

OUR “GATHER AND GROW” CHURCH RENOVATION PLAN

Frequently Asked Questions

GATHERING SPACE/CHURCH RENOVATION

Why is it necessary to add “Gathering Space” to the Church?

Space attached to our Church where Parishioners can gather after or before Mass for coffee and conversation etc., a feature of many churches, will enhance our warm and welcoming Parish environment and spirit.

Will there be bathroom and kitchen facilities?

Yes, the new space will have bathroom and kitchen facilities.

Will the new space have a basement for storage?

Neither the new gathering space nor the expanded Church will have a basement. Our Church is built on ledge, which would require blasting for a below-ground foundation. This would add approximately 30+% additional construction cost which we do not feel is warranted.

Is there dedicated space for LifeTeen in this new plan?

There is no space exclusively dedicated for any Parish Ministry or Program, but our new meeting/greeting space will be available to LifeTeen and other Parish Ministries.

Will the new space be handicap accessible?

Yes, handicap accessibility is a feature of both Phase I and Phase II.

Can the Church be restored to its original state (colored ceiling)?

We are exploring ways to introduce some additional color into the Church.

Will the memorial bricks be re-used in the elevated plaza?

Yes, the bricks will be re-used in the elevated plaza.

FINANCING

What will Phase I cost and how will we pay for it?

Our preliminary estimates indicate the cost will be in the range of \$2.5 - \$3 million. We will have detailed construction bids from three vendors in the second quarter of 2018. Phase I of our Plan will be financed through the sale of our rental properties and will not require the need for a Parish Capital Campaign.

What about Phase II?

Phase II will require a Parish Capital Campaign. Given the upcoming Diocesan Capital Campaign, and the limitation it places on our ability to conduct a local Parish Campaign, Phase II will be done at a later time.

Will we be able to refurbish and expand the Church without impacting our operational finances?

Our Church is in need of immediate refurbishment given its age and the obvious deterioration of pews, kneelers, etc. We do not intend to use operating funds to finance the project. The sale of our Parish rental properties and donations to date appear to be sufficient.

What if the sale of Parish properties does not result in sufficient cash flow to complete Phase 1 of the Project?

Diocesan policy requires all required financing be in place prior to starting any project. While we expect the cash flow from property sales to fund the entire project, we can adjust our planned spending, and make adjustments if the financing does not meet our original estimates.

Can Parishioners contribute to the Project if they so desire?

If a Parishioner has a desire to contribute to this project, we certainly encourage you to do so and warmly welcome your donation. We will be developing opportunities for Parishioners to participate via "Memorials" such as naming of pews, purchase of a new organ, etc. Once those plans are in place, we will provide details on how to participate.

What is the status of the old Building Fund?

The balance in the Building Fund is approximately \$70,000, and it will be used to help finance this project.

SALE OF PROPERTIES

Will the sale of the rental properties impact Parish operating results?

Parish rental properties have been cash flow neutral in recent years, so selling them should not have any negative impact on the operating results going forward. The sale of these properties in the coming year is expected to finance a significant portion of our Church project.

What about the real estate market?

Our real estate advisors have indicated that the most highly desirable and fastest moving homes in Ridgefield are those within walking distance from Town center and in the price range we'll be offering.

Will we sell the house on the back end of the Church property?

There are currently no plans to sell the house on the back end of our Church property.

APPROVALS

Can the Diocese approve Phase I and II now, even if we only proceed with Phase I?

The Diocese requires most of the funding for a project to be in hand before approving it. At this time, since we will only have funds available for Phase I, it will not be possible to receive Diocesan approval for both Phase I and II.

Has the Town reviewed the plans for Phase I and II?

We have kept the Town informed of our plans and have not been informed of any major issues up to this point. Given the small variance that may be required for the expansion, we do not foresee any issues that cannot be addressed and resolved.

PARKING

Will we have sufficient parking when Phase II is completed?

While we have a plan for additional parking on the existing church property, it will never be sufficient to accommodate all potential attendees at weekend Masses, which means the school parking lot will always be needed.

Can we use space by the garage for parking and leave the grassy space alone?

Our Church is in dire need of additional parking, and we will do our best as we explore options for increasing the number of parking spaces.

ADORATION CHAPEL & BARN

Why will the Adoration Chapel be moved?

The Adoration Chapel will be moved because it is more appropriate for it to be attached to the Church, and it would free up the current space for use by either the School or perhaps our LifeTeen Ministry.

What is the plan for the Barn and can it be used for storage?

Current plans are to retain the Barn during the implementation of Phase I. It is currently used for meetings and not available for long-term storage. Its use and location will be addressed during Phase II.

BUILDING USE DURING CONSTRUCTION

How will Weddings and Funerals be handled while the Church is being renovated?

Weddings and Funerals will be celebrated in our Parish Hall or at other churches during our Church renovation.

Will the Church be available for Mass and other special events while construction is being completed?

The Church will not be available for use for an extended period of time during the renovation project. All Masses will be celebrated in our Parish Hall or the NBRC until all work has been completed. We will be in a better position to know how long the project will take once we receive bids from contractors, and we will keep the Parish informed.

PHASE II

Why are the two wings in Phase II unbalanced?

There is less space available on the High Ridge side of our Church, and therefore it is not possible to have it extend symmetrically with the other side.

Will our Parish Hall and Nancy Bossidy Recreation Center (NBRC) be needed for Mass when Phase II is completed?

The expanded seating capacity of our Church will be in the 650/700 range, thus eliminating the need to use the Parish Hall for weekend Masses. Mass attendance at Christmas and Easter time is significantly higher, which will probably require continued use of the NBRC facility.

PARISHIONER INPUT & UPDATES

Has Parishioner input been valuable?

Our current Plan has been evolving with the help of Parishioners since the beginning of 2013 when DCA Architects presented our Parish with 4 options for a new church. We selected the plan calling for a new church on the school side of the street, and presented it to Parishioners as part of the Feasibility Study conducted by CCS in the spring of 2017. Study results indicated that Parishioners were not in favor of that plan and preferred to have our existing Church refurbished and expanded. Parishioner feedback has been helpful in developing the current plan.

Will our Parish receive progress updates on the project?

We plan to provide regular updates through our Parish Bulletin, Website, pulpit announcements and our Parish social media sites as the work progresses. Our goal is to ensure all Parishioners and interested parties are kept well informed throughout the project.

MISC

Why do we need to replace the organ?

The organ has many expensive failing parts that need to be replaced. The company from whom we purchased the organ is no longer in business, and replacement parts and maintenance service are very difficult to obtain.

Will Masses continue to be held in our Parish Hall once Phase I has been completed?

Yes, since Phase I will not increase the seating capacity of our Church.