

Sanctuary Renovation – White Paper

Introduction:

The sanctuary at St. Paul's has served the congregation very well since it was first constructed. It has wonderful acoustics for musical activities and there has always been a feeling of warmth in the sanctuary due to the wood and the "inverted ark" design. For many there is a safe, spiritual feel to the sanctuary that invites meditation and closeness to God.

Over the past few decades, the sanctuary has been used for drama by the youth of the congregation, Christmas presentations, musical "productions", smaller musical events, recording sessions and various worship services. These would have all been shared with the congregations in a much better way if there were a larger, more visible area at the front of the sanctuary. On several occasions larger choirs and ensembles were reluctant to use the sanctuary because of logistics and space limitations. The front was designed for basic Sunday morning worship. Worship steeped in tradition.

The front of the sanctuary (where ministers and choir sit) is full of fixed pews, pulpit and permanently fixed low wood partitions. The organ is also prominently situated toward the middle of the area. These make it difficult to use for presentations and singing by the younger members of the congregation as there is little room, multiple levels and fixed furniture which block line of site from many locations within the seating area.

The needs of the congregation have changed as far as the uses of the sanctuary are concerned, both on Sunday mornings and during the week. A renovated sanctuary which incorporates the need for a traditional setting as well as a more contemporary, wider use setting would serve the congregation better and open the sanctuary, with its extraordinary feel and acoustics, to a broader use within the church family and the community. A sense of renewal, energy and new possibilities would certainly accompany such a redesign (note the increased interest, wider uses and increased revenue from the renovated gym).

Scope of Project:

Renovate the interior of the sanctuary to update its functionality and increase its usable scope.

The major components of the renovation would include:

- Redesign the front to provide a much larger multifunctional "stage" area with one higher level, fewer stairs and ramp access.
- All items on the new "stage" would be moveable (pulpit, chairs for choir, etc).
- A new organ of different design would be incorporated off to one side or be moveable. The organ needs and selection will have a significant impact on the potential shape and design of the stage area. It may be possible to incorporate the sections behind the tall rear wall where the current organ tubes are hung.
- Projection equipment, including screen for pictures and video would be incorporated.
- The sound system will be completely rebuilt using as much of the current system as is possible such as wiring, speakers and some of the microphones. The mixing and

amplifier components would be new as would some microphones. Options for location of the mixing board will include rear floor and front of the balcony.

- Replace carpeting down the centre and side isles and in front of stage. (Stage area would be hardwood, wood laminate or some new type of stage flooring).
- Assess floor tiles in balance of sanctuary and Narthex to determine if they need to be replaced.
- The windows throughout the sanctuary, including those behind the choir lofts should probably be replaced with energy efficient ones as well as the bank of windows in the landing just outside the narthex entry doors in the literature table/greeting area. Consideration should be given to providing an opportunity for members to donate stained glass windows during this stage of the renovations.

Other considerations would include:

1. Overhead cross and communion table placement
2. Replacement of pews with moveable chairs to allow for various configurations. This item could be done over several years to defray costs
3. Assessing/ upgrading the current lighting on the “stage area” to support multi functional uses
4. Investigate the possibility of converting the heating system in the sanctuary from electric to forced air gas and revisit the question of air conditioning.
5. Accessibility.

Next Steps: (Preliminary list-not final)

- Create a Sanctuary Renovation Committee to move the project forward
- Engage congregation in the idea through issuing of this document.
- Create a list of people within the congregation with whom we will have in-depth interviews on the uses of the sanctuary and the needs of all groups. This would include as a minimum:
 - Ministerial staff
 - Worship Committee
 - Choir Director
 - Choir members
 - Sunday School superintendant and teachers
 - Those organizing musical activities
 - 20 members of the congregation representing all ages and involvement
- Visit other congregations who have renovated their worship spaces and bring pictures and descriptions back to the congregation to explain what they did and why.
- Refine the scope of the project and work needed based on feedback. (2 or 3 options)
- Put reasonable and credible estimates together for the work.
- Put a broad plan in place to fund the project.
- Get congregational approval at special meeting for the renovation.
- Advise Presbytery of the plans