

Parish Meeting to Discuss the Stone Church:

Handout and Survey to the Congregation

The 2019 Rector's Report, which can be found in the 2019 Annual Report, summarized a number of recent developments with respect to the Stone Church. It also states a number of challenges that the building presents, including the cost of current and future repairs, lack of parking, and accessibility issues. The letter then makes reference to the many community needs that our church could help with if we were able to focus our time and money in these areas.

Vestry supports the Rector's Report and has come to the difficult conclusion, on a unanimous basis, that paying for the current and future maintenance and repairs of the Stone Church is not feasible for our congregation. This conclusion is based on the following facts that have been established over the past 14 months:

- 1. Our church is experiencing significant financial challenges, with offerings down in each of the last three years, accumulated deficits of over \$35,000 from 2017-2019, and Vestry being forced to withdraw \$12,000 of investment funds to meet day to day obligations in the fall of 2019.*
- 2. We spend about \$5,000 on basic operating costs for the Stone Church every year (excluding any major maintenance costs like masonry repairs), whether the building is used or not.*
- 3. The Stone Church needs immediate repairs of \$30,000 to \$40,000 (2019 quotes to replace half of the roof, new dehumidifier, pointing, new window pane, mould remediation, duct cleaning). There have also been recent issues with the furnace and, at some point, the other half of the roof will have to be repaired (an additional \$25,000+).*
- 4. The church has \$17,258 in available funds to pay for repairs to the Stone Church. The "Stone Church Trust", with a balance of approximately \$76,200, cannot be used to pay for the repairs. Attempts to raise \$15,000 from the congregation in 2018 to pay for a roof were unsuccessful, with only half of the targeted funds raised.*
- 5. The Stone Church Working Group determined that the building is not a heritage property and is thus not eligible for government assistance.*
- 6. Even if the immediate maintenance issues were addressed, major limitations in the form of lack of parking, safely accessing the building by crossing a busy road, and accessibility issues remain.*

On a unanimous basis, the Vestry members appointed by the congregation for the 2019, 2020, and 2021 years believe that it is in the best interests of our congregation to deconsecrate and demolish the Stone Church, taking the necessary steps to preserve key artifacts and looking into the possibility of a memorial sign or some other physical

Parish Meeting to Discuss the Stone Church:

Handout and Survey to the Congregation

reminder of the Stone Church. The Stone Church Working Group's report indicated that the estimated cost of demolishing the building was approximately \$15,000 (2019 quote).

Coming to these conclusions has been a very difficult process for all members of Vestry, as we all recognize the significant emotional and historical value that the Stone Church has in our congregation and community. While we would love to be able to repair and maintain the Stone Church, eliminate our operational funding deficiencies, and take action to address the many social and community needs that surround us, this is simply not feasible and we must identify our priorities.

As this process moves forward and we prepare to finalize a decision on the future of the Stone Church, Vestry wants to know how you, the congregation of St. John's, feels about this important matter. We therefore ask you to prayerfully consider and respond to the following question:

Do you support Vestry's unanimous position that it is not feasible to maintain and repair the Stone Church, and that steps should be taken to deconsecrate and demolish the building?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Please provide any comments that you would like to make in relation to your response.

Please return this short survey by next Sunday (October 10). Vestry will be reviewing the feedback at its next meeting in October as Vestry continues the discernment process. Please also include your name below so that Vestry can be sure that the feedback received is from current members of the congregation. All responses submitted will be kept confidential.

Name: _____