

Spirit and Space Annual Report 2017-2018

Your Spirit and Space Team was initially chartered by Session in January 2017 to consider how our congregation, by improving the structural, visual, and practical design of our worship environment can improve our welcome to each other and the community.

The Team began work in May 2017 by spending time to listen to members of the community and our congregation. We undertook five such meetings - two with members of the community and community service organizations, one with the people we welcome as part of the Food Clothing and Prayer ministry only, one with congregation and community members, and one with only congregation members. These meetings opened our eyes to opportunities Christ Presbyterian Church has for ministry to our city and beyond.

We reviewed articles and case studies focused on worship and welcome, and visited several churches that have entertained and acted on similar hopes and visions.

In January 2018, aware of the ministry possibilities being uncovered by the Spirit and Space Team, Session updated the Spirit and Space charter to include not only our worship environment, but to identify ministry opportunities. The Team provided Session with a list including the following ideas:

- Redefining “Service” to include all those who live or work in our city and are in need of the love of Christ- that we can

offer help to them, invite them in, and provide healing in all its aspects.

- Nurturing - We must do ministry in a way that nurtures the spiritual lives of those we seek to serve through our current ministries but goes beyond simply giving out food and clothing.
- Enabling - What can we do that goes beyond what the social services infrastructure of our community already offers?
- Connecting - Figure out how to connect to our peers, our political leaders and our neighbors throughout the community, by participating in events that wrestle with current events and local issues.
- Sponsoring/hosting - Define what it means to be welcoming in ways that are not structural and physical in nature (how we host events sponsored by the community, how we sponsor our own events, how we welcome people when they arrive at their destination within the building).
- Honor and uplift those in our congregation who have been faithful and committed to what we "are" and "have been" in the way we undertake our ministries to the community.
- Encouraging pastoral and professional staff involvement - to know, care for, and serve our downtown neighbors, as well as downtown business, governmental (political), and social welfare leadership, so as to build partnerships that serve the good of the parish/community (from our perspective... embody and empower "the Kingdom of God.").

As it identified these ministry possibilities, the Team also established the following top priorities for our physical

environment that would support and enable the church in worship and its ministries.

- 1.** Create a worship space that allows us to fully respond to our call to be a place of worship that fully embraces, facilitates and reflects the way we now come before the Almighty as a community of faith. This includes flexibility of our worship space, improved acoustics and visibility, and space for gathering together, all the while preserving the architectural heritage of our building.
- 2.** Provide access (exterior and interior) for persons with disabilities that preserves the historical character of the church and, to the extent feasible and practical, that allows persons with disabilities the same experience indoors and outdoors as able bodied persons.
- 3.** Establish a reception area that is convenient and inviting for most who enter the building and that transitions into administrative and professional staff office areas.
- 4.** Develop the outdoor space surrounding the church so that it signals our openness to the community and invites them in to the ministry of our church.

With the inspiration of ministry - current and future - that calls us to action, we have begun work to identify an architectural firm that will develop the plans for the improvements we wish to make to our space. We have also begun consultation with an advisor to assist us in the necessary efforts to evaluate our generosity potential and raise funding for this project. We are on schedule to complete this project by the time of the 200th anniversary of the founding of our church in 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Spirit and Space Team

Jerry Norton, Alice Bailey, Tom Okonak, Nancy Irving, Kathy Kettlewell, Lorraine Murphy, Jeannine Moss, David Kienzle, and Dave DeVries