



September 29, 2021

Dear St. John's,

Perhaps it has become trite with overuse to say so, but we've just experienced an unprecedented 18 months that none of us could have imagined. Thank you for your ongoing prayers, support, and care for one another through such transition and uncertainty. This time of living with a pandemic has in some ways clarified what is essential in our faith community right now:

- 1) feeding the hungry;
- 2) caring for the sick, suffering, despairing and dying in their distress;
- 3) staying connected with God (in worship, prayers, meditation);
- 4) staying connected with and caring for one another.

It's also essential that we find creative ways to communicate. We are all searching for some semblance of 'normalcy' and getting back to routines. But it's just fair, and important, to say that some things will be different in our shared life. Some of our ministries have evolved and changed. Things will look and feel different after not being in the building for a significant time. We will start our final phase of the Capital Campaign construction project soon, and things will move and morph to make our spaces more accessible and hospitable. To that end, I will be sending a communication, "Update from the Rector," every couple weeks or so to keep you updated on the progress. We're trying to keep our costs low by sending this via email. If you would prefer to receive the letter by mail, please let me know.

We have attached a Capital Campaign update and our best estimates for a construction schedule. However, even these may change depending on material supply and acquisition, contractor availability, and weather. We will do our best to keep you informed in the coming weeks and months. Your questions are always welcome.

During this time, let's keep our hearts focused on what is **essential**, even as we go through growing pangs, shifts, modifications, and adjustments. Your patience and flexibility are appreciated, and your generosity of spirit to the leaders, decision makers, and work teams entrusted with our ministries means more than you can know.

Finally, as you are deciding how and in what ways to participate in the life of St. John's ministries during this season in our lives together, I encourage you to decide what is essential for your spirituality and well-being and safety. Stay connected to God and to each other. And know that you are loved and treasured beyond measure. Peace.

Beth +

The Rev. Beth Taylor, Rector

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Everyone is Welcome! Everyone Belongs!



St. John's Episcopal Church Capital Campaign Update – September 2021

St. John's three-year Capital Campaign, *Affirming our Welcome: Building in Faith*, began in September 2019. Projects include:

- Repairs to our roofs: **Completed**
- New HVAC system (including air conditioning to the sanctuary and Jatho Hall): **Completed**
- New Accessible Entry and Elevator: **To be completed – Winter 2022**

Where we are with Capital Campaign pledges, donations, grants, and loans:

We have received \$708,655 to-date of the \$885,151 pledged by 134 members and friends of the St. John's family. This is an amazing expression of your faith and belief in this campaign, especially during the challenging times brought about by the current pandemic.

In addition to pledges by parishioners and friends, we received a \$15,000 grant from Diocesan Council and a second grant from the Trustees of the Diocese for \$25,000, and a rebate from DTE for \$ 18,212. Last year the diocese also approved a low interest loan for up to \$200,000 to support our cash flow as we move forward with construction. Just last week, based on our request, that line of credit was increased by the Diocesan Council to \$300,000. This increased amount is extremely helpful as it should cover our long-term borrowing needs from a single source with very favorable terms.

At the beginning of this year, the total cost for all three projects was estimated to be \$ 1,231,000. Roof repair and HVAC installation were completed slightly under budget, but the estimated cost of construction for the new accessible entry and elevator project, based on actual bids received, is significantly higher than previously estimated due to economic, supply chain and COVID-19 related issues. The total cost of that project was estimated to be \$737,000 in January, but the actual cost is likely to be \$844,000 (including the Woodward ramp repair, which was already completed, architect's fees, etc.). We trimmed some other project expenses, so now the total cost of the capital campaign is expected to be \$ 1,325,000, for a net increase in cost of approximately \$ 94,000 (7.6%) from our January estimates.

To address the shortfall, in part, the Vestry has allocated \$60,000 to the project from existing savings. As we approach the end of the construction process, based on pledges still expected in 2022, we will still be short in terms of cash flow by approximately \$140,000 near the end of the construction process. This amount of shortfall in cash is essentially the same as the expected capital campaign revenue for 2022. We may elect to secure a second loan from a bank for that amount in December, but currently the Finance Committee and Vestry are leaning towards borrowing from ourselves to avoid additional short term debt service costs from a bank. We have enough long-term savings to do this comfortably, and 2022 pledge revenue should be enough to pay back this short term "borrowing" from our savings by the end of 2022.

If you are in a position to pay your pledge to the Capital Campaign in advance, or increase your pledge, or if you would like to make a pledge or a contribution to the Capital Campaign *you can do so at any time – make your check payable to St. John's Episcopal Church and write "Capital Campaign" in the memo field*, or go to the St. John's website www.stjohnsroyalok.org, click on the GIVE button and select the Capital Campaign option for making a one-time or recurring gift. **Thank you.**

Construction Timeline and Description of Building Changes:

The primary goal of the renovation is to provide welcome, hospitality, and accessibility to St. John's and to the wider community who use our building with a **new entryway, elevator, and other improvements to our spaces**. The Vestry hired a construction management firm, Ronnisch Construction Group, to secure bids from contractors and manage the construction process. The Vestry also appointed a team of parishioners and staff to meet weekly with the Ronnisch team and our architects to provide direction (*Will Wittig, Marie Donigan, Tim Morgan, Maria Walter, Rev. Beth Taylor, Jennifer Perkins*).

