



**Congregational Forum with
Terry Byrd Eason, *Liturgical Designer***
on the Sanctuary plan
March 16, 2008

Good to be here today, and to get to present to more of you, because I've already had two other occasions to speak to people. Good to be back and to be with you, and to be able to attend a large service in this space this morning. Palm Sunday is always a very vigorous service. I'm going to be standing here as we look at the slides. Some of you may need to adjust if I sort of stay put about here, to get the view of the slides behind me.

One of the most important things is to understand the history of this building. Most of you who have been members a long time are very aware of the history of this building. But basically it falls into two parts. The first 50 or 60 years after this building was built, it had a center pulpit and a raised choir loft in the front. And then in about 1950 or half-way through the 20th century it was changed to reflect a different liturgical thinking, one where the communion table was placed in a more "altar table" like setting, and the choir was divided.

There's a very interesting bit of history there, and of course at the time that the church was built, at the same time within the same range of time, there was the realization of the chapel, and the chapel is a full expression of the idea from the 1920s through the 1950s that worship would have, in the Presbyterian church, but in other churches, would have a communion table placed in a more altar-like setting, and that the choir would be divided. But if we go back earlier --- it's very important to go back to the history of when this building was built --- Presbyterian churches were just warming up to the idea that the choir could be in the front, and could be seen. The choir usually had been in the back or in a corner. But only in the revivalist movement of the mid-19th century did choirs begin to come up front in Protestant churches. Presbyterians, who always had a very strong pulpit in the center, in this country, resisted it because the choir was thought to be competitive with the pulpit. Your building, dating from the early 1890s, had a choir a little bit more progressively exposed than many Presbyterian churches of that time.

Then, by the time we got to the 1920s, that style of architecture with the raised choir lofts and the curved pews gathered around the pulpit, began to be supplanted by the idea of a more formal arrangement looking back to the more linear churches from the middle ages and that altars would be placed in chancels, which were separated from the congregation. And the communion table filled that

role in the Presbyterian tradition and was placed in a more altar-like setting against a reredos. Another name for a reredos is an altarpiece. You can go to museums and see very elaborate altarpieces that exist to ornamentally call attention to an altar.

But to understand the evolution, I think, is very, very important and to see that what you did in 1890 when this church was built was very much of the period. How it was altered in 1950 was very much of the thinking of that time. And the needs that exist now have evolved, and particularly with regard to flexibility in music, are more expansive than in the 1890s, but that the form and the needs of worship very much identify with the 1890s building. And in fact, most of the churches built in America, I would say even culminating with the Methodist church down the street, were built sort of in the long and narrow style from the 1920s through the 50s, and in some cases the beginning of the 60s. There was a rebirth of a concentric thinking starting in the 50s and 60s, and most churches built since then have not been built in the long and narrow style, but have been built in the concentric style, a more gather arrangement, very much like your church has been for 115 years or so. The arrangement of the pews in this church really has survived the test of time, and in fact if you look at even Roman Catholic and modern Lutheran churches, and Episcopal churches, you will find most of them are designing churches in a more concentric arrangement, a more gather arrangement, about the center focal point of the space. So, your church has a very important history, and I think it's important to understand it.

Here is a photograph of the church pretty much exactly as it is right now, noting that the table, which sat near the reredos for many years, in recent years, has been moved forward down on the floor. And part of it is the shape of your room with a narrow chancel that was built in 1950 tending to disconnect the focal point of worship from the transepts. The transepts since the renovation never had good sight lines to the communion table when it was back in the deep chancel. Yet down the center of the room it was a fairly good visual relationship, but also the theology of it is not very resonant to the reformed tradition, and consistent with reformed tradition, and the idea of dividing the choir into two parts when the choir normally sings in the Presbyterian church as one body of singers, is not really good musically. There's always been conflict to dividing choirs in churches that maintain the great body of choral tradition. So, all of these things, and acoustical concerns about this building, the very core resolution of the coupling of the organ and choir through these arches, the organ speaking sideways, so the organ has to be intensely loud up front, almost too loud in the chancel in order to be loud enough to get to the back of the church, this room, in contrast with your chapel, has wonderful music in it, and I very much admire the choir today (it's a magnificent choir which does a great

job of singing in a room that isn't helping, that isn't aiding the acoustical --- the choir is singing in spite of the room. So, give them a few Brownie points! But it's important to have this history.

