congregation.

B. Purpose Statement

The purposes of this Spiritual Assessment and Feasibility Study were as follows:

1. Assess the present spiritual climate within the congregation;
2. Determine the congregation's awareness of a list of recommended capital repairs and upgrades;
3. Determine the congregation's support for addressing capital repairs and upgrades;
4. Determine the level of potential financial support through a proposed Capital Funds Campaign;
5. Gather relevant input from the congregation on both spiritual and capital issues;
and

6. Present recommendations on both issues to church leadership and the congregation.

The study was conducted in an objective and factual manner by a senior member of KSA Services, experienced in conducting Feasibility Studies. All attempts were made to be true to the needs and intentions of St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church. All comments, concerns, and opinions expressed in interviews, surveys, and conversations were recorded, classified, tabulated, and presented in this report.

The ultimate objective was to measure, as accurately as possible, the current state of spiritual disposition among members and support for the proposal to address capital projects. This report is presented in statistical and narrative format. All information collected is for the exclusive use of St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church and its leadership. Any questions, comments, and inquiries referencing this study should be addressed to KSA Services.

C. Analysis

Town Hall Meetings

Two separate Town Hall Meetings were held at different points in the process. An initial meeting was held on May 22, 2011, following the second worship service. A second meeting was held on September 11, 2011, between the two worship services.

The agenda for the first meeting focused primarily upon the reasons for the study. While capital repairs and upgrades need to be addressed, the current state of spiritual discontentment among some members has hindered the congregation's ability to move forward. Mr. Knauer explained to members leadership's proposal to conduct a study in the hopes of addressing both the spiritual issues, as well as gathering a response to capital projects. Many questions and answers were exchanged among an interested group of attendees. The overall reaction of members was both positive and hopeful.

The second Town Hall Meeting focused on the list of potential projects developed by the Buildings and Grounds Committee. While details of each item were verbally described, a PowerPoint slide presentation illustrated the items. Al Fecci presented the project list. Jeff Knauer then reviewed the study process, including details about personal interviews or submitting surveys in writing. A time of questions was enjoined, followed by an opportunity for members to obtain their survey questionnaires and sign up for interviews. There was a definite positive tone among those who attended this meeting. Members are looking forward to hearing results and recommendations.

Questions and Answers

One written instrument, the Feasibility Study questionnaire, was utilized for both the personal interviews and written responses. A copy was included with an instruction letter, distributed to those in attendance at the Town Hall Meeting on September 11, 2011, or mailed the following day to the rest of the church membership. A special note of invitation was included to some members who had disengaged from the congregation due to spiritual issues. Leadership's desire was to gather input from everyone involved and to hear from all sides of potential issues.

All recipients were invited to schedule an interview to discuss their responses to the questionnaire. Those who were unable to schedule an interview during the available dates were asked to complete the questionnaire in writing and return it to the church by September 25, 2011. On September 25, those who had not yet responded were encouraged to fill out a questionnaire during church services and drop it in a secure container before they left that day.

A total of 107 people, representing 83 households, participated in the study. A total of 71 people, representing 55 households, were personally interviewed.

A total of 36 people, representing 28 households, submitted written responses. Total participation from 83 households exceeded the goal of 75 households, and represented 55% of the 150 households who are regularly engaged in financially supporting the church and are active in participation. This level of participation provides very adequate data to measure the sentiments of the overall congregation. It should also be noted that a number of members who have disengaged themselves due to the spiritual issues did participate in the study. This assures that various facets and points of view were included in this study.

The Feasibility Study questionnaire contained 14 questions covering demographics, spiritual issues, opinions on details concerning capital project proposals, and opportunity for individual comments and questions. Results and analysis of each question are reported on the following pages.

Note: The responses are based on the answers of the 107 participants who represented 83 households. The study statistics include responses from each participant as indicated. For the purpose of the range of financial commitments in Question 10, only one response per household was used. Apart from Question 10, the responses of all 107 people were measured to obtain study results. Calculated percentages are rounded off to the nearest whole point. Totals are rounded off and will not always equal exactly 100%. In cases where some participants failed to provide certain answers, totals were still figured to add up to 100%.

Question 1
How long have you been attending
St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church?

	Interviews		Surveys		Overall	
0-5 Years	13	18%	9	25%	22	21%
6-10 Years	11	15%	6	17%	17	16%
11 Years or More	47	66%	21	58%	68	64%

A total of 107 people, representing 83 households, participated in the study. Of that total, 71 people were personally interviewed, while 36 people responded in writing. In order to establish a participating goal for the study, it was determined to aim at enlisting a majority of the number of households who regularly contribute through financial means to the parish and who participate in parish activities. This number was determined to be 150 households. Half of that number is 75, and so the goal was set at that number. Participation in the study exceeded this goal, having gathered input from 83 households.

The purpose of the first question was to measure the number of participants based on how long they have attended the church. The reason for the question was to make sure a broad segment of the congregation was surveyed. A secondary purpose was to examine the demographics of the membership according to these categories. Overall, 21% of participants have attended for 0-5 years, 16% for 6-10 years, and 64% for 11 years or more.

The results suggest several things. First, the congregation has a significant core of members who have attended for a long period of time; in many cases, their entire lives. This is noteworthy in a day when many people transfer from one area to another on a frequent basis, due to educational and job situations. This level of stability also suggests a strong level of loyalty to the church, as well as a certain satisfaction found in the ministries and programs enjoined by the congregation. Second, the 21% who have been attending for 5 years or less suggests the church is attracting new members. This is a hopeful sign in a day when church membership is often on a decline. The results of this question provide assurance that a wide scope of the congregation did participate in this study.

Question 2
What is your overall view of St. Mary’s by the Sea?

	Interviews		Surveys		Overall	
Very Favorable	34	48%	21	58%	55	51%
Favorable	27	38%	14	39%	41	38%
Less Than Favorable	10	14%	1	3%	11	10%
No opinion	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

This question was asked for the purpose of measuring overall sentiments towards the church apart from the proposed capital projects. It is also an important element in measuring the spiritual climate of the congregation.

