
January 19, 2023

RE: St. John's Building Improvements Update

Fellow Disciples,

In 2020, St. John's partnered with GROTH Design to create a short and long-term plan for our church relating to layout, functionality, interior utilization and exterior needs including the grounds. We selected GROTH Design Group, a Milwaukee-based architectural firm that specializes in religious architectural design to help guide our plan development. Discussions wrapped up in the spring of 2022 and were capped off with a presentation in May highlighting possible changes. **Attached** is a timeline detailing our work with GROTH Design.

Unfortunately, our momentum stalled. The next step in the process was to get your feedback on the potential plans. Feedback listening meetings were announced last September. However, external factors such as the rising inflation, increasing interest rates, and economic uncertainty have impacted St. John's and thus delayed these important discussions.

In reflecting how St. John's would emerge from the "post" COVID window, I was reminded of the many wonderful events which happened here in 2022: the Winter Farmers Market, summer Music Camp, Vacation Bible School, Family Fun Nights, the fall book study of Moses, the joyous celebration of our 60th Anniversary, a successful Bazaar, and the entertaining "Moses the Musical", just to name a few. It is amazing to see our energy displayed throughout our many ministries. Additionally, we supported community groups who depend on St. John's to aid in their mission: Alcoholic Anonymous, Al-Anon, Boy Scouts, T.O.P.S., and the Chinese Christian Church. 2022 was indeed a busy year in "serving the world" as we declare every Sunday in our mission, **Following Jesus, Making Disciples, Serving the World**.

St. John's original purpose was to create short and long-term plans to guide our goals for ministries into the future. It is up to all of us to decide how and when those plans will proceed, regardless of the current economic factors.

Committing to the Future of St. John's

At this time, St. John's has not committed to any construction or improvements, but as you have read much work has been done to explore possibilities of changes to better meet ministry needs and goals. We have been blessed by the guidance and expertise of Paul Barribeau from GROTH Design and the team at SJV, shepherding us through these difficult conversations. I am also thankful for all of you who supported this project along the way by participating in groups, sharing insights, and keeping this undertaking in your daily prayers.

We need to move forward by using the reports, findings, and ideas created by GROTH Design along with your input. It is imperative we take care of our aging building. This means placing immediate needs over "future wants or desires." It may also mean breaking projects into small components and/or stretching projects out to avoid placing St. John's in financial hardship.

What's next?

Following ongoing discussions and discernment, the Council is advising we take the following course of action in 2023.

The exterior of our building is in desperate need of painting to protect and extend the life of the siding. In addition, there are sections of rotten siding and trim that must be fixed. Council recommends repairing the damaged areas and painting the entire exterior.

The deterioration of the circle drive blacktop has been a congregational discussion topic for several years. Council recommends investigating ways to improve the usage/design of circle drive, along with resurfacing.

Interior and exterior signage needs improvement. Council advises to explore ways to improve signage, including replacement of the current St. John's sign on the corner of Barker Road and Davidson Road. The goal is to create visibility in both directions on Barker Road.

Budgeting for the 2023 goals

At our Annual Meeting on January 29, 2023, leadership will present the 2023 operational budget for your approval. The three items listed above will not be part of the budget.

As stated earlier, our hope is to move forward with the above necessary building projects and avoid placing St. John's in a financial hardship. I am hopeful with the support of the St. John's Community that funds can be raised (in addition to the budget) through a separate capital campaign.

We are in the process of receiving and reviewing bids to get an estimated total for the goals. There will be an opportunity at the Annual Meeting on January 29 to discuss these recommended goals. Until then, please reach out to me or the other Council members if you have any questions. Lastly, thank you for your ongoing prayers, they are greatly appreciated.

God's Blessings,

Brian Zach – President

St. John's Repair and Remodel Timeline	
Please note: this is not a meeting-by-meeting timeline, but a high-level recap of events.	
2020	
Spring	Conversations of potential large interior and exterior projects (i.e., identifying a main entry, Circle Drive repair) lead to our partnership with GROTH Design.
Summer	Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing (MEP) assessment was conducted to determine the individual lifespans of these areas throughout the church. We pinpointed potential concerns and support for any future work/construction which may occur.
Fall	Two congregational Visioning Workshops held by Paul Barribeau of GROTH Design to guide and assist us in creating a master plan. Additional meetings were held with ministry leaders to assess their needs around building usage. These meetings and workshops allowed GROTH to shape the master plan and possible design options to meet our needs.
Winter	Initial findings from the workshops and ministry meetings were presented to the team for review and feedback. GROTH shared various architectural drawings with the group which aligned possible solutions to our identified short and long-term needs.
2021	
Winter	Additional St. John's members were added to assist, as the scope of the project expanded. The project "expanding" was derived from the workshop sessions, ministry leader meetings., and feedback from the team.
	New team members began looking at and prioritizing the original ideas (i.e., identifying a main entry, Circle Drive repair, etc.) compared to the additional short and long needs discovered in the September meetings.
Spring	Group meetings were held with GROTH Design deciphering priorities of the short and long-term needs in potential interior and exterior changes. GROTH share new architectural conceptual drawings to help visual guide our conversations and discernment.
Summer	Members toured Grace Lutheran in Grafton, along with two churches in Madison for in-person understanding of construction possibilities and to hear from those church leaders about their work with GROTH Design. More meetings were held to redefine drawings and provide feedback. A representative from Mission Investment Fund (a financial ministry of the ELCA) spoke with the group about possible funding opportunities and services they provide for churches looking at construction projects. VJS Construction Services was brought in by GROTH Design to share construction estimates based on the short and long-term needs we identified.
Fall	Meetings with GROTH Design and VJS continue as the team works through drawings and concept changes

St. John's Repair and Remodel Timeline	
Winter	Meetings continue as the team provides feedback and reviews tweaks and changes from VJS and GROTH Design.
2022	
Winter	The group inches closer on finalizing potential plans which can be share with the entire congregation.
Spring	GROTH Design shared the potential design changes.