So, in trying to anticipate a renovation in a room, now 50 years old, renewed 20 years ago after a fire, but put back virtually exactly the way it was before the fire in the late 80s, and even the colors and tonalities of the room are not very much to do with a Romanesque building, which is what this building is from the 1890s, with some Arts and Crafts influences. The pew ends are wonderful examples of Arts and Crafts detailing. The column capitals are wonderful examples of Arts and Crafts. And that blended in a Romanesque setting. And so trying to rethink this room, history and tradition and understanding of Romanesque architecture, and understanding this room's architectural history is a very important part of sorting these various threads out.

Certainly, to look at photographs --- and I have two photographs of the original chancel that was here for 50 or 60 years before the renovation --- I think this is the older photograph ---- this is probably a time exposure, which is why the ceiling and organ pipes look so bright --- but if you look at these photographs up close, and these photographs are available around the church --- you can see stenciling on the organ pipes. I'll try to point that out. There's lots of stenciling all around the organ pipes. You can see stenciling on the walls. You can see stenciling, very rich stenciling, over here in the side arches, stenciling up in the little tympanum here, and stenciling up in the arcade up high. And so there's really a lot of richness in the room that's been missing. And in fact if we go back to this photograph, some of the stenciling had been painted out even by the time this photograph was done. I don't think there's quite as much. These walls are plainer here. And part of it was, the Victorian period had lasted for 60 years to the early 20th century, and by the 1920s there began to be an architectural reaction against the painted ornament and there was a formality of approach, a sort of what I call an academic, a cool academic reaction to Victorian exuberance, and there was a calming and a sort of deliberate recapturing of architectural styles. Some of the warmth and generous detail of Victorian era was brought into question. And of course, many of you know in our cities, many Victorian neighborhoods were just destroyed, because they fell out of fashion.

Well, we don't like what our parents have, or sometimes our grandparents, but we love what our great-grandparents have. And eventually times change and we turn to appreciate earlier styles, which are called into question. And so redecorating this space was very much Victorian architecture was very much out of

fashion in the early 50s. Painted ornament was very much out of fashion, and the divided chancel had evolved as something that Presbyterians very much wanted to have. So, to understand all that and also to appreciate in your chapel a superb, unified architectural expression of that mid-20th century viewpoint, where the more logical, academically correct building with a divided chancel and with the chapel is a wonderful example that is more at unity with the thinking of the divided chancel. So, appreciate that in your chapel.

By trying to look at and understand your building and to look at some of the functional and acoustical issues in the main sanctuary is what we are talking about. And to look at the great width of the room, but the relative narrowness in this photograph of the view that the room really goes all the way from here to here, but this is a very narrow chancel designed really to go with a nave much more like your chapel, a long and narrow nave like your chapel. And so the sightline issues from over here into the back of the chancel have always existed. And here in the plan we can see the narrowness of the chancel, especially how back here is very little related to out here. And also because the sound of the organ comes from these areas and gets together with the choir, part of the organ has to go past this arch and then all the organ has to go past this arch, this one here, and get out going in this direction, and then eventually work its way to the side walls. So geometrically the room has some acoustical shape problems that we're trying to address.

The logical way that you would project organ and choir sound --- and it's one of the things we're talking about --- hymn singing and general responsiveness of the room is another acoustic thing that we're talking about --- but when we're talking about organ and choir, coming in and around corners is difficult. So the logical way to get organ and choir in this room is to have it speak directly out, which is the way that it was originally. And so the proposal is to have a bigger chancel where the organ can speak this way, is pretty much where the organ is now, but it tends to speak this way, and the proposal is to have this arch removed so that the organ and choir sound can come out in all directions, rather than out and have to turn and get through the heavy arch. So, that's the long and short of the sort of physical change that needs to happen to get better coupling between the organ and choir and the main body of the sanctuary.

Notice that this is called Plan J, and that is because we did A, B, C as alternatives, and then with the committee, lots of input, lots of work, did other plans, and other plans, and we eventually adjusted it and built consensus for --- and again this is a master plan, these are not final drawings, these are concept master plans where we can scope out the project and see and go about the business of

getting support to do it, and then engineering drawings and other more technical drawings and more refined drawings with input from you today, and from the committee over the last few months will go into drawings from here forth.

