

COMMON BOND

Volume 31, Number 1, Summer 2021



With You in Spirit
Pandemic Inspired Innovations

Social Outreach During COVID-19 | Expressing Spirit Through Ornament | Help Qualifying for Restoration Grants | Master Planning Infrastructure Demands | Stained Glass at Woodlawn

From the President

Dear Friends,

We've all had to adjust to difficult circumstances over the past 15 months. Religious institutions have been among the most stressed--and most inventive. From zoom vespers, shivas and book clubs to streaming worship services on cell phones, religious institutions have helped their congregations through these trying times.

You have also continued to serve your communities with food banks and vaccination centers. We know this took extraordinary efforts. As you resume in person services, we expect that many of you will continue some of these new ways to connect.

Even though restrictions on in person worship are lifting, we are celebrating our Sacred Sites Open House virtually again this August. We started planning this 11th annual Open House months ago when no one knew what conditions would be like this summer. We'll have virtual tours of a variety of religious institutions throughout New York City and State. We hope you will watch. It's a chance to see wonderful institutions you might never have the opportunity to visit. They will be listed on our website at <https://nylandmarks.org/sacred-sites-open-house/>

We look forward to next summer, when we trust we will resume in person tours, and you will again be welcoming visitors.

Like you, our Sacred Sites team has never stopped working. We have made 40 grants this year totaling \$566,425 and helped institutions throughout the State maintain these remarkable buildings. Vivaldi, in the past year, our grantees have provided social services and cultural programming to 304,000 individuals. Ann Friedman and Colleen Heemeyer are now resuming their travels to visit applicants for the next round of our Sacred Sites grants.

We're also pleased to present the latest edition of "Common Bond." We hope you will find it interesting and helpful.

Our very best wishes to you, your congregations, and families.



President



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.

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Onward and Outward: How Covid-19 Broadened the Reach of Sacred Sites

By 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, theatre and other arts. Her blog "But I Digress..." focuses on cultural events, travel and food at: www.marigoldonline.net



1

1 Welcome Chapel Missionary Baptist expanded its food pantry offerings during the pandemic.

As the Covid-19 pandemic forced religious institutions to end in-person services, leadership worked to identify new ways to serve their congregations and communities. Even as restrictions are being lifted, many churches and synagogues will be keeping new approaches that have enabled them to expand their offerings and reach additional audiences.

Combating food insufficiency

The FOCUS Interfaith Food Pantry, a feeding program that encompasses six covenant churches, four faith affiliates and two faith partners, housed at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Albany. Pre-pandemic, guests came inside the church to collect bags of food. Now they phone to place food orders and pick up groceries outside the building. This convenient pre-order and pick-up format has continued, even as pandemic restrictions ease. Despite the pandemic, Emmanuel Baptist participated in this May's National Muslim Soup Kitchen Day with a local mosque and the Capital Area Council of Churches. Everyone involved wore face coverings and maintained social distance. Meals were pre-packaged and brought in on trays. But there was no sitting around and chatting as in previous years.

Before Covid, the Caring Kitchen of First United Methodist Church, Oneida, was open one day a month. During the pandemic nine area churches banded together to package grab-and-go meals and deliver food to the homebound, assisting many more families.

Highbridge Community Church in the Bronx had an existing connection with local Highbridge and Woodycrest food pantries for in-person food pickup. Since the health crisis, whenever the pantries have food to offer, church staff and volunteers call neighbors to announce availability for outdoor collection and arrange to drop off groceries to homebound individuals.

"Some people are new to this outreach," Highbridge's Reverend Cora W. Taitt observed. "We plan to continue it as long as we can."

In Albany, Welcome Chapel Missionary Baptist Church noted a tremendous expansion both in people served and cooperation with other institutions. "Before the pandemic our church was insular," said Financial Secretary and Deaconess Alice M. Robertson. "Our pastor felt it should be outward-focused and that's what it has become."

During the early days of the health crisis, the church began providing food on the first Saturday of each month; now a second Saturday distribution is beginning. Welcome Chapel works with Kingdom Ministries, a local Baptist fellowship, which receives donations from regional food banks, local supermarkets and other large companies. Besides reaching those in their community, Welcome Chapel also aids people from further away, including Schenectady and Troy. Volunteers also deliver food to local parks and the Albany City Rescue Mission.

First Presbyterian Church, Hudson, was deeply involved in creating the Columbia County Recovery Kitchen (CCRK) that delivered 1,000 meals a week to struggling families identified by local agencies and social workers throughout the pandemic. Now, donors are helping the church build a commercial kitchen to host CCRK's daily operations, "a huge endeavor for us," according to Pastor Kathryn Beilke.

In addition to providing food, the church helped neighborhood children. Before the pandemic, the church provided after-school programming in partnership with the Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood Group (GHPN), modeled after the Harlem Children's Zone. To meet the challenges of virtual learning during the pandemic, the church secured funding for the group to host school children for daytime Zoom classes at the church under the supervision of GHPN staff.

Cultural and Social Service Programming

St. Peter's Lutheran Church, New York City, doubled its congregation in 2020 by merging with Sion Iglesia Luterana, which had been housed in their space for a decade. As Sion members mostly spoke Spanish and St. Peter's mostly English, the move to Zoom inspired the Department of Parish Life and Action to develop bilingual outreach programming. This included Bible study, cooking, meditation, and a book club. Each gathering has a translator so that participants can pick the language they prefer. At this point, many members of both groups are in the process of becoming bi-lingual. Pastors and musicians from both churches worked together to combine traditions.

As the church had a large water main break in January, 2021, activities are likely to remain virtual for a long time. However, technology has enabled congregants who had moved to other parts of the U.S. and foreign countries, including Hungary and Norway, to stay connected.

Beth Shalom v'Emeth Reform Temple (B'ShERT), a Reform synagogue in Flatbush, Brooklyn, gained its rather lengthy name as the result of a series of recent mergers among several temples, which has grown the congregation. B'ShERT offers worship services online via Zoom as well as cultural events, learning opportunities and performances.

2 Emmanuel Baptist Church in Albany shifted to a pre-order and pick-up food pantry format and hosted an on-site Covid vaccination van.



3 The congregants of Welcome Chapel Missionary Baptist led the expansion of the good pantry.

The temple's Social Action Committee participates in the Interfaith Coalition of Brooklyn together with several other Flatbush congregations: East Midwood Jewish Center (a Conservative synagogue), Our Lady of Refuge Catholic Church, and The Turkish Cultural Center, providing educational and social programs from each faith. There is outreach to the community at large through annual drives at Rosh Hashanah and Passover with food dropped off at the synagogue and delivered 3 to recipients or to Our Lady of Refuge Food pantry. The Interfaith group also sponsors a number of service projects for Martin Luther King Day and this year directed congregants to virtual volunteer opportunities. Going forward, ways to volunteer will be made available both virtually and in-person. With Congregation Beth Elohim, a Reform synagogue in nearby Park Slope, B'ShERT participates in the Park Slope Refugee Task Force. They shifted to digital monthly meetings and virtual social action, like letter writing campaigns, during the pandemic. This broadened participation by home-bound seniors and busy parents alike.

Social justice has always played a major role at St. Mark's Church in the Bowery, the second-oldest church building in Manhattan, located in the East Village. This church transitioned to Zoom early in the pandemic, enabling the formation of several programs including Healing Circles led by parishioners who are social workers. They also initiated Act, Learn and Pray, a group of congregants who gather online to discuss dismantling racist ideology.

There is a bust of Peter Stuyvesant on St. Mark's property as well as the Stuyvesant family vault that lies underneath the church. These have been used as opportunities to learn more about the history of both New York City and the church. Using contemporary technology, the church reached out to noted historical scholars abroad and around the U.S. to engage them in live-streamed conversations about slavery and other social justice concerns. St. Mark's continues to house several non-profits including Danspace, the Poetry Project and the New York Theater Ballet.

As Covid restrictions are lifting, poets are holding readings starting with outdoor gatherings and dancers are rehearsing. As Rev. Anne Sawyer said "God is also experienced through the arts."

"The pandemic has allowed us to grow stronger as a church although it is also important for us to come back physically as a community," she added.



Old Dutch Church, Kingston, had a connection with nearby Bard College well before Covid. Then, when the school closed down, the church provided rehearsal spaces for students as well as for the church's own musicians. In keeping with Covid restrictions, some artists rehearsed in small, already-connected pods which then offered mini-concerts to the community via live feeds.

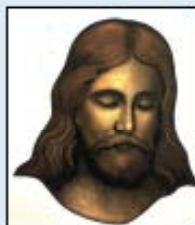
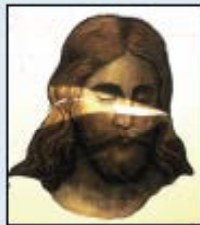
A major concert series lies ahead. "Our church can hold seven hundred and fifty people," said Commissioned Pastor Rob Sweeney. "It is so large that even if we have to restrict the audience to twenty-five percent capacity plenty of people will be able to attend." Also on the cultural front, Old Dutch's theater group plans a living history event in the Church cemetery this September and October.



