

Common Bond

Welcoming our Neighbors



14

th Annual Sacred Sites Open House Weekend

*INSIDE: CHURCH & COMMUNITY | SHARING SPACE |
EXPANDING ARTS | SACRED SITES GRANTS*

From the President

Dear Friends,

This year's Sacred Sites Open House—our 14th!—had “Welcoming Our Neighbors” as the theme. We thought it was, and is, timely in a period when we seem to be so divided.

Part of the focus was on the range of social service and cultural programs religious institutions provide to the wider community. Food pantries, clothing, day care, concerts- a place to find comfort.

It also focused on sharing spaces with other denominations and non-profit groups. Aside from being a good neighbor, sharing can provide needed income. We know that many congregations are still recovering from the Covid shutdown and that fewer Americans report weekly attendance at houses of worship of all denominations.

But, if you visited Open House participants, you met friendly people dedicated to maintaining religious buildings of all sizes and conditions. They know the importance of keeping community and family histories alive.

I listened as the president of a small Harlem synagogue spoke the different waves of immigrants, Holocaust survivors and college students who have maintained its presence there for 100 years, despite changing demographics. A member proudly noted that she had belonged to the synagogue for all of her 77 years. A large Presbyterian church that could hold 700 persons had 10 congregants in the pews at its service, and unknown others online. It was a totally joyful experience. The pastor is proud of the church's connection to the arts in Harlem and has plans for partnerships and growth.

Our Sacred Sites program has helped almost 900 congregations of all denominations over the past 38 years with grants totaling \$14 million. We have dedicated ourselves to this because religious buildings tell us so much about architectural and community history. And because they welcome neighbors with programs to feed the body as well as the soul.

Our thanks and congratulations to all of you who are working to maintain New York's diverse collection of houses of worship.

We're here to help.

Sincerely,



Peg Breen, President



**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

Common Bond is the technical journal of the Sacred Sites Program of the NY Landmarks Conservancy.

The New York Landmarks Conservancy's Sacred Sites Program offers congregations throughout New York State financial and technical assistance to maintain, repair, and restore their buildings. In addition to providing hundreds of thousands of dollars in matching grants each year, the Conservancy offers technical help, workshops for building caretakers, and publications.

Editor: Ann-Isabel Friedman

Contributors: Karen DiLossi, Ann-Isabel Friedman, Mari Gold, Colleen Heemeyer, Kate Toth, and Jodi Warren

Designer: Tara Ritz

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The New York Landmarks Conservancy
One Whitehall Street
New York, NY 10004
212.995.5260
www.nylandmarks.org

Peg Breen, President
Ann-Isabel Friedman, Director,
Sacred Sites Program
Colleen Heemeyer, Deputy Director,
Sacred Sites Program

Sacred Sites Committee
Canon George W. Brandt
Peg Breen
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Marc Schappell
Sandeep Sikka
Adrian Taylor
Jim Taylor

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The How's and Why's of Sharing Space: A Positive Approach for Church and Community

by Mari Gold



Mari S. Gold

Mari S. Gold is a New York City-based freelance writer who contributes to several magazines and websites. Among the topics she covers are food, travel, dance, theater and other arts. Her blog "But I Digress..." focuses on cultural events, travel and food at:

www.marigoldonline.net

The Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew, at the corner of West 86 th Street and West End Avenue was dedicated in 1897, making it one hundred twenty-seven years old. This United Methodist congregation, housed in its third building, has endured many changes in its history. Back in the 1970's, church membership had dwindled, and the surrounding neighborhood was struggling.

Today the Church is a vibrant organization serving not only those who come to worship but also a large number of other community groups. As Reverend Karpen, Senior Pastor, says, "We have a large space, and many organizations need a home for their work. Our view is that we should fill our space with good people doing good things."

Groups Sharing Church Space

Today, as part of the sharing space philosophy, the church is used by more than twenty groups representing a wide range of activities. Among them are the West Side Campaign Against Hunger, a continually expanding food pantry; Congregation B'Nai Jeshurun which holds annual High Holy Day services at the Church, as well as three other synagogues that hold services and life cycle events here; the Broadway Inspirational Voices choir; two AA groups; several



Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew, photo by Jade Duskow



Dancers in Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew, photo by Brent Ness

community orchestras; an afterschool theater; and a weekly Migrant Resources fair to help support the area's newest neighbors, providing a range of resources from attorneys to MetroCards. An English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) program, administered by the Riverside Immigrant Services & Empowerment, helps adults and children advance their language skills. In addition, the Church has a resident theater company and offers concerts co-presented with Carnegie Hall and Jazzmobile, widely promoted to the congregation and neighborhood, both on the church's website and with outdoor banners. "During the pandemic out attendance again fell off as it did with many religious institutions," Karpen continues. "Now we are at or maybe above pre-covid numbers, thanks in part to technology which enables people to watch our services online, bringing us audiences from all over the place."