This is a close-up view of the plan, noting that the choir is arranged in a semicircle, a slight semicircle, which helps the choir have ensemble. If you just have a group of singers stand to sing around a conductor, they will probably stand naturally in a semicircle. It's just sort of a natural arrangement. And so this tries to provide the choir a natural arrangement. Probably that original chancel where the choir was sort of in this area in straight rows, one side of the choir would have a little difficulty hearing the other side of the choir. If you turn it in on itself a little bit, one side of the choir can hear the other side.

The organ, again, speaks more forward by removing this arch. But the focal point of the room, and, in fact, the focal point of any church, and certainly the focal point of a Presbyterian church, is three things:

1. the Word: the pulpit or the place for the word and the reading of the word and the preaching of the word;
2. the Table: the place where bread is broken and the cup blessed for the service of communion, and the nature of that is table in the Presbyterian tradition;
3. and the Font, the place whereby we are made Christians, we are incorporated in to the body of Christ by an act of washing, and so a font is a place of water and washing and being made new. And we do that first, before we come in to receive communion.

So, those three things are fundamental to planning for Reformed places of worship. We have tried to look at ways of having the word, whether it's in one piece of furniture, the pulpit, or in two, a pulpit and lectern. And those are optional ways of doing it. The central placement of the table, but lifted up on three steps, so that the table will be here in the center, where the whole room engages a view of the table, but unlike here where it's hard to see the table. It would be lifted up where it has a better visibility. And a font, and we've looked at various ideas. We've drawn it here in the middle, and there's some discussion that maybe it should be on the side, one side or the other. But we will keep talking and find a place for the font that will be prominent and it should be up front, and clean, and balanced with the table and the pulpit. Those things are very important to get right in a Presbyterian church.

Here we can see a forward-looking view of the pulpit, the table, and the font, whether it's here or there. The choir really would then recede a little into the background, behind the pulpit and the table and the font. The focal point would be more forward. And in the center of what the pews are looking at. The pews are gathered around this as the focal point of the room, and this is all the backdrop and setting of it. And in a sense, the choir, curved like this, sort of completes the circle of the congregation, which includes the choir, the gathering around the focal points. Your room works with this very well, and the shape of the pews works with this very well. It's a very sound, liturgical planning. This is some of the earlier elevation drawing we did, which looked at it.

Oh, and by the way, I should mention the church secured the services of Mr. Bob Mahoney from Boulder, Colorado, who is one of the country's leading acoustical consultants, who came and did tests and I think he attended a service and did tests. He did lots of tests in the room and analysis. His recommendations have been incorporated in virtually everything that has been developed to date.

One of the earlier ideas was to take this arch and to keep it as a stone arch, but to widen it to a circle that went all the way up, so that the chancel was opened up, and the organ could speak forward. Then we decided, why re-introduce a stone arch in a shape that it never was before? And so our later thinking, which you'll see in a few minutes, really planned to open the chancel up all the way, and let this shape of ceiling continue back to this arch. But because of the changes made in the chancel in the 50s, and because we need this space back there, and the window is really quite wonderful and the detailing of the stonework, and I love the engaged column in this arch --- which is a gesture the architect made in the 50s to the fact that this is a Romanesque building. That is a Gothic arch that connected it to the Romanesque nature, and you know your front doors have those huge big, sturdy columns that flank the doors. In fact, these arcades are like little columns with arches, jumping from column to column, which is a Romanesque idea. And that Romanesque feeling comes into this arch here. And so we decided to try to maintain that second arch, and the depth of the chancel from the 50s renovation, and the window, and in fact, we are getting some input about saving some of the millwork. So some of these drawings are not necessarily showing the millwork, but in fact we are trying to save a good bit of the present millwork into the renovated space. But so here we see in this drawing where the second arch and the window are still very much there, and that back area behind the second arch would be a great area for handbells, for the choir when the choir got very large, but mostly we would see the choir being forward of that second arch, where it has better acoustical projection.

Here's a series of drawings that shows --- here's a section front-to-back where we're showing --- this is sort of a very schematic idea of organ pipes that sort of approximates where the organ is here, and then you see the arches and trusses of the transepts in this view, and a pulpit with a platform extending out, pulpit and table and font. And then back here is the stained glass window that is --- this is the second arch that will remain --- and then our current viewpoint is that the ceiling will come all the way back here, matching the nave of the room. And that's what the finalized concept drawings we are showing you today show that view.

So here is a series of drawings that looked at how we might articulate it, a close-up view of the pulpit, and a close up view of an idea for a font. This was behind, for when we were anticipating saving the present communion table, which is a modification of the earlier table. But in fact we had further thoughts because we've looked at the photographs of your original communion table, possible lectern, and seatings.

