



December 19, 2018

Dear friends,

Over the last three years, a committee of parishioners has been exploring the future of our property at 112 N. Washington St. The site is currently occupied by the Ross Dress for Less department store on the ground level and our Fowler House formation classrooms in the subterranean level.

While this property has been a great gift and blessing to us over the last twenty years, the committee has been examining the state of the current building, recent real estate market trends, availability of new tenants, and the church's needs for the future. Much of this exploration is detailed in Rejoice articles in previous months, which can be [found here](#).

As much as this building has been a gift to our parish programs for the last twenty years, we have learned that the building needs expensive repairs, the real estate market is not favorable for large retail spaces, and we have come to rely on the income from that property to balance our annual budget. It is clear that the time has come to open the next chapter of our relationship with that property. The time has come to see what new gifts and blessings 112 N. Washington St has to offer us.

A committee led by Chris McMurray, Jim Coakley, and John Weaver, with the support of the Vestry, engaged a real estate broker to explore the many options for the property. On November 27, the Vestry approved the committee's recommendation to enter a non-binding letter of intent with a developer. Under the terms of the letter of intent, the developer would enter into a long term land lease with the Church and assume the risk of redeveloping the site as multi-family/retail. As part of the redevelopment, the Church would be provided space in the new building that we could renovate to suit our needs, which, along with a re-imagining of the whole campus, could be funded by a future capital campaign.

In the next six weeks, three things will be happening:

1. We will hold a series of parish-wide meetings to discuss together the implications of these changes, to answer questions, and to address concerns. Those meetings will be on Sunday, January 6 at 9:00 a.m., and Sunday, January 13 at 11:30 a.m. and 4:00

p.m.

2. We will be establishing three committees to lay the groundwork for the next few years. The first committee will be to create an interim plan for our ministries while the Fowler House is temporarily unavailable. The second committee will be looking at our whole campus and creating a best-use plan for all of our spaces, including the new space in the new building. The third committee will be establishing a contingency plan should our negotiations with the developer not come to pass.

3. We will be holding a parish vote on Sunday, February 3 at 11:30 a.m. This vote is required by the canons of the Diocese of Virginia anytime a parish is voting to buy, sell, or encumber any parish property. Russ Randle continues to serve our parish faithfully as legal advisor and liaison to the diocese.

Along with the Vestry, are deeply grateful to Chris, Jim, and John on the Fowler House Committee for the thoughtful, careful work they have put into the process of re-imagining our property. They have been wonderful to work with and we look forward to the journey we have ahead.

Advent blessings,

The Rev. Noelle York-Simmons, Rector

Emily Bryan, Senior Warden

Dave Riggs, Junior Warden

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