

# **Hospitality:**

## **In Ministries and Places**

It is with deep gratitude and appreciation to the congregation, leadership, and the vision of this church that this document has been created. Your comments in focus groups, your listening in community interviews, and your creative play have all gifted this offering. Exceptional work has been done by your Leadership Council and staff, Expanding Horizons committee, and the Trustees. May the insights and considerations for change that these words offer, bring this faith community into a strong and vital future.

**Spatial Impact: Interpreting the Language of Space**

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## Introductory Statement

The consulting work of **Spatial Impact** focuses on the facility and its environment for how it assists or diminishes the vision/mission of the church.

*"Experience shows that renewal of the building and enlargement thereby of its capacity for hospitality and service, has led to the renewal of the worshipping community in that place and to growth in numbers as well as in maturity of faith." Re-Pitching the Tent*

As intentional changes are made to the building, this also allows for changes to happen in how the congregation relates to one another and the community at large. Patterns of how we enter, move through the building, experience worship, learning, and fellowship may be altered, thus opening new ways to communicate and be the people of God.

**Spatial Impact** does not offer architectural designs and does not presume to know the structural limitations or possibilities of a building. Some of the building suggestions will need further consulting from professions such as architect, engineer, plumber, etc. This document offers a philosophical overview and cannot speak to structural issues.

It also needs to be stated that this document does not offer all possibilities or look at all areas. The priorities for ministry that were 'named' in the April 2008 session with Spatial Impact provide the focus.

## Core Values

Core values help to define ministry directions, attitudes, and facility space. This is where we start all visioning. The Leadership Council has provided the following definitions.

### **Soul Freedom**

**What does this value mean?** Each believer has his/her own relationship and experience with God, there is a responsibility and a freedom to interpret this experience with God

### **Spiritual Growth**

**What does this value mean?** Development of spiritual maturity of life –takes commitment and attention, takes a certain openness and willingness to trust which comes through –life experience, study, community, role models and mentoring, prayer, disciplines, God is working through us

### **Mission**

**What does this value mean?** Proclaiming the love of God by caring for our neighbor near and far, speaking out for justice and against excess suffering, how can we as a congregation and individuals best be 'Christ's hands' in the world

### **Inclusive Community**

**What does this value mean?** No judging, no barriers to membership, affirm diversity of differences (age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race), try to embrace people without question

## Ten Changes that could make a Big Difference without too much dust

1. Make as many rooms as possible multi-use. This allows many groups to effectively use the same space.
2. Replace sanctuary pews with chairs. Try several arrangements that allow people to enter from the back.
3. Clean, Clean, Clean out! Room for storage is at a premium. Plus - stored and old items smell. Consider renting a storage unit for those items that need to be kept but not used. This could even include church records and historical items.
4. Make the 'fireside room' more available as a social and group space. Take out the risers - they dominate the use of this room. Chairs can be set up and taken down but risers are a different story.
5. Take down all bulletin boards. This is a dated communication medium. Acrylic wall units are clean and organized for promotional materials. Keep all in one place.
6. Simplify the music room to be able to include rehearsal space for adult and children's music. Glean the music.
7. Change the names of rooms and of the newsletter. This is a simple way to refresh everyone's thinking. Fellowship Hall, Parlor, and Lounge are dated terms.
8. Change the interior doors. Doors are an important 'welcome' tool. Many of the interior doors including classroom doors and the doors to the 'fireside room' all say 'we don't want you to come in'. They create an emotional barrier.
9. Create an addition at the back entrance that includes the elevator entrance.
10. Remove the boardroom table and chairs from the Parlor and make this room the gathering space. Knock out as much of the wall along the hallway as possible. This way the hallway and parlor are open to each other - making the space wide and accommodating. Easy to find and easy to use.

## Your Historical Patterns around a Building

The history of First Baptist Church and its buildings provide an interesting pattern. Perhaps history is able to give insight and courage to this day and time. Before any building was erected, this church borrowed/used spaces in other facilities. Parts of the capitol and the Dane County Courthouse were called 'home' by this congregation. In 1854 land was purchased on the square and for 45 years this was where the church was in ministry. It was considered the 'community center' for the city of Madison, public meetings were held within its four walls, and it housed the early Wisconsin Historical Society.