But to go on and look at this, we then came up with this drawing, which is a little bit farther along than the previous drawing, because here we show the arch with the engaged column, but here, no arch. And that's to make the organ and choir literally come into the same room as this room; they are not in a separate space, they are in this space. And the sound can reflect off the ceiling through these arches and get out into the space much more directly. And the organ fits very much where the organ is, but it would be opened up, and the wall that blocks the organ would be removed. And of course, that wall was not there in the original building. That wall only dates from the 1950s renovation. Originally, as you see from the old photographs, the church was opened from here all the way to there, back to the choir. So it's really putting the choir back, but in a roomier situation, but it's putting the choir back sort of where they were originally. We entertained the idea of having the organ on the central axis. That's the first instinct of any organ consultant, but with the window being there, it's where some of the ideas from the 50s, we are recommending, would survive.

So saving the window means the organ stays divided, and in fact, our earliest efforts were trying to preserve the layout of the present organ, and now an organ committee has been formed. They will do the due diligence of looking at the present organ, which has been renovated several times, to look at it for the long haul, in terms of whether a full configuration of the organ or renovation of the organ, or what the right answer is for the organ. But it's being proposed to be about where the present organ is, and part of that is placement, and part of that is

trying to preserve the view of the window. Here is a close-up view, and you can see on the drawing a sort of early concept of possible casework.

Some people have said, well, do we want to see organ pipes? And I would say, if you do have a pipe organ, I believe you should see a few pipes. In the case, honestly, of what the organ is. Your old church had lots of pipes showing. The old downtown church, before the 1892 church, if you look at those old photographs, there were pipe organs with pipes showing. And only in that same period of 1920 to 1950 is when architects tried to hide organ pipes. And before that time and after that time, architects and organ builders have been very happy to make organs more visually expressed as pipe organs. And so that's what we're hoping to do here, and these are very early designs and really won't, can't, go much further than where we are until the organ committee makes its report and we can identify an organ builder to come into the design team to advise us on how the organ might be realized or renovated.

So, here you can see how the piano can come sort of sit about where it is but have very good sightlines in to the organ console. This view is taken from that balcony, just like this photograph. So, you're looking down onto the chancel, looking down onto the communion table, and the seats behind the table, and behind that, the organ console.

Our goal is to have the organ console buffered by the ministers' seats, the elders' seats, the benches, that are flexible, but that are there to sort of an orderly setting to the chancel and to the table. But they're movable. The whole chancel is very flexible, and I know you have this wonderful musical that you do, that's huge and sort of takes over the whole front of the chancel. This will accommodate your musical much more since it's an open chancel and a greater flat floor. So, things like that, which churches do much more than they did in the 1890s, are accommodated much more easily. And by having this furniture - most all of the chancel furniture - be movable, and have flexibility. So, that's what's being proposed in the furnishings, and in the chancel layout. But, notice that the three focal points are very much there, the three liturgical focal points are really in the forward part, where the congregation gathers around the table, and the font, and the pulpit.

Notice here that we're showing some early ideas of stenciling so that the idea is to try to re-ornament this space in a more historic way. We think that the lines and the energy of this wonderful building can be appreciated more if some of the color and decorative elements from the earlier design are brought back. And that's one of the other ideas that we are recommending. Here you can see these areas in

the side where the walls come around, and the choir sort of extends under the raised portions of the pipe organ. And that gets the sound of the choir out under the organ to the transept. So here going back to these photographs, here you can see the stenciling even here survived on the pipes. You can see it there. And then that earlier photograph that showed more stenciling to look at --- this is not your church, but it's a photograph of stenciling done in the style and period of your building that shows Romanesque arches and stenciling and textures. I was thinking it's something like this that was the stenciling that used to be up here. I mean, we don't know that, but we're speculating from evidence I've seen in photographs and what I know about historic tradition. So, and that's sort of an Arts and Crafts interpretation of Romanesque.

But to know that ideas --- and it takes a great deal of work to work this out --- but it means there would be a greater sense of unity in the church than exists now. But really there are three things going on in your church: the original building, it's sort of a 1950s coloration and texture of materials, and the lightness of the pews, the pews are slightly blonded, which was very popular to do, the woodwork has a light oak look from the 50s, and then the chancel idea is the third element. So we're trying to blend these different ideas and get the coloration analyses back to more like the 1890s building.

