

On June 20, 2021

we began worshipping in the Wood Fellowship Hall while our sanctuary undergoes renovation as a part of the Opening Doors Capital Campaign. This Frequently Asked Questions sheet is intended to keep the congregation informed about the details of what is happening in “the most important room in our house,” the sanctuary. This communication is the first in a series of ways we will be sharing information on the sanctuary project with church members. Stay tuned for more information and for ways you can submit questions that you have along the way.

Sanctuary Renovations

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why are we doing work in the sanctuary at all?

A: Of all the rooms on our church campus, the most important is our historic and beautiful sanctuary. The sanctuary is the place from which all the rest of our ministry and mission grows. In the past 30 years we have had two successful capital campaigns to address other parts of our church facility (the last campaign taking place in 1999 to build the Poplar Street building). However, we have not addressed the Sanctuary in a substantial way beyond recarpeting in over a generation. The Session believes the time is now for us to invest in the treasure that is our sanctuary so that future generations can benefit from the abundant life that comes from worshipping in community.

Q: Who have we hired to do the work in the sanctuary?

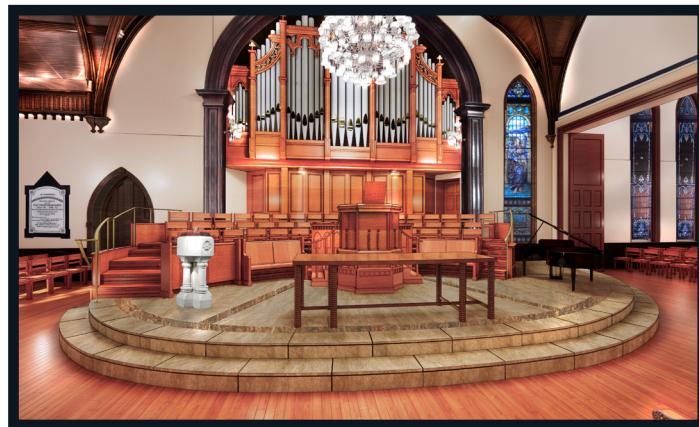
A: Rodgers Builders is our contractor. We hired Rodgers for our last capital project (the 1999 campaign that built the Poplar Street building). Jenkins Peer is our architect. Terry Byrd Eason, a nationally renowned liturgical consultant who has worked with many historic Presbyterian churches, helped with our conceptual design and is assisting Jenkins Peer and Rodgers throughout the project.

Q: Who is overseeing the project from the church?

A: Our Church Business Administrator, Wilfred Neal, meets with representatives from Jenkins Peer and Rodgers Builders weekly. A Construction Work Group made up of church members (Suzie Black, Eddie Booher, Lee Bradley, Gene Cochrane, Jimmy Dudley, Barb Frith, and Diane Maye) will meet regularly with Wilfred to stay abreast of progress and to guide decisions that need to be made within the allocated budget.

Q: What are we doing in the sanctuary? What is the scope of the project?

A: There are seven areas of work that we are undertaking to invest in the future of our historic and beautiful sanctuary: (1) a new chancel that will provide flexibility for worship and more space to accommodate our choir, (2) a new pipe organ, built by Quimby Organ Builders of Warrensburg, MO, (3) a significant treatment to the floor, where we will stabilize the back half of the sanctuary, add a subfloor, refinish our existing heart of pine hardwood floors (and replace where necessary), and replace the old carpet with new



carpet runners down the aisles, (4) treatment of the walls, with refinished wainscoting under the stained glass windows, plaster repair, and painting where needed and in line with our current coloring (including the narthex and balcony stairwells), (5) the building of replicas of our current pews (once we are certain the replicas will meet our expectations), (6) lighting – replacing the existing florescent lighting in the ceiling, and (7) improving the technology for our television and livestream broadcast.

Q: Why are we considering replica pews? Why was there not mention of this in the campaign literature before now?

A: Initially, we envisioned refurbishing our current pews and repairing where needed. These were the assumptions during the time that we put together the Opening Doors campaign material. As we have continued to fine-tune the project with our architect and builder and have identified a reputable church furniture company (New Holland), a number of things have become clearer: (1) Because we are addressing the floor in a more substantial way, we will need to remove all the pews. New Holland has examined our current pews and they are not able to guarantee they can put them back together if they are removed, (2) the cost for New Holland to build replica pews vs. refurbish our existing pews is the same. Additionally, the replica pews will carry a 25-year warranty (there is no warranty on refurbished pews). There is one important caveat: To ensure that we are satisfied with replica pews, New Holland has agreed to build us a "model" pew and deliver it to us so that we can offer our feedback. If they cannot replicate our pews to our expectations, we will go the path of refurbishing our existing pews.

Q: It sounds like the floors and the pews are connected?

A: Absolutely! If we were not doing anything to the floor of the sanctuary, there would be less of a need to address the pews. However, while preparing for construction to begin, we discovered that the sanctuary floor is in desperate need of treatment. The back half of the floor (from about the second chandelier to the narthex) is literally sitting on dirt. To ensure stability and safety for the future, as well as to enhance the acoustics of the room, the Session decided that now is the time to address the floor in a substantial way – adding piers and girders to increase load capacity and a subfloor to stabilize and strengthen the structure. This decision requires us to take up all of our pews, which



then leads to the question of the best course of action for a long-term investment of the pews (covered in the previous question and answer above).

Q: Will our church remain a Historically Designated Site in Charlotte?

A: Yes. We have been given written assurance of this by the Charlotte Preservation Society.

Q: What else are we doing to ensure that we preserve as much of our sanctuary's treasures as possible?

A: We have empowered a group of passionate and dedicated members to be our "Preservation Committee." Those members are: Suzie Black, Jean Cochrane, Jane Ives, and Kathryn Raby. This group is charged with (a) deciding what needs to be saved and stored, and (b) what to do with those things that we preserve.

Q: What will happen to the needlepoint on the front pews and on the pastors' chairs in the chancel?

A: The beautiful needlepoint cushions on the front pews are currently in climate-controlled storage and will be returned to the front pews of the sanctuary when the renovation is complete. The needlepoint cushions on the pastors' chairs will need to be incorporated in a different way in the seats that will be in the new chancel. Wilfred Neal will work with New Holland to determine how the cushions will fit in the new pews.

Q: Will anything be different about the chandeliers or the stained-glass windows?

A: No.

Q: How long will the project take to complete?

A: Right now, Rodgers estimates that we will be back into the sanctuary by late summer 2022. Until that time, we will worship in the Wood Fellowship Hall.

Q: How can I hear about/see updates along the way to our completed renovation?

A: Starting this summer we will offer written updates as well as pictures and videos of what is happening in the space through our weekly newsletter and on our website. It will be exciting to watch!