As the church reached midlife at this location, the building was in need of major repairs and the increased commercial expansion around the church did not allow any growing room for First Baptist. The building was sold, land was purchased not too far from the center of the city, and a new building was built. Fire destroyed this not even two year old building and there was a serious question about the church's future. Energy and money had reached to their limits to build. It was the women who challenged the congregation to rebuild on the same site. This time a gymnasium and swim tank were added. These two unique aspects of the First Baptist facility invited a flourishing youth market. Some forty-five years later the well used 'new' building was in need of repairs - drainpipes were rusty and dangling, the windows were loose. A decision was made to sell the church property and buy land 'in the country - in the midst of cornfields'.

While it was known that Madison was now growing westward, concern was voiced about who would come this far outside the city to any church function. The current building was built in two phases, the sanctuary in 1950 and the education wing a few years later.

It is now 2008 - nearly 60 years of good wear and tear, lifetimes of memories and ministry – and once again, First Baptist Church must make a decision around its building. Four choices are possible: to remodel the existing facility, to buy land and build, to purchase an existing building, or to lease an existing building. Each decision requires in-depth exploration. Each has its positives as well as drawbacks.

**It is of utmost importance for this congregation to view facility usage (whether remodeling, building or leasing) as a key aspect of ministry. This is also a time when all decisions move you into new territory. All options will change you. All options will invite you to 'give up' something that has become part of a familiar church pattern. All options call for financial commitment. Doing nothing is no longer an option. You are on the verge of newness!**

### **Remodel, Build, Lease**

The report done in 2001 by Architecture/CSG, Inc. gives this evaluation of the building: *As a general rule the building is in very good shape. Building codes have changed in the 50 years since the building was built. No longer does it meet code in several areas. Any remodeling would require meeting code. Attention would be directed to insulation, electrical, windows, boiler, handicap accessible restrooms, and an elevator to make a greater portion of the building accessible.* That being known, any remodel will be costly. The Trustees have a working knowledge of what is involved in improving the building. Value their care-filled and diligent work. Costs to remodel may or may not exceed costs to move. In fact, several trustees indicated that it may be more cost effective and better for design purposes if the education addition were leveled and the addition would be placed on the Franklin Ave side. But costs are not the only factor in this decision.

Comments heard about the current building like 'this building has no curb appeal' and 'the building is traditional and if we are to be other than traditional we need to change the building' are important to hear. Countless time the consultant heard from the people of First Baptist Church - 'We are Baptist BUT' – indicating that you don't think, act, or reflect the mainstream idea of Baptist. So much so that there has been talk to drop the name Baptist. So – how can a building reflect YOU.

**Leasing a space** - rather than owning a building - might afford more dollars to be used in ministry and less attention on building maintenance. Your beginning was in borrowed space and today there are churches that do not own a building, but use existing commercial spaces. Studies have revealed that today's people are not trusting of churches and there may be less of a barrier if the space is more familiar to their everyday encounters. Your current location would probably bring a good profit if sold.

Faithfulness and a principle about where a church is 'called to be' are crucial factors in decision making. The overwhelming ministry from the naming session was hospitality. Hospitality can be measured in how easy it is to find and enter a building, as well as providing places for people to socialize and enjoy each other. This is difficult at the moment in this building. Hospitality can be measured as how inviting you welcome other groups and people to share your space. This is a principle you practice well. Hospitality can be measured as being part of a neighborhood – being a good neighbor. Extension to the neighborhood has been limiting.

If the decision is made to remain at this location it must be because THIS is where you still 'feel called' to be in ministry. This location has advantages for ministry that fit your

values. Remaining in this neighborhood for another 50 years also means becoming a good neighbor. Any remodeling done must be viewed from surrounding eyes. Will you create an appealing and welcoming building? Creating too many stories (either in floors of the building or levels of a parking ramp) invades the neighborhood aesthetic. Focus on how the new design of the building can open you up to the neighborhood and larger community.

