

Church Council Report to the Congregation

At the congregational meeting last August, a vote was held to gauge preferences for possible construction projects. These projects were particularly designed to improve accessibility in all areas of our church campus regularly used for ministry. In the following months it was concluded that additional information was needed to determine the most pressing needs related to accessibility and safety.

At the direction of the Executive Committee and approval of Church Council, a representative task force was convened to assess the needs of our St. Paul's Church as it pertained to the buildings and surrounding areas. Identifying and prioritizing these needs would then give helpful direction for further maintenance, reconstruction, and construction projects.

Members of the Task Force included Sue Ambrosic (Kitchen Angels) Dan Farrar (Church Treasurer) Marsha Fortune (Community Meal) Don Gray (Property & Management) Jim Johnson (Property & Management) Karl Kalk (Worship & Church Music) Mark Kreemer (Pastor) Cindy Lash (Welfare & Social Action) Patty Long (Task Force Chair) Paul Mutchler (Renovation 2012) and Tracie Schmolt (Church Finance, Community Clothes Closet).

The Task Force met three times. Meeting one involved an extensive tour of all three buildings and the surrounding areas. Meeting two involved compiling a list of the most obvious needs, with the third gathering focused on discussing and ranking the identified needs and labeling each as a maintenance project (M) or a need more likely addressed through a capital campaign (C). It was acknowledged that neither area (M) or (C) would come without cost. With the completion of this final step, the task force arrived at recommendations to be forwarded to Church Council for its consideration. Thanks to the members of the task force for their insight and thoughtful work on behalf of the congregation. The complete Needs Assessment Task Force report is available on our church website under Church Council, then Church Council Minutes.

At the Congregational Meeting on May 21st, Church Council will propose that a capital campaign be organized to raise funds for several high-priority projects. It is the recommendation of Council that, as funds are available, we begin with safety and accessibility projects that could include:

- Reconstruction of the Harvard Street concrete steps, leading from the lower parking area.
- Installation of a building-wide fire alarm system.
- Parish Hall main floor handicapped-accessible restrooms (across from the lounge).
- Refurbishment of the Gleitsman Lounge.
- Replacement of the church building boiler.
- Driveway alignment and enclosure of the porte cochere.

It is our understanding that, using current pricing, these projects in total could easily cost \$300,000. This would begin phase one of the capital campaign. Please note that the recommendation includes the words "as funds are available." Council's concern for the physical needs of the buildings includes the need to see that the programming life of the church is not compromised. It is a balancing act with the intent that one should not suffer at the expense of the other. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this information and ask that you plan to attend the May 21st Congregational Meeting.

A final thought. Moving forward, we should be mindful that as a part of good stewardship, a thorough needs assessment for our church should be completed on an annual basis.

Eric Myers
Church Council President
March 20, 2023