All 107 participants supplied an answer to the question. Overall, a positive response was gathered from 89% of participants, with 51% having a very favorable view and 38% having a favorable view. There were 10% of participants who currently view the church in a less than favorable light.

Given the congregation’s sensitivity to the spiritual issues, it is interesting to note the strength the overall favorable viewpoint of members towards the church. There were 89% who see St. Mary’s in a positive light; more than half in a very positive light. This does not negate the concerns of the 10% who expressed a less than favorable view. There are issues to be addressed, but there are also many positive forces at work within the church that should not be forgotten.

It is also worth noting that not everyone who shared concerns saw the overall view as less than favorable. It is also true that some who currently hold a less than favorable view are still actively involved, working for the good of the church. Many participants summed up their feelings with such sentiments as, “I love St. Mary’s,” “I love my church,” or “This will always be my church.” There is a deep desire in the hearts of most members to resolve any issues in the best way possible and to move forward.

Question 3

How involved do you consider yourself to be in the church?

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Very Involved	26	37%	3	8%	29	27%
Involved	29	41%	12	33%	41	38%
Somewhat Involved	12	17%	9	25%	21	20%
Not Very Involved	3	4%	7	19%	10	9%
Want to Become More Involved	1	1%	5	14%	6	6%

This question was asked in order to measure the level of involvement in the church by study participants. The reason for the question was to ensure that the pool of participants represented the broadest span of members from the most involved to those not very involved. A secondary reason was to measure how involved people see themselves to be, as a level of involvement often corresponds to a sense of ownership.

Overall, 85% of study participants consider themselves to be involved at some level in the church, with 27% being very involved, 38% being involved, 20% being somewhat involved. This compares to a benchmark of about 60% in today's average church. This suggests a strong level of commitment on the part of church members. Many remarked that while they are still involved, they used to be much more involved "in their younger days." Of special note was a group of members who care for the Memorial Garden, a number of whom have exceeded their 90th birthdays.

Some who are not very involved have stepped back due to health reasons, or other responsibilities such as caring for aging parents. Several have stepped back due to discouragement over spiritual issues. On a more positive note are the 6% of participants who noted a desire to become more involved. A list of their names will be supplied to church leaders. It is highly recommended that efforts are made to contact and engage these members in opportunities of ministry and service within the church community.

Question 4

Can you name three positive aspects, or things you appreciate about St. Mary's?

Responses listed are those received from 5 or more study participants. Both interviewee and written responses are combined.

75 Warm and friendly people, a strong sense of community, support for one another

- 59 Father John's ministry, sermons, leadership, personal support for one another
- 34 The church's outreach programs, ministries, involvement in the community, St. Gregory's pantry
- 34 Congregation is welcoming, inclusive, tolerant, and diverse
- 25 Programs for youth and children, Sunday School, accepting and welcoming of children
- 13 Worship services, a place of solace, chapel open 24/7
- 12 Dedication of members who volunteer and work, take ownership
- 7 Keeping the traditional approach to worship, Anglican liturgy, and a strong spiritual foundation
- 5 It is a nice sized community, people know each other
- 5 Appreciate history of the church in the community, family history in this church, memories from Memorial Garden

This question was asked as an opening to a spiritual assessment of the church, beginning with the positive. There were 75 people (70% of participants) who noted a distinct positive of St. Mary's is the people. They believe the church is a warm and friendly place, with a strong sense of community, based on mutual support for one another. Second to the people is the Rector, Father John. There were 59 participants (55%) who noted his ministry, his outstanding sermons, and his care of members as great strengths. Many see his presence as a drawing factor for new members. Third on the list is a tie between the church's outreach ministries, and the congregation's sense of being inclusive of all kinds of people. There is also strong appreciation for the programs that target children and youth.

From the positive side of things, St. Mary's possesses some great strengths and attractive qualities. Many churches believe themselves to be warm and friendly, but participants cited examples in addition to their comments. A number said that St. Mary's is the "friendliest church" they have ever attended. Many consider the church their "home," and fellow members their "family." Several participants cited occasions when fellow members gave them support through life's trials. These comments provide substance to the claim "warm and friendly."

Father John's sermons received wide acclaim. His ability to relate the gospel to everyday living is seen as inspirational and beneficial. A number of members said

that he is the reason they attend. The ministries that provide outreach into the community are most important to members as they want neighbors to know they care. The congregation's tolerance and acceptance has allowed many kinds of people to find a church home. And programs for youth and children have made the church a place where the whole family can benefit together.

While St. Mary's is facing a number of spiritual challenges, it would be wise to remember the tremendous strengths still present among the members who truly love the church and one another. Much can be accomplished and resolved from a positive perspective.

Question 5

Can you name three things that could be improved, or done better at St. Mary's?

Responses listed are those received from 5 or more study participants. Both interviewee and written responses are combined.

- 32 Communication is lacking, congregation is not aware of leadership decisions, or responses from leaders lack straight-forwardness
- 25 Budgeting practices, handling of finances, transparency, living within our means, improving revenue
- 21 Better recruitment and engagement of volunteers, better instructions to volunteers, and more delegation of responsibilities
- 16 Errors in leadership have eroded trust and caused people to question integrity of leaders, better leadership model needed
- 11 Repairs to facility, develop a long-range plan so that church can become proactive instead of reactive
- 11 Improvements to music program, grow the choir, broaden selection of music, and improve choir robes
- 10 More fellowship events for adults, for seniors, with schedules sent more in advance
- 10 Recruitment of more members
- 8 Stem the tide of discontentment among members, help congregation feel unified again

- 7 Make the church more handicapped accessible
- 7 Congregation needs to better handle changes, regain focus, think positive, and move forward
- 6 Improve handicapped parking
- 5 Review fundraising methods, not comfortable with lottery-style methods
- 5 Have church meetings at times convenient for those who attend 8:00 a.m. service
- 5 Sermons are sometimes a bit lengthy
- 5 Improve the rectory

This question was asked in an effort to afford members an opportunity to voice their issues and concerns in a confidential manner. There were a number of issues brought to light, but no one issue mentioned by 30% or more of study participants.