Many of the church growth theories will speak of locating churches in areas of population growth which is usually transitioning from rural to urban use. This has been your historical pattern. Empty space allows **new facilities to be built and plenty of parking** but in this day there may be ethical and social principles at play in this decision. Smart growth speaks to the need to create communities where people get to know one another by walking on sidewalks, connecting in shops and parks, where diverse professions and incomes live side by side, and there is a mixture of business, schools, homes, and parks in the neighborhood. Staying in this neighborhood means becoming a neighbor in a new way. ([www.smartgrowthamerica.com](http://www.smartgrowthamerica.com) and [www.saveourlandsaveourtowns.org](http://www.saveourlandsaveourtowns.org)) You will need to EXPOSE yourself – show not only who you are on the outside of your building but show up in the neighborhood.

### **Considerations:**

1. Use of outside artwork can be temporary or permanent. The children in the art classes in Sauk City created an outdoor art statement on Boundaries. Justice issues as well as playful expressions of life could be art projects for the children, youth, and adults to visualize 'on the church corner'.
2. Extend the patio to the sidewalk and have secured tables with umbrellas (like on the patio of CUNA Credit Union). If the patio opens onto the sidewalk, it is more inviting and permission giving to those who walk by.
3. Host a neighborhood get together complete with a neighborhood rummage sale.
4. Create a banner for the corner that states you are remodeling and to please excuse the noise and confusion. Thank them for their patience.
5. Purchase The Great Neighborhood Book, published by the Project for Public Spaces. Great ideas for neighborhood activities!!
6. On a summer Saturday morning have First Baptist musicians and 'artists' of all ages – just like on State Street - around the property and even on intersections along the street. Sell brats and hot dogs. Become the activity hub for the neighborhood.

### **Being a Place of and for the Community**

*"The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination."* John Schaar

It is interesting that recent research (from major pollsters done in 2005) on spiritual seekers lists the following as the reasons why they would connect with a church. Note that worship style, preaching, and Bible study are not of utmost importance.

- The church accepts you for you, no matter where you come from, what you wear or what you look like
- The church is very active in helping people in the community who are hurting or in need
- The church has people who care deeply for and support each other

- The church participants believe God's love is available to all persons regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation.

As people come into the building for whatever need, concern, or business they are picking up the 'character' of this congregation. Who are you? Are you sincere? They are asking themselves - Do I feel safe here? Am I welcome here? All of these speak to relationships with each other and the world as well as honest engagement in doing so. It speaks of being accepted, of the integrity of being who you are.

*"The day of friendships has arrived. People want to know you care. People want to receive invitations to church from people they know. People want to be introduced to God, and be invited to hear more about God from people who are already their friends. (Congregational Megatrends, Jeff Woods)* **The most common response heard in the focus groups for why someone 'came to First Baptist' was that they were invited by someone they knew. The second most common response was that they were from a Baptist tradition.**

The idea of friendships may be helpful. How could friendships be furthered in programming and facility sharing? Friendships can more easily happen in small groups. When we hear of interests through casual conversations, how can these ideas be encouraged and people networked with others who might share the same passion? As friendships grow, a trust and a willingness to discuss faith stories and understandings will be given opportunity. Friendships are about acceptance.

Meg Wheatley's, Finding Our Way, emphasizes the need to practice the art of conversation as our world becomes more and more isolated and divided.

Her principles of conversation are:

1. We acknowledge one another as equals.
2. We try to stay curious about each other.
3. We acknowledge that we need each other's help to become better listeners.
4. We remember that conversation is the natural way humans think together.
5. We expect it to be messy at times.

How can the spaces in the building be more conducive to conversation? There is a need to create spaces that can feel supportive to two people, or six or twelve or one hundred. What about these spaces makes acceptance, belonging, conversation and faith sharing happen? Many sizes and shapes of spaces are important in a building.

