



GROUNDBREAKING Sunday, June 11th, 2017, 9:15 a.m.

The Groundbreaking ceremony for the \$1.5 million building program will be held between services on Sunday, June 11th. The vestry meeting on May 15th approved the selection of our general contractor, the terms of the Binding Agreement required by the Diocese, and the establishment of a line of credit with Fulton Bank.

The vestry received and approved the recommendation of the Construction Committee to engage Paul Risk Construction as our general contractor. Founded in 1933, they are a Lancaster County fourth generation family-owned firm with extensive experience in historic renovation, church construction and environmental (LEED) building. They were chosen by the committee following two rounds of biddings from five general contractors and multiple value engineering exercises. This produced a savings in construction costs of approximately \$600,000.

The Construction Committee achieved this cost reduction while maintaining the core goals of the project: handicapped accessibility, stormwater management, energy efficiency, columbarium expansion, outdoor labyrinth installation and the creation of a handsome welcome space. The savings did come at some reduction of scope. For example, the undercroft will not have elevator access and the size of the atrium skylight will be reduced. However, construction costs were held to \$1,234,000 and within budget guidelines of the vestry.

The vestry also received from the Diocese approval to secure a loan of up to one million dollars. The approval includes a Bidding Agreement that stipulates St. John's reserves \$650,000 in our unrestricted endowment as collateral for the Diocese. This dovetails with our funding strategy with Fulton Bank, recommended by the St. John's Finance Committee. The Binding Agreement also mandates the vestry develop a plan to meet our full Fair Share asking to the Diocese in three years.

The loan with Fulton Bank negotiated by the St. John's Loan Team is a three-year line of credit with a fixed interest rate. As with a home equity loan, we have the flexibility to draw on the line only as bills come in and pay interest only on the amount we use. This also allows us to preserve the assets of our endowment while we pay our bills.

Initial construction is projected to begin mid-June and be finished before Christmas. The footnote is the delivery time for the elevator may push us later but we will have occupancy of the atrium by December. While under construction, the main entrance to the church will again be the doors at the top of the steps on Chestnut Street. For those who don't climb steps, a large screen TV is being installed in the Parish Hall for watching the worship service, and Communion will be carried over by Eucharistic Ministers.

Key to the success of our building program is the support of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania. Together we are partners in God's mission. The affirmation and encouragement of our Bishop Audrey Scanlan is the motivation St. John's needs to realize the potential of God's blessing as we represent the presence of Christ in Lancaster. You can read the [Bishop's letter of congratulations](#) and the [Binding Agreement](#) on the St. John's website.

A parish mini-meeting will be hosted by members of the vestry, Finance and Construction Committees on Sunday, June 4th, from 9:15 to 10:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall. They will field your questions and note any of your concerns as we prepare for the next six months.

St. John's is about to enter the last stage of our six-year sojourn to make our church fully welcoming to all. Our celebration on June 11th will likewise be a celebration for all. Everyone will be invited to share in the shoveling of soil. Not just the clergy, vestry, Finance and Construction Committees, Capital Campaign, Paul Risk Construction, Fulton Bank and diocesan representatives, but children and parents, teachers and choir members, Jubilee ministers and Voyager members, everyone is welcome to lift up a scoop of earth in thanksgiving to God for bringing us together in this shared ministry and in the promise of greater mission to come.

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from St. John's Messenger, May 2017