The most-mentioned area for improvement, mentioned by 32 people, had to do with communications. The congregation desires more information concerning leadership's decisions in a timely fashion. Lack of communication has contributed to an erosion of trust and a perception that integrity has diminished.

The second item on the list, mentioned by 25 people, has to do with the management of church finances, specifically operating by a balanced budget, keeping members aware of decisions that are made, and enacting efforts to improve revenue.

The third item, mentioned by 21 people, has to do with recruiting more volunteers to assist those who are overburdened, as well as improving the methods of communicating responsibilities and instructions.

The fourth item, mentioned by 16 people, had to do with perceived errors made by leaders in handling a number of church-related issues. These perceived errors have caused some members to lose trust in leaders, while causing hurt and disappointment to others.

A variety of other items comprise the balance of the list. While no one issue was mentioned by a majority of participants, a common thread can tie together the top three or four. That thread is a need for better communications. It would appear as though improvements to communications could resolve a number of issues that have some members frustrated and upset. Greater transparency on certain issues may also

help restore trust and assist members in regaining confidence in leaders.

Most of the rest of the items listed have to do with specific needs and preferences of members. All are worthy of notice and consideration.

Question 6

What is the number one item to be addressed at St. Mary's by the Sea and how to begin?

Responses listed are those received from 5 or more study participants. Both interviewee and written responses are combined.

- 20 Work to bring closure to divisions and discontentment in the congregation
- 15 Facility repairs, become proactive as opposed to reactive
- 14 Greater efficiency in budgeting, balancing budget, audit of finances
- 13 Improve leadership style and management practices to re-establish trust and allow members to regain confidence in leaders
- 5 Gain new members, maintain present members
- 5 Improved communications and management style of Rector, use members more to assist in decision-making

The number one item, mentioned by 20 participants, has to do with those whose feelings were hurt by one of several unfortunate incidents that occurred over the past several years. One incident involved the departure of an assistant Rector, while another involved the departure of a vestry member. In addition, a number of decisions were made that were not understood by members, heightening the degree of hurt and negative views already held due to the aforementioned incidents. There is a cloud of discontentment still lingering over the congregation from this series of unfortunate events. There is a desire to see closure, resolve, some form of ending to this chapter in church history so that forward movement can be attained.

The facility repairs and financial issues are second and third on this list naming most critical items. There is also a desire to see leadership style and management practices improved, as well as growing the church.

Very little input was given as to how these issues should be addressed. Hope was expressed that the study process would bring to light the issues and that solutions

would become apparent.

Question 7

Agreement with leadership that repairs and renovations are needed.

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Strongly Agree	31	44%	9	25%	40	37%
Agree	30	42%	18	50%	48	45%
Neutral	9	13%	8	22%	17	16%
Disagree	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	1	1%	1	3%	2	2%

This question was asked as a means of measuring support for church leadership’s assessment that a number of repairs and renovations to the church building and rectory should be addressed. Overall, 82% of study participants agree with leadership’s assessment; 37% strongly agree and 45% agree. There were 16% of participants who expressed a neutral position at this time. A number of these members would like additional details on proposed project items before they form opinions. Others felt unqualified to offer opinions either way. There were 2% of participants who are in strong disagreement with leadership’s assessment. These viewpoints stem from financial concerns over addressing capital projects at this time to disagreement that certain items need to be addressed.

Answers to questions posed later in the study may provide information needed by some holding neutral positions to become more favorable towards leadership’s recommendations. In any case, an 82% agreement response indicates a strong level of support to move ahead with plans to address projects in need of repair or renovation.

Question 8
Prioritizing Items in Need of Repair or Renovation.

Questionnaire Items	Top Priority Value – 5 points	Medium Priority Value – 3 points	Low Priority Value – 1 point	Total Responses	Total Points
Air-conditioning	15	39	30	84	222
Carpeting	17	31	35	83	213
Renovate or Replace Rectory	65	22	12	99	403
Retaining Wall	34	30	18	82	278
Roof Repairs	80	12	0	92	436
Other Items Not Listed on Survey					
Church Arches	4	0	0	4	20
Renovate Church School Rooms	1	1	0	2	8
Repaint Main Church	0	1	1	2	4
Add Pew Cushions	0	0	2	2	2
Replace Dishwashers	0	1	6	7	9
Dry Basement, Mold Issues	25	0	0	25	125
Remove Oil Tanks	0	1	1	2	4
Repave Parking Lot	0	1	1	2	4
Sanctuary Sound System, Acoustics	1	0	0	1	5
Handicapped Accessibility	23	3	0	26	124
Window Wells on North Side – fill in	1	1	0	2	8
Memorial Garden Upkeep	2	0	0	2	10
General Landscaping Upkeep	4	0	0	4	20
Church Floorboards in Sanctuary	0	1	0	1	3

This question was asked as a way of measuring members’ responses to the list of items on the questionnaire, as well as on the expanded list supplied with the vision letter. Some items listed require repairs. Others have been recommended for renovations or upgrades. Leadership desired congregational input to help determine support when addressing listed items, and as a means of determining where to begin if the list needs to be addressed over time.

Participants responded to some or all of the items listed on the questionnaire rating items as *Top*, *Medium*, or *Low* priorities. Some added items from the expanded list, and a few added items not mentioned on either list. Though no item received a response from all study participants, data gathered provides enough information for leadership to gain a picture of members’ opinions.

For each *Top* priority vote, 5 points were assessed. For *Medium* priority, 3 points were given, and one point was added for a *Low* priority indication. Total point scores, along with the number of participants who rated each item, can provide indications of priorities. Results are as follows:

<i>Questionnaire Items</i>	<i>Total Responses</i>	<i>Total Points</i>
1. Roof repairs	92	436
2. Renovate or replace rectory	99	403
3. Retaining wall	82	278
4. Air-conditioning	84	222
5. Carpeting	83	213

Other Items Significantly Mentioned

1. Dry basement, mold issues	25	125
2. Handicapped accessibility	26	124

The roof repairs were seen as *Top* priority by the greatest number of participants. Primary concerns have to do with stopping any leaking. For those who mentioned it, they were not certain that a sloping roof is needed.