"Our church is known as a community that 'plays well with others' and one that believes that sharing space provides the opportunity to make new friends and help improve the

social fabric of the neighborhood," Karpen adds. "Our church is known as a community that 'plays well with others' and one that believes that sharing space provides the opportunity to make new friends and help improve the social fabric of the neighborhood," Karpen adds. He also references his personal theology of shared space which places the notion of hospitality at the center of the congregation's mission.

Challenges to Sharing Space

Beyond the most basic issue of tenant/Church compatibility there are certain challenges to sharing space with other groups. Expenses such as fuel bills and security rise; storage needs must be addressed, and working out logistics is a top priority. When a group wishes to enter a long-term relationship with the church, the matter goes to the church's Board of Directors. If the organization's mission and overall approach seem in sync with those of the Church, it usually is accepted.

Groups are encouraged to consult a lawyer and put their landlord/tenant agreement in writing, spelling out the obligations of both landlord and tenant. Karpen points out that

shared space needs good planning and that some congregations may want to consider hiring a full-time business manager to oversee operations.

Demand to use church space is high. “We get roughly five to ten requests for space each week,” points out Brent Ness, the Church’s Director of Operations. “At best, we can accommodate two or three.” Says Karpen: “If you’re being hospitable to people and groups in the neighborhood, that feeling of hospitality is probably washing through to whenever you worship.”

Today, St. Paul and St. Andrew is literally always open, and thousands of people pass through its doors each week. “It’s God’s building,” Karpen concludes. “To me this means it should be filled with God’s people which means everybody.”



Donkey at St. Paul and St. Anthony, Photo by Jordan Ruff



Children making noodle necklaces with Pastor Andrea and the Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew, photo by K. Karpen

Sharing Religious Property With Other Nonprofits: Benefits, Considerations, and Challenges

by Jodi Warren



Jodi Warren, Esq. is a partner at Capell Barnett Matalon & Schoenfeld LLP, a New York City law firm, where she specializes in Real Estate, Corporate and Commercial Transactions, and Religious and Charitable Organizations. Jodi represents and advises clients in all aspects of property development, construction, finance, acquisition, and sale. Jodi routinely represents religious and not-for-profit corporations on complex real estate transactions including long-term leases, purchase and sales of properties, joint ventures and development projects. She serves as counsel to numerous denominational governing bodies as well as individual congregations and nonprofit organizations.

In New York’s dynamic landscape, religious buildings serve not only as sacred houses of worship and community centers, but also as venues for mission-related activities. However, despite the importance of these buildings in their communities, these spaces often remain underutilized for significant portions of the week. By sharing or leasing spaces to other nonprofit entities, religious organizations can unlock benefits that extend beyond financial gains — such as developing stronger community connections, enabling vital services, and broadening their organizational reach.¹ This arrangement can vary depending on the needs of each organization, ranging from leasing an entire building or a portion of it to one or multiple nonprofits, to sharing the same spaces in the building but at different times. However, space sharing comes with a set of considerations and challenges that necessitate careful planning and foresight.

Benefits of Space Sharing

1. Financial Advantages: Opening religious buildings to other nonprofit users can generate income can help cover operating expenses, fund capital improvements, and support broader mission goals. Additionally, sharing

¹ This article specifically addresses the sharing and leasing of property from a religious organization to other nonprofit entities. It does not explore arrangements with for-profit organizations. The analysis and tax implications for engagements with for-profit entities are significantly different and warrant a detailed, separate analysis.



expenses like utilities, security, and cleaning services reduces the financial strain on the religious organization.

2. Community Service and Engagement:

Nonprofit users often provide essential community services such as schools, daycare centers, counseling, and social services. Hosting these services transforms religious properties into community hubs that comprehensively serve the needs of local residents.

3. Promotional and Partnership

Opportunities: Shared spaces frequently lead to joint events and initiatives, fostering community and collaboration. These activities not only enhance the visibility of the hosting religious organization but also integrate it more deeply into local community networks.

Considerations Before Sharing Space

1. Space Utilization: Identifying underutilized spaces within the building is crucial. Many religious buildings are primarily active on weekends and serve various functions during weekdays (often

at night). Therefore, these spaces can be used by other nonprofit organizations during regular business hours. This adaptive use of space ensures that facilities are maximized without interfering with the religious practices traditionally held.

2. Regulatory Building Compliance:

Understanding and adhering to zoning laws (such as the type of activities that can be used in the space, for example, community facility use), occupancy classifications and requirements, and fire/life safety codes, is essential to ensure that the shared spaces meet the legal requirements. Proper compliance helps avoid potential legal complications and ensures that facility usage is safe and lawful. Religious organizations should consult with an architect or attorney to navigate these regulations. **3. Tax Implications:** Under New York Law, to receive a property tax exemption, a religious organization must own and solely utilize the property for its own exempt purpose. However, there is an exception to the law which provides that if a religious organization leases or shares space with another nonprofit entity, as

long as maintenance, depreciation, and carrying costs of the building exceed or are equal to the rental income, the religious organization is still eligible for a real property tax exemption (i.e., the religious organization is not making a “profit” on the sharing or leasing of space). The nuances of the tax laws are beyond the scope of this article, but the religious organization must understand and discuss with an attorney and/or financial advisor the potential implications of the real property tax exemptions and Unrelated Business Income Tax prior to opening their building to other users.