I might also add, because some people were concerned about light, this room does not have a good lighting system, even though it was redone in the 50s. And I'm sure it didn't have a good one in 1892. We want to have a superb lighting system that gives all the light we need to the chancel area, that gives good lighting up so you see the building and appreciate its architecture, and good lighting down for reading light for in the pews. It's entirely possible to do it; it just means a lot of rewiring. And by the way, it's the time to get the building's mechanical system totally up to code. The codes have changed, they've gotten tougher. It's the time to get all these technical issues in the building resolved at one time, the lighting resolved and updated.

These floors are very loose and flappy. It's the time to deal with these floors. When the ushers go up and down the aisles it's very bouncy. The floor framing, being so bouncy, is doing a lot of acoustical damage. It's drawing all the bass energy out of the room. It's why men are not supported in singing in this room. My own church had a bouncy floor and we replaced it with a stiff floor and six months later you could hear men had learned to sing, and to sing out. You go to church in your chapel and you go to church here - here if you sing very loudly at all you feel like you're singing yourself a solo. Now, when the choir comes to the back

and they are up close, you can hear them, but when the choir was up front, they were way far away, because the room is not getting the sound of the congregation and the choir around the room very well. But if you knew what a great room like this would be, with 400 people singing a hymn and the sound it will be in this room if the room were not absorbing all that hymn singing, you would sing out and not feel like you're singing yourself a solo. And I believe this can be a very exciting room for hymn singing if we fix the acoustical issues. And we've done enough other rooms like this; I believe we can make a huge improvement in this space.

This was a photograph of a church that had richly ornamental furniture that was done in a Romanesque style. And I just wanted to show you that such things exist. That furniture had some of the characteristics of your earlier furniture. In fact, I want to go back to this slide. You can see this paneling here is very much like this paneling over here. I mean, it's the same paneling. But the table, the pulpit, with the arches, and the little columnettes, and the communion table, notice, had arches on it. And I think those original pieces of the pulpit and the table in the original church are clues of possible good direction to go with the chancel furnishings. And so, working that out, looking at how we might incorporate the 50s furniture, but to let those original pieces inform us of what would be a wonderful way to resolve the chancel design and that's what we will be working on, should you choose to go forward and implement this idea. So, any questions? I really sort of --- the time is called a forum, so I'm really happy to take any questions, as long as you're willing to last.

[question regarding the floor] The floor, in here? Well, we know we want the floor to be a lot stiffer. I mean, when you jump up and down and you can make the floor bounce, it's absorbing energy. It may stay a wooden frame. It's currently a wooden frame with columns. I believe it's been altered. I don't think the frame of the floor is in its original configuration. I think the levels have been changed with it, which is why it's sort of uneven in places. And you know the floor has a very slight slope in it. I think if you check it, it's not completely the same on this side as it is on that side. The frame needs to be stiffened, which can be done by supporting it in more places, even if the original timbers are retained. And that all needs to be checked out by a structural engineer. Then we would have more levels of density in the floor and hopefully a hard finish on it. One of the materials we are looking at is you currently have the mosaic, the terracotta colored mosaics in the narthex. That's one possibility. We have several churches I've worked on that have wonderful handmade terracotta tiles, sometimes they are known as Moravian tiles. They are very much a product of the Arts and Crafts movement of the turn of the century, shortly after the time your church was built. They would be wonderful as finishes.

They are very durable. They don't wear out like carpet, they don't absorb like carpet. There are all kinds of possibilities that would fit the character of this church and the long-lived serviceable materials.

[question regarding color] These walls are very much of the beige mindset, and the pinky beige appearance of the room, which probably varies a bit with lighting. But the color comes off as rather pink to me. Then of course the darker pink of the rose carpet. Those were very popular colors from the 50s. If you compare the pinkness, the bluey pinkness of the carpet with the cool pinkness of the carpet with the warmer tonality of the narthex tiles, I think the warmer color is more in keeping with the period. Now, I do think the room needs more color, not less color, but the background color of the walls shouldn't be the pinky color. I think it should be brighter, a more reflective surface, and that the overall effect of the room will be brighter and not as muted down as it is now. But it's a matter of balance, color balance, and light balance, and good lighting as well.

