



Keith's Turn Time to Get Busy for a New Year

By Keith Tonkel, Pastor

It's ours! Given! A brand new year. Another chance to show that "this is a day (and time) of new beginnings, time to remember, and move on."

Happy and blessed New Year to each of you. May this be a good one. Good for us in our nation, our state, our world and in ourselves. We can help make these things so.

This ran into me last week. "Love your neighbor as you love yourself; now try loving yourself as your neighbor." (F. Buechner) One of the beauties of grace discovered is that we can indeed have a self fit to live with, even one to love.

The other side of this is that the graced and loved self is the kind that wants to see what can be done for the Kingdom of God and for others.

"Most of the significant things done in the world were done by persons who were either too busy, or too sick! There are few ideal and leisurely settings for the discipline of growth." (Robert T. Henderson)

Thank goodness we can all do some significant things for God, our church and each other this year. Even those of us who are busy or sick. It's strange but true: It's the busy who most often get the jobs done. The "un-busy" often use up their energy in getting ready to do.

We are hoping for more WellsFolk to get busy with us. Our Council on

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James Mason (right) shows Associate Pastor John Brashier (left) how the new warming oven operates. The oven was generously donated by Associated Food Equipment and Supply.

'90 for 90' Project Helps Position Wells for Future

The Wells Men's Fellowship breakfast begins promptly at 7:15 a.m. every third Sunday, that is, except when the oven door refuses to cooperate.

"The biscuits will be done in 10 more minutes if I can hold this oven door on until then," Billy Browne can be heard calling from the kitchen as the guys circle up to say the morning blessing.

The old Viking oven has cooked a lot of biscuits for the men's group and a lot of casseroles for family night dinners, and it is definitely showing its age. The door often falls into the hands of the cook.

The oven is not the only problem. Doors and drawers are falling off and

the buildup of grease behind the old grill with broken casters sitting on a brick resembles a BP oil spill.

Wells needs a new kitchen.

A new kitchen with new appliances is part of the new "90 for 90" renovation plan to update the kitchen and fellowship hall area.

Since our 90th birthday celebration this summer, a small group of WellsFolk formed an ad hoc committee and have been working quietly behind the scenes on Wells' first major renovation since 1984-85, when the sanctuary and fellowship hall area were redone.

"This committee and others are eager to position Wells Church for

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Renovation

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another 90 years of 'Loving, Caring, and Sharing' here on Bailey Avenue," said James Mason, a member of the committee.

The project includes renovating a number of ministry spaces at Wells to include the fellowship hall, kitchen, food pantry storage room and downstairs restrooms. The current design envisions a coffee bar and welcome/information center where the associate pastor's office is currently located.

"This project will be dedicated in honor of the 48 years of transformative connectional ministry of Keith Tonkel and his family," said James. "Keith has faithfully taught us that 'money follows purpose' and this project will follow that philosophy as we ask people to consider investing in Wells' future now."

The committee's guiding financial principles for this project include:

- A defined 90-day fund raising campaign that will begin Jan. 1 and conclude March 31.
- Only funds raised specifically for this project will be used. We will not use savings, nor will we go into debt.
- Members and friends of Wells are only asked to give what they are able above and beyond their normal tithes and offerings.
- Design plans will be adjusted if necessary in order to stay within the \$201,790 budget.

"It's not about spending a lot of money. It's about continuing to build a place where people will spend a lot of time serving the Lord," said Ken Hodges, chairman of the Finance Committee and a member of the Ad Hoc Renovation Committee.

The plans take into account that the fellowship hall area is the first impression many people get when they come to Wells.

"This renovation project is important



to Wells because the back door is our front door to many folks attending our church," said Phil Eide, a member of the Trustees and the Ad Hoc committee. "The space has served us well, but after decades of use it needs updating, significant kitchen improvements and spiffing up for our guests and our regulars, too."

The renovation project will include:

Coffee Bar Area: Conversations over coffee often can be the first opportunity to connect with people on a personal level. The proposed Coffee Bar in the area of the current associate pastor's office will create a comfortable place where visitors and members can connect and talk.

Tuesday Morning Ministries: This project will provide enhanced and dedicated space to our Tuesday Morning Ministries. The renovation of the existing storage room will facilitate the ongoing collection of food donations throughout the month and make the work on Tuesday mornings much more efficient.

A Place for those without a Place: Wells has always sought to be a safe place for so many people without a place for many different reasons. Our sanctuary, kitchen and fellowship hall are regularly used by a number of non-Wells folk for weddings, receptions and funerals because a number of people don't have a church they call home or that is welcoming to them for whatever reason. The renovation of our kitchen and fellowship hall will allow us the opportunity to better serve not only our present ministries, but also to minister to those among our broader

community who have always depended upon Wells Church in the past for a place during these times of both extraordinary joy and sorrow.

Office Synergy: Despite the small size of our staff, much synergy and efficiency is lost due to the associate pastor's isolated office location in the fellowship hall. By locating this office upstairs, John Brashier will be in a much better position to interact with the staff and visitors.

Bathroom: As almost everyone knows, the current downstairs bathrooms are dated, hard to clean, awkward to access and lack adequate ventilation for the volume of use they receive during events. Additionally, it is disappointing that we do not offer a single bathroom with a diaper changing station. That sends an unintended message that young children are not central to who we are, which couldn't be farther from the truth. This project will allow us to address all of these shortfalls.

As one can see from the plans, this is not simply a building renovation project to modernize the kitchen; it is a project to adapt the fellowship hall space into an area to better serve the ministries of the church.

Phillip Morgan, who serves on the Trustees, and Bob Kersh, who worked on the committee, see the project as more than a building project.

"Phillip and I plan to and are supporting the renovation project for Wells Church," said Bob. "Wells is our spiritual home. Wells is where our journeys began of sobriety and spirituality. As our futures on this earth are brief, we want to have hope that Wells Church will continue to be a beacon of hope for others like ourselves."

Stay tuned for more information and perspectives as this project moves forward. As always, please feel free to send the committee your ideas and feedback at 90for90@wellschurch.org.