

Dear Friends,

The Vestry of the Church of the Holy Spirit invites all parishioners of CHS to participate in an informational meeting after the Sunday worship services on July 9, 2017 gathering at 11:00 a.m. in Griswold Hall on Highland Street in Plymouth. Refreshments will be provided by the Vestry. The purpose of the meeting is to share information regarding the upcoming sale of the church building on Main Street in Plymouth to Plymouth State University. Vestry members will be joined by representatives from the diocese to fully explain the process of this endeavor and what it will bring to our future as a worship community.

While many of you may find this to be a sudden turn of events, the process began over a year ago when PSU President Donald Birx met with our Priest in Charge, Randy Dales and our junior warden, Beno LaMontange to discuss the possible acquisition of the church building by PSU for use as its university chapel. President Birx's commitment to establish a campus spiritual center heightened our interest in the sale, knowing that the building would continue to be used as a house of worship. In addition, it should be noted that Bishop Hirschfeld foresees collaboration between the diocese, the parish, and the university, forging a joint campus ministry.

This is the second time in four years that the university and the church have been in conversation over the possible sale/purchase of the church. The people in leadership have changed, but the overall goals remain. The possibility of selling the church building was discussed at length at the January Annual Parish meeting, and in February. Randy, Beno, and I were joined by diocesan representative Kevin Nichols as we met in President Birx's office to discuss the possible sale. Acknowledging that our church building requires more repairs and updating than we have available funds was a bitter pill to swallow; however, the reality of the situation is that there is no parking; there is no handicap entrance; the bathrooms are inaccessible to many; the roof needs to be replaced, etc. The Vestry felt that it was in the best interest of our congregation to begin the process of seriously engaging in these discussions. The process has included several inspections of the building, an architectural review, and an outlined renovation plan for the building to be done by the university. Finally, two weeks ago, PSU tendered an offer.

The Vestry has met four times since then, going back and forth with offers and counter offers before unanimously voting to sell the property. Although this has been a heart wrenching decision, the Vestry is committed to maintaining our presence and outreach to the community in Plymouth. The joint 9:30 a.m. services at St. Mark's will go forward, and the Highland Street campus will allow us to continue 8:00 a.m. services in Plymouth, while we examine future possibilities for ministry in this community. Monies gained by the sale of Main Street building may be redirected to expand and update the CLC and Griswold Hall. We look at this as a chance to go forward without the burden of a building we can't afford to maintain and the chance to forge new ministries within our community.

Please join us on July 9th, so that we may more fully share the process with you.
Sincerely, *Christina Mason*, Senior Warden