

ARCHITECTURAL RENEWAL COMMITTEE (ARC) UPDATE

August 13, 2006

PHASE 2 RENOVATIONS

On May 28, the congregation approved (subject to the availability of funds): i) sub-dividing the present Burke Room to create a Christian Education (CE) Centre, ii) moving the Community Shop to the new space created under the nave, and iii) creating a new Parish Hall in the present Community Shop location.

Once we receive the outstanding \$800,000 from the sale of the parking lot (expected some time in August), we plan to start construction on both the CE Centre and the new Community Shop. Construction is expected to take about six weeks. Construction of the new Parish Hall will follow and take six to eight weeks. Groups presently using the Burke Room will need to temporarily relocate while construction is underway. All groups will be contacted and provided with alternative locations.

CE Centre (Burke Room reconstruction)

The CE Centre will be divided into four areas: an office for the Christian Education coordinator, two Church School classrooms (one with small tables and chairs for young children), and a Youth Lounge. The classrooms and Youth Lounge will accommodate evening and weekday meetings. There will be storage areas for Christian Education and other groups using these rooms, as well as storage for tables and chairs.

There will be new casement windows, new energy efficient lighting, ceiling fans in each area, and an option for air conditioning.

The existing kitchen will remain to provide juice for the Church School and refreshments for meetings. (The Parish Hall will have a new, larger galley kitchen.) The CE kitchen will be refurbished as follows. The stove will be removed, and the sink and the dishwasher will remain. The existing cupboards will be extended to the ceiling, and the walls and existing cupboards will be painted. There will be a new under-counter fridge with a microwave above (in the present stove location), a new counter top, new lighting and new flooring.

Hallways

The present hallway outside the Burke Room will have the coat racks and dividing panels removed, creating a wider hall. New lighting will be installed. A new coat room will be constructed off the new Parish Hall.

A new custodian's cleaning area is located just inside the men's washroom. There will be a new door for access. The present custodian's closet in the east hall at the top of the stairs will become Audio/Visual storage.

Community Shop

The entrance to the new shop will be from the south tower on Elgin Street. There will be considerable natural light in the entrance and stairwell. Shop volunteers are involved in the design of the Community Shop space, which is in the process of being finalized.

PHASE 3 RENOVATIONS - THE NAVE

As some of you will recall, initial renovation discussions were launched by the Rector in his report to Vestry in 2001. The Nave Committee was established in mid-2001 and was charged by the Rector with the following: "While maintaining the integrity of the nave as sacred space, (1) reconfigure the space to reflect our contemporary self-understanding as a Christian community and how this can best be reflected in our worship; (2) restore or replace items deemed to be in poor repair (floor, pews, lighting); and (3) maximize the flexibility of the space for multi-purpose use."

We soon found that systems throughout the entire building (nave and ministry/admin areas) are interconnected, and repairs in one location could not be responsibly undertaken without consideration of the larger picture. Hence the mandate of the Nave Committee was expanded, and the committee was renamed the Architectural Renewal Committee (ARC).

With the completion of Phase 1 (upgraded infrastructure and new facilities for The Well and St John's in the basement), and Phase 2 construction about to start, it is time to turn our minds to the nave - Phase 3 of our renovation program.

Over the past five years, a number of ideas have been put forward and discussed, with a view to improving our worship space. A major consideration for any design is how to provide appropriate space for the choir and other musicians, and how that space relates to the rest of the congregation. ARC has come up with one possible solution, and would like to test it for a time to see if it improves our common worship experience.

TEST of an alternative seating plan for the Nave

We will be testing a new seating arrangement beginning on Sunday, October 15. The present summer altar positioned at the top of the chancel steps will be used during the test. Instead of sitting in the chancel, the choir will sit in the front section of the nave. This will be accomplished by removing the first four rows of congregational pews. Three of these pews on each side will be turned sideways, facing each other, placing them perpendicular to the present nave seating to accommodate the choir. This arrangement means that the whole congregation will be worshipping together in the same space, gathered together as one community around the Lord's Table. Communion will be administered at the high altar rail and in the Chapel, as is the case from September to June, when the choir is present.

Some people may wonder about seating capacity with the loss of the four front congregational pews. A statistical analysis of attendance over the past 25 years indicates that the average attendance at Sunday 10:15 worship has remained more or less constant at an average of 200, including the choir. The test seating plan accommodates almost 300. The altar will be visible from all locations in the church, including wheelchair seating, which is not presently the case with the high altar.

It is only by actually testing this arrangement during regular worship that the congregation will be able to assess whether moving the choir into the nave improves our worship together. If the choir were to move to the nave permanently, the chancel platform could be reduced in size, restoring the original floor in the south transept and the full

base of the pulpit. This would also provide more nave space for extra seating when needed. Also, in a permanent arrangement, the chancel choir stalls could be removed and the chancel's original oak floor restored. The high altar will remain as is.

No specific length of time has been set for the test. However, it would seem wise to leave the experimental arrangement in place at least until Christmas to better assess the use of this configuration at a time when maximum seating is required.

Considerations to determine if the test is successful:

- ◆ Does the arrangement safeguard a sense of sacred space?
- ◆ Does the arrangement enhance the sense of full participation and inclusion for all worshippers?
- ◆ Does the arrangement work liturgically - flow of choir, servers, and people going to Communion, Scripture reading, prayers, preaching, etc.?
- ◆ Does the choir feel comfortable seated in the nave?
- ◆ Does the congregation like the feel and sound of the choir seated in the nave and the stronger leadership the choir is able to provide?
- ◆ Is the seating capacity adequate with the loss of 4 pews for the congregation?

In order to receive your views and to promote discussion, ARC will organize a parish discussion, which will provide a formal opportunity to provide specific observations about the arrangement. Prior to this meeting, please provide any comments directly to the Rector.

