



Bridging Our Future Through Faith (BFF)

WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND FOR BRIDGING OUR FUTURE THROUGH FAITH?

The plan was to complete critical repairs to the southwest foundation wall of the church. Since we are planning to add an enclosed lift adjacent to the Kitchen area, construction of a new entry addition would proceed at the same time as those repairs. This lift will allow universal access to the main level and to Fellowship Hall. Adding a lift will enable our congregants who cannot navigate the existing level changes and staircases to be included in all fellowship events. It will allow easier access to the building for all who use our Fellowship Hall as their meeting space.

We also recognized the need for more bathrooms on the main level. With that in mind we need to reconfigure the main level Narthex area, replacing the existing bathroom with a coat closet, and reconfigure the Nursery, Choir Room, Carlton Rooms and Hallway to provide two new bathrooms, one which will provide full handicap accessibility. Completing all the necessary work will enable us to proceed with renovations for a fully licensed kitchen, complete with storage to house our food pantry.

WHEN WAS THE (BFF) CAMPAIGN STARTED?

The campaign was started in February 2014. After researching different options we settled on a three stop lift that would go from ground level up to the main level or down to Fellowship Hall. This meant that a new hallway would need to be constructed, and the existing rooms on the main floor would have to be changed to accomplish this and to also add the two bathrooms on the main level (one bath being Handicap accessible).

So we launched the campaign and were moving forward nicely however, in July 2015 we had a change of ministers. Rev. George Morris joined us as interim pastor and felt that it would be best to suspend the campaign until a permanent pastor was assigned to our church. In October 2015 Pastor Sammy joined us on a part time basis and later was appointed as our Pastor. Based on this the Administrative Council along with the Trustees and Finance Committees decided it was time to reinstate the campaign.

So effective February 2108 we have reinstated the BFF campaign.

SO WHAT ARE THE THREE STAGES OF THE BFF CAMPAIGN?

They are:

Stage 1 - A restructuring of the Hallway and the addition of two new bathrooms and the removal of the existing bathroom on the main floor. The entry to the Carlton Rooms will be changed so that it opens to the main level. The reconfiguration of the Carlton Rooms will make this area more easily used as a gathering/meeting room. This also requires the repositioning of the Choir and Nursery Rooms in order to accommodate the two new bathrooms and the lift should we obtain a grant for the lift.

Stage 2 - The two stop lift that would allow people to enter the building without steps. The lift will go down to Fellowship Hall or up to the Main Level. We have been working with Margaret Westfield an architect and grant writer to apply for grants for the cost of the lift and the lift structure. Work has begun with the thought of beginning work in 2019 pending receiving of a grant. This stage would include the reinforcing of the kitchen area wall and new entrance to Fellowship Hall.

Stage 3 – This stage would allow us to redo the kitchen area to make it functional again. The work completed in Stage 2 along with the reinforcing of the wall allows us to get the kitchen area all set up so once completed appliances, cabinets, and equipment can be purchased and “plugged in”. This will enable us to once again have a licensed kitchen in our facility.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED AND WHERE DOES THE CAMPAIGN STAND NOW — BEFORE THE RELAUNCH?

During the suspension several people have continued to give to the BFF campaign and as of the end of 2017 we have collected \$159,444 and have spent \$64,494 on architect fees, design and engineering fees. The good news is that all the architect, design and engineering work was complete for all the work so whatever is done can be done with each stage completed separately so we do not have to redo any of this work. It also enables us to split the stages up separately as we are able to reach the campaign goals or obtain grants.

That leaves us with \$110,000 of BFF funds in hand. These funds are tracked separately from any other church funds.

This has raised a Sub-Question?

If you collected \$159,444 and spent \$64,494 that is \$94,950 –correct? Yes that is correct, however the Trustees invested the \$94,950 thereby growing it to the \$110,000 as of the end of 2017.

WHAT IS THE TOTAL COST FOR ALL THREE STAGES?

The total cost of the entire project is approximately \$576,000. We know that that is a large amount for us to raise which is why we have split the project into the three stage approach.

Thus we have relaunched the BFF campaign with Stage 1 which is the main level with a target date to start in the spring of 2019. The cost of this stage is approximately \$222,500 so as of the end of 2017 with \$110,000 in the BFF fund we need to raise \$112,500.

Since the relaunch of BFF campaign we have gotten an additional \$14,512 so the additional funds needed to undertake Stage 1 is now \$97,988. With God's grace, our prayers, and your support we just might be able to accomplish this.

GRANT UPDATE?

Unfortunately on April 18th the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled on appeal in a case in which Morris County was sued because its grant program (which is similar to the NJHT program) awards funds to churches for exterior and structural repair and restoration work. The state supreme court ruled that it is unconstitutional to use public funds for that purpose. The NJHT is talking with the office of the state's attorney general to determine the impact of this ruling on the NJHT program. It seems nearly certain, however, that we will not be able to obtain construction funding next year for the lift.

We were in the process of applying for the planning grant which is the step prior to applying for the construction grant. Since the planning grant costs us funds to apply for we have decided to discontinue the application process. The planning grant would enable us to use the funds already spent for architect, design and engineering fees to qualify for our matching funds towards the grant. However, it does not make sense for us to proceed as it will cost us and even if we obtain the planning grant approval we may find out that the decision is that churches are now ineligible for construction grant funding. We will of course keep an eye on this and if it is decided that construction grant funding is cleared in the future we will take another try at obtaining it. Bottom line this will now certainly delay that opportunity for us to obtain a construction grant for the lift for at least another year.

So what do we do with regards to getting any grant to help us?

We will now look further into the viability of obtaining private grants for maybe the handicap bathroom and possibly some funding for the lift.

Any questions please feel free to ask Gary Hopkins or email your question to him and he will coordinate getting a response to you. ghopkins13@gmail.com