



## **BUILDING PROJECT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS JANUARY 2018**

**In anticipation of questions from the congregation, ARC consistory leaders have drafted a list of frequently asked questions and have included answers to these questions. We hope this information is helpful to you.**

- 1. Was it really necessary to cut out the addition with the new children's wing (lower level) and staff offices (upper level)?**

Yes. The additional square footage brought the cost of the project beyond what the consistory felt was prudent. We felt that many of the identified needs could be realized by renovating most of the current structure as opposed to adding on. Also, you may remember that—in the previous project—there were significant areas of the facility needing attention that were not addressed, i.e. the fellowship hall and the current lower level education wing. We believe that the revised plan allows every part of our current facility to be renovated to enhance our ministry and mission.

- 2. Explain how this project enhances our children's, middle school youth, and high school youth ministries.**

This project provides us with the opportunity to renovate all areas for children's and youth ministries with more flexible, accessible, and welcoming spaces. The children's ministry area will be able to be secured to provide greater safety for our children.

- 3. Why did the staff office area have to be redesigned?**

First, the staff team regularly encounters guests who are confused by the current office configuration, often approaching the director of youth ministry, director of children's ministry, or pastors before entering the designated reception area staffed by the office manager/office assistant. The new configuration will have a clearly-designated reception area where all persons will need to pass through before entering a program staff member's or pastor's office.

Second, we believe that a reconfigured office suite will provide greater privacy for those seeking counseling or pastoral care, and will provide an important and necessary boundary for our program and pastoral staff.

Third, the reconfigured staff area will provide for greater collaboration and teamwork among current staff members.

**4. Why do we have to remove the glass wall separating the sanctuary and the narthex?**

We believe that the removal of the glass wall and the expansion of the sanctuary into the current narthex is important for two reasons: seating capacity and flow.

First, we will be losing seating due to three expected changes: the expansion of the audio-visual booth (an identified need as our current booth is not large enough to meet our technological needs now and in the future), the addition of an ADA-accessible ramp onto the platform on the east side of the sanctuary, and the removal of two pews near the front of the sanctuary (so that families who wish to have the casket present in the sanctuary for a funeral worship service are able to do so). We believe that we can recover some of these losses in seating capacity with a sanctuary expansion.

Second, the expansion of the sanctuary into the current narthex will allow for better flow from the sanctuary into the upper-level coffee fellowship space, more flexible seating for those with special needs, and easier navigation for guests who—after entering the building from the new lower-level parking lot—will take the new unidirectional stairway to the upper level and find themselves in the ideal location to either enter the sanctuary on their right or the staff office suite on their left.

**5. What are we doing with the audio-visual system (including the recording of worship services), and will this be part of the project?**

The costs to update our AV system would be above and beyond the \$1,925,000. We are hopeful that we can supplement these needed upgrades with a portion of the building fund and other special gifts. We acknowledge that this is an area of need, and it will be addressed in the renovation process.

**6. Will the kitchen in the lower level fellowship hall be moved?**

The kitchen will not move and will remain the same.

**7. Why can't we do this project in phases so that we don't have to take out a loan?**

The ARC Consistory believes this to be the right time to address all of our current needs. The costs of construction continue to increase each year, and many financial lenders are anticipating interest rate increases in the future. We believe it is wise to take advantage of the low interest rates available now.

**8. What amounts will be required to pay the principal and interest for the project, and how do we know we can afford these amounts?**

We expect to pay \$5,000 to \$6,000 per month for long-term financing on \$700,000 over 15 to 20 years. These numbers are arbitrary based on final interest rates agreed upon, length of the loan agreed upon, and the rate at which pledges accrue. If there are more people who decide to pledge to the project, or make additional gifts, these figures will decrease. Our total for interest on the construction loan of 18 to 24 months will be approximately \$50,000.

The ARC Consistory consulted with Bob Carlson, the Executive Director of the Reformed Church in America's Church Growth Fund (one of several potential lenders). Bob has experience assisting churches throughout the denomination with these types of projects, and is also a well-respected former banking executive. Bob used several objective measurements to review ARC's financial statements, contribution range reports, and potential financing. After reviewing this information, Bob shared that a loan of approximately \$700,000 was a reasonable and responsible choice for ARC.

**9. What is the timeline moving forward?**

The congregational vote will take place on February 11. At the February 12 consistory meeting, ARC's leaders will discern God's leading regarding the project. If the consistory discerns God's call to move forward, the project will be presented to East Sioux Classis (our regional governing body) for their approval. (The classis must approve a project any time a congregation wishes to borrow funds that exceed 2/3 of the prior year's offerings received for congregational purposes.) Based on past precedent from other congregations with much larger projects and more significant long-term financing, we believe that our classis leadership will approve the project and plan.

Once the above steps are taken, CMBA Architects will begin working on bid specifications by May 1. Bids will go out to general contractors by July 1, with renovation work to begin by mid-August.

**10. Who should I contact if I have additional questions?**

You may contact the church office ([americanchurchoc@gmail.com](mailto:americanchurchoc@gmail.com)). Your questions will be forwarded to the appropriate party.