

Building ~~for~~ the Future.

We have now spent three years praying, preparing and planning to redevelop the church hall and finally have plans agreed and drawn up to submit to the Local Authority for planning permission consent. This is a key point in the process and signifies a real step forward, and of course commitment to the project.

The proposed facilities should provide versatile and comfortable accommodation for the church and community groups for many years to come and will enable the mission and vision of St John's Church to grow and develop. Of course, the cost of the redevelopment is significant and we are faced with a fundraising target of over one million pounds! This is daunting, to say the least, but if it wasn't, would our reliance be upon our selves and our own provision rather than on God and his providence?

It is easy to focus on the money, but as we prepare to embrace the next phase of the project, it is a good time to remind ourselves this is a faith-raising journey, not purely a fundraising endeavour. There will be many activities and events to get involved in and many problems to overcome, but prayer will be a key tool to help us build the new hall. As we take each step of faith on the project journey, so our faith levels will soar to new heights. In turn our effectiveness as a body of believing Christians, (working together in care, love and unity) will increase and God's purposes and mission worked out through His body at St John's.

You may have noticed a subtle change that now the building project is called the 'Church Development Project,' (compared with the '*Hall Re-development Project*'). This is a deliberate act and encompasses the integral part played by the hall for current and future church use, and also the contact opportunities it brings to enable the church family to fulfil its vision of sharing the *presence and love of God*.

So, in continuing to read this leaflet outlining the next phases of the project, and particularly how you can get involved, please pause. Pray that God would speak to you and show you what part you may play in the project. You see, as we embark on the journey to re-develop the hall and so improve the facilities of the church centre, we are not building *for* the future as much as actually *building* the future. What action we take now will directly affect what happens in the years ahead. What part are you going to help build?

Yours in His Service

John Saxon
Church Warden / Project Chairman

Next Steps

Our application for Planning Permission will be submitted in the next few weeks. Over the summer our design team has been in touch with the Local Authority Planning Department to ensure all current regulations and preferences are met. This time has also allowed Computer Generated Images to be compiled to submit with the plans to support our application. (Did you know these images were offered by a Parishioner whose wife and family has used the current church hall. Richard Gardner offered his services free of charge and we are extremely grateful). Photographic quality images of plans enhance understanding and appreciation for any such project. We expect consent to be given early in the new year.

Following approval for our plans, the next phase will be to draw up detailed plans, technical building specifications etc, to enable building contractors to tender for the construction. This will cost be up to £50,000 in professional fees and take about 3-4 months to complete. Concurrently the project team will research for suitable contractors to approach to tender for the work.

Prayer and Communication

Communication will be a vital element in sustaining the project through to completion. There will be regular feedback of any particular needs and difficulties for the project as well as news of positive steps made to encourage us all. Apart from notice bulletins that will be issued at key times, news will be regularly fed into church prayer meetings. The back bone of these will be weekly meetings of about 45 minutes at various times throughout

the week. Details will be published regularly and it is hoped that an increased number of people will attend and support the life of the church through prayer. No previous experience necessary; just a desire to see God's will worked out in God's way for the vision and mission of St John's Church. You do not have to attend regularly or even for all the meeting, come when you can and go when you need to. They are a really good way of keeping in touch with what is going on and help you feel involved with all that is happening.

Activities and Events

Even since the early days of drawing up plans for a new hall, ideas have been coming to the project team about events to publicise and raise funds for the project. Quiz evenings, open gardens, car washing and a church open day are a few that have been mentioned. Yes, these will raise some money towards our goal, but just as importantly they will enable us to engage with the community. As a focus for cell group outreach events, or as an enterprise for an individual, they will all increase our chances of sharing the news about the hall redevelopment and where appropriate, to share our faith too. After all, the vision is to share the presence and love of God at the heart of the community. So, if you have an idea that may raise the profile of the project, earn some money or engage with the community in a new way, please let us know! Look out for details of events planned for later this autumn.

Finance and Administration

Finance is a big issue and as such we want to approach it from different directions and ensure we have explored all possibilities. This in itself is a huge task and administrative/financial support is needed in several ways.

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We have already had some success with raising grants for the project and will obviously like to seek more. This will involve finalising research into Grant Making Trusts and compiling applications. Ian Johnson has had considerably expertise in this area but is looking for help, particularly with administration and IT skills.

Currently George Pilgrim the Church Treasurer, is going to keep an income and expenditure account but there is also a need for someone to help keep and prepare financial information. This will enable up to date information to be shared with the church family, perhaps through the use of EXCEL or similar computer program. Therefore we are looking for a *Project Accountant*.

Many people use the internet for up to date information and several people have suggested details and news about the project and events could be advertised by the church website. Although regular details could be compiled for the website, somebody with the requisite skills and time is needed to set up and maintain the site.

Giving

God loves a cheerful giver! And the project will happily receive any gifts from cheerful people at any time! As you can see from the information in this leaflet, the project has many more ways to give than just finance and at this time these requests are important. When planning permission has been obtained, we will have to pay £50,000 for the next phase as described earlier. Later this autumn there will be a gift day specifically to raise funds for this. However, you can add to the funds already in hand at any time. One off gifts or regular (e.g. direct debit) donations can be made. Please don't forget Gift Aid. If you are a tax payer an extra 28p can be claimed for every £1 given. Please indicate your intention to do this on the gift envelope available at the back of the church, or see Martyn Pryke our Gift Aid Secretary for more details.

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse....see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing.
Malachi 3 v 10

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, COLCHESTER

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH HALL