Addressing the rectory was the next *Top* priority. There is a very strong support to provide adequate, comfortable housing to the Rector and his family. Many church members expressed embarrassment over the current condition of the rectory. However, many questions remain as to the best solutions. People wonder about the Rector’s preferences as to housing arrangements and the close proximity of the rectory to the church. Questions exist as to whether the current structure is worth renovating, whether it should be replaced entirely, or whether it should be sold and replaced with

a different home elsewhere. Then there is the matter of what may be allowed with the matter of diocesan ownership of the house. These questions led to a clarification within the prioritization of the rectory issue as follows:

- 29 members preferred renovation
- 13 members preferred replacement
- 57 members indicated no specific directive

What may be prioritized in the *Medium* range would be the retaining wall. Lower on the list was air-conditioning, and lastly, carpeting. Two items gathered significant support under the other items category: the issue of keeping a dry basement and dealing with any mold issues, and handicapped accessibility, involving either a ramp access, replacement of the elevator, or both. The mold issue is of special concern to the Sunday School department and the health of those who regularly use the church's lower level. Accessibility is an issue for many members who currently struggle to enter and leave the building, as well as to a number of members who have limited attendance in recent years due to problems with access.

A leaky roof is seen as a must-repair. The rectory is as much a moral issue as a practical one to many members. Any mold issue is a health issue. And accessibility is a current and future priority. If any other items affect the structural integrity of the church, they should also be addressed. Beyond these items, most members would prefer that the most cost-effective solutions be studied further.

The bottom line is that members agreed these are items to be addressed. They also prefer that each item, along with potential solutions, be studied carefully so that good stewardship of funds is exercised, and the most possible progress pertaining to the list of items is made.

Question 9

Supportive of a decision to engage a 3- year Capital Funds Campaign.

	Interviews		Written		Overall	
Very Supportive	23	32%	3	8%	26	24%
Supportive	24	34%	17	47%	41	38%
Supportive with Some Reservations	16	23%	10	28%	26	24%
Not Supportive	6	8%	1	3%	7	7%
Undecided	2	3%	4	11%	6	6%
No Response Given	0	0%	1	3%	1	1%

This question was asked in an effort to measure support for leadership’s decision to engage a 3-year Capital Funds Campaign should a determination be made to address needed repairs and renovations. A Capital Funds Campaign would serve to generate funding for the capital projects.

Overall, 86% of study participants expressed some level of support for engaging a Capital Funds Campaign: 24% being very supportive, 38% supportive, and 24% supportive with some reservations. Should some of the 6% who are undecided become supportive, the 86% level of support could rise. There were 7% of study participants who were not supportive.

The responses given to this question suggest strong support should leadership decide to move forward with a Capital Funds Campaign effort.

Question 10
Range of Potential Financial Support.

Interviews

Per Year for 3 Years	#	%	Low Range	Middle Range	High Range
No Recorded Gifts in Categories A-G	0	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$4,000 - \$5,999	1	2%	\$ 12,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 18,000
\$2,000 - \$3,999	10	18%	\$ 60,000	\$ 90,000	\$120,000
\$1,000 - \$1,999	7	13%	\$ 21,000	\$ 31,500	\$ 42,000
Less than \$1,000	27	49%	\$ 0	\$ 40,500	\$ 81,000
Specific Amount Stated	5	9%	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000
\$ 0 Indicated	4	7%	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
No Response Given	1	2%	-	-	-
Total	55	100%	\$106,000	\$190,000	\$274,000

Note: Amounts ending in 9 are rounded up to the next dollar to make calculations simpler.

Written:

Per Year for 3 Years	#	%	Low Range	Middle Range	High Range
No Recorded Gifts in Categories A-G	0	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$4,000 - \$5,999	2	7%	\$24,000	\$30,000	\$ 36,000
\$2,000 - \$3,999	1	4%	\$ 6,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 12,000
\$1,000 - \$1,999	4	14%	\$12,000	\$18,000	\$ 24,000
Less Than \$1,000	17	61%	0	\$25,500	\$ 51,000
Specific Amount Stated	0	0%	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
\$0 Indicated	2	7%	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
No Response Given	2	7%	-	-	-
Total	28	100%	\$42,000	\$82,500	\$123,000

Note: Amounts ending in 9 are rounded up to the next dollar to make calculations simpler.

Overall:

Per Year for 3 Years	#	%	Low Range	Middle Range	High Range
No Recorded Gifts in Categories A-G	0	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$4,000 - \$5,999	3	4%	\$ 36,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 54,000
\$2,000 - \$3,999	11	13%	\$ 66,000	\$ 99,000	\$132,000
\$1,000 - \$1,999	11	13%	\$ 33,000	\$ 49,500	\$ 66,000
Less Than \$1,000	44	53%	\$ 0	\$ 66,000	\$132,000
Specific Amount Stated	5	6%	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000
\$0 Indicated	6	7%	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
No Response Given	3	4%	-	-	-
Total	83	100%	\$148,000	\$272,500	\$397,000

This question was asked for the purpose of measuring potential financial support should the church proceed with a Capital Funds Campaign effort to address proposed projects. Of the 83 participating households, 74 indicated a level of estimated financial participation should a campaign be engaged. This is a response rate of 89%. It is possible that those who offered no response at this time may choose to give should a campaign occur, which would raise the response rate and totals higher. This level of response is very positive.

Potential giving was calculated using the low range, middle range, and high range in each category, except where specific amounts were indicated. The totals of these calculations provide a low range total of \$148,000, a middle range total of \$272,500, and a high range total of \$397,000. The experience of KSA Services suggests that a middle range estimate will most often be closest to the amount of commitments received during a Capital Funds Campaign. In this case, that amount from this group of study participants would be \$272,500.

The middle range estimate of \$272,500 is representative of about 55% of church members who regularly support the church financially. This would suggest that additional financial support could be forthcoming if a Capital Funds Campaign is engaged. An additional 67 households with a history of regular financial support have yet to respond. Taking into consideration both the additional households yet to be heard from, and the present state of the economy, a reasonable Capital Funds Campaign goal could be set at \$300,000. A stretch, or faith, goal of \$375,000 would also be recommended.

