



Campaign Overview: What we want every parishioner to know *(a lightly edited transcript of remarks delivered by the Rev. William Peyton after the 10 a.m. service on Campaign Launch Sunday)*

What I have to share with you are the notes that I think of as belonging in the category of what the campaign committee, what the building committee, what the staff, and what I would want every parishioner to know. These are the headlines and some of it is informed by some of the questions that came from the responses in our feedback. There is, as there always is, some confusion and some failures of communication on certain points. So if you've heard all this before, you just get to hear it again a few times between now and the 5th of November when the intense part of this Building Centennial Campaign will conclude. Here is the history of this project that we would want every member of the parish to know.

The roots of what we're proposing now go back many years, at least as far as a 2012 study of our facilities that resulted in recommendations relating to the best use of various portions of our facilities. That 2012 report recommended, although we didn't take any action at that time, but it recommended that the 1927 building, which includes the space we're sitting in now and the parish hall and the library and lounge and the kitchen and the rooms above the kitchen, all of that is original to the 1927 building. All of that is worthy of a careful and loving historic restoration. And the recommendation going back as far as 2012 is that the 1959 additions, which include the office corridor and what we think of as the church school building, are not well-suited to be renovated for current and future use. And so the recommendation going back now more than 10 years was that those buildings be demolished and their uses be replaced in new construction.

With that on the table, what we heard from you beginning in our listening process in 2019, and this was a process that went on for months, and we distilled all the feedback we got from the parish and gave it to the architects, and we distilled it to four principles that really did come from the parish. And those principles were **welcome, accessibility, flexibility, and sustainability**. Those were the guiding stars that we offered to the architects in the master planning process. And I hope that you see good progress toward those ideals in the master plan as proposed. What we have now is a proposed master plan. Jennifer Minetree is the member of the committee who said this. She's an architect herself, as are several other members of the committee, and she is familiar with this process of iteration and refinement. And it was Jennifer who said, "The version we're looking at now is the worst version you will ever see because it's going to get better from here with your feedback and with refinement." But I hope that you see in the version we have in front of us today, solid progress toward those aspirations and principles that came from the parish about what we need in order to facilitate our ministries in the years ahead. In this space, which is the heart of who we are and have been as a parish, the instructions to the architects from day one were as follows: We want it to look and feel exactly the way it looks and feels today, only better.

The largest changes that are proposed to this worship space are the following. One, the installation of an accessible ramp that would come down under these windows unobtrusively without interfering with the historic doorway or chancel, that would make this space completely accessible to the outdoors and to the rest of our facilities without the use of the lift, which according to the architect's analysis and according to your own experience creates a log jam in an important traffic area. So that's a major change. The Nave would be for the first time completely wheelchair accessible.

The other change that you would notice in the Nave and what's currently proposed is that we would increase seating for our choir, which we need. We have a fabulous choir. Thank you choir! What's special about this building and the organ is that they were built and designed with and for one another at the same time. It's not the case, as it is in many churches, where we've got a beautiful building and we say to an organ builder, can you fit an organ in here? This organ and building were built together in tandem, and that's why we've committed to restoring them together in tandem, and in order to preserve the extraordinary acoustics in this room, we asked architects to maximize the amount of choir seating that can fit behind the plane of that arch so that we can increase the number of choristers who are underneath that arch, which is essential to the acoustics. To do that, we want to take some of the things that are not essential to the acoustics out from underneath the arch and bring them out. Those include our new organ console. So in the current proposal, the new organ console would move to the west side and out a little bit, creating more seating there. Also, in interest of accessibility and space, the current proposal is to bring the pulpit and the lectern out this way. I can't remember the exact number. Six feet, nine feet, something like that. They've studied it with drawings. The plan after much conversation is to retain the beloved preacher crusher. And so it will move with the pulpit. And they've studied that extensively by drawing from the back of the room to make sure it will look and feel the same. And I can tell you that it will, but it will create space for wheelchair and walker accessibility up to that level.

The other thing in this space in the current proposal is that the floor, if you were to go up these stairs and out the door toward the parking lot, you would go up several stairs and then back down several stairs. That would be eliminated in the proposal. You would go up three or four stairs or up a ramp, and at that point you would be level with an accessible exterior door and there would be no steps at all between you and the sidewalk. There would be another ramp that could take you into the parish hall. So no lift or elevator would be necessary anywhere on this level of the entire facility.

So in the current proposal, these are the headline items. We make those changes in this space. We build a new building on the other side of the new courtyard in that space, and it contains a parish hall that's large enough for our needs and more functional and more hospitable for the parish and for outside groups. It contains flexible meeting spaces of a variety of sizes for a variety of uses and a variety of ages. And this is something that has come up and I want to be really clear about. The proposal would include all new systems for our buildings, all new sewage lines, all new electric lines, all new HVAC systems, new sound system, new lighting, all of those systems. And this is not a gripe, this is an observable fact. Every one of those systems is outdated, is past its expected lifespan, which actually makes it convenient. You don't have to enter a big process of discernment about whether something that's a little bit old and a little bit new should be preserved. We know that we need all new electric, all new plumbing, all new HVAC. That gives us a beautiful and blessed opportunity to be in the forefront of green and sustainable building in Charlottesville and in the Diocese of Virginia. So all of that is part of the plan.