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Technology to Enhance Worship

2020 marked the 150th anniversary of the Victorian building housing Berith Sholom, Troy, the oldest building continually operating as a synagogue in New York State (2016 was the 150th anniversary of the organization of the congregation). During the pandemic, Berith Sholom became a "destination synagogue," drawing from a wide geographic area via Zoom.

"We will never stop being hybrid," said Rabbi Debora Gordon, aka 'Reb Deb', "even when congregants return in person. Technology enables us to reach many more people, including older congregants who prefer to not drive at night and those who attend life cycle events like bar and bat mitzvahs and memorials who can participate wherever they are around the globe."

Reb Deb, a self-proclaimed 'tech geek' who leads a highly diverse congregation, has been assisted by Choir Director Dan Foster whom she describes as both a musical and technology wizard. Realizing that the magnificence of the Torah is typically seen only by the reader, she worked out a way to videotape 'over the reader's shoulder' so that everyone watching can enjoy the scroll's calligraphy and follow along with the actual pointer—an approach she dubbed the "Torah Cam."



4

Public Health Outreach

Many institutions, including 225 year-old Mother A.M. E. Zion, in New York City's central Harlem, found themselves deeply engaged with the health crisis. At the height of the pandemic Mother Zion volunteers and staff gave out five thousand hand sanitizers and ten thousand masks; later it served as a testing and vaccination site.

The oldest African American church in New York City, Mother Zion has developed a partnership with one of the City's major health-care networks that will provide medical staff for health assessments, blood pressure and diabetes screenings and other services. Emmanuel Baptist Albany also served as a vaccine information and clinic site, as did Highbridge Community Church in the Bronx. Russ Brewer, President of Oneida's First United Methodist's Trustee Committee, pointed out that "Those who benefit from support services need them now more than ever."

The church's Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) group moved to a virtual setting during the pandemic, as did Gamblers Anonymous (Ganon). Both are now back in-person in the building but occupying more locations than in the past to facilitate social distancing.



5

4 The FOCUS Interfaith Food Pantry, a feeding program that encompasses six covenant churches, four faith affiliates and two faith partners, is housed at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Albany.

5 Berith Sholom, in Troy, New York, has installed a camera over the reader's shoulder to allow anyone watching to view the Torah scroll's calligraphy and follow along with the actual pointer.

Schoharie Reformed Church reinstated in-person AA with approved precautions last summer. “Although numbers (of attendees) have been smaller than usual, we were one of the very few places where people could attend in-person,” said Pastor Sherri Meyer-Veen. Both AA and Alanon work with the church, advertising through their networks that include national recovery newsletters and websites as well as county social services.

During the pandemic, Schoharie Reformed also hosted what became the only after school program in the school district as the other state-sponsored programs shut down. The program changed to accommodate Covid regulations including distancing, creating individual work/play stations, separating children’s belongings into individual bins and increasing equipment cleaning.

These religious institutions acknowledge that they would not have been able to function as they did without modern technology. Some congregations invested in new cameras and/or updated internet service for higher speed; others enhanced telephone systems and increased their social media presence to help spread the word about activities. Many noted a major uptick in technology skills among staff and volunteers.

Reb Deb of Berith Sholom summed it up when she pointed out that “the pandemic kicked us into the 21st century.” Many religious institutions feel that outreach via technology in addition to, but not instead of, in-person connection is welcome, valuable, and here to stay.



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THE CHURCH OF SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER, NYC
INTERIOR RESTORATION

With You in Spirit, Written in Stone

By Emily Valentine Sottile

Emily Sottile is the Director of Sacred Space Studio at EverGreene Architectural Arts Inc. Drawing on formal studies in art history and theology and over a decade in the field of preservation and specialty construction, Emily works closely with clergy, architects, and committees to plan restoration and new design of religious buildings across the country.

At some time over the past year most of us have told loved ones we'd be with them in spirit for holidays, graduations, birthdays, or funerals. The expression long precedes the COVID pandemic (appearing in St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians), but this era has given the expression new life as we have figured out creative ways to be present with those we cannot share physical space with. In *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* Victor Hugo described architecture as "the chief register of humanity" writing "The human race has, in short, had no important thought which it has not written in stone". If that is so, might we find expressions of what it is to be present in spirit in the architecture of our own communities?

1



1 & 2 EverGreene Architectural Arts led the replication of damaged stenciling and gilding, amongst other features of the Eldridge Street Synagogue in Manhattan's Lower East Side. (Whitney Cox)



2

A readily identifiable indicator of the instinct to be with those whose physical presence we are deprived of are grave markers. Just steps from Wall Street, alive with commuters, tourists, workers and residents, is Trinity Episcopal Church's cemetery. The burial ground is a *vanitas*, a reminder that this life is temporal and fleeting, but each individual monument suggests the eternal nature of the soul whose name is emblazoned upon it. A marker invites a kind of conversation. Tending or visiting a grave is a way to be with someone who is no longer with us. Those known to the departed may bring flowers, say a prayer, or speak to their relation. Those passing through may read a hitherto unknown name and wonder quietly (or even out loud) "And who are you?" piecing together clues of a life from the symbols, words and dates inscribed in stone.

The stars scattered in the ceilings at Eldridge Street Synagogue invite those who enter to be with Abraham as he heard the Lord's promise "I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky" Genesis 12:4, and to be with the future decedents of the countless Americans across the United States who trace their ancestry through twentieth century immigration by way of Ellis Island to the Lower East Side and observances at the Eldridge Street Synagogue.



3 The restoration spanned two decades and was completed in 2007. The Eldridge Street Synagogue is consistently ranked as one of the most beautiful in the world. (Whitney Cox)

Jesus' promise to his followers "and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age," Matthew 28:20 is a complex theological concept articulated by exquisite mosaic at Christ Church, United Methodist on Park Avenue. The recently restored Christ Pantocrator (a Byzantine representation of Christ as the ruler of the universe) fills the dazzling apse of the sanctuary, ever present, gazing upon all who gather below in praise and supplication. The doors of Christ Church are open all day, and the image of Christ is generally in the company of visitors who stop in throughout the day to sit quietly, pray, and contemplate.

In addition to announcing cause for joy or alarm, the ringing of bells signal times of prayer: communal prayer services, daily recitation of the Lord's Prayer, Mass, the Angelus (a personal and communal Marian devotion), times of the liturgy of hours (scriptural readings, psalms, hymns and litanies), and feast days. Because readings and prayers are selected for each day of the liturgical calendar individuals in full congregations or empty rooms across the globe may open their prayer books to the same readings and prayers as clergy and countless lay people to pray together at a distance.

The bell towers that rise from the Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. Patrick or the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in Manhattan, the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph in Brooklyn, and countless churches around the world visually allude to a call to prayer by bells (even when they aren't ringing).

These architectural examples, and many more that populate the land and cityscapes of our communities speak to us of what is to be present in spirit. The next time you make the acquaintance of a house of prayer, here in the state of New York, or anywhere your physical (or virtual travels take you) take a little time to look for the thought recorded in its structure and ornamentation.

4

4 The Christ Church, United Methodist, on Park Avenue, possesses stunning Byzantine Revival details, such as vivid mosaics. (Tom Wool)



5



5 EverGreene Architectural Arts led the conservation and stabilization of the church's mosaics as well as the refurbishment of the ceiling's acoustic tiles. The result is one of awe-inspiring glittering detail. (Tom Wool)

Helping Congregations Qualify for Restoration Funding

By Ann-Isabel Friedman

1 & 2 Holy Innocents in Flatbush, Brooklyn, and St. Anselm's in the Melrose neighborhood of the Bronx (bottom right) were listed on the National Register in 2005 and 2014. The two churches received multiple Conservancy grants totaling \$105,000, and New York State restoration grants totaling \$700,000, to fund copper roof restoration.



The Conservancy has assisted 836 New York State congregations with grants totaling \$14.9 million over the past 35 years. To qualify for our grants, congregations must be locally designated landmarks, or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In recent years, the Conservancy has helped 50 sites get listed, which has thus far enabled 14 congregations to access more than \$1.5 million in Conservancy and New York State restoration grants.

The Conservancy launched our Sacred Sites program because we recognized that religious buildings are unique among landmarks: monumental, beautiful, and requiring special expertise to maintain and repair. Religious landmarks are culturally significant as well, embodying neighborhood history, and anchoring their communities with social services, educational and cultural offerings. Our technical and financial assistance has helped congregations struggling to maintain their aging historic buildings. Often, the number of active worshippers declined, or congregations are faced with years of prior neglect.

Beginning in the early 2000's, we observed that the closure and sale of older religious properties was accelerating sharply. In New York City, developers sought to buy and redevelop sites. Upstate, population loss contributed to mergers and closures. In 2004, we initiated a city-wide survey that has now documented about two-thirds of the city's historic religious sites. Then we obtained National Register listing for many of them, allowing us to help.

These surveys have identified hundreds of significant but little-known historic religious sites of all faiths. Initially, staff at the New York State Historic Preservation Office was able to translate our research into nominations. However, with state budget cuts, this was no longer possible. In response, the Conservancy secured foundation support, hired architectural historians, and partnered with Columbia University's graduate program in Historic Preservation.

