

# St. John's Sanctuary Restoration

## For your information and Frequently-asked Questions:

### First, the FYI:

There will be another opportunity to learn more about identified sanctuary repairs prior to an April 10 special congregational meeting. The Master Planning Team and Board will host a discussion to review why we are ready to move forward with the restoration of our exterior walls and address questions from members and friends.

- Tuesday, April 5, at 7 p.m. conducted only on Zoom with this link:  
<https://tinyurl.com/Apr5-SanctuaryDiscussion>

### Now, the FAQs:

- 1. What are the problems that prompted the assessment of the sanctuary walls?**  
Please read the assessment report: <https://tinyurl.com/StJohnsFacadeAssessment>  
There have been leaks in the wall and deterioration inside and outside for some time. Buckets catching the leaks are visible in the back of the sanctuary. Several windows are cracked. We have known there were issues but this is the first time we have obtained a professional assessment of the causes, damage, and needed repairs.
- 2. Will this restoration work fix the wall problem “forever”?**  
We love the unique design of our sanctuary exterior! And ... as a result of the assessment, we now understand that there are some aspects of the wall design that create challenges to preserving the walls externally and internally. Once restored, the walls can be professionally maintained on a periodic routine schedule, thereby preventing further issues from developing. Today's methods and products for caulking are improved compared to 1960. Routine professional maintenance activities will be needed every five years. If we take care of the structure after restoration, we will be preventing future problems. The Board will budget for this periodic building maintenance expense.
- 3. Will the windows be replaced?**  
At this time the plan is to remove each window and then reinstall it with better sealant. Broken windows will be replaced. We evaluated whether there could be a positive environmental impact by installing different windows and determined that “new” windows would change the light entering the sanctuary and would not have a significant positive impact on energy usage.
- 4. How much will the sanctuary restoration cost?**  
The estimate included in the assessment is \$286,000. This figure does not include all costs, so the team and Board have rounded the anticipated cost to approximately \$300,000. We anticipate contracting for a Guaranteed Maximum Price which means if the cost is lower, we will pay less.

4. **Who has St. John's engaged to serve as architect and general contractor for this work?**

The leader of the architectural team is Nestor Melnyk from MSA Design and our general contractor will be Beischel Building Company. They were selected following a competitive interview process. By the way, these professionals recently worked together to complete major renovation work at nearby Immanuel Presbyterian Church on Clifton Avenue.

5. **Who will supervise the sanctuary restoration project?**

The Master Planning Team under the direction of the Board of Trustees will continue to monitor and supervise the sanctuary restoration work, providing frequent updates to the congregation. Our contractor, Beischel Building Company, will assign a superintendent for the project and they will be present at the building throughout construction.

6. **When will the work begin and how long will the restoration work take?**

The architect has begun the pre-construction phase of planning and design in order to keep things moving forward. With luck, we'll be starting on the construction by June 2022. It is estimated that the construction work will take six to eight months. This is due in part to the need to do the phases of work sequentially, and the amount of time it will take to complete individual window restoration. That's why we want the congregation's approval to get started right away – so that the work can be done during milder weather.

7. **What will we do on Sundays while the sanctuary is under construction and how will our art be protected?**

Rev. Mitra will be planning creatively for Sunday services based on the evolving status of our sanctuary restoration process. Everyone will be kept apprised as the work proceeds. Our contractor is well-versed in working within existing church buildings; they understand the need for protecting interior furnishings and the importance of maximizing options for use of the space during the construction period. They have assured us that the Bertoia sculpture, paintings and organ will all be safely protected. They will install some type of barrier between the work area and the remainder of the sanctuary.

8. **Why do we need a bridge loan and what's the plan for a capital campaign?**

The board has reserved some available assets for this work, but St. John's does not currently have \$300,000 available in cash on hand or available from endowment funds. While we could look to utilize larger portions of available funds or assets, we believe the impact this would have on other budget planning would outweigh the costs of maintaining a bridge loan in the short term.

As part of the larger master planning preparation, we anticipate having a capital campaign to raise funds for both the sanctuary and other building improvements that will be outlined in the master plan currently under refinement. The bridge loan is being sought to allow the church to get started on this urgent work which shouldn't be delayed until the capital campaign later this year. The Board anticipates that the bridge loan would be the first thing to be paid by capital campaign funds. We are working with a consultant who specializes in assisting UU churches with capital campaigns and we anticipate that the public campaign will begin in early fall.

**9. Can I vote in advance if I'm not available on April 10?**

If you cannot attend the special congregational meeting in person or online, you can still vote. You must request an absentee ballot no later than the Friday before the vote (in this case, by April 8).

You will complete your ballot and place it in a sealed blank envelope. On a separate slip of paper sign your name. Put your envelope with the ballot and the signed slip of paper into a second envelope. Mail it to the church or hand it to Nancy Henry, Erna Olafson, or Matthew Peterson any time before the meeting. (Keep in mind that U.S. mail is not as reliable these days, so if your time is running out and you are away, contact us by email.)

Be aware that if the language of the proposals changes substantially at a congregational meeting, absentee votes cannot be counted.