Timeline for Entryway/Elevator Addition:

- The original timeline for the completion of the entry vestibule / renovation project was sometime in October; clearly that timeline has been pushed back. In May we received a comprehensive set of bids for the project that in total were well over our budget. Our team, along with our professional team of Ronnisch and Thomas Roberts Architects, worked diligently over the summer to reduce the cost of the project as much as possible without compromising any of our core goals, which has required many thoughtful discussions, revised drawings, and rebidding the project with dozens of sub-contractors. Other issues such as supply chain concerns, getting city approvals, and negotiations with our utility providers have also added to some of the delays we have experienced over the summer.
- That process is now essentially complete, and construction will begin in early October. Fortunately, during this delay we have already secured the required approvals from the City of Royal Oak, so we are poised to begin construction without further delay. (Stay tuned for an announcement about a groundbreaking ceremony one Sunday after church.)
- Of course, we are all wondering when the project will be completed. The main thing to keep in mind is we all need to be very flexible with this process, especially given the added challenges that the pandemic is causing for everyone including the construction industry. Our best guess is that most of the project will be complete in mid-January. It is possible that the new entry vestibule may be useable, although not complete, by Christmas. We certainly can't promise that, but rest assured that everyone involved in the project is working very hard to get us to the best possible outcome as quickly as possible.
- One key element of the project we already know will be delayed a bit due to material supply issues, which is the elevator. It's likely that the new elevator will not be functional and ready for use until mid-February. The rest of the construction will be done before that, but the lead time for the elevator equipment has increased recently, so we will have a slightly longer wait for that one part of the project.
- As we move through the coming weeks and months, we will keep the congregation apprised on our progress through letters and meetings after church on Sundays. We will communicate in advance which entrances are open, and any limitations that are required for building access. As always, worship will be available on Zoom in addition to whatever we can offer in person. Thank you in advance for your patience as we embrace these changes together.

How the Current Spaces will Change:

We would like to take this opportunity to review some of the changes you can expect inside the building. For the most part our plans have not changed since the original design, so much of this is review, but we will also touch on a few small changes that were impacted by the budget.

- The **Entry Stairs** leading from the new entry vestibule up to the main level will receive a major refresh with new flooring, a new ceiling, new lighting, fresh paint, and a new more open handrail in place of the concrete block wall.
- The new "**Community Room**" (previously known as the Choir Room at the top of the parking lot entry stairs) will provide a home for our convertible "Nursery" on Sunday mornings, minimizing the distance between children and parents. The Community Room will be equipped with multifunctional storage space so that nursery toys can be stored after use on Sunday morning. The room itself will become another accessible and attractive meeting room for St. John's and other community groups. Clear glass will be installed in the windows (in place of the yellow glass) to provide more natural light and a sight line into the courtyard and sanctuary. A new ceiling and ceiling fans, carpet, furniture, and lighting will be added. The Choir will now rehearse in the sanctuary and music storage is being moved to another location. This space will have a new pair of glass doors leading directly into the space from the hallway.

You may recall from previous drawings that this space had been proposed to be very open to the corridor. This is one change in the plans that was affected by the budget, but also by a reassessment of the use of the space. There were several details associated with opening the space that much that proved to be too expensive, and we also decided that being a little less open to the corridor and not sub-dividing the room into two smaller spaces had other functional benefits.

- The **Library** will not change except for new furnishings and a relocated kitchenette.
- The **Library Restroom** previously connected to the Library will be removed to make space for the elevator.
- The **Main Restrooms** on the main level across from the Church Office remain unchanged.
- A **carpeted seating/gathering area** will be added in the space previous known as the Coat Closet. This will open the sight line towards the existing elevator and the Narthex, creating a more welcoming atmosphere for small gatherings.
- The space previously known as **“The Nursery”** on the basement level (B1) is being converted into a robing room for Choir, Acolytes, Clergy vestments, and Christmas Pageant costumes. The robes and vestments will be stored in new closed cabinets so the room can also be used as another attractive and accessible meeting space.
- The current men’s bathroom on the basement level (B1) is also being removed to accommodate the lower level entrance to the elevator. **Two new unisex restrooms** will be installed on the basement level, near the location of the current Women’s Room on this level, providing updated and fully accessible bathrooms for everyone using that level and Jatho Hall.
- **Open Hands Food Pantry** food storage and packaging that currently takes place in the West Transept of the sanctuary will be moved to the basement level (B1) once the construction on that level is completed. Food pantry distribution has expanded to include cold storage of fresh meat, bread, and produce that will remain outside in a drive-through operation, even after the pandemic subsides.
- Although it’s not directly part of the Capital Campaign, the Vestry allocated \$18,200 to the **New To You Resale Shop** while the shop was closed for renovations. That renovation is complete - carpet, paint, ceiling fans, additional electrical outlets and a ramp have been added to the space. New To You is rebuilding inventory, merchandising the shop, and adding credit card machines and cash registers. We will finalize the timing of the reopening of the shop after construction is underway so we can confirm when it will be safe to invite our guests and volunteers back into the space. A Guiding Coalition was appointed by the Vestry to oversee this project: *(Lynne Muth, Mary Adams, Lisa Dion, LeeAnn Morgan, Dennis Spatafora, Rosemary Spatafora, Rev. Beth Taylor)*

Thank you

In all that we do, we continue to be so grateful for this St. John’s community, and for the prayers, financial support, and hard work we have witnessed from all of you. Collectively, we continue to demonstrate the love and resilience that has always been at the core of this amazing faith community.

With sincere thanks,

Marie Donigan, Co-Chair of the Capital Campaign

Veronica Griffith, Co-Warden of the Vestry

Maria Walter, Treasurer and Co-Chair of Finance Committee

Bob Weigel, Co-Chair of Finance Committee

Will Wittig, Co-Warden of the Vestry and Co-Chair of the Capital Campaign



Ephesians 3:20-21 *Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine:
Glory to God from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.*