While these numbers do not eclipse the entire expanded project list total of \$456,700, they do promise to generate funding to address a number of items on the list. Both the strong percentage of those willing to contribute, and the potential amount that may be realized, indicate strong support to move forward with a Capital Funds Campaign and the list of projects.

Question 11

Any Further Comments, Suggestions, Ideas, or Concerns.

Question 11 was asked in an effort to provide participants a platform to share input they felt was important to the spiritual issues, project proposals, or both. Responses of a similar nature were combined to reflect the frequency of those comments. A total of 63 different ideas were offered. Though every thought is valued, the ultimate purpose of the study is to measure trends of thoughts in order to gain insight and direction. Therefore, all responses mentioned by 5 or more participants are listed below, along with the number of people who made a similar comment.

- 15 We are concerned that money raised will be managed responsibly, used for what it is intended, and that costs are representative of repairs actually needed. The church tends to overspend its budget on a regular basis, leaving little for repairs and maintenance. Projects need oversight.
- 14 We are not a wealthy parish and the focus on fundraising has worn some people out. The reliance on raffle-type fundraising is troubling to some in regard to selling tickets or imposing this method on poor people of the community. Could other methods be considered, such as involving the strong presence of tourists, or opening a Thrift Store that would generate constant revenue.
- 10 We love our church. The ultimate goal is to keep St. Mary's going.
- 10 Now is not a good time for capital improvements due to the poor economy.
- 9 We are having difficulty collecting our regular pledges so it may be difficult for members to commit additional funds.
- 8 These projects need to be done. We have been delaying them for years with band-aid solutions, and they have accumulated.
- 8 We would like to see the church getting back to using more volunteer labor to accomplish projects and repairs.

- 7 Father John is a tremendous asset as a preacher. He helps attract many from the community. We are very happy that an African-American was chosen in this white community. No Rector we have is perfect. We hope he will work with the Vestry and the congregation to resolve any problems and show us how to work together.
- 6 People will contribute more when they feel better about where the church is headed and the atmosphere returns to being peaceful.
- 5 The timing of a Capital Funds Campaign may be difficult if Father John is on sabbatical (though he deserves it) and we no longer have an assistant Rector.
- 5 A master plan for the parish is needed. Develop leadership from within to assist in various areas. Members possess many skills that can accomplish much.

About 50 more comments were offered, covering a wide variety of topics. Of those offered most often, 4 of the top 5 had to do with the financial aspects of proposals made. The first alluded to money management, and concerns that are based on past history of costs being underestimated while projects were approved before funding was certain. The economy is a factor on a number of people's minds. How will the current state of things affect a Capital Funds Campaign? Also revealed is the deep, underlying love for St. Mary's held by many members. Though 10 expressed that sentiment in this space for response, many others made similar comments throughout the interview process.

Of additional note is the acknowledgement that projects need attention and there is a desire to employ volunteer skills and labor to address the list as has been this church's practice throughout its history. There is also a desire to resolve spiritual issues and move forward.

Question 12 **Questions You Would Like Addressed.**

This question was offered in an effort to allow participants to pose questions for which they desired additional information. A total of 24 different questions were mentioned. Those of a similar nature were combined to discover trends of thought. Those asked by 3 people or more are included in this report.

- 14 Can we acquire a more detailed breakdown of the costs of each project on the list? How desperately is each item needed? Are there options or less costly solutions? We have a history of being off on project estimates and we want to be good stewards of our resources. Can we also see an analysis of the rectory proposal – current value, value if renovated, cost to demolish and replace, Father John’s input on what he would prefer, and the issues involving diocesan ownership of the property? How supportive is the Bishop during such matters?
- 8 What led to the departure of some long-time members? How many have gone and what were their reasons?
- 4 Is it possible for Father John to make some adjustments in his leadership style?
- 3 Does the church have an ongoing deficit? We would prefer a balanced budget to overspending what we do not have.
- 3 What has been accomplished by having an assistant Rector? Do we have a job description and clear goals for this position?
- 3 What is happening with the grant for the ramp project? Are there other grants available from businesses or the community to assist with the ramp, based on our food pantry and community service?

The balance of questions covered a wide array of subjects from church staff and ministries, to project details, to fundraising ideas, visibility of the church building, and the possible mold issue. By far, the greatest area of question had to do with greater clarification of the proposed projects.

Study participants felt a need to better comprehend individual items on the list of proposals, in regards to costs, choices, and necessity. A few members felt that some past decisions were made in haste, without sufficient evaluation or research. More prudent solutions could have been found and money could have been more wisely spent, or saved.

Specifically, members need a better picture of certain items, such as the rectory. What are the choices? Can the property be renovated? What is it worth now? What would it be worth if renovated? Would that solve the issues? Does the church have choices in regards to ownership of the rectory? Resolving those issues and supplying members with the facts will allow people to formulate conclusions and offer support. The process of providing project information and details will also help establish confidence where that may be lacking.

Question 13
Skills You Would be Willing to Share.

This question was asked for the purpose of discovering potential volunteer labor and skills that may exist among members. The church has a history of accomplishing many projects by donated labor. Some members desire to see this pattern re-established. Others see this method as a means of reducing the amount of funds needed to be raised, increasing the number of projects that may be addressed, and growing the sense of ownership in St. Mary’s by its members, young and old.

A total of 42 of 107 study participants offered skills and volunteer labor to assist with projects as appropriate. Those skills are listed below. Names will be supplied to leadership.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 19 – painting | 1 – estimator |
| 9 – yard work, gardening, landscaping | 1 – mechanic |
| 9 – general duties, helpers | 1 – drywall |
| 7 – carpentry | 1 – interior design |
| 5 – light construction | 1 – tile |
| 5 – cook, fix lunch | 1 – kitchen repairs |
| 4 – general construction | 1 – knows the facility |
| 3 – plumbing | 1 – research for available grants |
| 3 – cleaning, window washing | 1 – woodworking |
| 3 – organize | 1 – art work |
| 3 – “gopher” | 1 – fire equipment |
| 2 – electrical | 1 – blueprint reading |
| 2 – contractor | 1 – computers |
| 2 – help for buildings and grounds | 1 – knows a member who
removes oil tanks |
| 1 – demolition | |
| 1 – move furniture | |

Question 14
Available to Assist with a Capital Funds Campaign.