4. Statutory Requirements for Religious Organizations:

Religious organizations are subject to specific statutory regulations under the New York Not-For-Profit Corporation Law and the Religious Corporations Law. Consequently, except where exemptions apply, these entities must secure approval from the Attorney General and/or the Supreme Court for any leases that extend for five years or longer. This requirement introduces an additional expense and procedural steps that must be clearly understood and discussed with all parties from the beginning of any contract negotiation.

5. Risk Management: Beyond just holding proper insurance coverage, space sharing increases liability exposure that must be proactively managed. Below are a few examples to help mitigate the risk:

- Include clear facility use policies and security protocols.
- Require tenants to indemnify, name the religious organization including its members, agents, invitees, etc.) as an additional insured, and provide evidence of insurance prior to entry.
- Inform the religious organization’s insurance broker that other entities

are utilizing the space and confirm the existing insurance extends to uses within the building or purchase additional insurance or endorsements if necessary.

Navigating Complexities of Sharing Space

1. Tenant Compatibility: Before embarking on a space-sharing arrangement, religious leadership must carefully select and vet prospective users. The ideal users are those that are mission aligned and have similar values and community objectives. This synergy is crucial for minimizing potential conflicts and ensuring that the shared space is used in ways that complement the organization’s mission.

2. Coordination: Sharing a building involves logistical considerations, particularly when it comes to scheduling and managing spaces that are traditionally used sporadically throughout the week. Religious leadership must understand the needs of its own organization and the services already provided in the building so that space is not leased that is needed for hosting the organization’s ministry. Effective coordination and clear communication are essential to ensure that all activities are seamlessly integrated without disrupting religious practices and mission related events.

3. Increased Operational Demands: Hosting external entities can lead to increased security needs, additional storage requirements, and more frequent maintenance and repairs. Scheduling can also become a complex issue, requiring robust management to prevent conflicts. Religious organizations must take these costs into account when determining the rent or donation requested from users.

4. Control Over Premises: Sharing space often means ceding some level of control over the

property, which can pose a challenge for many organizations. Religious organizations should prepare for potential pushback from the congregation and discuss this with their members.

5. Operational and Financial

Responsibilities: Being a landlord extends beyond merely providing space to users. Depending on the terms of the legal arrangement, the responsibilities often include they arise. For larger congregations with multiple users a dedicated building manager is often prudent.

Legal Framework and Agreements

It is imperative for the religious organization to engage an attorney at the initial stages to draft an agreement that delineates the relationship between the parties involved and safeguards the religious organization and its property. While this requires an upfront financial investment, it is a judicious measure that can save significant time, money, and prevent potential conflicts in the future. Depending on the duration and nature of usage, different agreements will be appropriate. Such types of agreements include a Facility Use Agreement for one-off events (such as weddings, or conferences), License Agreement for shorter-term usage (such as an after-school program held once a week) or a Lease for a longer-term arrangement (such as leasing an entire portion of the building). These agreements must outline the permitted uses of the space, length of term, financial arrangements (rent/donation, payment of utilities, and operational expenses), maintenance

obligations, insurance and indemnity requirements, etc. Clarity and detail in these areas are key to preventing misunderstandings and future disputes between the parties.

Conclusion

While sharing or leasing space offers numerous benefits, both financial and mission-oriented, it also necessitates a thorough understanding of legal, financial and operational considerations. Religious organizations should approach these opportunities with strategic planning and establish clear agreements to ensure that the advantages are fully realized without compromising their mission or the safety of their organization and buildings.

Expanding Arts in Sacred Spaces: Added Value for Artists and Congregations

by Mari Gold



Alison Cook Beatty Dance performs at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Times Square, New York, N.Y. the Fleet for videography and photography, Partner for Sacred Places

New York City is home to more than 1200 dance-making entities as well as numerous congregations with surplus space and escalating operating costs. In 2019, Partners for Sacred Places, a national, non-sectarian, nonprofit organization focused on building the capacity of congregations with historic sacred places convened several New York City partners to launch a new program in New York City. These include Dance/NYC, a non-profit promoting the knowledge, appreciation, practice, and performance of dance in the metropolitan NYC area; the New York Landmarks Conservancy, which works with hundreds of historic NYC religious institutions annually; Goldstein Hall, a NYC law firm; and IndieSpace, which

supports the NYC grassroots theatre community in NYC via advocacy and other efforts.