Through these efforts, between 2005 and 2021, 45 sites in New York City and Westchester have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, with another five sites in New York City and Long Island currently under review by the State Historic Preservation Office, with approval anticipated by the end of the year. Four additional nominations are nearly complete.

Unlike local landmark designation, National Register listing requires that the owner of the religious institution consent, or not object, to the listing. With the incentive of Conservancy restoration grants and potential New York State restoration grant funding, the Conservancy was able to convince the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens to consent to the listing of two churches.

Holy Innocents, a 1923, modern Gothic church in Flatbush, Brooklyn, by architects Helmle and Corbett was listed in 2005. St. Matthias, a neo-Renaissance church dating from 1924-1926 by architect Francis J. Berlenbach, Jr. was listed in 2012. The Conservancy had similar success with the New York Archdiocese in 2014 for the listing of St. Anselm's, a Byzantine Revival church in the southwest Bronx. Architect Gustave Steinback completed the church in 1917. It features multiple murals and mosaics by German monks of the Beuron School.



These sites were among the very few Roman Catholic churches to be listed on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places in many years, as many dioceses around the state and country have official policies barring parishes from pursuing National Register nominations. Denomination-level reluctance persists among many faith traditions, even though listing is primarily honorific, imposing no regulatory oversight. The surveys and nominations are adding a diverse pool of religious institutions to the National Register and to potential grantees.

In addition to Roman Catholic churches, the Conservancy's outreach has led to new recognition for synagogues and historically African-American, Spanish-speaking, Chinese, and Korean churches. Thanks to a matching grant from the Preservation League of New York State, the Conservancy hired historian Tony Robins to prepare nominations for nine synagogues and one former synagogue in Brooklyn and Queens. [See Common Bond Vol. 23, *Unsung Synagogues of NYC*]. With funding from the J. M. Kaplan Fund and the David Berg Foundation, the Conservancy engaged Mr. Robins to list four additional synagogues through 2017.

3 Nine synagogues and one former synagogue, now a church, were listed on the National Register in 2010. This initial group of listed synagogues garnered multiple Conservancy grants totaling \$343,500 to fund conditions assessments, masonry and roof repairs, and stained glass and bronze entrance door restoration.

3



Congregation Kol Israel,
Crown Heights, Brooklyn 1927



Jewish Center of Kings Highway,
Midwood, Brooklyn, 1921



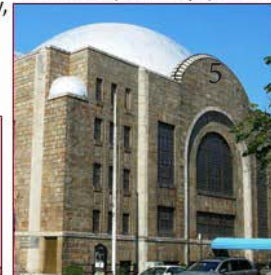
Kingsway Jewish Center,
Midwood, Brooklyn, 1951



Ocean Parkway Jewish Center,
Kensington, Brooklyn, 1925



Young Israel of Flatbush,
Midwood, Brooklyn, 1923



Young Israel-Beth El, Borough
Park, Brooklyn, 1920



St. Leonard's Church AAO, Bedford
Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, 1909



Free Synagogue of Flushing,
Queens, 1927



Rego Park Jewish Center,
Queens, 1948



Astoria Center of Israel,
Queens, 1925

Among the sites recently listed is New York City's oldest mosque, the Moslem Mosque, Inc., in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Originally constructed in 1886 as a Methodist Church, and purchased for mosque use in 1931, the wooden building is remarkably like wood-frame mosques the congregation's Tatar founders left behind in Eastern Europe. Several historic African-American churches have been listed, including Cornerstone Baptist Church in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, whose building dates to 1889, and the 1912 Bethel A.M.E. Church in Harlem. Tian Fu United Methodist Church, a Chinese-American congregation

in Sunset Park Brooklyn, was listed via funding from the Gerry Charitable Trust, which also provided funding to complete survey work in Brooklyn and Queens in 2016-2019.

4



4 (Clockwise from left) Cornerstone Baptist, Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, Moslem Mosque, Williamsburg, and Brooklyn Tian Fu United Methodist Church, Sunset Park, Brooklyn



The history of these diverse congregations is now publicly accessible via listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

5 (Clockwise from bottom left) Rugged Cross Baptist in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, Congregation Ohab Zedek in Morningside Heights, Manhattan, and Holyrood Church/Iglesia Santa Cruz in Washington Heights, Upper Manhattan, are among the 45 diverse congregations that have been awarded over \$1.5 million in Conservancy and New York State restoration grant funding between 2005 and 2021 as a result of the Conservancy's National Register outreach.

The J.M. Kaplan Fund also underwrote the 2011 listing of the largely Spanish-speaking West End Presbyterian Church on Manhattan's Upper West Side. A New York Community Trust grant funded listing of five former synagogues, now African-American and Korean churches, in Harlem, the Bronx, and Queens in 2014 and 2015. Funding from the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation underwrote the listing of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Northport, Long Island, as well as a Conservancy grant to restore the tower at the newly-listed church. (Illustration 4)

Although recognizing, documenting, and listing fifty historic religious sites is an important accomplishment, our efforts have also had tangible benefits for the congregations. Over the last 17 years, fourteen of the 45 listed sites have received 22 Conservancy grants totaling \$588,000. With initial architectural services and matching grant funding from the Conservancy laying the groundwork, three of the sites received additional New York State restoration grants totaling \$950,000. As this pool of newly listed sites continues to grow, so, too does the number of sites we're able to assist with Conservancy technical expertise.

5





Green Pastures Baptist Church, Bronx, 1928



New York Dong Wong Presbyterian Church,
College Point, Queens, 1924



Haven Ministries, Rockaway Beach,
Queens, 1921



Mt. Neboh Baptist Church,
Harlem, Manhattan, 1907-1909



New Bethel Way of the Cross
Church of Christ, Harlem,
Manhattan, 1900

6 The re-use of historic houses of worship by new congregations, communities, and faith traditions is an important component of New York's history. Five former synagogues, now churches, in the Bronx, Harlem, and Queens, were listed on the State and National Registers in 2014-2015.

Follow the (Master) Plan: Architects Respond to the Exigencies of Post-Pandemic Sacred Spaces

By Matthew Marani

Matthew Marani is currently a graduate student enrolled in the Pratt Institute's City and Regional Planning program, and is a graduate of the University of Edinburgh Architectural Conservation program. He has been published by *The Architect's Newspaper*, *Curbed*, *Metropolis*, *The New York Review of Architecture*, and *6sqft*.

1 MBB Architects is currently leading an infrastructural renovation of the Town & Village Synagogue in the East Village. Their master plan remains flexible to a range of future interventions. (Courtesy MBB Architects)

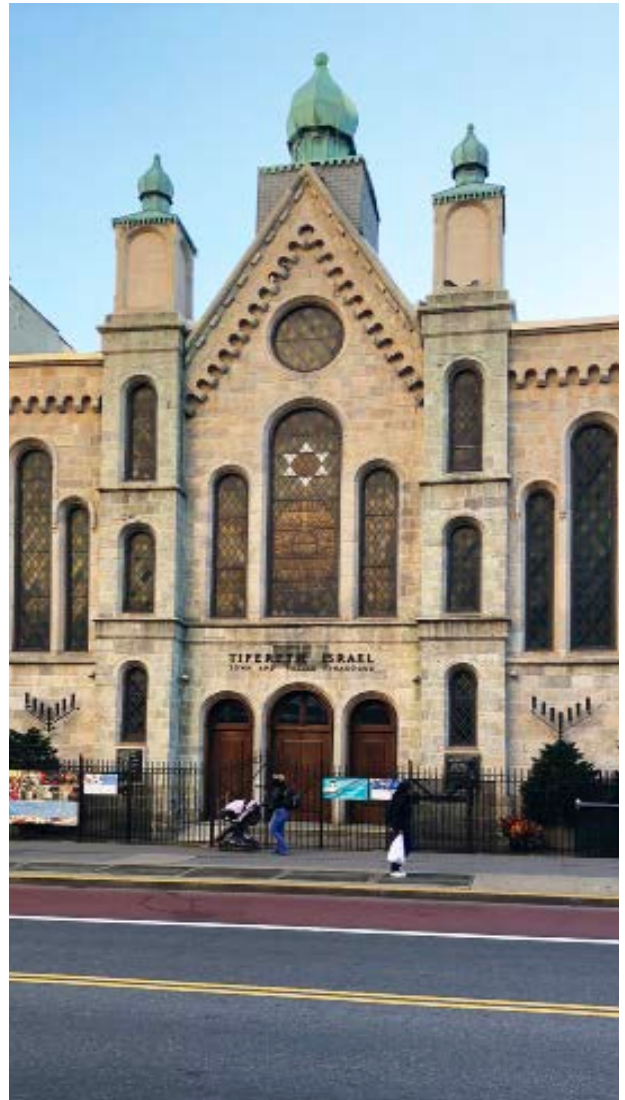
The ongoing Coronavirus pandemic is driving congregations to reevaluate building systems, especially ventilation. Some improvised during this era of social distancing with jerry rigged improvements to boost air circulation, such as swarms of standing fans or newly inserted ventilation units.

While congregations may want to move forward with comprehensive changes, architects are calling for restraint. They advise creating holistic long-term masterplans, rather than focusing exclusively on immediate concerns.

