



## Feasibility Study Executive Summary

### Background

Pastor Ken, the pastoral staff, and the Leadership Committee are to be thanked for their time, efforts, and prayers in preparing Wallenpaupack Church for this very important study. Since occupying its first permanent home, the congregation has experienced rapid growth. This growth has stretched the building beyond its capacity in a number of ways. Leadership has acknowledged a need for more space. The purpose of this study is to measure the congregation's response to this need. Much weight will be given to this input in deciding how to address this need.

### Methodology

A participation goal of at least half the active households of the congregation was set, being 60 of 120 active households. A participation of at least half the number of active households strongly validates study results. It should be noted that the number 120 is a "best guess" of staff as the actual number is somewhat fluid due to the rapid growth and lack of administrative space and tools to maintain a comprehensive data base. A total of 88 households, including 113 individuals, took part in the study, for an 73% response rate. This 73% level of participation included 30 people from 17 households who engaged in confidential interviews to discuss their responses, and 83 people from 71 households who responded online or by returning paper questionnaires.

### Findings

Demographically, 54% of participants have been attending the church for 2 years or less, 23% 3-5 years, 8% 6-9 years, and 15% 10 years or more. 99% consider their needs to be sufficiently taken care of, 81% very well taken care of and 18% well enough. 75% consider themselves involved in church activities at some level, with 41% wanting to be contacted about becoming more involved. This response indicates the strong level of interest people have for their church.

100% of participants consider the need for space an important issue. If not all areas of need can be addressed right away, the order that members prefer is as follows:

32% - Wallykids space	15% - Administrative space
27% - Youth space	4% - Informal gathering space
22% - Group worship space	1% - Other (no specific space mentioned)

Priority was given to children and youth first. Both of these groups are currently struggling to make current spaces work, including a tent outdoors. A desire for increased group worship space closely follows along with a desire to reduce the current number of Sunday services so that more time can be given to greetings and fellowship. Administrative space needs are understood and benefits of more informal gathering space are also valued. But the priorities are what they are. 96% of participants support leaders developing a plan to address these needs. No one was opposed. Primary benefits of adding space included better space to minister to children, ability to keep growing and preserve growth already gained, reduce the number of Sunday services, provide space for the youth, and increase outreach opportunities.

Support for a capital campaign to generate funding for a project stood at 88%. 13% were neutral. 91% offered an estimate of giving to a potential 3-year campaign. Amounts were measured at the low, middle, and high points of each range of suggested giving levels. The amounts that could be realized in 3 years were a low level total of \$472,500, a mid-level total of \$639,000, and a high level total of \$805,500. A number of factors were weighed in order to provide a conservative estimate that leaders may use for planning purposes. These factors include those who currently support the church who did not participate in the study, potential non-cash donations, and the consultant's experience gained on hundreds of campaigns. A conservative goal of \$550,000-\$650,000 should be attained in a 3-year campaign effort. This figure should have little downside risk with greater upside potential.

94 individuals said that they are, or may be, interested in helping with campaign efforts, be that on a committee, assisting with a special event, or in some other way. Volunteer labor has been offered in 32 different categories including a number of professional licenses and certifications. Some donations of materials may be available as well as use of some heavy equipment. All of these offerings of "sweat equity" could make a difference in the planning process and may help with project costs as such volunteerism did with the present building.

All comments made throughout the study are listed in the full report. Those of a similar nature are combined and may be slightly reworded to reflect the group's overall thoughts. 56 final comments primarily reiterate positions taken throughout the study, but also add a number of visionary thoughts having to do with ministry goals for the future. A number of questions were also posed which will be directed to leaders for responses.

In conclusion, participants appear to be in agreement that a need for more space exists and should be addressed. An air of expectation exists that something will be planned and carried out. The vision seems to be that the church should continue its pattern of growth, meaningful ministry, and outreach. Caring for children and youth must be a priority. Effective ministry will require more space as soon as possible. If a plan is developed as soon as possible, people will patiently endure in the meantime.

## Recommendations

Based on study results, recommendations include:

1. Study results should be shared with the congregation, including access to the full text.
2. Leaders should not delay in developing a plan, with a feasible project budget
3. Members with specific areas of expertise may be consulted to assist with planning
4. Members should be regularly apprised of progress during the planning process
5. A capital funds campaign should be initiated as soon as possible as all steps associated with design, permits, approvals, and construction will require cash. To delay the fundraising process could delay the timing of any project..
6. As many volunteers as possible should be engaged to lend their energy to a campaign effort
7. Volunteer skills and labor should be assessed in order to determine how much of a factor it may lend to an overall project plan
8. It is recommended that professional guidance be retained to guide a capital campaign effort. Churches who attempt this step by themselves generally realize an amount of 50-60% of what may be gained with guidance. This worked well for the church before.

A final word of thanks is extended to all those who made time in their schedules to participate in the study. Your help was appreciated and key to the success of this study. Thank you!