With help from these New York City nonprofits and experts, as well as regional denomination contacts, Partners for Sacred Places conducted email outreach to introduce dance groups to congregations with space to share, and vice-versa. The program was initially launched in Manhattan and Brooklyn. In 2022, outreach and recruitment were expanded to the Bronx and Queens.

Initially dubbed NYC Dance in Sacred Places, the effort broadened to NYC Performers in Sacred Places in 2023. The program aims to use



Karen DiLossi, Director of Strategic Partnerships at Partners for Sacred Spaces

congregations' surplus or unused space for dance groups and other performing artists, providing a place to rehearse, perform or even set up an office while avoiding the cost of property ownership. Churches, synagogues and meeting houses benefit from new income to help maintain their buildings and a way to increase their community involvement.

Karen DiLossi, Director of Strategic Partnerships at Partners for Sacred Spaces, brings performing artists and congregations together to better understand how each side operates. Once both potential partners are identified, DiLossi coordinates Shared Space trainings that introduce common goals and needs. The training highlights best practices to make shared space agreements work. This includes ensuring that the performance group's aesthetic aligns with the congregation's ethos and mission, and how to work out cost-sharing basics such as utilities, housekeeping, security and liability insurance.



iele paloumpis, "In place of catastrophe, a clear night sky," Part of Platform 2022: The Dream of the Audience (Part II), from DanceSpace

"The training program now takes place in person over one full seven-hour day," DiLossi says. Both artists and congregations are encouraged to work as teams so that knowledge is shared among representatives from each side. An artistic company might bring a general manager, board member or an administrator. Congregations are represented by members of the clergy, lay or denominational leaders, deeply involved volunteers or an administrator. A team of three or four is typical but not mandatory. "The entire process was upended by Covid," DiLossi points out, "so at one point everything had to move entirely online. After trying a hybrid model, both the performers and sacred places agreed that one in-person day was best."

After the training sessions, practical elements are worked out by the participating artists and congregations. Some artist tenancies are relatively long-term while others are briefer by providing artists the time to develop and

refine a project, train dancers or performers, or rehearse.

Kathy Kaufman is resident lighting designer at DanceSpace St. Mark's, at St. Mark's Church in the Bowery a landmark dating from 1795, a long-time Conservancy Grantee, and one of the oldest religious institutions in New York City. Kaufman who also provides lighting design for multiple additional dance groups and venues, says her work starts with taking a close look at the architecture of the space and asking questions about the planned number of performers and the choreographer's overall concept.

"If the work uses a small group of performers it may not require illuminating the entire space," she says. "Or, if the work is outdoors, for instance at The Cloisters (the Metropolitan Museum's Upper Manhattan branch for medieval art and architecture), it's important to consider how sun and shadows will impact both piece and players."

Congregations and artistic entities are encouraged to apply to Partners for Sacred Places to participate in NYC Performers in Sacred Places workshop training sessions. Congregations are welcome if they have spaces large enough for rehearsals and possibly performances; are open to total artistic freedom, have the capacity to manage space-sharers and have clergy and lay leadership with an interest in the arts.

Performers of all kinds—dance makers, theater artists and musicians— are welcome if they are willing to make a creative home within a sacred space; are paying rent to another space and would like an alternative; have the ability to manage the logistics of sharing space; and have enthusiastic management and leadership. Interested parties from either side should consult the program's website for more information: <https://sacredplaces.org/nyc> or contact Karen DiLossi directly: kdilossi@sacredplaces.org.



Leslie Parker, Paloma McGregor, Renisha George. "Divination Tools: Imagine Home." 2023. Photo by Ian Douglas, from DanceSpace Project

Sacred Sites Grants

The Conservancy awards matching grants to plan and fund the repair and restoration of historic religious properties. In 2023, we pledged 56 grants totaling \$685,350 to 52 religious institutions throughout New York State, leveraging nearly \$24 million in repair and restoration projects. These sites serve more than 165,000 community members annually through a variety of activities such as food pantries, support groups, concerts, childcare, and youth programming.

To be eligible for our grant programs properties must be in New York State, owned by a religious institution, actively used for worship, and listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places or locally designated. Eligible properties include churches, synagogues, meetinghouses, mosques, and temples.

2023 Grantees include: (listed by County, then City or Borough)

Albany

First Reformed Church of Bethlehem, Selkirk
\$15,000 — Stained Glass Window Restoration

Good Ground Family Church, Cohoes
\$13,000 — Existing Conditions Survey

Allegany

Union University Church, Alfred
\$14,500 — Roof Replacement

Broome

St. Michael's Greek Catholic Congregation, Binghamton
\$10,000 — Steeple & Spire Repair

Cayuga

First Presbyterian Church of King Ferry
\$6,000 — Steeple Repairs

Columbia

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Kinderhook
\$3,000 — Sacristy Roof Replacement, Cellar Bulkhead Reconstruction

Dutchess

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Poughkeepsie
\$15,000 — Conditions Survey