New York-based architecture firm MBB Architects has integrated contemporary infrastructure within high-profile historic landmarks such as Trinity Wall Street, St. Paul's Chapel, and St. Patrick's Cathedral. Each required a design and project management methodology of near surgical precision. That same level of care is being applied at the Tifereth Israel Town & Village synagogue in the East Village, where the firm is leading a comprehensive upgrade of an outdated HVAC system.

The Town & Village Synagogue was erected in 1869 as the First German Baptist Church, one of many Romanesque Revival or Rundbogenstil parishes located in what was then the thriving Kleindeutschland neighborhood in Manhattan's East Village. The church passed to the fledgling Ukrainian community in the 1920s, and again in 1962 to Tifereth Israel Town and Village Synagogue.

The design by German-born architect Julius Boeckell incorporates a roughly coursed Tuckahoe marble façade, arranged as a double-storied arcaded structure flanked by narrow towers and topped with a triangular pediment. The Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the synagogue as an individual landmark in 2014. But excluded the three-story rear annex building, built four decades after the main building, that houses the primary infrastructural components.



Conserve Inspired Places



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The project largely focuses on the replacement of a six-decade old number two oil-fired boiler and air handler, as well as an inefficient rooftop air-cooled chiller.

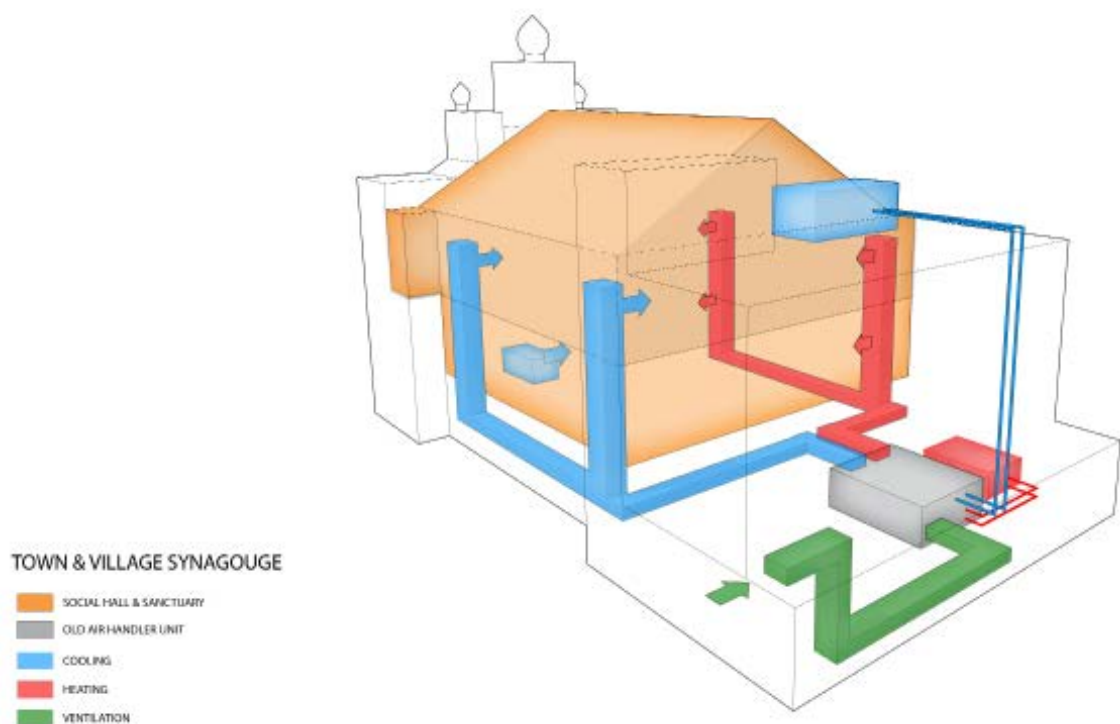
Though strategic in outlook, the goal of the project is to solve a particular infrastructural flaw while ensuring compatibility within a larger multi-decade master plan. "Part of the challenge of this project was actually helping Town & Village decide where to stop, because there's always more work that needs to be done. It would have been very easy for the project scope to expand to the point that it was no longer achievable financially or logistically," said MBB Architects Associate Partner Taylor Aikin. "We had to be disciplined in saying, this is the goal of this project and accomplishing that other goal will have to wait for another project. Fortunately, we had prepared a master plan, so each discrete project contributes toward a comprehensive vision for the building."

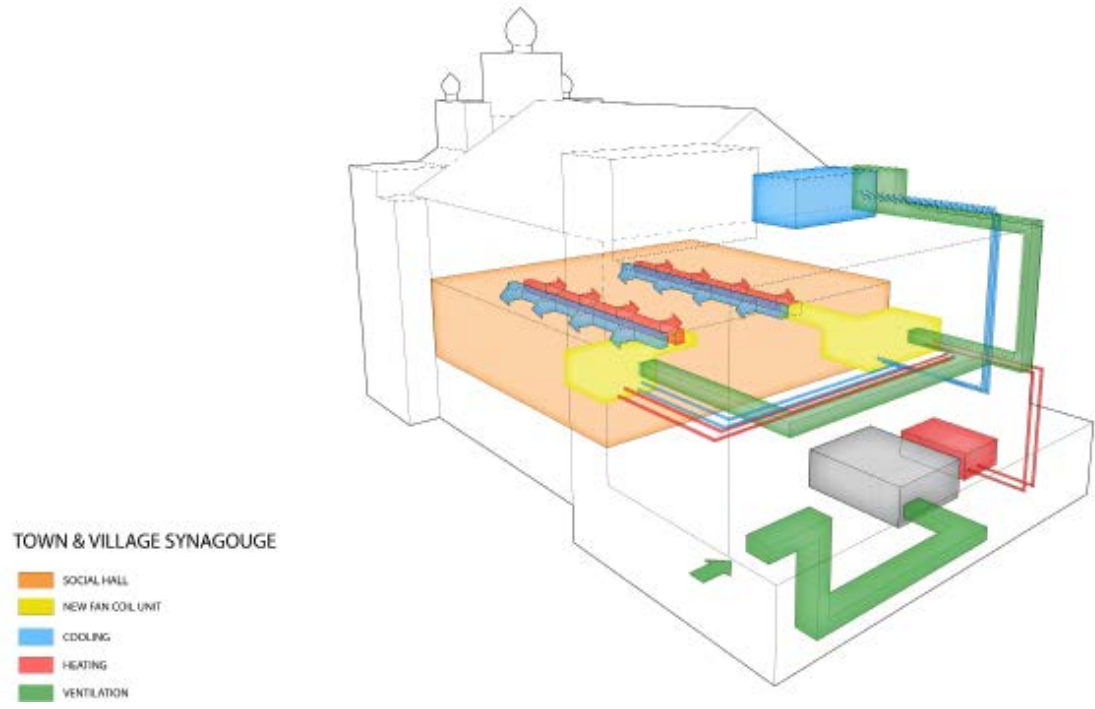
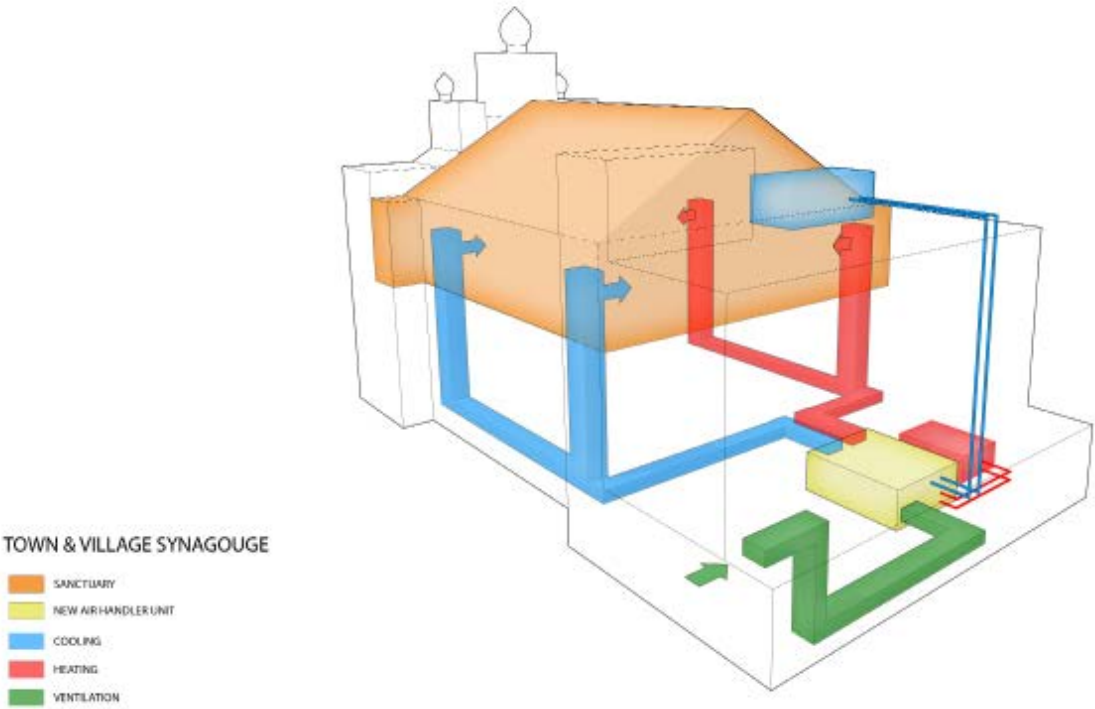
The same emphasis on embedding enhanced ventilation and other infrastructural elements within a holistic master plan is a position shared by Irvington-based firm Walter Sedovic Architects.