The idea of **approachability** is difficult for many people. How do we introduce ourselves? How do we become friendlier to each other? Learn ways to extend hospitality and talk with strangers. Ideas such as nametags, greeters, ways to start a conversation, etc are highlighted in the work of Scott Ginsberg. While this is written for businesses it is a very insightful tool for churches. Catch some of his ideas at [www.hellomynamescott.com](http://www.hellomynamescott.com).

## Youth

The importance of and attention to our youth and children is the future. A youth emphasis transcends all aspects of ministry – worship, staffing, outreach, communication, relationships, education, and facility. Having their 'own space' is an important way for youth to claim belonging.

It is not the purpose or intent of this document to flesh out all possibilities related to youth ministry. Denominational resources will be helpful. What has been supplied is a basic overview of the Millennial generation (ages 8-27)—offering insights to ministry directions and applications.

(Information quoted from *Making God Real for a New Generation: Ministry with Millennials Born from 1982-1999* by Craig Kennet Miller and MaryJane Pierce Norton, Discipleship Resources)

- The Millennials make up America’s largest generation. They are on their way to making a huge impact on the way we see and experience the world around us. The Millennials are larger in number than the Baby Boomers. This new youth boom will challenge the conventions and beliefs of older generations.
- From 2001 – 2011 there will be a 16% increase in the number of students on the nation’s college campuses. The percentage of men on campus is spiraling downward. Among some ethnic minorities, the gap at college is much wider.
- Millennials are creating a worldview that has experience at its center. For Millennials, life is art. The window to the soul is through artistic expression. Truth is not found in head knowledge but in heart language. Rather than asking if something is true or false, the more important issue for Millennials is whether it touches the soul: Does it cause me to see the world in a different way? Does it call for me to accept a different point of view? Does it challenge me to make a change? Is it real?
- Freedom to communicate and create is at the core of the Millennials.
- Millennials make up the most diverse generation the US has ever seen.
- As in all youth cultures, music is a critical part of one’s identity and is an indicator of one’s values.
- Millennials have been confronted with more images and experiences of violence than ever before.
- As congregations look to create ministry for Millennials, one vital key is the creation of healthy, strong relationships with members of this generation. The technology used by this generation, from cell phones to the Internet to instant messaging, has a critical element: to stay in touch with family and friends. For Millennials, technology is for staying connected.
- Millennials need adults who are willing to listen to them. The most radical thing an adult can do is intentionally listen to and learn from today’s children and youth.

### **Considerations:**

1. Begin to think of the **arts** in youth ministry. How can First Baptist offer opportunities for youth to explore their faith and potential through music, drama, dance, photography, and writing?
2. **Music** is such a key to the youth culture. Give thought to the introduction of music that speaks to this generation in worship and education. Listen and learn while also helping them to ‘unpack’ their music in light of faith exploration.
3. Explore the many ways the congregation can be **in relationship** with this generation. Listen, hang out, tell stories, laugh, say hello, call them by name, invite them to grow, and simply be present. This is why gathering spaces and social times are important. Sometimes unpacking an event (i.e.: serving at the Food Initiative) that is shared together is all that is needed: What did we learn? How did we feel? How does this change how we see the world?
4. **Volunteering** changes lives. This generation deeply desires to volunteer to make the world a better place. The environment is a major focus for them. Offer

significant ways to volunteer that make a difference in people's lives. How does each person's spiritual gift grow and expand in their 'personal mission'?

## Entrances

*"It (the church entrance) should catch the eye, stir the imagination and woo the feet of all who pass by. . . A door is to a church what a bull's eye is to a target. It is the spot where we want people to come. To this end it should be made distinctive."* John Scotford

When we enter a church, we transition into different space, with different people, and with a different atmosphere. In this space we are called to faithfulness. We are called to enter the rich history of our tradition where behaviors and liturgies unique to this space shape and form us as a people of faith.

