

Good afternoon, and thank you for staying for this forum and presentation of the process and plans for our worship spaces – especially the sanctuary – that are being proposed as a part of the Faith for the Future capital campaign. In fact, the plans under consideration serve as a major focus of the coming campaign, and are certainly a significant part of the vision for this church for the future.

It is indeed a privilege to be able to speak with you today about the challenges with which we are faced, the process that has been followed over the past 18 months or so, and the excitement with which we hope to move forward in realizing this vision. I am pleased to share the presenting today with two persons who have been pivotal to the unfolding of this process. Betsy Marvin and Jon Sheppard have co-chaired two groups which have met and worked literally for hundreds of hours in the past year-and-a-half – and I thank them for their participation today and for their leadership in this process.

Today's forum is only a beginning point for broader conversation and consideration of these plans by members of the congregation. Today's session is intended to give a good background understanding of what has been considered, and the current status of proposals for the sanctuary. In mid-March, we will have the privilege of hosting another congregational forum (on Sunday, March 16) with Terry Byrd Eason, the outstanding liturgical designer with whom we have been working, in order to fill in even more of the rich historical, architectural and liturgical context in which these proposals have developed and to which they relate. So, while many of your questions may be answered today, even more will be possible with the next forum!

Before we move to an outline of the process and proposals, I think it is important to say a few words about this space – what it means to us, and from where it has come. This is indeed SACRED space...and it is sacred on several different levels. It is sacred by definition because of the divine purpose for which it was built – the worship of God. It has been made even more sacred over the last 115 years by the generations who have worshiped here and been nurtured in the faith within these walls. So it also has an

element of sacredness that has developed in a historical sense for the congregation and community. But it is certainly also more than a sacred building. It is a living and breathing testament to the faithfulness and vision of this congregation over many generations.

I point this out in part to emphasize the deep sense of gratitude and the care, seriousness and prayerful consideration that has permeated the discussions among the various committees involved in the development of these plans. The prospect of change always carries with it not only excitement and great hope based on a vital vision for the future; it also carries with it a certain level of anxiety and hesitancy – uncertainty about what we will miss, what will be different and how that will affect our own personal devotion. At the same time, we must move forward with FAITH, as our predecessors have at critical points in years past, that God is leading us in important directions that will give life and vitality to this congregation and to the larger Church long after we are gone.

As many of you are aware, the congregation of Third Church traces its beginnings to 1827. As we just marked our 180th anniversary as a congregation this past year, it is interesting to note that major markers in the history of the congregation have occurred just about every 60 years or so, give or take a few – roughly the span of two generations. During the first 60 years, as the congregation and the community grew, Third Church occupied several different buildings at various locations in the downtown area, west, and just east of the river. In the late 1880s, however, the congregation made the bold –and some said irresponsible, even crazy – move further east of the river to the largely undeveloped area of East Avenue. The first building on this site was built around 1887 on Meigs Street, and within just a few years, the present sanctuary was built to accommodate the rapid growth that was occurring in the area. Portions of that first building, of course, still exist and are now incorporated into the Parish House, most evident in the spaces of the Chancel Choir Room and the Moot Room.

Almost 60 years after the opening of the new sanctuary, it was determined that the space did not adequately meet the needs of the growing congregation or of its worship patterns. So, in the early 1950s the chancel was dramatically altered in a neo-Gothic style, re-positioning the choir and organ, pulpit and lectern, and adding the stunningly beautiful window above the reredos and communion table.

Here we are, almost another 60 years later in the history of Third Church, and again we are at what many feel is a critical junction in the life of the congregation, full of challenge, but also of great opportunity. It is a point where the inevitable structural needs of an aging building coincide with the realization that while we still worship in a very traditional pattern, that the way we experience that worship is vastly different than it was in the 1950s, with larger numbers of participants in worship leadership, specifically in choirs, and much more participation by the congregation in the form of spoken and sung responses, prayers and hymns. As a result, our current worship experience is no longer fully supported by the space. As we move into the rest of the presentation, it is our hope that you will catch a bit of the vision for what can be – as the plans interestingly recall some of the best features and functions of the original sanctuary design, as well as build on the strength of what was added over 50 years ago, while boldly preparing for and anticipating the next 60 years in enhancing the worship life of this great church.