The firm has participated in the comprehensive restoration of the National Historic Landmark Eldridge Street Synagogue, the multi-phased restoration of the 1860 Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, and scores of buildings across Columbia University's campus, amongst many other preservation-focused projects. Recently, they developed a program dubbed "Healthy Environments for Re-Occupancy," or HERO, that aims to guide building stewards through the myriad approaches to safely reopen public spaces.

2 The current ventilation system relies on an outdated oil-fired boiler. The existing air handler serves two large worship spaces, increasing congregants' Covid risk. (Courtesy MBB Architects)

2





3 & 4 MBB Architects's upgrades are located in the non-land-marked rear annex of the synagogue. They are presently installing a new HVAC system fed by a rooftop chiller and a high-efficiency modular condensing boiler. (Courtesy MBB Architects)

5 The first step in assessing healthy indoor environments is to define use, since the number and frequency of people in a given volume of space is most crucial. The next step is defining spatial relationships within the structure, in order to facilitate planning of shared systems and optimizing movement of air, circulation, heating and cooling. (Courtesy WSA)

6 Operable clerestory windows, set high in the sanctuary, facilitate the quick expulsion to the atmosphere of warmed air as well airborne microbes. Simple effective systems such as these have kept us safe in heritage buildings for millennia. (Courtesy WSA)

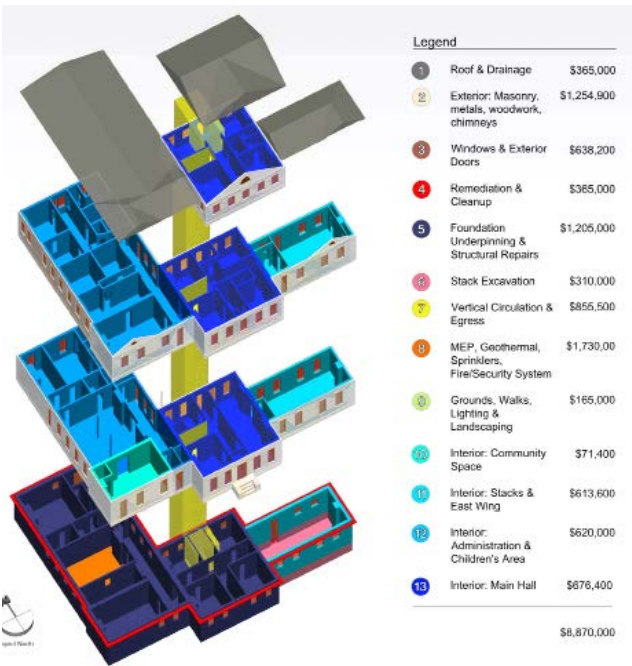
"We feel it is important to look at the building holistically and look at what creates health and wellness in a building. Mechanical systems are just one aspect of that. We look at daylight, natural ventilation, tactile materials, circulation, and how airflow-obstructing walls do not create a healthy environment no matter what alterations are at the mechanical system," noted Principal Jill Gotthelf. "If we are too reactionary now with a focus on the microscopic, we will ultimately be conducting huge interventions that are not necessarily good for the building over the long haul."

Gotthelf noted that the hermetic sealing of historic structures following the Oil Embargo of 1973 provided many hard-earned lessons. In an attempt to reduce energy usage, many heritage congregations effectively removed or damaged the very attributes that made them healthy buildings; convective cooling, central chimney effects, and operable windows. In the decades since, those same congregations have spent considerable sums to reverse those ill-conceived interventions.

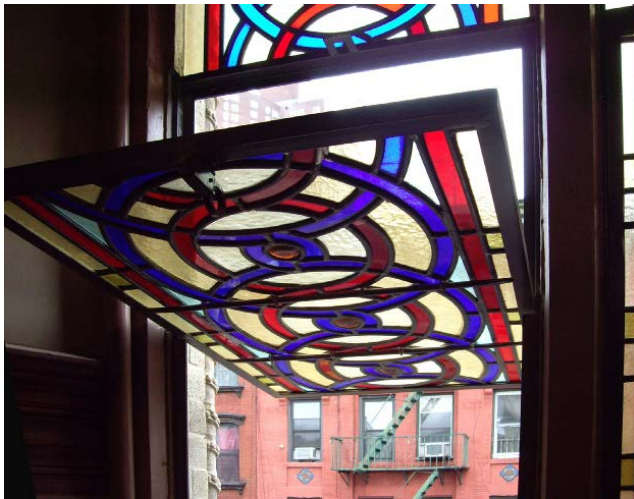
Putting those principles into practice requires a willingness to engage with the concerns of client congregation. The firm is doing just that at the Bertram Goodhue-designed Christ Church of Bronxville, where they are leading a sweeping renovation and long-term master plan.

"The solution is varied. We sort of divided the building up into three nodes; the sanctuary religious programs, which inherited design elements that are perfectly aligned for meeting the pandemic; the second is a largely subterranean connective building that houses an auditorium and theater with circulation and support services; and the third principal priority comprises several five story buildings that house a number of communal facilities," stated Walter Sedovic. "We look at how much air there is to play with, versus the number and confinement of people within a given space."

5



6



7



Up north in Rochester, Bero Architecture, an architecture firm with a particular expertise in historic preservation, is encountering many of the same challenges and crafting similarly thoughtful solutions. Presently, the firm is working on the interior restoration of the Immaculate Conception Church in Ithaca and exploring avenues to reconcile wainscoting and stencil work with the demands of natural ventilation and air conditioning. "We are identifying all of these different aspects of a master plan, such as liturgical improvements ranging from moving the Marian shrine to building a new confessional, but air conditioning and natural ventilation remain huge factors in every decision," noted Bero Architecture Principal Architect Jennifer Ahrens.

7 Among the cleanest and most efficient heating systems – still – is perimeter radiant heat, which may be either steam or hydronic (hot water). (Courtesy WSA)

8



"It can be difficult in a church where you have leaded-glass clerestory windows that can rust and get stuck due to water and rain, and their height makes them difficult to maintain, so we are looking into systems that allow you to conduct remote operation of these windows—that, of course, opens up new challenges in providing subtle conduits for electrical wiring."

While the pandemic is coming to a close, issues pertaining to natural ventilation and the incorporation of modern infrastructure within historic congregations will surely continue. However, sticking with a master plan and seeing the forest the trees remain the most effective course to address such problems in the years ahead.

8 & 9 Bero Architecture is currently working on the interior restoration of the Immaculate Conception Church in Ithaca, which entails reconciling historic details with contemporary infrastructure. (Courtesy Bero Architecture)

9



Pandemic Upgrades Enhance Accessibility for All at St. Ignatius Loyola

By William Collins

William J. Collins is a registered architect at Acheson Doyle Partners Architects. William has a keen interest in historical preservation and has worked on a variety of Landmarked projects, including the Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral, the Plaza Hotel, and the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola. Currently, he is involved in the ongoing renovation of the historic Jan Hus Presbyterian campus for the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany.

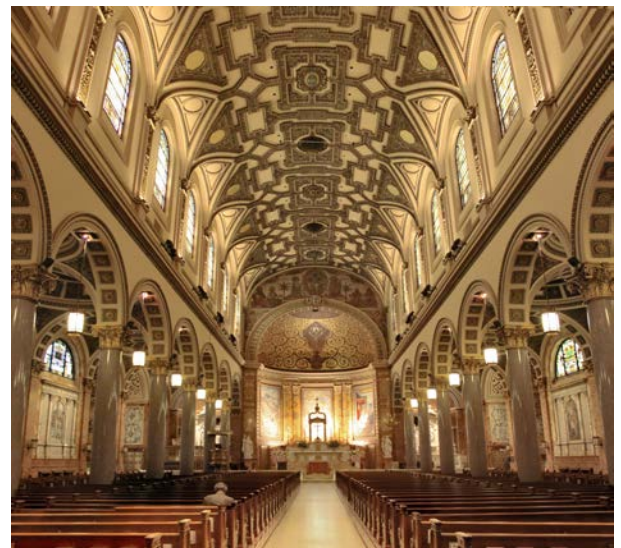
While installing new, accessible technology in historic structures can present challenges, the articulation of Baroque geometries in the nave of the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola allow for ample opportunity to conceal wiring and fixtures. The new television monitors are the only pieces readily visible in the space. (Courtesy Acheson Doyle Partners Architects)

A commanding presence on Park Avenue, the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola has been a fixture of Manhattan's Upper East Side cityscape since the mid-19th Century. As often is the case in historic buildings, the original plan did not account for contemporary accessibility, fire safety and security, or audio-visual needs. Fr. Dennis Yesalonia, S.J., set out to change this when he became pastor in 2016.

