

Narthex Renovation Update **[from June 20, 2021]**

St. Mark's received three bids this week on the Narthex Renovation Project. We were very disappointed to see that the bids we received are approximately double the budgeted cost. Council will be meeting tonight to consider our options as we plan for a congregation meeting, assisted by the wisdom and advice of the Finance Committee. We wanted everyone to be aware that the way ahead is more challenging than we had hoped.

The pandemic has created global logistics issues that have created material shortages and price spikes on many items. There are labor shortages in the construction industry. Some of these issues were quietly brewing while economies were shut down and are just now coming into force as the demand for labor and goods grow. Our architect, John Recny, described these issues as a "perfect storm" that hit our project bid timeframe and called this price volatility unprecedented in his 40-year career. There are many reasons to believe that prices will come back down to levels governed by normal market supply and competition.

We have been tested with a pandemic unlike any other challenge in our lifetimes, and God has guided us to appreciate that our church is not merely a building—we are a community of faith. We are so thankful to see each other's faces again and to gather in person in growing numbers. We have been blessed with an abundance of resources and the vision to renew our gathering spaces to serve future generations of our Congregation. Those blessings and that vision are not diminished by the pandemic or current construction market conditions.

We may require just a bit more time to ride out this storm. Further consultation with the architect might reveal some options, but the reality of this price bubble is going to impact any near-term choices. Please pray for God's guidance for all of us as we plan the future of our Narthex Renovation Project. We will provide further information at our upcoming congregation meeting.