The following number of study participants have indicated a willingness to serve as volunteers should the church proceed with a Capital Funds Campaign. A separate list with names will be provided to leadership. Some people have indicated an interest in more than one area of service.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Prayer | 28 |
| Literature design and preparation | 12 |
| Overall Planning | 13 |
| Communications | 16 |

Kick-off Event	17
Help to communicate with small groups	7
Youth and children	10
Anywhere I may be needed	<u>64</u>
Total responses	167

This level of interest from a total of 107 study participants is very encouraging. Most people who make offers to assist with a campaign do so with an assumption that the campaign will take place. Though a number of people offered their help with more than one duty, it is interesting to note that 64 (60%) of participants said they will volunteer “anywhere I may be needed.” Should a Capital Funds Campaign be engaged, sufficient volunteer assistance is available to run a successful campaign. Every part of the campaign could be adequately staffed.

D. Observations

Definition: Observations are based on comments, suggestions, impressions, and various written materials reviewed, along with an interpretation based on our previous experience. The following observations were noted during this study:

1. St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church is a congregation of dedicated, committed, and caring members with a desire to move forward with a sense of mission and purpose. The warmth and friendliness of members is seen as the church's most positive attribute. Father John, the Rector, is also recognized as a gifted preacher, caring pastor, and a real asset in connecting with the local community.
2. The study was designed to evaluate the spiritual climate of St. Mary's, as well as determining the feasibility of addressing a list of proposed repairs, renovations, and upgrades submitted by the Building and Grounds Committee. To provide a valid report, a goal for participation was set at 50% of the number of church households who are active in participation and making financial contributions. As the number of active households was determined to be 150, the participation goal was set at 75. Actual participation was enjoined by 83 households, representing 55% of the active households.
3. First priority of the study was to evaluate the spiritual climate at the church. After personally speaking with 71 people and reading written responses from 36 others, the following observations can be made. The church has experienced an unfortunate series of events over the past several years involving staff, members, and executive decisions on church business matters. Each issue contributed to hurt feelings on the part of certain members. A lack of resolve concerning these hurts contributed to further disappointments, misunderstandings, and confusion about what happened and why. Lack of adequate communication allowed only one perspective to become the most dominant, leaving some actions unexplained and suspect. Hurts of those directly affected were untended. Some members decided they were unable to endure circumstances at St. Mary's, eventually leaving to worship elsewhere. Their departure left friends grieving their loss. The pain of these circumstances has caused some to disengage from active participation while waiting to see if some measure of resolve will be found.
4. In addition to the events involving people is a pattern of leadership that has been difficult to understand. A lack of information regarding church business and financial decisions has fostered a deteriorating sense of trust among some members. Being unable to balance the budget in a difficult economy has intensified some negative feelings.

5. Any of these issues by themselves would probably cause a temporary disruption in the spiritual climate of the church. Matters would be resolved and peace would resume. But all of these incidents have had a cumulative effect upon St. Mary's. Though not everyone is aware of why there is a sense of unrest, they do know it exists. Members would like to get beyond this spiritual impasse.
6. On the project side, there is strong support to address needed repairs and to improve the Rectory. People are willing to support a Capital Funds Campaign effort, both financially and in filling volunteer positions. Many are also willing to contribute "sweat equity," using their skills to address projects that volunteer labor may address.
7. While a number of issues await solutions, the membership of St. Mary's contains an incredibly able and talented number of people willing to be contributors toward solutions. Members are willing to use their gifts to assist leaders in finding answers to each issue. Members desire to work with leaders, to support their efforts, to help shoulder responsibilities, so that the church's best resources are applied to each situation. They envision a cooperative joint effort of members moving forward together.
8. The study was successful in gathering input from members on various sides of each issue presented. Participants offered both positive and negative points of view, as well as suggestions and offers to help enact solutions.

E. Conclusions

Definition: Conclusions are based on direct interpretation of surveys and personal interviews. After analysis, study, and prayer, the following conclusions have been reached:

1. This study began with a dual purpose of examining the spiritual climate and measuring support for addressing proposed repairs and renovations. In order to achieve these purposes, it was hoped that a representative group of members would participate in the study. Communication and materials were sent to all church households. A special invitation was extended to those who have stepped back from active involvement at St. Mary's. All were invited to schedule confidential interviews or to respond in writing. Telephone calls followed up mailed materials. A target of 50% of the number of active households was set, and participation exceeded the target. There were 83 households (55%) who participated in the study, including a number of households who have currently disengaged from St. Mary's. This leads to the conclusion that the study achieved its goals in being able to examine various sides of the spiritual climate, as well as adequately measuring support for addressing proposed repairs and renovations.
2. Using weather as an analogy to explain the spiritual climate at St. Mary's, one might say that the church has undergone several major storms and a number of contrary winds over the past several years. This had caused some who can endure no more difficult weather to settle elsewhere, while others have "hunkered down" in a position of relative safety until the outlook for better weather is more favorable. Major storms included the departure of a beloved assistant Rector and the removal of a Vestry member who was not of the Episcopal faith. Contrary winds included absence of communications concerning a number of decisions that were made, inconsistencies in management styles, and seeming disregard for people's feelings in the midst of decision-making processes. This has left the landscape of the church void of some former leaders, workers, and givers. Those closest to where the storms hit were the most affected. Those who were not directly affected, or whose friends were not affected, know little of the circumstances, except that some people have gone and others are upset. The lasting effects of these storms are an erosion of trust in leadership and a tentative approach to the future by those most affected. Those less affected are more ready to go forward.
3. Regarding the outlook in moving forward, members are looking to leadership to provide guidance by example. Most members have taken what action they have personally deemed necessary while awaiting leadership's next steps. Some have decided to worship elsewhere and are already engaged in service there. The majority of those who have stepped back, but not departed, are waiting on

leadership's rebuilding efforts following the storms and contrary winds. If a more transparent and amenable style of management is adopted, some will return to a more active status. If certain rules and practices are clearly identified and administered consistently, others are likely to re-engage as well.