To begin, let me outline for you the timeline of the process and involvement of people over the past 18-20 months which has led to the current plan as incorporated into the larger Faith for the Future capital campaign.

In mid-2006, a focus group was formed in the early stages of planning for the campaign, which we called the Worship Space Group. This group [Betsy Marvin and Jon Sheppard, *co-chairs*; Joyce Dustman; Jeanne Fisher; Randy Kemp; Chuck Lewis; Paul McArthur; Jeanette Olson; Peter DuBois, *staff*; and John Wilkinson, *staff*] was charged

with evaluating our worship spaces and worship-related spaces, such as children's and adult choir rehearsal rooms, in light of our current uses, and anticipating future needs.

This group worked from June to December of 2006, and out of its research and deliberations, crafted a Worship Space Case Statement, drawing on a broad understanding of worship as outlined in The Directory of Worship in our Book of Order, as well as on the observations and expressed needs developed by the committee. The focus of the Case Statement was on considering the "big picture" of worship: what is the place of worship in the life of our congregation? How do we address the needs of various constituents?

Always, the group held to the guiding principle of "Enhancing the Worship Experience." As discussions progressed, that was a primary test of what challenges should be included in our proposals for action – building on the strengths and beauty of our current worship spaces, while anticipating the needs of our worship for the next 50+ years.

Realizing that one of the major concerns expressed in discussions was around the importance of clear audibility of both spoken and sung word, the Group determined that before being able to suggest any actions to be taken, that expert advice and evaluation of the acoustic properties of both the sanctuary and the chapel was needed.

With the agreement of the Campaign Cabinet, we engaged nationally recognized acoustical consultant Robert Mahoney of Boulder, CO. Bob has extensive – and successful – experience in working on a wide range of projects nationally – and has a particularly keen understanding of the special concerns and needs of churches, as opposed to concert halls, theaters, convention centers, meeting rooms, etc. He met with the Group in November 2006, and worshiped with us on a Sunday morning in both spaces, did extensive testing of the rooms, and completed a full survey of the

structural and mechanical systems that effect the acoustical properties of our worship spaces.

After receiving his report, the Worship Space Group finalized its Case Statement, and passed it, along with a potential project list to implement, and the acoustical report on to the Facilities Committee of the larger Campaign organization. A copy of the Case Statement developed by the Worship Space Group may be found on the "Resources" page of the campaign website.

To summarize, these three themes, or key values, emerged from the discussions of the Worship Space Group

1. The centrality of worship in the life of the Church and of THIS congregation – this cannot be overstated – everything else that we do grows from the community in worship.
2. the growth and development of worship-related programs in the past fifty-plus years – SINCE the last renovation of the sanctuary, which focused primarily on the chancel (includes more than doubling size of adult choir, establishment and growth of children's and youth choirs, handbell choirs, youth and children's musicals, etc. It also includes the addition of many special events such the recent Boar's Head Festival, with well over 100 people involved in the production and at the front of the church!)
3. Third, Responsible stewardship of these historic buildings which have been handed down from previous generations, with new vision and vitality for the future.

When the facilities committee was dealing with the implications of the reports it received from the Worship Space Group and the acoustical consultant, it determined that the scope and nature of the design work needed in the Sanctuary would be best accomplished by consulting a Liturgical Designer. Terry Byrd Eason was engaged in

the early spring of 2007 as liturgical designer to give our discussions a grounding in the liturgical traditions of our denomination. He is renowned for his extensive understanding of many liturgical traditions, and brings a great historical sensitivity to his work relative to both architectural AND liturgical considerations.

A reconstituted Worship Space Sub-Committee with representatives from the Facilities Committee and Campaign Cabinet, held a series of five meetings with Terry Eason over a period of nine months – beginning in March, and continuing throughout the remainder of the year. This series of meetings also included one important meeting with both Terry, and acoustical consultant Robert Mahoney present.

Each successive meeting resulted in clearer focus on the *design, structural* and *functional* issues – in keeping with the values articulated in the Case Statement.

As the sub-committee worked with Terry a part of our charge to him included three key issues – which had been articulated earlier in our case statement, but now became even more apparent:

1. Visibility – improved sightlines to and from the chancel, and improved lighting throughout the sanctuary
2. Audibility – so that the congregation members hear each other and worship leaders effectively
3. And Accessibility – movement into and within the sanctuary should be fully accessible – a value completely in keeping with the larger campaign as well.