Erie

Temple Beth Zion, Buffalo
\$25,000 — Exterior Masonry Restoration

Trinity Episcopal Church, Buffalo

\$12,000 — Window Restoration Project Management

Franklin

The Church of the Ascension, Saranac Lake
\$10,500 — Stained Glass Restoration

Greene

First Reformed Church, Athens
\$6,000 — Fascia & Gutter Repairs

Reformed Dutch Church of Prattsville

\$4,000 — Design Services for Facade Restoration

Kings (Brooklyn)

Church of St. Ann and the Holy Trinity, Brooklyn Heights
\$15,000 — Construction Documents for Tower, East Facade,
& Main Roof Restoration

Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Emes, Cobble Hill (aka Kane Street Synagogue)

\$15,000 — Engineering Services to Stabilize Sanctuary Ceiling



Manhattan Seventh Day Adventist Church, Greenwich Village



Trinity Episcopal Church, Buffalo

Sacred Sites Grants

Kings (Brooklyn) continued

Flatbush-Tompkins Congregational Church, Flatbush
\$15,000 — Construction Documents for Exterior Envelope
Repairs to Address Water Infiltration

Old First Reformed Church, Park Slope
\$11,500 — Stained Glass Assessment

St. John's Church, Park Slope
\$1,800 — Roof Conditions Survey

South Bushwick Reformed Church, Bushwick
\$15,000 — Soffit & Chimney Restoration

Stuyvesant Heights Christian Church, Bedford-Stuyvesant
\$5,000 — Monumental Window Stabilization Design

Monroe
Brockport United Methodist Church
\$10,000 — Architectural Services for Roof Replacement

Central Church of Christ, Rochester
\$2,800 — Architectural Work for Roof Restoration

West Henrietta Baptist Church
\$3,000 — Fellowship Hall Roof Replacement

Nassau
Elmont Presbyterian Church
\$25,000 — Conditions Survey & Priority Drainage & Roof Repairs

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Sea Cliff
\$5,000 — Restoration of Two Porches

New York (Manhattan)
Christ and St. Stephen's Church, Upper West Side
\$10,000 — Conditions Assessment

Hebrew Tabernacle, Washington Heights
\$12,000 — Entrance Door Rehabilitation Feasibility Study
\$30,000 — Entrance Door Restoration

Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue, Lower East Side
\$4,000 — Roof Assessment & Construction Management

Manhattan Seventh Day Adventist Church, Greenwich Village
\$20,000 — Foundation Repairs & Shoring

Museum at Eldridge Street, Lower East Side
\$7,000 — Storm Window Installation

Notre Dame School of Manhattan, West Village
\$15,000 — Facade Assessment & Construction Documents
for Facade Restoration

St. James Presbyterian Church, Hamilton Heights
\$8,500 — J.M. Kaplan Pass Through Master Plan
Implementation Grant

Tribeca Synagogue, Tribeca
\$4,750 — Conditions Assessment & Recommendations
for Plaza Waterproofing
\$5,000 — Skylight & Roof Conditions Assessment

Niagara

First Presbyterian Church of Niagara Falls
\$10,000 — Architectural Work for Belltower & Turret Restoration
\$35,000 — Belltower & Turret Restoration

St. John's Episcopal Church, Youngstown
\$3,000 — Roof & Gutter Repairs, Foundation Repointing

Oneida
First United Methodist Church, Rome
\$8,000 — Repair Steeple Cricket

Stone Presbyterian Church, Clinton
\$8,000 — Roof Replacement

Tabernacle Baptist Church, Utica
\$25,000 — Replace Side Aisle & Chapel Roofs

Ontario
Port Gibson United Methodist Church
\$26,000 — Building Envelope Repairs & Restoration

Orange
Baptist Temple Church, Newburgh
\$10,000 — Masonry Repairs

Queens
St. Raphael Roman Catholic Church, Long Island City
\$20,000 — Roof Replacement

Rensselaer
Trinity Episcopal Church Lansingburgh, Troy
\$6,000 — Stonework Assessment

Schenectady
Christ Episcopal Church, Duaneburg
\$13,000 — Architectural Work for Exterior Envelope Restoration
\$34,000 — Exterior Envelope Restoration

Suffolk
Basilica Parish of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Southampton
\$15,000 — Wood Tracery & Stained Glass Window Restoration

Bellport United Methodist Church
\$5,000 — Conditions Survey

Caroline Church of Brookhaven, Setauket
\$3,000 — Window Conditions Survey

First Universalist Church (now Ketewamoke DAR Hall), Huntington
\$4,000 — Conditions Survey

Ulster
Katsbaan Reformed Church, Saugerties
\$23,000 — Window Restoration

Reformed Church of Hurley
\$8,000 — Carpentry Repairs to Steeple & Fascia

Warren
St. Mary's Church, Glens Falls
\$8,000 — Accessibility Study to Enhance Public Events/Share
Space Use of Ralph Adams Cram designed School
Building

