

WHERE WE ARE: Week of March 8th

1. I would like to acknowledge Helen B. Garretson, George Raymond and Nancy Cobden for their leadership in orchestrating the awesome Mardi Gras event last evening.
2. This Thursday, our Insurance Team of George Raymond and Ted Cobden will be meeting with our Insurance Adjuster, Jim Wilson from GAB Robbins. They will be giving him our claim package for the collapse of the west wall. The claim totals about \$255,000 and includes such items as:
 - a. Crissey Farm Rental
 - b. Loss of Rental Income – Tenants, Other Events
 - c. Rector's Auto Insurance Deductible
 - d. Architectural / Engineering Fees (currently being incurred)
 - e. Building Structure Study (Recall building inspector – concern about structure of church)
 - f. Masonry Contractor- (Stabilizing and fixing)
 - g. Stained Glass Window (Removal, Storage, Reinstallation)
 - h. Carpenter and Electrician (To prepare, remove, protect the altar and rearidus for the work to be done on the wall)
 - i. Tree Service (remove trees near the electric wires – accomplished)

We have put together a package containing all the back-up information and quotes. We will keep you posted, since we have heard that the insurance company is anxious to settle the claim and we would like that.

LAST WEEK:

1. I told you on Thursday that we would be handing off our Claim to the Insurance Adjustor, Jim Wilson.
That did happen. George and Ted, our Insurance Team, Doug J. Warden and Francie were all there. The company is also sending a contractor on Tuesday from the Eastern part of Massachusetts to tour the site and submit a bid. We are not sure whether this is a check and balance put in by GAB Robbins to see how our contractor bid measures up or not. This will happen this week. The outcome will determine our next steps.
2. We ask your prayers for five members of the Vestry, who will be attending the Wardens / Vestry Day on Saturday.

WHERE WE ARE: Week of March 15th

1. This past Wednesday, we had a conference call, which included four representatives from Willis Insurance Broker: the Vice-President, the person responsible for service delivery, the Corporate Claims Manager and our contact, L. Wilson, Steve Abdow, the Diocesan Representative and, representing St. James, Francie Hills, Ted, a member of the Insurance Team, Doug from Seattle and myself. The call clarified for them some of our concerns. They reviewed the bid from Balfour and our masonry bid and have approved ours. By Wednesday of this week, we will know the status of our claims list. We also offered some process improvement opportunities for them in guiding other churches through similar events.
2. In 2012, St. James will celebrate 250 years as the oldest church in the diocese. We are beginning to have initial preparatory conversations about celebrating that achievement. We hope to commission a piece of original music, have the last 50 years of our church history written and have the presiding Bishop here for the Eucharistic Celebrations, along with representatives from each church in the diocese. Francie and George Raymond have had meetings with Bishop Scruton and the presiding Bishop's visit is being supported by him and is likely to happen. More to come!
3. Yesterday, the Vestry had its Retreat at Christ Church, facilitated by Wendy Denn, Director of the Trinity Conference Center in Connecticut. You must have been praying very hard, because it was evident that the Holy Spirit was at work among us. We learned a lot about each other and what church meant to us before and what church means to us now, through a powerful process using "photos" and stories. We listened deeply, in a non-judgmental way to each story. Each one came from the heart and I, personally, was deeply moved. It is a process we may want to replicate in the future. Through it, we spent time talking about communication, especially with each of you. We are going to try writing up my Sunday remarks and:
 - a. Putting them on our website
 - b. Emailing them each week
 - c. Having it in writing here at church the following week

You will be invited to tell us how all of this is affecting you. We are trying to be transparent and the Vestry and Executive Committee gets some feedback, but we'd like to hear more about the impact on each of you. What you think and feel is important to us. We are prepared to listen and to hear you.