

## **A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER PLANNING TEAM**

September 13, 2022

Hello from the Master Planning Team! We want to provide you with an important update about our building. If you've been following our posts in the e-News, you know that the most recent projected cost for restoration of our sanctuary facade is about \$650,000 – which is more than double what we anticipated last spring. As we explained when we shared this news in August, the reasons for the higher price include the impact of inflation on construction materials and the fact that the subcontractors we need for this project are very busy and therefore less interested in taking on an unusual job (like ours); this has resulted in fewer and higher bids.

As you might imagine, our team has used the past couple weeks to discuss how this higher cost for sanctuary facade restoration impacts the overall master plan and capital campaign. And we have brainstormed the alternative options we can think of related to the sanctuary facade, including changing the wall design and selling the property rather than repairing the facade.

Principle # 5 of the UUA principles is “we affirm the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process.” At St. John's, the big important decisions get made via the democratic process: we elect our lay leaders, we choose which minister to call, we vote to approve our annual budget. And we voted last spring to restore the sanctuary facade and conduct a capital campaign, making that decision based on a set of assumptions that have now changed.

Our team works on behalf of the congregation and we really appreciate the trust and confidence that you've shown in us during the past year. We've tried to be as transparent as possible throughout this process. Having spent many hours working “up close and personal” on this project, the team does have an opinion about the best course of action. And we also trust you, our members, to make good decisions for the congregation, even when St. John's is faced with tough choices.

That's why the Team has asked the Board to call a special congregational meeting on Sunday October 9 to vote again on the plan to begin the restoration of our sanctuary facade. As we did earlier this year, this will be a multi-platform meeting with those online being able to speak to those gathered in person, and vice versa.

Because we know that some folks have questions about the facade repair and some may be wondering about other options that we might pursue, we want to take time BEFORE that congregational vote to have a “big discussion.” We want to provide a time when everyone - in person and online - has an opportunity to share and listen to our members' questions, ideas, and concerns. We will share with you our research, and invite you to bring your own ideas and suggestions as well. That big discussion will be structured in a way that promotes sharing of all perspectives and ample opportunity for questions to be asked and addressed.

We want everyone to attend, even if you think you already have your mind made up about what the best course of action is! So please mark your calendars for Sunday Sept. 25 for this big discussion, conducted both in person and online. Bring a snack and plan to spend about 90 minutes with us, so that together we are prepared to make the right decision when we vote on Oct. 9. Having this conversation together will make the Oct. 9 meeting go smoothly for everyone.

We recognize that these meetings take place on days when the walks for ALS and suicide prevention are taking place. We join with Nicole who leads the SIDE WITH LOVE team for the suicide walk and urge you to make a contribution to support her as she walks for St. John's (and by the way, Nicole has asked for an absentee ballot for the vote!)

Here are the dates for the big discussion and Special Congregational meetings as well as several drop-in zoom sessions; if you have questions before the big discussion, we would be happy to talk about whatever is on your mind.

Lastly - Thank you, for reading this message and for supporting St. John's.

DROP-IN ZOOM MEETINGS with the Master Planning Team:

- Wed. Sept. 14 @ 7 p.m. <https://tinyurl.com/Sanctuary-zoom-09-14-22>
- Fri. Sept. 23 @ 4 p.m. <https://tinyurl.com/Sanctuary-zoom-09-23-22>
- Sat. Sept. 24 @ 9 a.m. <https://tinyurl.com/Sanctuary-zoom-09-24-22>

BIG DISCUSSION – Sunday, Sept. 25, immediately following the service - Link will be shared before the meeting.

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – Sunday, Oct. 9, immediately following the service - Link will be shared before the meeting.