Westchester
Messiah Baptist Church, Yonkers
\$30,000 — Roof Replacement

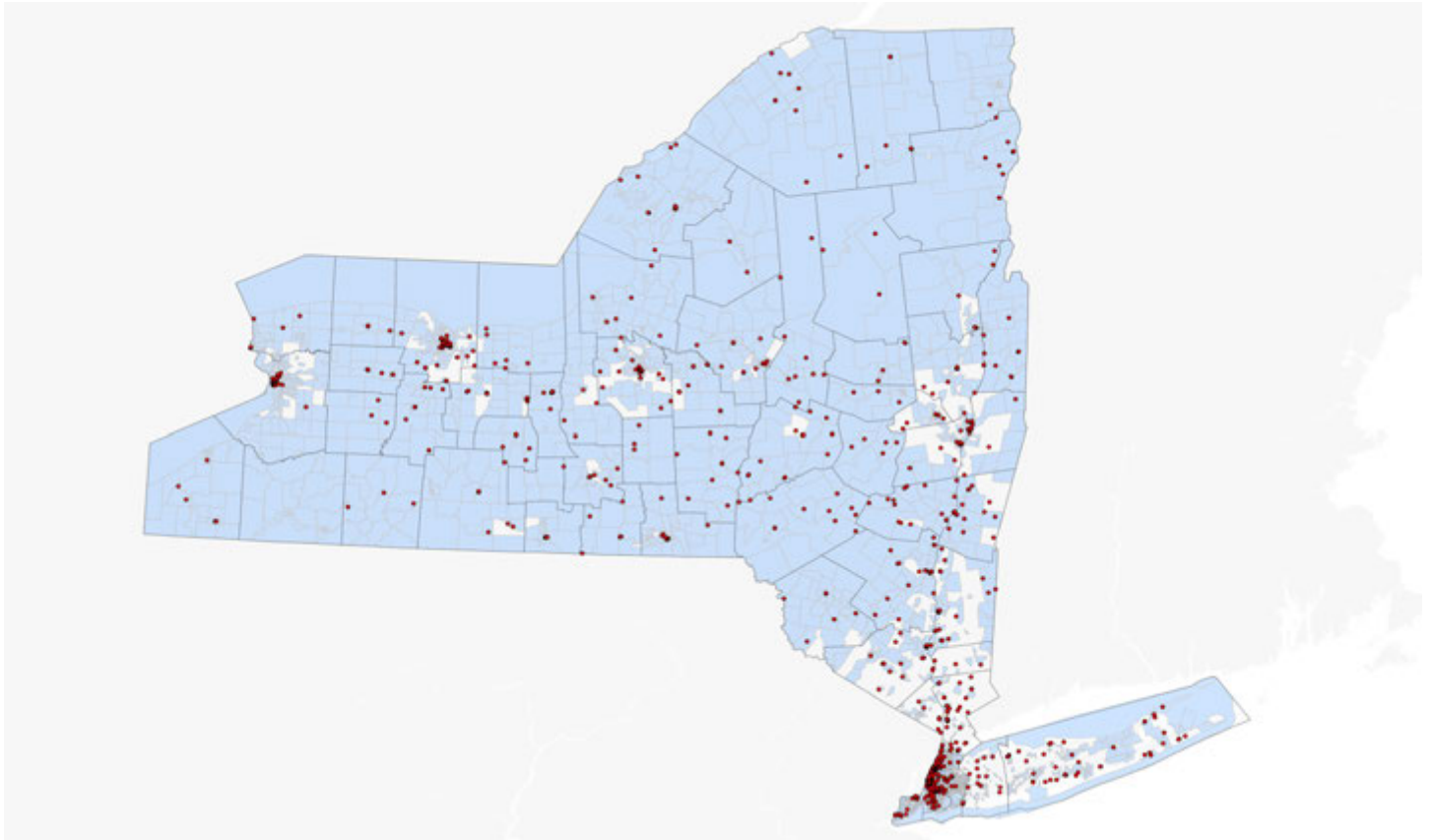
Peekskill Presbyterian Church
\$5,000 — Conditions Survey of Church & Fowler House

St. John's Episcopal Church, Pleasantville
\$15,000 — Steel Window Restoration

Shiloh Baptist Church, Tarrytown
\$12,000 — Repairs to Stucco Masonry & Rear Porch

Since its launch in 1986, the
Sacred Sites program has given
1,604 grants to 835 congregations.