**An entrance is the first place of hospitality.** An entrance into a building holds many obligations. It welcomes one in from the outside elements and assists them in navigating through the building. Being able to see in and see out is important for everyone concerned. It is how we first begin to navigate through the building. Entrances with glass in windows and doors close to the floor engage children who are also able to see in and see out. It is beneficial to have as much natural light as possible coming into an entrance of this sort.

Once inside, a pattern of movement is created. Human beings create movement patterns based on what is natural to their needs. One college in the midst of a major campus building project, waited for the students to create the paths where the sidewalks would go. Common sense assists in site and facility space decisions. A person will enter a building closest to where the car has been parked. Coat racks and rest rooms near an entrance are helpful. Understanding the natural flow of people's movements helps in designing a building.

A Front Entrance is not always the same as the Main Entrance. To attempt to *make* the front entrance the main entrance would be futile because convenience and natural traffic patterns speak loudly to the other. Entrances need to be distinctive, easy to approach and use. The backside of the building needs a dramatic entrance that clearly defines which door is to be entered for worship, community gatherings, general deliveries, etc.

Another kind of **entrance** is the use of words used and practiced. First Baptist practices respect for all persons and all opinions in conversations about faith and spirituality. Words and attitudes that reflect actions of welcome and acceptance are also entrances into a faith community. Bulletin, newsletter, website, and worship expressions offer entrance to all.

### Considerations:

1. Make the Main Entrance (parking lot entrance) key to all movement in the building.
2. Create an addition on the back side that includes the Main entrance and Elevator Entrance. Simple signage inside the additional space can indicate Elevator entrance ->. In this way - all people come in the same door and are treated equally. It increases the use of the elevator. This addition will 'make a statement' as the Main Entrance -adding 'drama' to the back side of the building.
3. Create a new sign at the corner that simply states: your name, a tag line, times of worship/church school, and an indication (arrow?) of Main entrance and parking. Make it Simple and Bold.



4. Eliminate the Franklin Street Entrance. Replace doors with windows that allow natural light to come into the space. Create plantings where the steps are located.
5. Is the Bell Tower needed? Could this be removed and the space used differently. Bell towers are difficult to maintain and frequently are no longer part of newer buildings. Removing the Tower would give a different look to the building.
6. Consider a new name and look for The Visitor. This has a dated look and a name that makes an outsider feel 'outside' the community. If this is for the 'insiders' it seems a strange name, too. Newsletters and websites are points of 'entrance' and it is important to view these from someone on the 'outside'.

## Gathering Space

A gathering space becomes the crossroads, the intersection to meet, gather, and fellowship as a community. This is a place that connects people. Created without walls and doorways, it naturally invites all to participate and use its space.

The creation of a Third Place or gathering space is important. This becomes the 'hang out' area that is neutral to all activities and ages. It is space that can be used without complication or permission by a visitor, a child, a student in the English class, a small group, an after church fellowship, a conversation between two people, a place to wait, a place to meet, a place to be. For this gathering space to be effective and well used, it needs to be at the crossroads of the movement patterns and without walls. It needs to connect the rooms and their activities.

### Considerations:

1. Some tables and chairs can be made available, some soft chairs for conversation and plenty of open space for standing and moving about. Gathering space that has this mix is well used, inviting, and flexible. Too many chairs and tables will restrict community building. New people will not usually approach people seated at tables that is why plenty of standing, open space is needed. Gathering space must engage movement.
2. This new gathering space will assist in community use and climate. It will exude hospitality and openness. It will help a person feel valued and expected in this place. Give thought to thinking of this room in a larger context. As more intentional programming and thinking happen around community, how could this room be helpful? What will this area be called?
3. Consider this space as a Third Place – a place to be with people. By creating more of a relaxing space in parts of this room, it will allow for people to mingle and connect. This creates a welcome space for the larger community who use the building (English classes, Urban League, Musikgarten, Foot clinic, MPC, 7<sup>th</sup> Day Baptists). Welcoming spaces invite people to linger, sit awhile, and connect with others.
4. Positioning the gathering space to be near or open off the sanctuary also means that the sanctuary can be extended gathering when not used for worship. Gathering spaces could be any of the following: 1. an addition with clear glass windows along the courtyard side of the sanctuary and including the lounge, 2. opening up the lounge and the parlor – with as many walls as possible coming