[question regarding seating capacity] Well, we think it's a wash, because there are open areas where we plan to put pews, and then of course the handbells move from here up here, so that comes back into play as seating. So we think the seating capacity really is the same. And the one real change we are proposing making is right now the aisle on the sides here is inside the columns, and we are thinking of making the pews in the back of the naves wider and putting the aisles, as they frequently are, on the backside of the columns. I think you can see it here. The aisle is inside the columns. This is the present pew arrangement. We are proposing putting the aisle on the outside of the columns. So we are adding more seats here that are inside the nave that have unencumbered sightlines, so you don't have to look through columns. So that actually would pick up seats that are inside the nave of the church and not behind columns.

[question regarding organ and choir] The organ console would be moveable. We're showing it here in the middle. This is flexible. These chairs are flexible. And the console can be placed to the side. Peter can sit here. Also the console can be reversed and then Peter would stand sort of right here, and the organist would face Peter directly and then the choir around. The guy in my office who did this drawing knows that many, many times we are doing organs where the organist conducts from a console. And so that's placed as if you could conduct from a console. But when there's a separate conductor and there's an organist who accompanies the director of music, there's any number of arrangements that would work for that.

[question regarding "Did we look at restoring a central pulpit and did we consider having just the pulpit and not a pulpit and lectern?"] I think we did do drawings that showed a central pulpit, and we talked about a central pulpit. What happens when you do a central pulpit is you need a little more room in the center and the table needs to come forward a little more and you need to get room in there for the pulpit between the table and the beginning of the organ console. The chancel is not quite as open and flexible when the pulpit is in the middle. And the pulpit may be, because of its size, the one piece of furniture that isn't as flexible. It can be flexible, but it's not as flexible as the table is. So, you would have to shift the pulpit out of the way for some of the things that you would do. But you've had as many years with a pulpit and lectern as you had with a center pulpit. It was felt that pulpit, given the great width of the church, is still relatively in the middle. There was some sentiment for keeping a lectern. Our proposal is that our lectern is completely freestanding and movable, and if at some future point you wish to have only one, the lectern could go away very easily. And you could read the lessons from the pulpit and preach from the pulpit. So, there really is flexibility, and I think if you're tightening up things just a little bit, you could put this pulpit in the center, if at some future point you wanted to do that. But it was felt given the greater sense of how preaching was done, that having the pulpit to the side, approximately where the pulpit is now, worked well, and was still relatively in the center.

[question regarding flooring materials] If we did the mosaic floors or the terracotta floors we might put them in the aisle and then have a simple plain floor under the pews, perhaps wood, or a simpler tile, rather than the more ornamental tile. Or do the same tile everywhere, depends on what we wind up doing. But sometimes, like in your chapel, your chapel has a stone floor down the center, and then it has a rather inexpensive, vinyl tile under the pews. So frequently the material under the pews is different.

[question regarding plans and decision making] Decisions were made at the level of a master plan concept. And of course these drawings have been on the wall all through the fall. I don't think there's any real questioning of the basic fundamentals of the concept or the scope of the project. We have line items for everything we've anticipated in the scope including a very early line item for the organ part of the project. They will all be refined, but because they've been out there and because this isn't a closed process, we've had input. For example, our earliest concepts were for all new furnishings, and we've had some feedback, saying, well, let's look harder at maybe saving some of the furnishings. So we're just now getting that input. We will need to keep working with the committee to see what we do with the input. But I think the basic fundamentals of the proposal including the scope and perhaps

even the dollars of the proposals as they exist are fairly solid, and are very much recommended and adopted. They are adopted as a proposal worthy of a fundraising campaign. And that's sort of where we are. But, we'll be talking about some of these things, like color on the walls. The color of the walls, typically, we do not finally set until the church is under construction. A month or two before the painter starts to paint we have the painter do samples, look at several ideas, and look at actual samples of colors and finishes in the space. Then we have time to look at it and make decisions. Not all the decisions are made at one time, and that's normative.

[question about the platform] My hunch is you would need --- if you need platforms --- they would be smaller and less platform because you have so much more permanent platform to work with. It may be you don't need platforms. The musicals would adapt to the new, generous space that's available.

[question about the basement] The basement, the undercroft, those are --- I remember so many times when we had a dirt basement and we wound up putting on a spray-on concrete, a thin layer of concrete over just to stabilize the dirt. All those kinds of decisions will get related with the coordination of the mechanical design, and structural decisions, and electrical decisions, and be made in conjunction with the local architect and all coordinated.

[question regarding handicapped accessibility] We are showing ramps on the side that come in so that the front part of the choir and the entire cancel platform is accessible to wheelchairs and walkers.

