



A House of Prayer FOR ALL PEOPLE

A retrospective on the *A House of Prayer for All People* Capital Campaign for Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church.

June 2024





In early 2016, a group of Montview members gathered to discuss the future of Montview's sacred spaces. Originally formed to examine opportunities for the integration of art within the Montview sanctuary, this "Sacred Spaces Committee" broadened their scope beyond the sanctuary, recognizing the need to build stewardship across Montview's campus. "The beauty of our historic building was in great need of restoration," says Montview Co-Pastor Clover Reuter Beal. "As the visioning began for what could be, the project we saw ahead of us was both exhilarating and daunting." Meeting throughout 2016, the Committee developed a Long Term Vision Plan that was reviewed and ratified by Session and the broader congregation in a variety of small and large group meetings. Working with Tryba Architects, a Denver-based architectural firm with experience working with both historic and religious campuses, the Plan they developed provided a roadmap for future renovation decisions that would be guided by the principles of Beauty and Awe, Stewardship, Connectivity, and Responsiveness. These early efforts provided a vision that would grow and expand into a large-scale construction project that would transform our church.

Sacred Spaces Committee quickly realized the importance of broadening their scope, recognizing the need for a comprehensive Long Range Campus Vision.

Photo credit: Jess Blackwell Photography

A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLE

In April 2019, the Capital Campaign: *A House of Prayer for All People* was launched with a goal of raising \$7.6 million for construction. Thanks to the hard work of our Capital Campaign Committee, co-chaired by Mary Medley and Doug Wiley, and two generous “cornerstone” gifts from the Alvarado Family and the LARRK Foundation, we turned to the entire congregation to help raise the funds needed for the project. We completed our fundraising that summer, surpassing our goal by \$2 million. With \$7,877,577 raised, a newly formed Construction Committee made up of Bud Starker (Chair), Martha Carlson, Bob Cloud and Craig Maginness would guide us into the next phase of the process: construction.

According to Construction Committee Chair Bud Starker, “this project (was) by far the most extensive campus construction undertaken since the building of the 1953 sanctuary, featuring work in every corner of almost every building.” The Miller Center would be revitalized, the Dahlia Street entrance reimaged, the

Westminster Commons demolished and reconstructed, new lighting installed in the sanctuary and new safety improvements made throughout the building. In addition, Bud continues, “exterior site improvements to the north, east and west sides of the property” would be made.

In early 2020, we contracted with Colarelli Construction, a commercial general contractor with experience and expertise working with sacred spaces. Vince Colarelli, architect, civil engineer and president of Colarelli Construction, was hired as our “owner's representative.” Essentially a construction project manager, Vince would guide us through the design and construction process and keep the Construction Committee, Tryba Architects, contractors, operational staff and senior leadership directed, focused and organized. With Colarelli at the helm, construction began in October of 2020.

As a thorough study of the building done by Tryba Architects and their consultants revealed, the need for a



Photo credit: Jess Blackwell Photography

large-scale construction project was a real one. “The state of the mechanical and electrical systems in the building had been neglected and needed to be upgraded and improved,” Construction Committee member Bob Cloud explains. Some wiring was 80 to 100 years old and needed to be brought up to city code standards so that it would not pose a safety risk for people inside the building.

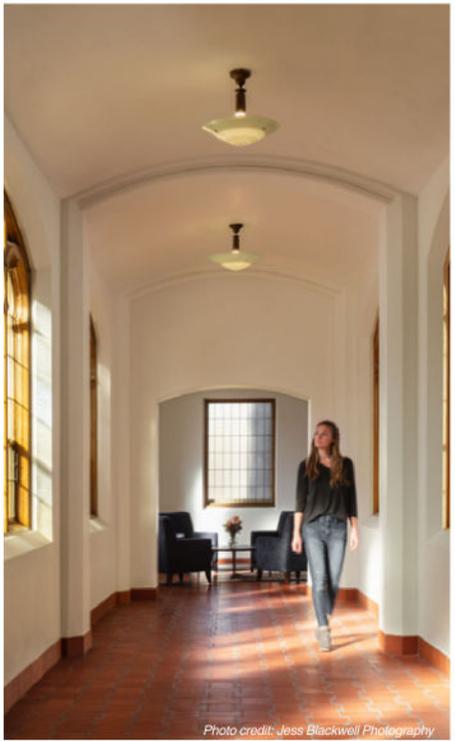


A project that would create a legacy for future generations of ministry at Montview.

In addition to the less visual building infrastructure improvements that needed to be made, many of the windows in our historic spaces were drafty due to gaps where the building's heat was escaping. Executive Director Jason Hays comments on our partnership with historic preservation organizations in restoring the windows in our building: "Thanks to our partnership with Historic Denver, we received a Colorado State Historic Fund grant that assisted in the cost of renovating and restoring windows in the Miller Center and the Education wing." These improvements

resulted in important energy savings for the church.