A total of nine potential design solutions have been considered, discussed and refined to date – the committee has evaluated a wide range of possibilities, ranging from simpler to more complex – all with the vision of enhancing the worship experience through the key values and key issues noted above. Along the way, many options were considered – from the very complex, to the very minimal - and numerous adjustments in design options have been made. The committee does feel that the current design

proposal addresses the most significant issues while honoring the values identified at the outset of our process. Thus the design you'll see shortly is far from being the most complex solution, but neither is it as simple as merely re-arranging furniture. Further refinements and details will be added in the next phase of our work.

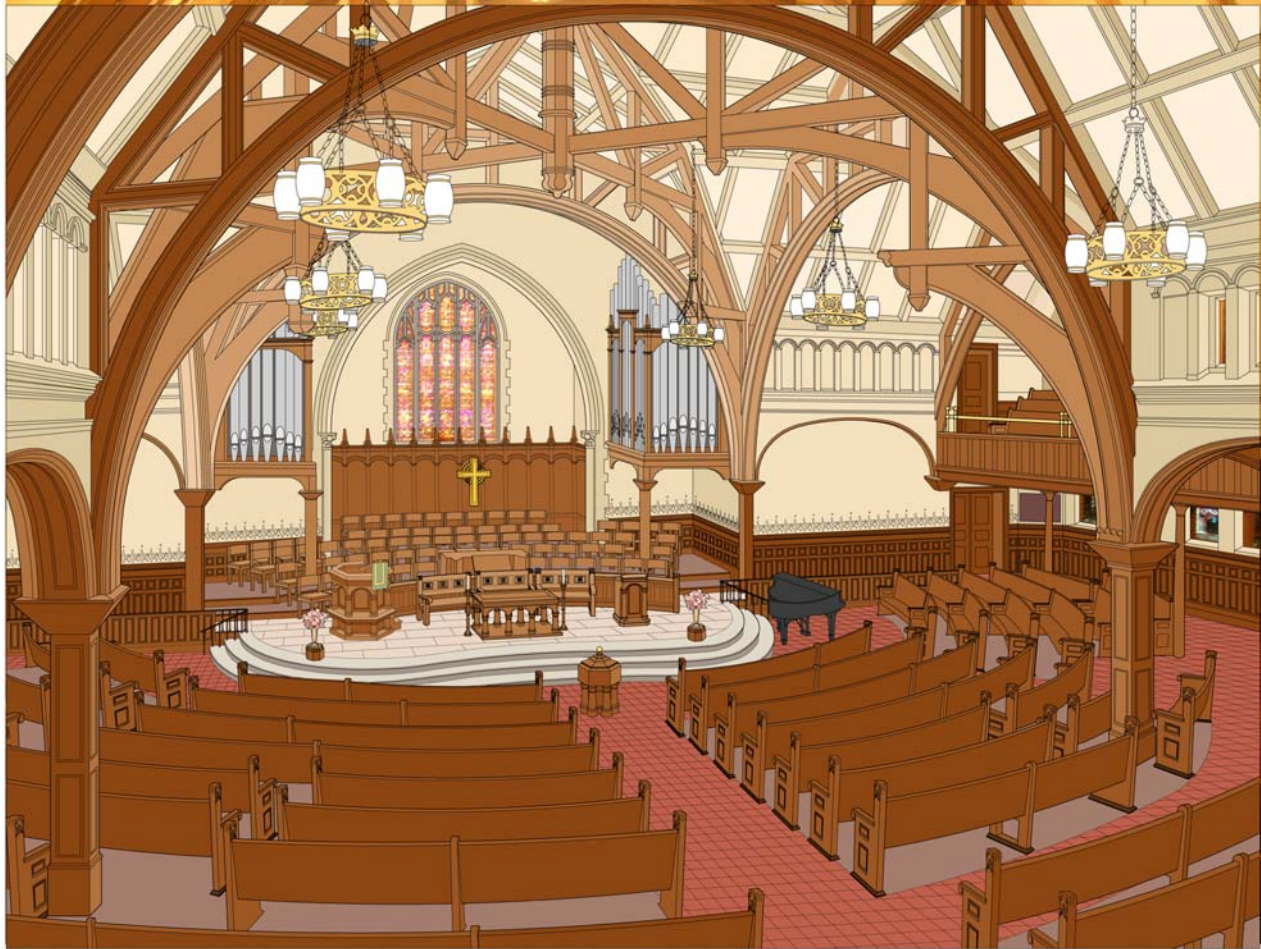
The scope of the proposed work is great – though it is important to recognize that other than post-fire sanctuary repair, neither the sanctuary nor chapel has had major attention in over fifty years. Therefore the work addresses needs on three fronts:

1. ***Catch-up*** includes major infrastructure correctives in the sanctuary (and to a lesser degree the chapel). These are things such as floor strengthening; pew rehabilitation; dealing with aging, ineffective and inefficient mechanical, electrical and HVAC systems as well as lighting and sound systems; remedying visual and aural problems resulting from the 1950s renovation; and restoration of the organs in both sanctuary and chapel.

2. ***Present needs*** refers to meeting the space and functional needs to accommodate the growth in programs already noted, and recognizing the ways in which the space is outmoded for our current worship practice.

3. Finally, our proposed renovations will move beyond catch-up and meeting only present needs to a real ***Vision*** for a worship experience shared by congregation, clergy and choir as equal partners. We will renew the space with flexibility to allow for future evolution of our understanding and practice of worship...recalling the strength of the Presbyterian tradition as expressed in, "The Church reformed, always being reformed."

The picture below is a color rendering of the ninth, and current, design proposal, which embraces and fulfills the concepts already outlined, and addresses the functional and structural needs articulated earlier. The perspective is from the corner of the rear (East Ave) balcony.



It is important to note that this is a CONCEPTUAL design drawing and not necessarily a final and exact version of what will be. Many details and refinements of decoration and finishes will emerge as we move forward.

This rendering, along with the floor plan of the proposed design on the next page include the following significant features:

(1) opening the first arch, and removing the front wall of the chancel (creating a new, wider chancel opening, and replacing the arch with a new wooden truss identical to those in the transepts) This “opening up” allows for re-orientation of the choir and organ console. Most importantly, it also opens up sightlines into the chancel from both side seating sections. (2) Handbells would be located within the chancel providing

much better visibility and audibility to the congregation – and freeing up the Arnold Park balcony for seating

(3) Placement of the pulpit, communion table and baptismal font emphasize and enhance their inter-relatedness and centrality in our worship. Additionally, we should note that all furniture in the chancel will be movable (not portable), creating great flexibility in use of the space.

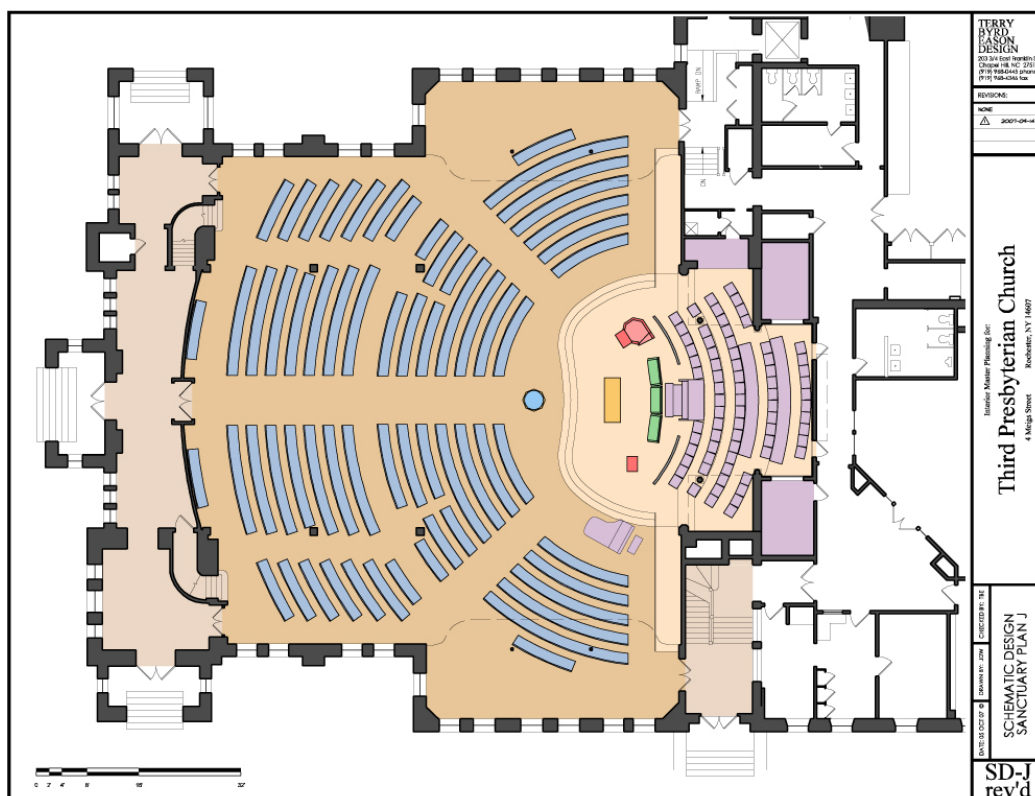
(4) Also, you will notice that on either side of the platform are ramps providing access to the chancel from either side, without steps.