Questions have arisen about the organ. The organ, as I've said, has from the beginning been part of this project and the plan is to restore the organ with the building. That work has gotten a little bit out of sequence because we had an opportunity to begin the organ restoration early because of COVID when we were not in this space. That coincided with a time when the world's finest Skinner Organ restoration team, which is the Thompson-Allen Company from New Haven, Connecticut, had time in their schedule. And if they don't have time in their schedule, then they don't restore your organ. That coincided with the beginning of COVID. So that work is about halfway done. All the sound that you hear today comes from the organ pipes that live up behind the east walls. And if you were to go up behind the west walls, it's empty. Those pipes are still in Connecticut being restored. They're coming back soon.

So it's a loving restoration of our old building. It's demolition and replacement of 1959 additions. It's the full restoration of the organ and it's a commitment to welcome, accessibility, sustainability, and flexibility. So that's where we are in the building project.

The intensive portion of the campaign we launched today will last for eight weeks. You're going to hear a lot about it in eight weeks, and I won't promise you that you won't get tired of it in the next eight weeks, but I will promise you that that phase of talking about this kind of nonstop will end after eight weeks. And when we get to the 5th of November, we'll celebrate whatever progress there is to celebrate whether we have been successful beyond our wildest dreams or whether we still have work to do. When we get to the 5th of November, it'll be time to take a step back and evaluate and regroup.

Another point of confusion, there are two numbers out there. One number is \$20 million. That is what we estimate the total construction and renovation costs of the project to be. That is not the goal of our campaign. The goal of our campaign is \$5 million beyond what we've already raised, much of which we've already raised in unsolicited gifts. Some of you are sitting here, thank you. We've had some generous gifts early before, going back a year or two, but we believe that if we can raise \$5 million additional dollars today, we can finance the \$20 million project largely based on a construction loan that would come from a prospective tenant. So this is another thing that's complicated about this project. The current proposal—I'm going to keep saying current proposal because it might change—in the current proposal, we are building more space than we currently can need or occupy. And the reason for that, this sounds odd, but it's true. We can't afford to build a smaller building. We need the income. We need the loan from the construction financing, which would then be paid off by free and reduced rent over a period of time to finance the project. If you wish to convince me and the building committee and the vestry and the campaign committee that we can raise 10 or 12 or \$15 million and build only what we need, that would be fantastic. And I hope you brought your checkbook. But all the study and conversation that we've done so far leads us to believe that it's more affordable for us to build a larger building than a smaller building. So that's the plan.

The timeline of the campaign, as I said, is eight weeks. In the course of the next five or six weeks, we're going to be doing a lot of personal conversations, one-on-one conversations, including visiting with groups and ministries within the parish. The hope is that by October 22nd, we'll have commitments from leadership groups such as vestry and staff and campaign committee. And then on the 22nd, that gives us a two-week period when we're inviting the whole broad St. Paul's community to consider their commitment to the campaign alongside your 2024 annual giving commitment. Because as you all know, it is essential that commitments to the campaign are over and above operating budget 2024 budget commitments. So we're doing that all in tandem. The general commitment period begins October 22nd and goes to November 5th. That doesn't mean that you can just keep your head down and duck. If we haven't heard from you after November 5th, we will still call you, but your commitment is invited by November 5th.

And then the last thing I want to mention is the timeline for gifts. We are identifying that centennial date of September 18th, 2027 as the end of the cash gift fulfillment period. So it's helpful for you if you're one of the parishioners who would be thinking of making a gift for this campaign out of income. Out of how much of my annual budget can I stretch and offer to this campaign? We're thinking about a four-year period. So because that date is almost exactly four years away.

If you are in a position to be thinking of making a gift that's not from annual budget and annual income, but a gift from accumulated assets or from a bequest, or from setting up a trust for the benefit of St. Paul's, which some parishioners have done, assigning other instruments such as life insurance. There are all kinds of ways that you can contribute. And if it's not a cash gift, that deadline doesn't really apply. If it's an asset, we can count it toward the campaign, even if we don't know for sure that it's coming before 2027. And if it's a bequest that you have in mind, you are assured of my prayers that it will not come before 2027. It is also possible, and this was an inspiration that I heard from one of our parishioners already, you might wish to consider a hybrid gift. In other words, an annual gift out of income and personal budget in addition to some other instrument or larger gift.

I think those are the main points I wanted to share. I'm grateful for your attention and your prayers and your patience over the course of these eight weeks.