

# **Fundamental Conclusions**

## **Courtyard**

- The trees and vegetation in the Courtyard are aged, have overwhelmed their locations, and require replacement.
- Somewhat due to this, we have exhausted congregation volunteers to care for the space.
- Recent drainage problems caused damage to the elevator area. The solution to this issue is now unsightly and accentuated the reality that the unlevel nature of the grounds are currently unsafe and challenge the usefulness of the area.
- Regardless of how we select the bathroom and nursery locations, we must make significant repairs to the Courtyard.
- There are likely significant synergies in the narthex work that would lessen overall costs of Courtyard refurbishment, allowing us to re-dedicate the memorial contributions, re-beautify the area, and expand its use for Easter sunrise, wedding vows, small gatherings, and other services.

## **Sanctuary Space**

- We are growing accustomed to seeing fewer pews in the sanctuary, and as members reselect their “customary seats,” we more often present the visual that we “fill our space” and are a robust congregation.
- Attendance at Christmas (5:00 PM - 181, 9:00 PM - 254) confirmed that we still have seating room for our peak services even without folding chairs.
- Our current 19-pew arrangement supports 266 worshipers comfortably and 304 in a tighter “friendly” seating. Of course, clerical staff and choir are in addition to this capacity.
- Current membership is 229 so we have room to grow.
- Two of the proposed options make use of the now open space in the rear of the sanctuary and return the visual effect of the sanctuary to the way it was for 40 years with no further reduction of pews. Use of beautiful woods in the new room construction and preservation of the existing wood doors and large windows sustain sanctuary beauty and add a “looks like it was designed this way” transition from sanctuary to narthex for continued fellowship and connections.

## **Architect’s General Findings**

- The St. Mark’s property has never been rezoned and remains two large Residential plots with the dividing line running through the middle of the church (from the parsonage to Backlick).
- The Montessori School received county permission to operate in a residential space. St. Mark’s has never filed for permission, but we were “grandfathered” in under current requirements.
- Fairfax County has written that proposed options will NOT require special site plans (~\$60K), but work will require minor site plans (\$10K-\$12K).
- St. Mark’s is two toilets short of the code requirement for bathrooms (in addition to the ADA bathrooms being at the far end of the Fellowship Hall).
- Several of St. Mark’s existing handicapped parking slots do not meet code due to slope and lack of space between slots.