(5) Extending the chancel platform forward brings the communion table into view.

(6) The concave steps allow for space at the front of the chancel steps, and for children's or youth choirs to stand

(7) In addition to the ability to place liturgical furnishings in their optimal positions, by constructing the chancel in this way, with moveable furniture, we completely eliminate the need for additional stages and risers for musicals, Boar's Head and for major choral works with orchestra.

(8) Finally, you will note the re-arrangement of the inner aisles in the rear third of the nave, which will increase seating in the center of the room, unobstructed by columns, and increasing seating in that prime area by about 30-35 seats.



Let us re-visit the three key values addressed by the proposed changes, and how they are fulfilled in the current design proposal.

1. Visibility

- Platform raises clergy and brings action closer to congregation
- Modifying aisles improves line-of-sight in center of nave
- Improved lighting assists with reading hymnal, bulletin, and understanding speech
- Provides permanent placement, better visibility and audibility for bells
- Re-orientation of choir allows full integration of congregation and choir as common worshipers

2. Audibility

- New sound and lighting systems improve spoken word
- Hardening of walls and floor improves acoustics for congregational singing, anthems, organ, group prayer
- Re-orientation of choir to face congregation improves hearing of choir throughout the room
- Modifying placement of organ pipework allows greater support for congregational singing

3. Accessibility

- New ramps on either side of the chancel platform allow full access to the chancel without steps, including
 - pulpit
 - lectern
 - communion table
 - choir
- New elevator in the Garth and ramps in the Parish House allow better access to the sanctuary

Additional items to note in the rendering and floor plan:

- Where the front arch is opened up and the new wooden truss is added – portions of the organ which were previously enclosed within the arch are now exposed with new casework around them. Thus the organ speaks more freely into the room, and supports the congregational singing better, rather than being “bottled up” in the chancel.
- The architectural design of new elements very much echoes and enhances the notable existing architectural elements – arches, arcades, curves to platform/choir arrangement/millwork under window, etc. It all leads to a more holistic integration of the architectural and functional elements of the room, and brings a greater sense of community and relationship between congregation and worship leaders, while enhancing the integrity of the overall architecture of the space.

Let us review the three approaches to the work, and see how this design addresses THOSE issues:

1. **Catch-up** (deferred maintenance) includes major infrastructure correctives in the sanctuary (and to a lesser degree the chapel). These are things such as floor strengthening and repairing cracked and thin wainscoting; rehabilitation of 115-year-old pews; dealing with aging, ineffective and inefficient mechanical, electrical and HVAC systems as well as lighting and sound systems; remedying visual and aural problems resulting from the 1950s renovation; and restoration of the organs in both sanctuary and chapel.
2. **Present needs** refers to meeting the space and functional needs to accommodate the growth in programs already noted, and recognizing the ways in which the space is outmoded for our current worship practice. For example:
 - Improved visibility, audibility, accessibility
 - Accommodates increased size and number of choirs

- New platform eliminates need for additional staging or risers for musicals, major works with orchestra, Boar's Head
- Movable chancel furniture provides flexibility
- Better placement for bell choirs for visibility and audibility

3. **Visionary** - Our proposed renovations will move beyond catch-up and meeting only present needs to a real vision for a worship experience shared by congregation, clergy and choir as equal partners. We will renew the space with flexibility to allow for future evolution of our understanding and practice of worship...recalling the strength of the Presbyterian tradition as expressed in, "The Church reformed, always being reformed."

Presented to the congregation January 13, 2008 by:

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