Restoring and improving the Library and Heritage Center, as well as the Miller Center, were part of the initial vision of the construction project. As Vince Colarelli explains, "This project was about trying to restore [these spaces] to their original beauty and grandeur from the repair and replacement of the [Miller Center's] dome ceiling to the restoration of light fixtures, reconstruction of the stage and building a new turntable." Crews rebuilt the Miller Center stage using the original lumber, he adds, "because it was so important to the legacy of the space."



Newly restored arcade west of the Miller Center provides for additional gathering and reception space along Dahlia Street



In the Heritage Center, the site of Montview's original sanctuary, the initial plan had been to build a storage space in the area where the old library had stood. Bob Cloud explains how, when the library wall was demolished, it was possible to envision the room's original use. "When we demolished the wall of the existing library and stood in the space," he recalls, "we decided not to build the storage space upon seeing what the original sanctuary really looked like." The choice was made to restore the Heritage Center to its original 1908 state as Montview's original sanctuary.

According to Construction Committee member Craig Maginness, it's changes such as these that have made being part of the construction project so rewarding. "To sit in the building now," he describes, "and see the extent that it reflects the ideas we had that were realized as well as the changes we made" is what remains most impactful to him as the construction project is nearing its end.

True teamwork was at play throughout the duration of the project. Construction Committee member Martha Carlson recalls

the challenge of "keeping the three legs of the stool - Owner, Architect, Contractor (OAC) - on the same page and working as a team." OAC members Bob Cloud and Martha Carlson met weekly with Tryba and Colarelli in order to ensure that the OAC's vision and efforts remained aligned. Their final meeting was in early 2024. The Construction Committee also met every two weeks for the duration of the project, ensuring that the construction timeline remained on course.

It was the commitment and dedication of everyone involved that enabled construction to move forward in the midst of significant challenges. Not long after construction began, Covid brought the world as we knew it to a complete standstill. "We were going to do the project in phases, but because everyone was out of the church, we decided to do it all at once," says Tryba project architect Megan Burke. While the closed church building was originally seen as an advantage, Covid placed strains on the project that no one could have anticipated or prepared for. Each morning, Colarelli tested its employees for Covid and without fail, some workers would test

positive and need to be turned away. "Due to this," says Bob Cloud, "the workforce was never 100%." According to Bud Stark, "public-mandated safety protocols severely impacted the coordination of labor activities at the site, leading to delays in the schedule." In addition to obstacles faced by the onsite workforce, Covid led to supply chain issues in the construction industry, causing delivery times to lag and prices to be inflated beyond all expectations. Bud continues, "supply-chain disruptions throughout the building industry were significant, exacerbated by the fact that many construction activities are sequential, unable to move forward without predecessor steps completed."



Photo credit: Jess Blackwell Photography

Another unanticipated setback came when the Denver Fire Department changed its position on the fire alarm upgrades they were requiring us to make throughout the building. Initially, they had required upgrades only to the renovated spaces within the church, but near the end of construction they changed their position, requiring upgrades throughout the entire building at a cost of \$411,000.

Due to the inflated costs in the construction industry during Covid and the unanticipated amount that needed to be spent on the fire alarm upgrade, we now have to raise another \$400,000 to close the books and cover all of the expenses incurred by the project. “It’s tricky to talk about the campaign and how close to budget we are when we added some things and had some surprises,” says former Montview Co-Pastor Ian Cummins. Some people pledged to the Campaign but were unable to pay it, leaving us with \$375,000 in outstanding pledge payments. We’re still hoping to receive some of the money that was due at the end of 2023. If those who pledged are now in a position to pay their pledges, we ask that they do so as soon as possible.

