

WE ARE EAGER TO SHARE

Over the past few weeks we've provided a weekly insert, like the one you're reading now, covering a different topic related to our worship space. If you missed any of them, all of the previous inserts are available on the information wall in the Gathering Space and also upon request from our secretary, Mike Marquardt, at marquardt@peacehartford.org

November 9

Communion Accessible to All

November 16

Helping Others to Hear and Be Heard

November 23

A Warmer, Well-Lit Space

November 30

More Than a Makeover

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS

On the weekend of December 7, the Renovation Committee is planning a brief (10-15 minute) presentation after each service, which will summarize these areas. We're also planning a lengthier presentation sometime in January, complete with artist renderings, and access to our design consultant, Paul Barribeau, from Groth Design Group.

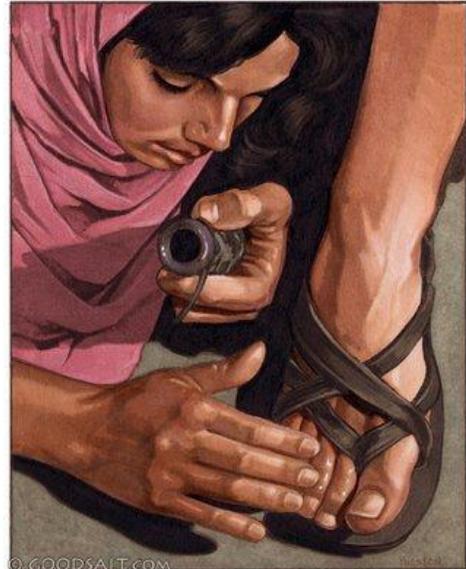
We are looking forward to sharing what we've learned and receiving feedback from all our Peace members.

The Sanctuary Renovation Committee

Don Radke, Chairman / Mike Marquardt, Secretary
Rodney Schulz / Betty Wolf / Janice Radke / Brian
Horst / Minette Wolf / Clarence Roethle
The Pastoral Staff

Peace Sanctuary Renovation

More than a Makeover



Have you ever taken a close-up look at the chancel furnishings like the baptismal font or the pulpit?

Have you noticed anything about the back wall of the chancel (the reredos) that makes the cross blend into its surroundings rather than stand out visually?

Are there parts of the sanctuary that make you feel like you are more distant and removed from what is happening in the front in the chancel?

GOD DESERVES NOTHING BUT EXCELLENCE

When Judas watched Mary pour an alabaster jar of perfume that was worth a year's wage on Jesus' head and feet, he claimed that the money could be better spent helping the poor. Jesus' told him to leave her alone because this perceived extravagance was a gift to honor her Savior and a testimony that would be told around the world.

When Israel built the tabernacle, the community spared no expense. The finest metals, the richest wood, and the finest fabrics were used to create a space dedicated to God. *All this for a space that only priests were allowed to enter!*

What can we learn from these examples and others in the bible? *Because God has blessed us with his very best, he deserves nothing less than our very best.* What is the best that Peace Lutheran Church can offer the Lord? While there's no one correct answer to this question, we believe this renovation is more than just a simple makeover. We've learned that our very best includes finding practical ways to serve God's people as they worship, discovering impactful ways of making an impression on visitors, and offering God the most beautiful space we can. This involves looking at our current worship space with fresh eyes and open minds.

MAKING AN IMPACT

The focal point of our worship is the Means of Grace - the gospel in Word and Sacrament. It is through these vehicles of the Word, Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, that we receive forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. We have visual representations of these vehicles in the pulpit and lectern, the baptismal font, and the altar, respectively. Many churches choose to make these visual representations significant fixtures in their worship space so that they are always a vivid and beautiful reminder of the way Christ comes to us. Many of these furnishings include rich symbolism on them that preach sermons all on their own.

When you look at the cross in front, perhaps you've noticed how it somewhat blends into the wood feature surrounding it. Several outside consultants have noticed that as well and have suggested ways to make the cross stand out more prominently. Some churches even have a suspended cross that hangs directly above a freestanding altar so that it has more dimension and visual presence.

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The channels of communication in worship are God to believers, believers to God, and believers to believers. We've learned of ways that we can enhance and improve those channels of communication. Martin Luther encouraged the use of a freestanding altar, where the pastor can stand behind it and face the people when serving at the altar. It also brings the action at the altar closer to the people. Some liturgical design consultants suggest that once the worshiper exceeds a distance of around 60 feet from the action in the chancel, he or she begins to feel further removed from what is happening and like more of a spectator than a participant. In Lutheran worship, the opportunity for participation among the people is important.

Another question that has come up is that if the flooring underneath the pews were to be redone, might it be wise to take the opportunity to angle the pews slightly toward each other. This could give us better sightlines to each other in our communication with each other. It could also cause us to sing toward each other, making for a more encouraging singing environment. All of these things can promote more of a sense of community.

OTHER AREAS OF CONCERN

Accessibility and Flexibility: The possibility exists of replacing the front two rows of seating with moveable, wooden chapel chairs. This would allow for more accessible seating and flexibility for special services (weddings and funerals). We are also looking into the prospect of moveable chancel furnishings (altar, baptismal font, and pulpit) so that, along with flexible front seating, more space can be created for children's Christmas services and guest choirs and instrumental ensembles.

Large Front Speakers: It has been noted by many that the speakers hanging in the front are too large and command too much visual attention. We are looking into options to minimize their visual impact.

Masking the Sprinkler System: We are grateful for the security of the sprinkler system in church. Many have expressed disappointment, however, with its appearance. Possible solutions are being discussed, ranging from painting all the pipes a color to closely match the wood to coming up with an architectural feature to box them in.