



Saint James Church

109 6th Ave. SW
Le Mars, IA 51031

St. James Renovation Campaign for Needed Repairs

Dear St. James parish family,

You may have already heard or noticed that a Renovation Campaign for needed repairs is underway for the church building. I am writing you to inform you of the details for this project and to appeal for your financial support. We have been fortunate and blessed that we have not needed any major repairs for decades. But when I arrived almost three years ago, the parish family overwhelmingly told me that ‘it is time!’ I politely asked that they give me time to settle in. Well, I’m settled in and it’s time to get to work. These physical repairs will not only enhance our church’s appearance and keep the building in viable condition, but they will also enliven our spirit and reflect our devotion to building up Christ’s Kingdom on earth.

The St. James Buildings and Grounds Committee has been meeting this past year to assess what repairs are necessary. The Committee consists of Chairman Mike Clarey, and members Bill Anthony, Tim Pick, Ken Plueger, Tom Reuter, Jim Sitzmann, Jr. and myself. We submitted a report to the Diocese last summer, which was approved. The Committee presented this report to the parish over two weekends this past November to solicit feedback. We received positive and constructive input about the proposal. Hence, we proceeded with the project.

The roof is the first order of business. Besides leaking in multiple areas, it is also sagging, worn, missing tiles, vulnerable to hail, and lacks aesthetic cohesion between the main body and the 1988 east addition (different shades of red and different trim). Also, the facial trim, eaves, and dome are significantly faded and corroded. The skylight in the narthex leaks year-round due a deteriorated rubber membrane over the roof and poor weep ducts in the skylight itself.

To resolve these exterior issues, Steve's Roofing Co. from Sioux City will install a charcoal/black steel molded roof which is hail resistant, guaranteed 50 years, very light, and able to be installed in cold temperatures. We do not need to remove the existing roof which will save us significant costs since it contains asbestos. They will also replace the facial trim, eaves, and dome with 24 gauge white metal and install a new skylight with a new rubber roof membrane.

The second order of business is **painting and flooring in the interior** of the church. Due to water damage from a leaky roof, many walls need to be newly plastered and painted. On one wall, there are vertical lines of discoloration due to a lack of insulation. The carpet in the main body has bubbled and buckled due to high traffic and caskets being rolled back and forth. The seat cushions on the pews are also showing considerable wear.

To address these interior issues, John Kaiser Co. from Dubuque will repair all damaged plaster, insulate, paint the complete interior of the church body (nave, sanctuary, cry room, sacristy, side entry, balcony, and east entryway) using natural earth tone colors with accent colors and 23k gold leafing around the windows and ceiling, paint wood grain on all beams and windows casings, re-varnish all existing woodwork, install newly padded pew cushions, lay new carpeting under only the pews and the two entryways (east and southwest), lay nonslip glazed ceramic tile in the church body aisles, sanctuary, cry room, and sacristy, install granite on the window sills, ledges, and two side altars (St. Mary's and St. Joseph's), and put new wainscoting along the church body walls.

At this point, you are probably thinking the three questions:

What's it going to look like? Since it is hard to envision all of this, we have placed picture renditions of these exterior and interior repairs in the east entryway to give us an idea of what it will look like. We hope you have or will take the opportunity to view the renditions.

How much is it going to cost? The total cost for the exterior and interior is \$300,000. While it is not three million, it is still a chunk of change. But considering all that we are doing and in light of some churches paying \$600,000 to only re-roof, I am grateful that it will not cost more. The Committee received several bids for both exterior and interior projects and we were pleased that the two highly recommended contractors came in with the lowest bids.

When will it be done? We have strongly expressed to both contractors that we want to be finished by Easter. I would love nothing more than to celebrate our first Mass together in our newly renovated church on Easter! We will still have our **Smorgasbord** in the Church hall on Palm Sunday, which means we will have to move Masses that weekend to the Gehlen gym. Parking will be available to us in the north parking lot of Gehlen.

OUR GOAL. I mentioned above that the total cost of the NEEDED repairs is \$300,000, but that is not our goal. With 704 registered families at St. James, we should easily raise \$300,000. Our true goal is to have a 100% participation in this Campaign. We hope to raise much more because there are many more DESIRED renovations that parishioners have frequently expressed to me that they would like to see done, such as a new altar, new lectern, new sound system, new ceiling fans, remodeling of the church hall, etc. The list is endless, which is good, but first we have to take care of what is necessary now and discuss later without urgency what we desire to do as a parish family. However, generous contributors to this campaign have expressed that they do not want to have another fundraising campaign in the coming years.

Why is 100% participation our goal? Contributing to this Renovation Campaign does more than just repair. It fosters ownership of God's Kingdom, belonging to something marvelously greater than ourselves, and responsibility as good and trusted stewards. Currently, 225 families out of 704 have raised \$209,100. I applaud them for their generosity. While some are able to give more than others, we all have something from God to give in order to keep our Church beautiful.

How to contribute? If you would like to pledge an amount to be paid in the coming year or two, you may fill in the form below, place it in an envelope and put it in the collection basket or mail/deliver to the parish office. If you would like to submit a full contribution with one payment, you may simply write 'Renovation Campaign' in the memo line of your check and drop it in the collection basket or mail/deliver it to the parish office. Please make your check to '**St. James Renovation Campaign.**'

Thank you for what you have sacrificed to contribute to the Renovation Campaign!

Sincerely,

Fr. Matt Hewitt

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Pledge Amount: _____ **Initial Payment:** _____

Timing of Payment: ____ Monthly ____ Quarterly ____ Other

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____