



Raising Our Faith † Building Our Future

Sometimes it's good to look at how far you've come before continuing forward. At last year's Annual Meeting (2018), the Building Our Vision (BOV) course was set: "The aim of the BOV team is to chart a course between what we know we have to do, and our hopes and aspirations, as framed by our strategic plan."

Members of the BOV team spoke at the Annual Meeting last February, saying that faith and hope are necessary for the journey ahead, quoting St. Paul, "For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." (Romans 8:24-25) And Paul also assures us, "The one who has called you will be faithful to bring it to completion." (1 Thessalonians 5:24) Just one year later, we have made remarkable progress on Building Our Vision (BOV) and Funding Our Vision (FOV).



We now have a recommended project that addresses life safety issues without needing sprinklers — and the cistern and well improvements necessary to support the sprinklers also go away. The improved traffic flow on our lower level and the on-grade exits from Hardy Hall to the new patio do more than provide for our safety needs. These work with the kitchen updates to expand our interface with the community and provide new, improved ways to minister to our community.

We have also widened our welcome to the community by providing new lobby and library space, and a re-focused entry that provides for drop-off and access options. Our Christian Education classrooms are being revamped. Worship space will be enhanced by providing additional natural light, opening windows on the north side of the church and re-opening windows on the west side to the new sky-lit lobby.

While work on BOV is continuing, especially for gaining town approvals, focus has shifted for the next three months to the FOV, our capital campaign. Our *Joy of Generosity* capital campaign kicked off in December. The campaign is off to a strong start, and the FOV team is working hard to keep up our early momentum all the way to Commitment Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, Palm/Passion Sunday.

The April 14<sup>th</sup> date was selected as Commitment Sunday not only because of the theological call to commit to following Christ Jesus come what may at the beginning of Holy week, but also to honor a milestone date in rounding out our 275<sup>th</sup> year: It was on April 20<sup>th</sup> 1743 that this church installed our first called pastor, Rev. Daniel Emerson (see the silver platter mounted on the wall outside Emerson Chapel). As we forge ahead with faith and hope on Palm/Passion Sunday, we continue to aspire to a future as fulsome as the past we have embodied, framed by our Strategic Plan, with hope and faith that the vision God has given us will be brought to completion.



**Your BOV and FOV Teams**

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