Acheson Doyle Partners Architects, P.C., an architecture firm versed in historic restoration and the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission approval process, was engaged to plan the project. ADP collaborated closely with the Commission staff from the earliest planning stages to expedite projects designed to remove barriers to access at the entire campus. The Parish House, the Church's nave and sanctuary, Wallace Hall (the undercroft, a community event space), the priests' residence, school, and daily mass chapel, were identified as spaces in need of accessibility upgrades. A major capital campaign, well-supported by the wider parish community in addition to separate donations from private individuals, exceeded its \$7.5 million goal. It enabled creating multiple ramps, an elevator, entrance upgrades, and fire safety and security systems.

Additional projects included renovation of the Church's daily mass chapel. Referred to as the "Lady Chapel" after similar chapels dedicated to Mary in large churches, this intimate space of prayer, located within the parish house, is a popular venue for weddings and christenings. When the pandemic forced the Church to shut down in-person worship in March 2020, the parish began live-streaming a daily 5:30 PM mass from the chapel. The Lady Chapel became the spiritual center of the Parish throughout the pandemic. Renovations included opening and accessibly connecting the chapel to the rest of the parish hall, restoration of the original Gothic stenciled finishes at the retable behind the altar, the installation of appropriate liturgical fixtures, and the installation of live-streaming equipment.

Work continues, with a goal of meeting all accessibility needs, including adaptations to facilitate digital worship and programming. Accessibility features for the hearing impaired have been installed in the nave of the church, as well as lighting improvements, video screens, a new sound system and live-streaming equipment. All hardware and cabling have been carefully integrated into the significant interiors. "Your Parish, Your Home" was the campaign theme, and these upgrades and renovations continue to make St. Ignatius a place accessible to all.



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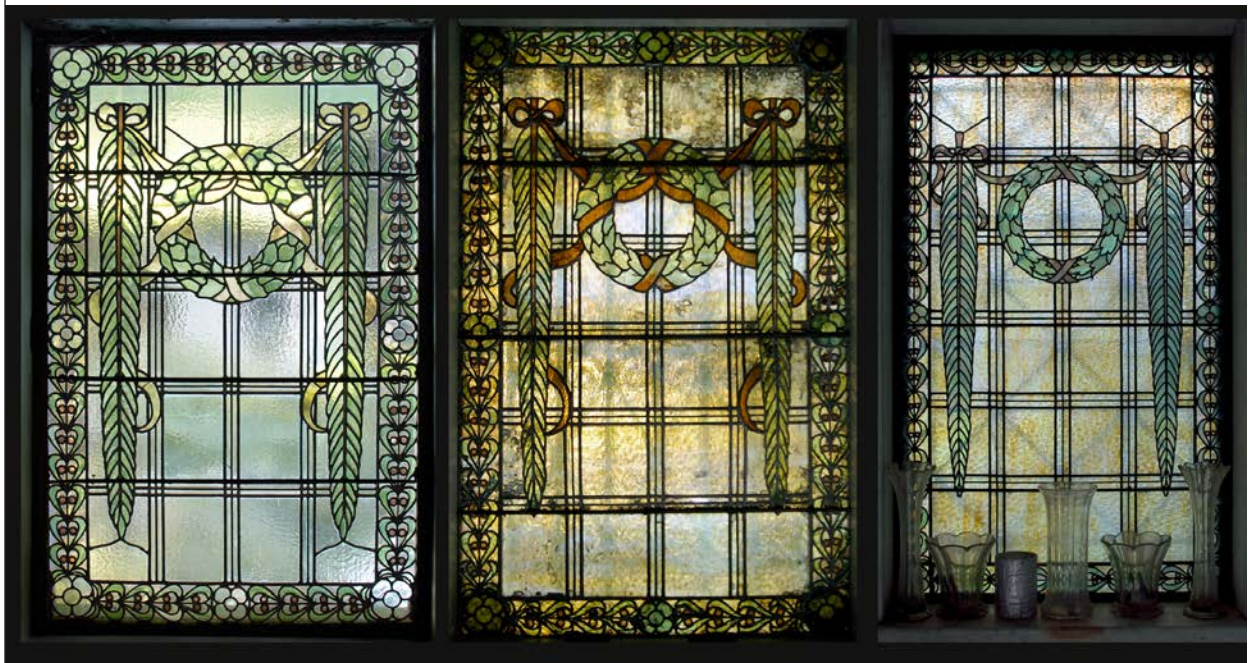
NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN ENID A. HAUPT CONSERVATORY

The Stained Glass Conservation Project at Woodlawn Cemetery, The Bronx

By Brianne Van Vorst

Brianne Van Vorst completed an MA in Stained Glass Conservation and Cultural Heritage Management at the University of York in England. After graduating, she returned to her home state of New Jersey and worked for a private studio before opening her consulting firm, Liberty Stained Glass Conservation, in 2016. She recently concluded the conservation of the stained glass at Trinity Church, Wall Street with MBB Architects.

1 Three panels sharing the same cartoon, the earliest of which identified the fabricator as Tiffany Studios. Left: Parkview Plot, c. 1906, Center: Chestnut Hill Plot, c. 1908, Right: Hickory Knoll Plot, c. 1912. Each of these windows exist in mausoleums made by the CE Tayntor Monument Company. (Lee Standstead)



The Woodlawn Cemetery (est. 1863) is a National Historic Landmark recognized as the steward of a vast collection of funerary art including one of the most comprehensive collections of stained glass in the United States. It contains more than 1200 windows fabricated over the period of 150 years and reflects the evolution of stained glass design and technique as well as memorial traditions in the 19th and 20th centuries. It is mainly comprised of windows by unidentified artists and designers from both the United States and Europe.

Less than 10% of stained glass artists and studios have been identified, but windows sharing similar features such as the same design cartoon or stylistic and technical similarities have been identified within Woodlawn's collection (figure 1). Scholars and curators familiar with Woodlawn's stained glass have attempted to link windows found in churches, private residences and public buildings with ones inside Woodlawn.

Records that verify the stained glass maker are rarely found. This has initiated the largest stained glass research project and survey ever undertaken in the United States. The project aims to; research, identify and catalogue the unknown craftsman, examine the condition of the windows and the environments in which they exist, and establish treatment recommendations for the ongoing care of the windows and mausolea.

The Project

In late 2019, a Project Plan was outlined. The vastness of the 400-acre physical space and of the collection requires an organized and methodical approach. The initial objectives were to establish a sequence to survey the plots, develop protocols for historic research and documentation, and assemble criteria for prioritizing treatment recommendations. The long-term goal anticipates engaging the lot owners and their descendants and the execution of the necessary conservation treatment.

By early 2020, the Pilot Phase began with funding support provided by the Ventus Charitable Foundation. The Pilot Phase began with the review of a huge number of existing records, documentation and photographs of the cemetery and mausoleums. Nine windows from various dates and locations were surveyed as an initial sampling of the range of objects, conditions and environments.

Customized field survey forms were created and modified with each new condition or technical inclusion encountered. These surveys record each aspect of the window's condition with valuable information including the setting, support methods, glass, glass paint, lead, protective glazing, and environment. The surveys are accompanied by extensive photographic documentation. The procedure for both surveying and photography was developed in consideration of the forthcoming interactive geographic information system (GIS) map. Photograph files are named to reflect the locations and conditions and will ultimately become searchable in Woodlawn's GIS.

Woodlawn's plots were developed chronologically. Research has established connections between monument dealers and stained glass studios. This is illustrated in contemporary marketing materials from stained glass studios boasting relationships with the major monument makers of the period (figure 2). Surveying windows according to the chronology of the plots allows the simultaneous review of contemporary monument dealers and stained glass studios to establish patterns and find repeating techniques, themes, materials and window designs. It is also efficient and prevents surveyors from traveling great distances between mausoleums.

2



2 Rudy Brothers advertisement referencing relationships with monument makers who are known to have built mausolea at Woodlawn Cemetery.

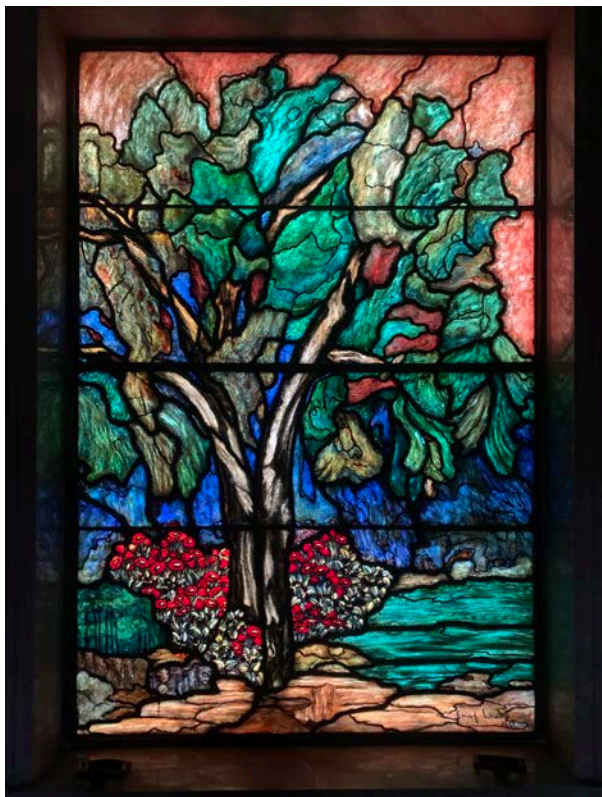
The advertisement appeared on p. 170 of the Omar H. Sample's "Monument Dealer's Manual: The Monument Man's Encyclopedia," a Hand Book of Ready Reference to Useful Information for the Monument Craft, Jan 1919, Allied Arts Publishing Company.

