

## **HVAC Project Update: September 2025**

In late 2024, an engineering firm created a pro-bono specification (spec) for an HVAC upgrade that would utilize as much of our current heating system as possible and would cost around \$550k.

This spec was used to request proposals from 6 HVAC vendors\* and all but one declined to bid the project as proposed (even the company that designed the spec). Only ACCO bid the HVAC project as specified for a price of \$630k, driven by our complex Trane control system and retrofitting our hydronic heaters in smaller rooms.

Our current system uses water to transfer heat but would require complex and expensive pipe insulation upgrades to allow for cooling without the risk of condensation forming on the pipes and causing expensive water damage. Even with this upgrade, a retrofitted system would only cool the sanctuary and leave the rest of the building with a mix of wall-mounted air conditioner units to cool on warmer days.

The vendors that declined to quote the proposed design recommended converting to a modern Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) system for \$750K that uses refrigerant instead of water, while addressing several other shortfalls of the current system (inconsistent heating, risk of pipe freezing, difficulty in finding qualified boiler techs). No contract has been signed yet.

The higher \$750K price is driven by higher amounts of electrical and mechanical labor needed to run refrigerant piping and electrical to all rooms instead of repurposing our current plumbing. As we go forward, all options have been highly impacted by tariff-related volatility, and ordering equipment soon helps minimize unexpected price increases in this space.

After careful review of the options, the Property Committee recommended we start fresh with this option instead of trying to fix our under-performing and under-sized existing system.

Questions? Contact the Church Office at [office@stlukechurch.com](mailto:office@stlukechurch.com) and your message will be forwarded to the LIFT Continuation Committee.

*\*Request for Proposals (RFPs) were sent to: ACCO, Hunter Davidson, Jacobs, HVAC INC., American, Total Mechanical.*