It is due, in large part, to the generosity of Colarelli Construction and Tryba

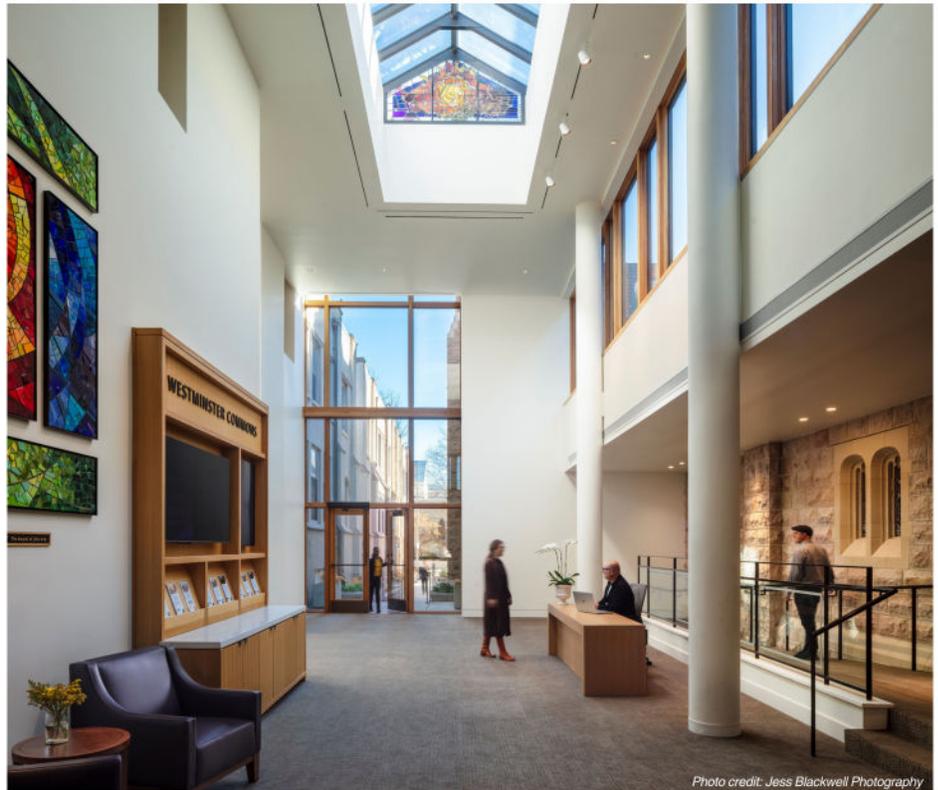


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Architects that we will be able to see this construction project through to its end. “Vince Colarelli has a deep commitment to building and restoring sacred spaces,” says Jason Hays. “Despite all of the challenges, his passion for sacred spaces led him to have a deep connection to the project.” Thanks to Vince’s great generosity, as well as his enduring commitment to see this project through, we are now in the final weeks of construction.

We also received very generous in kind donations for architect fees from Tryba Architects.

We’re especially grateful for church member, John McIntyre, principal Tryba architect on the project, who donated a significant

number of hours to the construction project. “This was an important project for our office and for me personally,” John explains. “Our practice is focused on transformational projects and on the stewardship of historic buildings. This was a chance to repair and enhance the existing campus and to add a contemporary lantern like entry pavilion that reflects the congregation’s values of welcome, hospitality, spiritual and community connection through the architectural language of transparency and light.”

While at first glance, it might seem as though the importance of this construction project lies in the renovations that were made to our building, its true significance goes much deeper than this. As Martha Carlson explains, “the building/facility is a key piece of our overall mission: providing spaces for worship, wonder, questions, healing and learning.” When the construction plans were first presented to Session, Craig Maginness was our Treasurer and was able to see the campus plan that was developed by Tryba Architects. He was also involved in the thinking and visualization about what a large-scale construction project might entail. Even at this early stage, he knew that “it was an important project that would create a legacy for future generations.”



This project is serving Montview’s local, national and international communities. As part of the Capital Campaign, we made a commitment to give away \$800,000 in Mission Impact Funds (MIF). The Mission Life Committee recently launched the first half of Montview’s MIF grants, totaling \$400,000 to be granted to one or more international charitable organizations this summer. The second round of \$400,000 will go to local mission partners.

For the Park Hill and larger Denver communities, restoration of the Miller Center – also called the Miller Chapel to honor it’s original purpose as a worship space – means that a state-of-the-art performing arts venue is now available locally. The refurbished space not only has restored stained glass windows and refurbished pews, but new sound, lighting and acoustic systems as

well as a reconstructed rotating stage.

With a seating capacity of 200, it is ideal for *Musique and Masque* performances, lectures and concerts, and is a much-needed resource for community arts organizations in metro Denver and beyond.

From a visit by Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1960s to providing homeless women a safe place to sleep in the early 2000s, Montview has been an essential community resource for over 100 years. Nowhere can this relevancy be seen as well as in the “Lantern” that now sits atop the Westminster Commons. Built as part of the construction project, it juxtaposes modernity with history, its steel and glass structure resting side-by-side with the old stones of our church. Lit up like a beacon for the Park Hill

community each evening, it is a statement about Montview’s enduring legacy as an essential community resource.

Eight years after the Sacred Spaces Committee developed a Long Term Vision Plan for the campus, their vision for what Montview could become has been realized and built upon. The pathway to get here, however, has been a winding one, beset with obstacles and challenges, but also with creativity, passion and perseverance. Thanks to the generosity of each person who donated their time, money, talent and effort to this project, we have ensured that Montview will remain a vibrant place for worship, sanctuary, education and inspiration for generations to come.

