



Saint Cecilia Catholic Church

2900 Hoover Avenue
Ames, IA 50010
Phone: 515-233-3092
Fax: 515-233-6423
www.stceciliaparish.org
parish-office@stceciliaparish.org

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Dear St. Cecilia Parishioners,

Last month our parish took the first of many steps to renovate our worship space. After consultation with the Pastoral Council, Finance Committee and Facilities Committee, we obtained archdiocesan approval to begin developing plans for this renovation project. Next year (2022) our current physical church structure turns 50 years old and there are numerous deferred maintenance projects that must be addressed.

The basics of our planning will include:

- Installation of new, reliable air handler(s) - Our air handler is original to the church. If it were to fail, we would not have adequate heating or cooling. Our chiller was a *used* unit when purchased in the 90's, so we really do not know how old it is.
- Replacement of ceiling/removal of asbestos - Through the years, we have had leaks in our roof which have created ugly stains and unsightly peeling that cannot be easily repaired or removed because of the asbestos in the ceiling.
- Elevation/relocation of ductwork - Our HVAC system circulates underground and with the high water table and the probability of water in our ductwork, the circulated air is not of the highest quality.
- Improvements in lighting - This will include consideration of natural lighting options.
- Installation of new sound system/speakers - The speakers in the ceiling are original as well, and as you can imagine, speaker technology has improved significantly in the last 50 years.
- Replacement of pews and carpeting - Pews and carpets bear the signs of many years of use.
- Installation of a fire suppression system - This is a standard recommendation by the Fire Marshal. While we have fire suppression systems in place elsewhere, there is none in the worship space.

A renovation of this scope will allow us to renew our sanctuary and sacred furnishings. The archbishop and the worship commission of the archdiocese will be active during this process and may have recommendations or requirements that they want to see.

Some work has already been done to prepare for the renovation. A new roof was added last fall. An HVAC programming system has been installed for the entire campus.

At one time, St. Cecilia considered building a new church on the current site. However, due to financial considerations, our gathering space was built first. Various renovation projects have been discussed subsequently, but we have not pushed them through to make it a reality. We believe the deferred maintenance issues need to be addressed and we need to begin soon.

After the last capital campaign, resulting in the building of the narthex, more than \$1.5 million remained and was set aside for eventual renovation of the worship space. This money is still available and we want to respect the wishes of the people who gave in the past.

This new undertaking will probably be in the several million-dollar range. We will know more after we hire an architect who will develop and present plans and provide estimates. An appeal will be made for your support of this project. This appeal will come a little later in the process. A reasonable timeline would be a couple years of planning and fundraising and then several months to accomplish the work. We will have to be out of the sanctuary during the renovation period.

I am excited to begin this process. It is not just a renovation project, but also an opportunity to grow in faith and to respond with gratitude and generosity. When a community works together for a common purpose, relationships are established, renewed and strengthened. I love to ask people to give. It is good for the soul. It is good for the community. It is good for the faith. It is good for future generations. I am proud to serve God here at St. Cecilia and want to accomplish great things for our community. This renovation is needed and is an opportunity to enhance beauty in our sacred space. I look forward to our future and may God bless the work that is to be done, and may we build well on the labors of so many people who have gone before us.

Don J. Zapla