

Facilities Assessment Maintenance Plan (FAMP)

Phase 1: Masonry & Roofing Project Q & A

Q: What will we address in the Phase 1 project?

A: Primarily we will address the masonry issues; the main areas of concentration are the highest reaches of the west tower and at the west transept, along 21st Street. The side and front steps will be repointed. This will cover a majority of the masonry repair work, but there will be other repairs in the next 10-20 years. Other Phase 1 projects include a new boiler for Old Buttonwood Hall, replacement of air conditioning units in Old Buttonwood, and repairs to roofing.

Q: What happens if we don't fix the masonry problem now?

A: In 2010, The City of Philadelphia introduced an ordinance for the Periodic Inspection of Exterior Walls and Appurtenances: facadeordinance.com/facade-ordinances/philadelphia.

This ordinance requires buildings over 60' in height to have their facades inspected every five years for structural soundness. Previous façade inspections of our building uncovered conditions that were addressed immediately (referred to as Phase 1A, Emergency Repairs). Further masonry work was completed during the main building renovation project. We are now due for another inspection, and we believe that some current façade conditions may not pass. Our masonry consultant has advised to proceed with restoration work. If we do not do this work, we would need to take protective measures around the church, including providing scaffolding at the building along 21st and Walnut Streets.

There are areas where there are damaged and loose stones, or missing masonry pointing. We need to fix these areas to provide a safe area for the public and our congregation.

Q: Why wasn't this masonry taken care of during the Preserving First Capital Campaign?

A: During the Preserving First project we made cost-saving decisions in order to fit the scope of work to our budget. A large portion of the masonry repairs were taken care of during the Preserving First project, but we also knew that more repairs would eventually be needed, based on the findings of our masonry consultant.

Q: Will this repair work eliminate the white stains on the Chancel walls?

A: Those white stains on the Chancel walls are called efflorescence: masonryinstitute.org/pdf/612.pdf. Efflorescence is quite common, and is caused when there is moisture AND salts present in the wall. There is a way to clean it off the masonry, but unless the masonry is dry it will likely reappear. Efflorescence does not deteriorate the brick; rather it's like dry skin or eczema.

It does not make sense to remove efflorescence from a building until the cause of the moisture infiltration has been solved. We intend to repair the masonry as much as possible in order to stop the introduction of further efflorescence.

Q: What are the other capital needs we need to address?

A: We will follow the Facilities Assessment report as we develop priorities for the next 20 years. Further masonry work on the east side of the building will be required. Mechanical system replacements will be required due to equipment that has reached the end of its useful life. If you have specific questions, we can review the report with you.

Q: What is the Presbyterian Investment Loan Program(PILP)?

A: PILP is a nonprofit corporation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) created to provide low-cost loans to congregations for a variety of capital projects including renovations and refinancing existing debt (pilp.pcusa.org).

Q: Has First Church used PILP previously?

A: Yes, First Church has used PILP before. Financial questions should be directed to the church treasurer, [Craig Boddorff](#).