[JOHN added some clarification regarding platforms, but it wasn't clear except this, to which those assembled clapped loudly. "At some point I think we will have a bonfire in the parking lot for those [stage] platforms."]

[question regarding original stenciling] Where we see the stenciling, I think we can pick the areas where we know the stenciling used to be and go back through the layers of paint and see if we can find it. Probably it's there. Then we may find places where the stenciling might be different. I'm very curious about the arcades up here. I'm actually a little curious about these large arches. In fact, a woman who attended a session I did yesterday afternoon bent my ear considerably about these large arches, because they bothered her. She had lots of thoughts about what could be done to those arches. But I think if it's part of the ornamental scheme of the room, those large arch areas would blend in better. But going back and scraping through to find out those colors is very useful. I would not say that I would promise

that I would be inclined to restore it exactly as it was. I mean, until we find out what it is. Not every original decorating scheme was beautiful *[laughter]*, and tastes change. But I think to know what it is is very helpful. Sometimes it is beautiful and you do want to restore it exactly as it was.

[question regarding pews] A complicated answer is required. The ends are very important and very distinctive. The pews need lots of work. They are coming apart. The backs are splitting. We are going to try to get pricing for two solutions. One would be to rebuild and refurbish the existing pews and to get to deal with a more comfortable seat and repair the cracks. The other one would be to replace the pew bodies with new pews that were designed to fit these pews, but with a modern, more comfortable shape, and to get as much thickness into the pew bodies as we can, because pews actually absorb bass [frequency] energy too. But they would then be incorporated onto the ends. Those are the new pews, using the existing ends, which is the replacement idea. Refurbishment is still very much on the table as something we want to look at. But at the point that replacement approaches the cost of new pews, you know, then I think we need to weigh out which one is better. The present pews are done in a radius, and so they have to stay exactly where they are, because if you move them around you are changing the radius and they won't turn into each other the right way. But yet, there is one company in Pennsylvania that still makes curved pews and has replaced curved pews numerous times in churches with curved pews, where the pews were at the end of their life expectancy.

Well, I think what I don't like about the present woodwork in here is the slight limed effect, which I think is very much the modern look of the 50s. But they should look like natural oak. They should look more like oak which you would associate with Arts and Crafts, which is sort of a mid-tone. It doesn't have the slightly milky look that these have. But it wouldn't go really dark and it wouldn't go lighter. It would be a little darker than this but not a lot darker, but not have the limed effect. That's my inclination, but that all has to be worked out and approved by the committee.

[question about the time required to do this] Very good question. I can't imagine it being less than six or seven months. And I can imagine it being up to eleven or twelve. And I'm hoping it's somewhere in between the two, because I know the longer you're out of the room the more frustrating it is. I know you're going to miss an Easter and a Christmas. The question is, can we keep from missing two Easters or two Christmases. And we very much prefer to miss only one. So the start and end dates usually have to do with holidays. At the time it starts getting more concrete I usually caution the churches not to schedule weddings. Weddings are frequently scheduled a year in advance, and you don't want a wedding to sort of jam up the

contractor trying to get finished on time. But my hunch is that it really wants nine months, ten months, something like that, because it's pretty extensive.

The wiring, getting in the walls --- it's time to get the room right. And if the organ's going to come out and be rebuilt, to come and break this into phases, you can do that, but it means you're making a mess a second time. It means you're closing it down a second time. Every church that wades through it usually decides it's best to bite the bullet, get it all done at once, make a mess one time, and have the organ come back into a completed space. The organ would need re-voicing, because the acoustics will be different. Then that's done in a completed space and not messed up with future construction.

[question regarding coordination of project] I'm thinking of the entire sanctuary building. I think that the rest of the project might be done in phases, so you're not completely out of commission all at once. I know you're doing renovations of the hall. My hunch is you would do them back to back. Does anyone want to speak to that? JOHN: We are going to try to coordinate it the best we possibly can
[remainder unclear]

[question regarding columns, organ placement, and structure] What I want is to resolve the fact that the organ is hanging out over those opened up spaces. Sometimes it's more comfortable to have it look like the organ is supported, rather than cantilevered. Now, I'm sure we can cantilever it, but it has to do with what extent we change the organ, versus sort of rebuilding it as it is. If we cantilever it, the frame has to project and get deeper. I'm trying to get the ceiling underneath it as high as possible, so I would hate, for the lack of a column, to suddenly have this huge structural support to carry it. I'm not afraid of a column. I mean, just look at those columns there. They are a little puny looking, but we are not proposing anything quite that small. But that's a very strong little column that's helping those balconies. I think it's just sort of there. I don't want it to get too big, because I want the choir to work around it. You're not the first person to ask about columns.