Remarks on the Stained Glass

The styles, techniques and materials in the stained glass collection vary immensely. There are impressionistic landscapes (figure 3) as well as typical European Gothic Revival windows (figure 4), and everything between. The windows demonstrate an array of features and conditions not typically seen together at the same site. For example, some windows were originally designed with exterior protective glazing whereas others were designed to open and provide ventilation. Furthermore, at least one window uses quartz in its composition, a rarity in historic windows.

There are windows over a century old in immaculate condition and contemporary examples which demonstrate severe degradation. The condition of the stained glass directly correlates with the condition of the mausoleum. Mausoleums that are not weathertight frequently have windows that exhibit loss of paint. A window dating to 1925 in the Myosotis plot (figure 5) illustrates these issues. Compromised mortar joints in the roof results in leakage and moisture infiltration, which has in turn accelerated the catastrophic loss of paint evident in the stained glass panel.

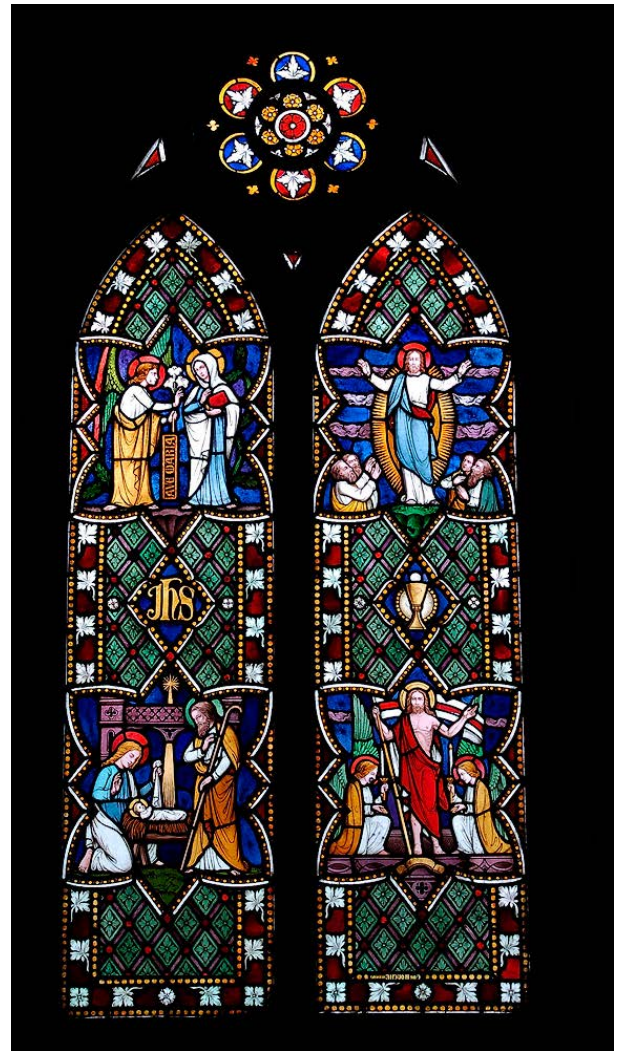
3 1951 window
extant in the Col-
umbine Plot.
(Brianne Van
Vorst)



3

4 1908 window
extant in the Wal-
nut Plot.
(Lee Sandstead)

4





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St. Patrick's Cathedral

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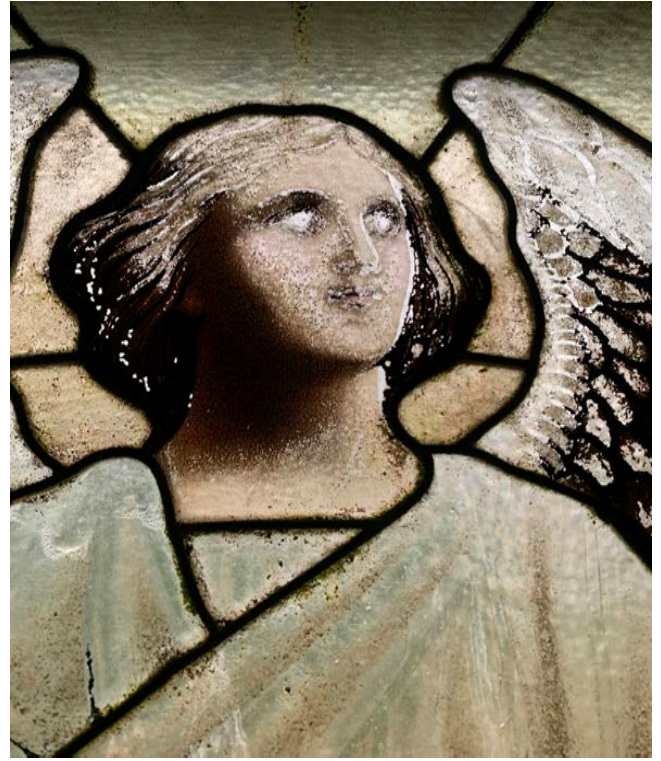
Photo: Vertical Access

5 Detail of paint loss in a 1929 window extant in the Myosotis Plot. (Brianne Van Vorst)

Historically, glass paint is applied on the interior face of the stained glass. Artists and studios have occasionally painted between layers of glass and/or on the reverse side to afford them a desired effect. At Woodlawn, it is not unusual for windows to have all or the majority of their glass paint concealed between layers of glass. This indicates that the original craftspeople were cognizant of the environment and attempted to protect the glass paint by concealing it from moisture. Windows with concealed paint in damp environments have maintained their paint at a higher rate compared with those with the glass paint on the interior face of the glass (figure 6).

We have encountered windows that have been installed backwards or upside down. In the case of the Walnut Plot, one panel was installed backwards which is evident by the lettering (figure 7). This has been noted in several windows, signifying that the installation of windows was done by the monument maker or an on-site crew, rather than the window maker (as would be the case in a typical building).

5



6 Detail from the 1908 window extant in the Walnut Plot. (Brianne Van Vorst)

6

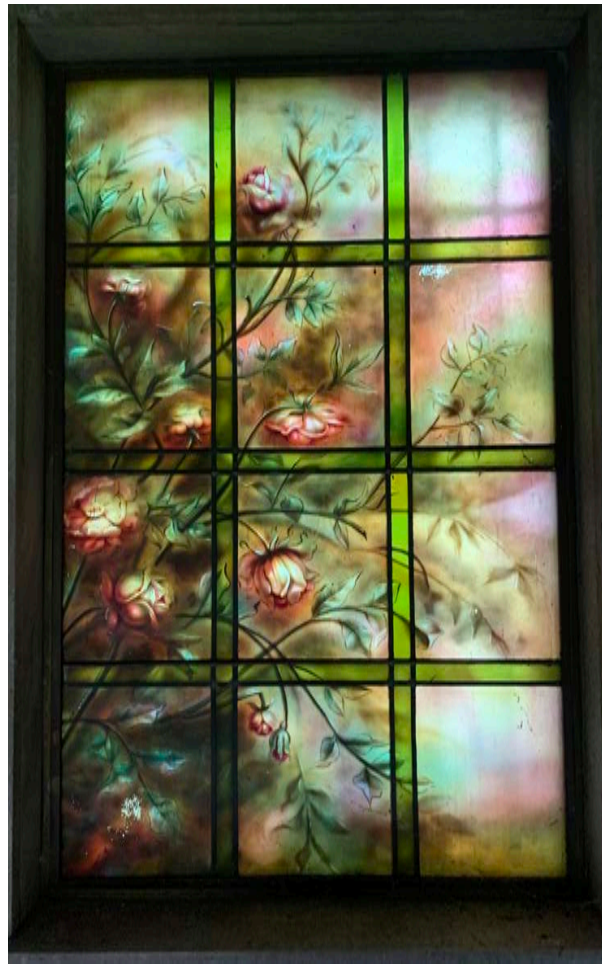


Given that each mausoleum and window condition is unique, they are treated as such. The approach to treatment, designed by Liberty Stained Glass Conservation with the help of the curatorial and conservation staff of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, places an emphasis on research and documentation, repair over replacement, reversibility of treatment, and preventative conservation. Aesthetic features are reinstated where needed while preserving the integrity of the original materials. The intention is to keep Woodlawn as original as possible for future generations.

The project relies on a collaborative approach 7 between the professionals from the Woodlawn Conservancy, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Liberty Stained Glass Conservation and Columbia University. The Avery Architecture and Fine Arts Library at Columbia University holds Woodlawn's archival collections. For more than a decade, graduate students from the University's Historic Preservation Program have documented mausoleum conditions and researched the structures providing insight into the history of the owner and their relationship to those who fabricated the memorials. These studies often alert cemetery staff to declining conditions and make recommendations for stabilization. Under the supervision of Woodlawn's Resident Craftsman repairs are made. During the Pilot Phase lists were assembled identifying several archives containing records that may be relevant to our project. These archives will be reviewed by an art historian. Researchers and conservators will work closely together to substantiate theories and make connections.