The New York Landmarks Conservancy Sacred Sites Grants, 1986-2024

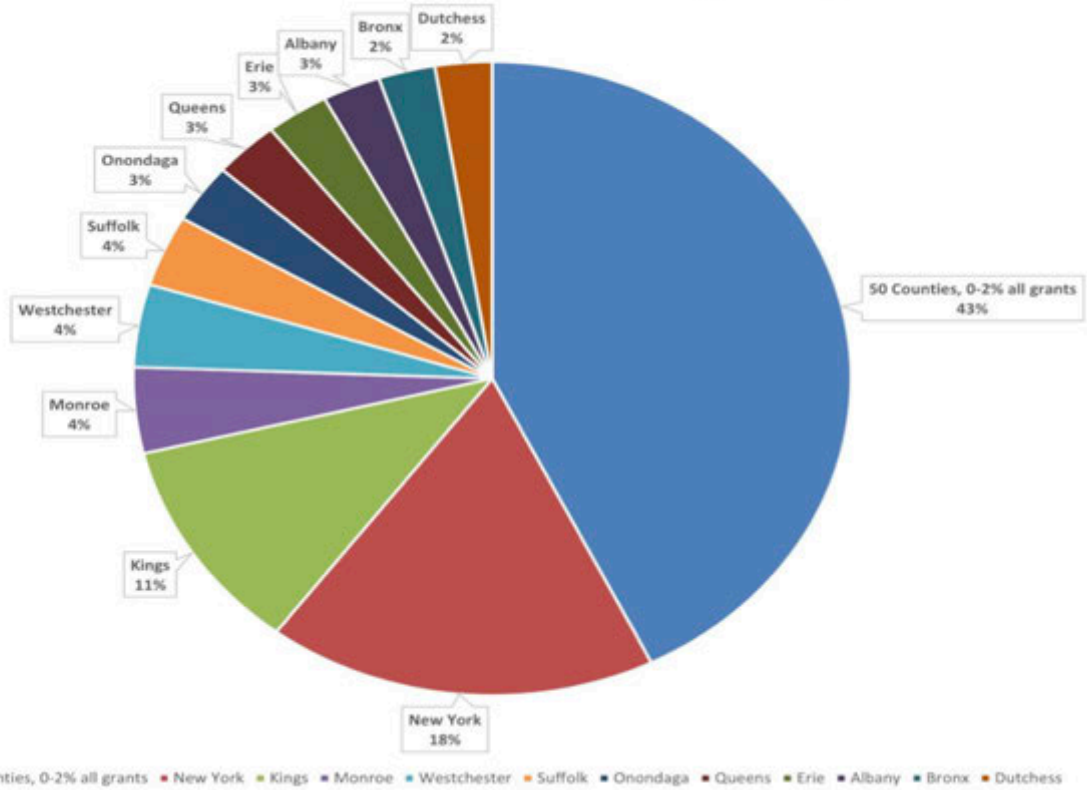


The Conservancy has awarded grants in 61 of 62 New York counties, with 75% awarded in low-income census tracts (in blue)

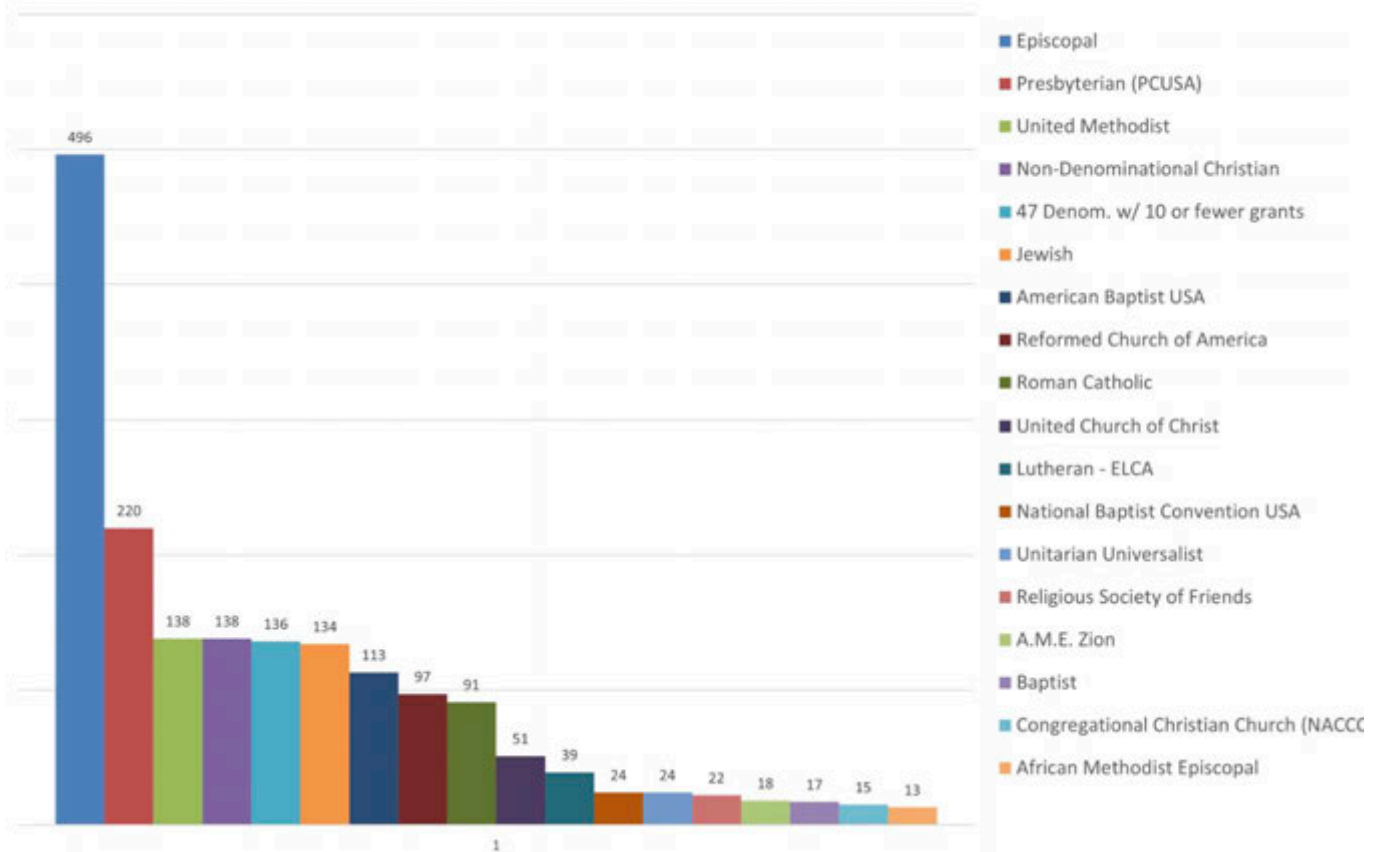
A Look Back, Statewide Sacred Sites Grants, 1986-2024

