

# **Engaging Space Task Force Final Report**

## **as of February 10, 2020**

### **Summary**

A survey of 174 members and friends, conducted between Oct. 6 and Nov. 3, 2019, indicates the congregation's highest priority for changes to our building and grounds is to have a dedicated space for coffee and fellowship between and after services. Second priority is a more welcoming fellowship hall/sanctuary, and third priority is more space for small group meetings.

On Jan. 12, 2020, about 40 congregants attended an open house forum to share the survey results and flesh out conceptual changes. They confirmed the need for a dedicated coffee space and the desire to make our fellowship hall / sanctuary a more welcoming space.

### **Introduction**

The Engaging Space Task Force (ESTF) was created by the BUUF Board to “craft and carry out a discernment process about our fellowship’s ‘home’ and property in order to help BUUF’s campus fully support its mission, vision, and values going forward.” Since January 2019 the ESTF gathered information on how our BUUF campus—indoors, outdoors, and the Douglas property—can best support our strategic plan. In addition to maintenance and repair, how can we use, expand, or modify our physical spaces where we come together to worship, connect, and engage in justice making? How can the Douglas property best support our mission and vision? How can we make our spaces more inviting, sacred, functional, and environmentally sustainable?

After gathering data from many individuals and resources, the ESTF developed a list of projects that could enhance our current space to better support our mission, vision, and strategic plan. The ESTF developed a survey that was available on-line and in paper format. They conducted informational sessions about our spaces on October 6 and 13, before, during, and after each service. About 80 people attended the information sessions. The survey was open online and on paper from October 6 through November 3. In total, 174 surveys were turned in, with 32 filled out on paper and entered by a team member, and the rest done online.

Survey summary results available upon request.

The survey collected demographics such as membership, age, years of attendance, frequency of attendance at Sunday services, and willingness to contribute financially to the highest priority projects. The survey asked about eight different projects in three different ways: 1. Perceived need, ranging from 1 meaning not needed to 7 being very needed, 2. Prioritized ranking with 1 being highest personal priority, and 3. Prioritized ranking with 1 being the most mission-oriented and best for the congregation as a whole. Not all ratings and rankings were completed by each person.

The projects surveyed:

- Dedicated coffee space (\$10,000-20,000)
- Remodeled storage space (\$5,000-20,000)
- Remodeled / expanded office space (\$20,000-100,000)
- More inviting sanctuary / fellowship hall (\$10,000-100,000)
- Small group meeting spaces (\$10,000-50,000)
- Chapel / quiet meditation space (\$10,000-250,000)
- Enhanced outdoor sanctuary (\$10,000-100,000)
- Dedicated sanctuary (\$2,600,000 – 4,000,000)
- Other

### Results of Survey

On paper surveys people did not rank all nine options, but almost everyone ranked their top three projects. Therefore, when the paper results were entered into the survey tool, the data entry person gap filled rankings top to bottom as needed, with “other” ranked as last, or 9. Several online participants indicated they didn’t have a preference after their top projects but they were forced to enter something. As a result, we primarily looked at top rankings.

**Rating of Perceived Need.** When asked about the perceived need of each project, on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being “not needed” and 7 being “very needed”, 66% of the respondents rank a dedicated coffee space as either a 6 or a 7, very needed. Second is a more inviting fellowship hall / sanctuary, and third is storage space.

Category	1- not needed	2	3	4- neutral	5	6	7- very needed	total	% 6 or 7	Avg response
Dedicated coffee space	3	5	6	17	26	49	66	172	<b>66%</b>	5.73
Storage space	5	4	6	25	43	48	41	172	<b>52%</b>	5.35
Office space	5	1	4	40	35	45	41	171	<b>50%</b>	5.33
Inviting Sanctuary/ Fellowship hall	6	3	11	31	25	54	41	171	<b>56%</b>	5.29
Small group meeting spaces	5	3	6	34	46	47	29	170	<b>45%</b>	5.18
Chapel/quiet space	10	8	15	46	39	35	17	170	<b>31%</b>	4.58
Outdoor sanctuary	10	13	10	33	40	39	23	168	<b>37%</b>	4.72
Dedicated sanctuary	45	18	27	34	16	14	18	172	<b>18%</b>	3.42

**Personal Prioritized Ranking (159 responses)**

Category	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	% High Priority (1,2,3)
Dedicated coffee space	60	35	22	<u>74%</u>
Storage space	7	20	27	34%
Office space	18	25	22	<u>41%</u>
Inviting Sanctuary/ Fellowship hall	29	25	29	<u>48%</u>
Small group meeting spaces	9	21	26	35%
Chapel/quiet space	7	8	10	15%
Outdoor sanctuary	9	13	16	24%
Dedicated sanctuary	13	11	4	18%

**Mission Prioritized Ranking. (157 responses)**

When priorities are ranked by how they are most mission-oriented and best for the congregation as a whole, three projects stand out: dedicated coffee space, more inviting sanctuary, and small group meeting spaces.

Category	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	% High Priority (1,2,3)
Dedicated coffee space	54	31	19	<u>66%</u>
Storage space	1	13	18	20%
Office space	8	13	21	26%
Inviting Sanctuary/ Fellowship hall	39	36	24	<u>63%</u>
Small group meeting spaces	20	27	30	<u>49%</u>
Chapel/quiet space	7	17	13	23%
Outdoor sanctuary	10	8	18	22%
Dedicated sanctuary	14	10	9	21%

Priorities change when people consider our building and grounds in terms of our mission. Space for coffee is desired because that is where people connect with one another and make plans. Consider how much our social justice work has grown in just the last few years. That ties to our need for adult small group spaces for Sunday mornings. From meditation to Inquirers to committee work to adult RE to Plate Partner presentations, small groups matter. And that need comes full circle back to the fellowship hall, which is our sanctuary and deserves to be embraced as such. Our sanctuary is our face to the public, our face to newcomers, and where we gather to lift hearts, broaden minds, and honor the interconnected web of life.

### **Open House on January 12, 2020**

ESTF held an open house for comments and discussion on Sunday, January 12 after second service, from 12:30 to 3:00 pm. BUUF Board attended and actively engaged in discussion. After a Powerpoint presentation by Cathy Carmen and Sue Langley, which explained the process used by ESTF and shared results of our survey, people went to different tables to help flesh out the size and scope of our proposal. The table topics were dedicated coffee space, fellowship hall/sanctuary, adult meeting spaces, and “all other”. Each person had a chance to give input at two different tables.

As the board heard at that open house, moving the coffee out of the sanctuary and working toward improving our current sanctuary/fellowship area was overwhelmingly supported by the attendees. No other suggestions were submitted for the location of the coffee area--our suggestion of the Fahs room was supported. Many interesting ideas were discussed on other topics that are attached, including small group meeting space, outdoors, and the use of the Douglas Property. We identified a few key members who were particularly passionate that may be part of the next phase of this project. We leave it in the hands of the Board to determine the direction forward. Thank you for entrusting this task to us.

Comments from the break out sessions available upon request.