To date, three full plots (over 100 windows) have been surveyed and the project is on-going and evolving. Engagement with lot owners has stirred interest in the assessment process and specific mausoleums will undergo conservation treatment as early as this year. Conservation work will be undertaken alongside the continuing survey and research process.

The benefits of the project are twofold; our research will contribute to the collective knowledge of several disciplines (such as Stained Glass, Art History, Architectural History, New York City History, Historic Preservation and Conservation Studies), and our physical surveying and treatment will conserve the most important stained glass collection in America for future generations. It is our sincere hope that the knowledge collected during this campaign will honor and strengthen the history and culture of Woodlawn and that of New York City.



**7 1909 window
extant in the
Chestnut Hill
plot has main-
tained nearly all
of its concealed
enamel and
grisaille paint,
despite its wet
environment.
(Brianne Van
Vorst)**

Sacred Sites Grants

The Conservancy awards matching grants to congregations to plan or implement the restoration of historic religious properties. Although the pandemic delayed some projects, the Sacred Sites program pledged 42 grants totaling \$618,600 to 37 religious institutions throughout New York State, leveraging over \$9.4 million in repair and restoration projects.

To be eligible for our grant programs properties must be located 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 designated pursuant to a local landmarks ordinance. Eligible properties include churches, synagogues, meetinghouses, mosques, and temples.

2020 Grantees include: (listed by County, then City or Borough)

Albany

Church of God and Saints of Christ, Albany
\$3,500 — Prioritized Scope of Work

Columbia

Church of St. John in the Wilderness, Copake Falls
\$3,500 — Architectural & Engineering Services

Glenco Mills United Methodist Church, Livingston
\$10,000 — Roof Repair

Delaware

First Congregational Church, Walton
Jay Gould Memorial Reformed Church, Roxbury
\$30,000 — East Wall, Tower Masonry & Stained Glass Restoration

Erie

St. John's Grace Episcopal Church, Buffalo
\$15,000 — Slate Roof & Masonry Restoration

Genessee

First Presbyterian Church of LeRoy
\$2,500 — Partial Sanctuary Roof Replacement

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, LeRoy
\$10,000 — Window & Exterior Repair

Greene

Durham United Methodist Church
\$5,000 — Roof Replacement

Jefferson

United Presbyterian Church of Sackets Harbor
\$30,000 — Masonry Restoration at Bell Tower

Kings (Brooklyn)

Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church
\$5,000 — Updated Conditions Study

Stuyvesant Heights Christian Church
\$3,100 — Wood Window Paint Analysis, Masonry Jamb Stabilization
\$10,000 — Scaffolding for Window Vent Retrofit & Stained Glass Installation

South Bushwick Reformed Church
\$2,500 — Asbestos Testing
\$10,000 — Construction Documents & Structural Repair Oversight



St. John's Grace Episcopal Church, Buffalo — Slate Roof & Masonry Restoration.



Conservancy staff and trustees meet with leaders of St. Alban's Episcopal Church on Staten Island to review proposed exterior trim and window repair.

South Bushwick Reformed Church

\$2,500 — Asbestos Testing
 \$10,000 — Construction Documents & Structural Repair Oversight

Trinity Baptist Church

\$7,000 — Architectural Services for Facade Repair to cure DOB Violation
 \$15,000 — Facade Repair to cure DOB Violation

Livingston

St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Geneseo
 \$7,000 — Conditions Survey & Master Plan

Madison

First Baptist Church, Canastota
 \$30,000 — Steeple Restoration

Monroe

Ebenezer Baptist Church, Rochester
 \$5,000 — Flat Roof Replacement

New York (Manhattan)

Church of St. Jean Baptiste (Eglise Saint Jean Baptiste)
 \$9,000 — Chapel/Auditorium Window Restoration

Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew, United Methodist
 \$35,000 — Additional Roof & Masonry Work

General Theological Seminary - Chapel of the Good Shepherd

\$8,000 — Construction Documents for Tower Restoration
 \$35,000 — Chapel Tower & Roof Restoration

Holyrood Church, Iglesia Santa Cruz

\$10,000 — Slate Roof Restoration Construction Documents & Repair Management

House of the Redeemer

\$40,000 — Window Restoration

Metropolitan Baptist Church

\$11,000 — Project Management & Construction Documents for Slate Roof Repair

Mother AME Zion Church

\$8,000 — Roof Assessment & Repair Management
 \$30,000 — Roof Repair

Museum at Eldridge Street

\$25,000 — Architectural & Engineering Services

Mt. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

\$50,000 — Masonry Facade Restoration & Foundation Stabilization

St. Mark's Church in the Bowery

\$7,000 — Construction Documents for Roof Drainage Restoration

Oneida

First Presbyterian Church of Holland Patent
 \$20,000 — Steeple Restoration

Tabernacle Baptist Church, Utica

\$30,000 — Masonry Restoration

Onondaga

First Presbyterian Church, Baldwinsville
 \$10,000 — Protective Glazing

Orange

St. George's Episcopal Church, Newburgh
 \$10,000 — Construction Documents

St. Johns AUMP Church, Goshen

\$15,000 — Window Repair, Repointing & Roof Re-shingling

Orleans

First Presbyterian Church, Holley
 \$5,000 — Roof Repair

Richmond (Staten Island)

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
 \$7,000 — Exterior Carpentry & Stained Glass Window Repair
 \$7,000 — Conditions Survey

Suffolk

Old First Presbyterian Church, Huntington
 \$15,000 — Replacement of Rotted Foundation Sill

St. John's Episcopal Church, Huntington

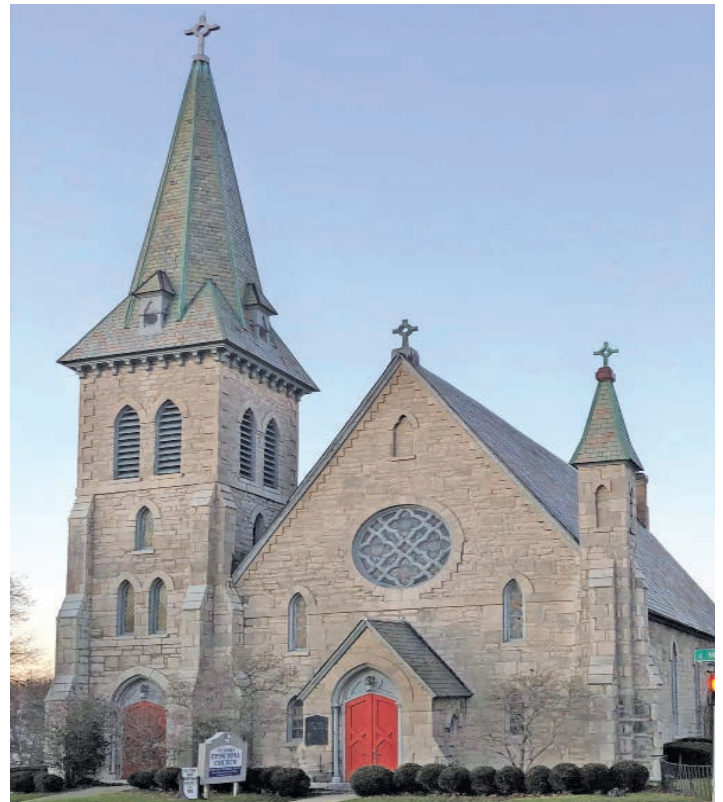
\$25,000 — Repointing Masonry, Repairing Bluestone Steps & Copings, Upgrading Entrance Drainage

Tompkins

First Methodist Church of Forest Home, Ithaca
 \$7,500 — Front Step & Door Repair, Weatherization of Sanctuary Windows

Washington

First Baptist Church, Hartford
 \$2,000 — Update Conditions Assessment



St. Mark's Episcopal Church, LeRoy — Window & Exterior Repair.



Lacey Thaler Reilly Wilson

Architecture & Preservation, LLP



A before and after of St. Anthony's Church in Schenectady, NY. After a severe fire, Lacey Thaler Reilly Wilson Architecture & Preservation designed the restoration and upgrades of the church.

The Restoration of St. Anthony's Church

St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Church was severely damaged by fire. Lacey Thaler Reilly Wilson Architecture & Preservation was subsequently hired to complete a Master Plan and construction documents for the church's renovation, including both repair of fire-related work and modifications to address accessibility and liturgical needs.

Most of the finishes and decorative murals throughout the sanctuary had been severely damaged. Lacey Thaler Reilly Wilson developed a new interior design which provided the necessary upgrades including elevator, restroom, enlarged sacristy, and devotional chapel, and worked with Evergreene Architectural Arts to create a new decorative scheme which restored many of the original features while adding new elements.

Our Services

Together with a team of highly qualified professionals we provide the following services:

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To find out more about St. Anthony's and our services, please visit us at ltrw-arch.com/cultural



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