4. While the series of storms and contrary winds caused hurts to a number of members, most people want healing to take place. They share a great love for the church and recognize the importance of St. Mary's to the community. They want to be able to worship and serve in an atmosphere of joy and peace. Any steps leadership may take in a positive direction should help promote healing and forward progress.
5. Support for the proposal to address repairs and renovations is positive. Top priorities include roof repairs and a solution for the rectory. A more thorough examination of costs and options on each item, with a clear presentation of findings to the congregation, may strengthen support for projects. Members desire to understand leadership's thinking process, with a chance to discuss results before final decisions are enacted. Though certain committees have been empowered to make recommendations and others authorized to make decisions, the extra steps of communicating details and inviting input can serve to establish better communications between members and leadership. This is how trust is re-established. Overall, 82% of study participants agree that repairs and renovations are needed. There is 86% support for a 3-year Capital Funds Campaign to generate funding, with 89% of participants offering a level of potential giving should a campaign be engaged. The middle range estimate of their giving, which is usually closest to the amount realized during a campaign, was \$272,500. Another 67 regularly contributing households have yet to be heard from, so a campaign goal of \$300,000, with a stretch goal of \$375,000 is within reason. More than 60% of study participants offered assistance in serving on campaign committees. And 42 people offered to help address projects with skills and "sweat equity." It is clear that the church, as a whole, is ready to address repairs and renovations.
6. While support to address projects is strong, there is a concern over the present state of the economy and how that may affect the ability for some people to make financial commitments. Members are willing to do what is necessary to address what they have been convinced are legitimate needs. This is why it will be important for each project to be well-defined and researched, with costs and options explained. Members are willing to assist in the process so that a few leaders are not overwhelmed. Because of their skills and backgrounds, certain members may be able to suggest the most cost-effective solutions on a project-by-project basis. This level of cooperation/ involvement can serve to re-establish trust in leadership and allow some members to step forward to become more involved again.

7. As leaders respond to the findings of this study, taking positive steps to chart a clearer course into the future, many members who are awaiting clear signals should rejoin the efforts of St. Mary's. Time and patience will be required. A greater than normal level of communication will need to be developed and maintained. If so, progress can be made and peace resumed.

F. Recommendations

Definition: Recommendations are based on our observations and conclusions. The following recommendations are respectfully submitted:

1. Support for dealing with proposed repairs and renovations is strong. If spiritual issues were resolved, support would grow stronger. We recommend that steps be taken to address spiritual issues so that as many members as possible may be re-engaged. Since some repairs are of a more critical nature, we recommend that the spiritual issues and preparations for addressing projects be done simultaneously. Both issues need to be addressed. Preferring one over the other will only create a new set of pressures.
2. To begin bringing resolve to the list of issues that have contributed to the cloud of spiritual unrest that has engulfed St. Mary's, we recommend the following:
 - A. Regarding those situations that involved particular individuals, we would recommend the formation of a reconciliation committee to deal with those issues. This committee would deal with specific incidents one-by-one. We would recommend inviting individuals to meet with the committee, not to re-hash the past, but to formulate future practices that would serve to prevent similar misfortunes from occurring again. If affected individuals choose not to meet, then those most familiar with circumstances may serve to help formulate appropriate future practices. The results of this committee's actions should be made available to all church members.
 - B. Regarding those situations that have led to frustrations with management styles and mistrust due to lack of transparency and information, the suggestion of a master plan, as noted in this study, would be a wise place to begin. As to the frustrations with management style, at least some of the problem may be that too much responsibility is maintained by too few people. As to the lack of transparency and communication, some of the problem stems from Vestry notes not being posted so people do not know what decisions have been made or why. These examples do not embrace the full scope of the problems, but they are key contributing factors. We would recommend a master plan for management and leadership based on the principles found in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. This portion of scripture points out how the church should function based upon mutual giftedness and need of each other. It presents order along with delegation. It shows how to lead with respect and appreciation for others. It also points out that every member is needed and has a valuable contribution to make.

Formulating a management flow chart according to this scriptural pattern can make way for leaders to lead without becoming overwhelmed. More members can be empowered to share ownership in the decision-making process. Each member can be freed to function in the realm of their strongest gifts without being left to serve in areas where they are weak. Others who are stronger in those areas are called upon to serve. While conventional wisdom would suggest that yielding power to others would weaken leadership, the opposite is true in the church. Leaders who function by scriptural patterns gain respect from members as the Holy Spirit flows more freely among those who serve together in unity.

3. While the spiritual issues are being resolved, we would recommend that plans for a Capital Funds Campaign are enjoined. We would recommend that a Capital Funds Campaign Committee be selected from the list of volunteers gathered from this study, and that they work together with the Buildings and Grounds Committee to clarify project details and prepare a plan in keeping with the information supplied by this study.
4. It is recommended that clear and regular communication is made with church members. This communication should be accomplished in as broad a fashion as possible, including e-mails, the website, regular mail for those not have having computer access, newsletter articles, posted minutes of key meetings, and forums held between and after Sunday services so that everyone wishing to attend may do so.
5. It is recommended that a Capital Funds Campaign goal of \$300,000, with a stretch goal of \$375,000 be enjoined. As preparation for a campaign usually takes 16 – 20 weeks, a campaign kick-off could be ready by the Spring of 2012. This timeframe would allow spiritual progress to be made, project details to be attained, and communication to occur. Since a relationship has been established between Kirby-Smith Associates and the church, we recommend that relationship be maintained. Kirby-Smith Associates can assist in guiding both spiritual and capital progress as desired by the church. We can assist with stewardship advice, creative ways to give in a difficult economy, and designing effective management styles.
6. It is our recommendation that the results of the Spiritual Assessment and Feasibility Study be shared with the congregation. The summary of the report may be distributed. Mr. Knauer is available to present a verbal summary. The study in its entirety may also be featured on the church website. Hard copies may be offered to those with no computer access.