[question regarding louvers] In this photograph, it looks solid and ornamented. In this photograph it looks like an opening to what could be a division of the organ. Now, I don't know that it was organ. It could have been some sort of louvers for fresh air or something. This had changed to louvers in this photograph. So, that's a clue.

[question regarding auditory functionality] When you talk of auditory functionality you mean speech intelligibility? Yes, what's happening is, if you analyze the sound

spectrum, huge gaps exist in the frequencies in this room because large sections of the sound frequencies are being absorbed, into the floor, into the walls, lack of geometry getting the sound out. And the goal is, within the range of human hearing for music, you want the spectrum more balanced. You want all the sound to be present. It's hymn singing and all of it. You want, if the men are going up the scale, you don't want their voices to drop out on certain notes. Likewise, mid-range in women's and children's voices, which get higher and higher. And then for speech intelligibility, speech is normally a narrower range than sung music, and so speech reinforcement systems, loud speaker systems are designed to really make speech clear in the room. That is also good for music. In a room like this, I believe it's entirely possible --- this room will never get too loud, because it's got certain surfaces that we can't improve a lot, like the ceiling is already moderately hard and we can't really get a lot more mass in the ceiling. The walls are hollow, but those walls are relatively small surface. We could spend a lot of money ripping out the walls, but because it's a small element in the room it's not going to get a lot better. So we'd rather spend our money other ways. The room will not get too loud, but it should get a good bit more live and as you now need speech intelligibility for the pulpit and lectern, you will still need it and it will need to be one that's very much attuned to the new acoustic. That's completely possible in a room like this.

[question regarding acoustics] It's being predicted by looking at the analysis of this space and looking at what the culprits are, like the floors are one of the big culprits, and then trying to project if it were solid. We start analyzing how much we can stiffen the floor. We could see how much improvement that would be. The acoustician can project because we are not doing one thing, we're proposing to do lots of things, and each one will have a cumulative improvement. And so the overall improvement will be significant. Each one improvement alone wouldn't do everything. It wouldn't do enough. So, he can project that. Every renovation I've ever known, the acoustician comes back and tests after it's done and sees how close his predictions were. They are never exact. It's not an exact science. Acoustical renovations are much more of an art than science. Eventually the art of tuning in the sound system and eventually the art of tuning in the organ and eventually the congregation learning to sing in the new room when it encourages them to sing. Like in my church, the men didn't sing that great on the first Sunday, but six months later they learned how to sing. You grow into the room and appreciate its qualities. A good bit of it is art.

[question regarding timelines] That is not for me to answer. Who from the committee knows the latest thinking of the capital campaign and a likely timeline scenario? JOHN: [first quarter '09 – *remainder inaudible, sorry*]

There's a lot of architectural engineering coordination that needs to take place once the decision to go forward beyond where you are now.

JOHN: It feels like we've answered, if not all of our questions, most of them. I would say a couple things. One is go to our website [<http://www.thirdpresbyterian.org/ccampaign/ccresources.shtml>] and there's a wonderful worship vision statement. Of all the things that we are thinking about in this proposal really hope to have both the setting function developed as well as a practical function to enhance our worship life, whether it's seeing, or hearing, or getting in and out of this place. Read that vision statement. It's really, I think, quite good. The other thing, www.terrybyrdeasondesign.com gives you a sense of possibilities from some other churches Terry has worked with, to see where we are going. You can even see the before and after as opposed to a kind of preliminary picture that we have. It really is, as somebody reminded me, a ...to see what may lay ahead of us. I would say also, thanks to Jon [Sheppard] who has really shepherded this worship conversation wonderfully, and with great skill and grace, and to Peter for his commitment and to Jim Chisholm from a facility point of view. I think it seemed to be very evident that two days ago at this presentation it would have been different from what it was today. It's a work in progress right up until the point we are ready to do it, but your input in the ongoing conversation really makes it a church-wide and congregation-wide conversation. You know where all of us are and how to get a hold of us. And we hope you'll do that. Happy Palm Sunday! Thanks very much for your time and your energy.

[applause]