The following map and charts demonstrate the geographic reach, economic impact, and denominational distribution of the Conservancy's Sacred Sites grants over the last four decades.

Sacred Sites Grants Distribution by County



Grants per Denomination, 1986-2024

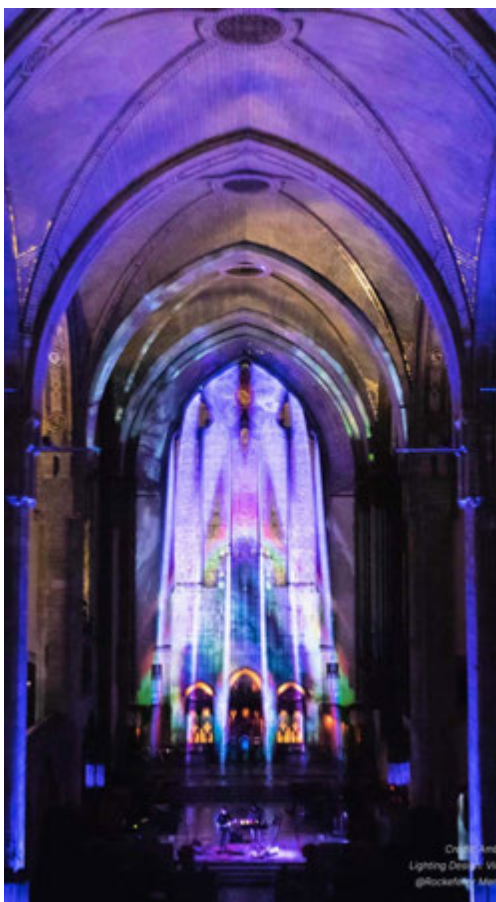


Space Sharing Website for Houses of Faith and Affordable Rentals for Artists

by Mari Gold

Venuely

Ambient Church Lighting Design at Rockefeller Memorial Chapel. Photo by Vincent Naples, from Venuely.



Venuely, a space sharing website which had a soft launch in September, 2022, is live and in beta-testing. Co-created with Partners in Sacred Places, the website makes it easy for sacred spaces to list spaces within their facility they wish to rent and allow artists, community groups and others to rent those spaces. The process is free for hosts to use with a five percent fee on top of the rental cost going to Venuely to continue its efforts.

“Venuely is a game changer,” said Kate Toth, Executive Director of Bricks and Mortals, which owns Venuely. “It opens a new revenue stream for sacred spaces in New York City while simultaneously creating desperately needed below market rental inventory for artists and community groups.

In addition to the website, Bricks and Mortals offers members a number of other benefits including: a 30 minute one-on-one assessment with B&M staff to discuss the congregation including its programs and property; information on grant funding; up-to-the-minute information about compliance with new local laws and ordinances; bimonthly meetings; exclusive webinars and more.

For more information on Venuely visit www.venuely.org. To learn more about Bricks and Mortals including how to join, visit <https://www.bricksandmortals.org>



Participants in the Shabbat dinner hosted by the Palestinian-owned restaurant Ayat in the Ditmas Park section of Brooklyn. Credit: Alex Kent/Gothamist, from Bricks and Mortals.

THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY

Connect with Us

One Whitehall Street, 21st Floor
New York, NY 10004

Email us: sacredsites@nylandmarks.org

Call us: 212.995.5260

Visit us: nylandmarks.org

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and community partners:*