7. Finally, at the appropriate time, Kirby-Smith Associates does provide coaching services for the Rector, church leaders, and groups. Outside coaching may assist in moving the community forward in the long-term.

G. Summary

Father John Thompson-Quartey and the Feasibility Study Committee, chaired by Jack Greene, are to be thanked for their diligent efforts in preparing the Spiritual Assessment and Feasibility Study.

A total of 107 people, representing 83 households, participated in the study. There were 71 people, representing 55 households, who were personally interviewed. There were 36 people, representing 28 households who responded with written questionnaires. This level of participation exceeded the goal of 75 households, representing 55% of the 150 households who are active in participation and giving. Demographics of participants included 21% who have attended St. Mary's for 0-5 years, 16% for 6-10 years, and 64% for 11 years or more. Overall, participants have a positive view of the church, 51% being very favorable and 38% favorable. There were 10% who hold a less than favorable view. Most people (85%) consider themselves to be involved at some level, 27% very involved, 38% involved, and 20% somewhat involved. There were 6% who want to become more involved than they are now.

An examination of the church's spiritual climate began by focusing on positive aspects. The top five responses centered around (1) warm and friendly people, (2) Father John's ministry, (3) the church's outreach programs, (4) the inclusive and welcoming nature of the congregation, and (5) programs for children and youth. Next was a question regarding things that can be improved. Top five responses included (1) lack of communication, (2) lack of transparency in the management of finances, (3) better recruitment and engagement of volunteers, (4) an erosion of trust in leadership, and (5) repairs to the facility. When asked what the number one item to be addressed would be, participants said work to bring closure to divisions and discontentment (20), facility repairs (15), greater efficiency in budgeting and balancing the budget (14), and improve style of leadership and management (13). This input, along with other comments offered, contributed to recommendations offered later in the report.

Turning to the portion of the study dealing with proposed repairs and renovations, participants were asked to help prioritize specific items. Roof repairs were seen as the top priority. Next was the matter of the rectory, though more information is desired before the best solution can be determined. A medium priority is the retaining wall. Both the air conditioning and carpeting were rated as lower priorities. Two items stood out on the list where others could be mentioned – the basement mold issues and handicapped accessibility. There were 82% of study participants who agree that repairs and renovations are needed – 37% strongly agree and 45% agree. Overall, 86% of participants support a Capital Funds Campaign to generate project funding – 24% being very supportive, 38% supportive, and 24% supportive with some reservations,

7% were not supportive and 6% undecided. There were 89% of participants who offered a level of potential giving should a campaign go forward. The middle range of estimates is historically the closest to what is actually realized in a campaign. In this case, that estimate is \$272,500 from 74 of 83 households. As another 67 contributing households have yet to be heard from, a campaign goal of \$300,000 with a stretch goal of \$375,000, is within reason. It should also be noted that there were 167 responses of people willing to assist with the tasks of a campaign. Obviously, some people expressed interest in more than one position. To gain perspective on the level of enthusiasm, 64 people (60%) of 107 participants volunteered to serve anywhere they may be needed. Forty-two (42) of 107 participants offered skills and “sweat equity” under 30 different categories.

Among other comments offered, the top five responses included a concern that money raised will be spent responsibly (15), new methods of fundraising be explored (14), members love for their church (10), concern over holding a campaign in a difficult economy (10), and the church is having difficulty collecting current pledges (9). Additional questions asked were headed by a request for a more detailed cost breakdown of potential projects (23) and an explanation of why some member have departed (8).

Observations made during the study confirmed that spiritual issues exist. These spiritual issues are hindering forward progress as they have created a climate of confusion and unrest. Members desire that these issues be resolved so that peace may be restored. Members would also like a more detailed explanation of proposed projects as they support addressing those of utmost concern. Conclusions confirmed several problem areas of a spiritual nature, including hurt feelings, erosion of trust in leadership practices, lack of transparency in financial decisions, and issues with style of management. Resolving these issues could lead to the re-involvement of some members who have taken a step back. Resolutions could also increase support for moving forward with proposed projects. Most importantly, a sense of peace and unity may be regained.

Based on observations and conclusions, recommendations include the formation of a reconciliation committee to bring closure to specific incidents, along with charting a course of management style to minimize future incidents of a similar nature. Also recommended is a master plan for leadership guided by scriptural principles found in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. According to this Biblical guide, more members will be involved in providing input according to their areas of expertise and giftedness. By virtue of delegation and sharing of responsibilities, individual leaders will not be so overburdened and will be able to function as they are best equipped. A better spirit of cooperation and congregational ownership should result.

It is recommended that the resolve of spiritual issues and the planning to address proposed repairs commence simultaneously, as both issues need to be addressed. As Kirby-Smith Associates has developed a relationship with the church, along with an understanding of the issues, it is recommended that Kirby-Smith Associates be retained to assist and guide both processes. That way, a Capital Funds Campaign could be prepared for the Spring of 2012, while spiritual issues are resolved and project details are gathered for congregational review. All progress should be clearly communicated to all members through all means available.

H. Thank you

It is with great appreciation that we thank you for allowing KSA Services to assist you with this Spiritual Assessment and Feasibility Study.

A special note of thanks is extended to Father John for his hospitality, trust, and kind cooperation in facilitating this study. Thanks go to the Vestry for addressing the needs of the congregation by commissioning this process. Thanks to Jack Greene and the Feasibility Study Committee for their efforts in preparing materials and contacting members to ensure an excellent level of participation. Thanks to the Church Administrator and volunteers for preparing the building for meetings and interviews. And, thanks to all who made the effort to participate.

As a decision is made on how to proceed with spiritual solutions and proposed projects, Kirby-Smith Associates would be honored to guide your efforts and conduct a Capital Funds Campaign for St. Mary's. We will work with you, exerting the same diligence and care to design and conduct a campaign that will help you achieve your vision and goals.

Again, thank you very much. It has been a distinct pleasure serving St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church. We will be praying for your success as you consider your next steps in this journey by faith.