- down - allowing the hallway to flow into the rooms (this would also assist in the bottleneck problem at this corner), 3. the chancel space
5. Use of Linden Parlor - if it is opened up – would be better used if the boardroom table and chairs were removed. This restricts the full use of the room as a gathering space. The small room across from the nursery would serve as a good boardroom.
  6. How could the 'Fireside Room' be used more frequently by all? The doors to this room say "keep out". The room is dominated by the risers. If the risers were removed – the space would be more versatile. This is a delightful room - worthy of great conversations, learnings, and enjoyment - but the current set up prevents that from happening in the best of ways. Singing carols around the fireplace would be fun! A great room for gatherings of all kinds.

## Sanctuary Space

The following comments are prompted by a 2002 resource of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America called **Principles for Worship** (in italics)

*The way a building relates to an environment or neighborhood is a sign of a community's attitude. A worship space that welcomes and accommodates other activities such as concerts, lectures, and dramas reveals a stewardship of resources and commitment to the greater community.*

*Christian hospitality is reflected in the attention a community gives to making its space physically accessible and welcoming to persons of all ages and abilities.*

*The multiple use of a worship space serves as a sign of stewardship, ministry, and outreach for a congregation and its surrounding community. Such use need not contradict the primary purpose of the space.*

*One common meaning of the term sanctuary is a place of protection and refuge. A liturgical space may serve a congregation and the larger community as a place of safety and refreshment, accessible for prayer and meditation, at times other than when the whole assembly gathers.*

In all worship services keep an awareness of a 'guest' being present. Always look at the flow of the service, bulletin layout, and announcements from the standpoint of 'what would a guest need to know/understand'.

Today's worship invites technical equipment and instruments other than the organ. In a traditional sanctuary the addition of drums, multiple microphones, and media screen may seem out of place. These are the tools of modern worship. This style of music reaches our youth and others that traditional worship has not. This is one way the core value of diversity is realized. Having a sanctuary that cares for all styles of worship is important to the future of this church. This keeps the tradition and the future in balance and conversation. This is a space that is both sacred and theatrical. It invites the arts and the artist. The sanctuary could serve the greater community for concerts, recitals, and potentially more artistic endeavors.

To keep the dignity of this place while expanding its availability and use is crucial. Because of the multiple needs in the chancel area, it is important to make it as flexible as possible. Currently it feels and looks FULL. Simplify the space. The current chancel area was designed for an understanding of worship that is not as true today. Pulpits and

lecterns are not often used in their original intention. Liturgical functions are understood in a more community way.

Beauty is very important to our spiritual sides. In this sanctuary the stained glass windows offer beauty. It is in simplifying our environments that the lighting, the architectural lines and proportion, windows and doorways, texture, and use of colors speak to our sense of beauty.

### **Considerations:**

1. Open up the chancel space by removing the wooden confinements that shape its edges. Eliminating these 'walls' offers openness that the congregation will physically see and spiritually internalize as welcoming. Removal of these wooden partitions also would mean letting go of the built-in lectern and pulpit.
2. Replace lectern and pulpit with a movable lectern.
3. Replace pews with chairs and change the position of worship - in the round, facing the rose window in the balcony, facing the south where the stained glass windows bring the space into a more human proportion. All three of these new designs allow people to enter the sanctuary 'from the back' rather than from the front. This is so important for hospitality and welcome.
4. Re-position the 'front of the sanctuary' where it is no longer facing the chancel area. Allow everything to be movable. Consideration might be to remove the chancel cross and replace with a movable cross on a standard thus allowing the cross to be present in all possible re-designs.
5. Re-think the sanctuary space as multi-purpose. As the sanctuary space is opened up, new ways of using it become possible. Occasionally add tables and chairs for events, or remove all chairs to use the space for physical movement, an art show, a concert.
6. The communion table calls us into community. The table is open to all. This is a significant symbol of our faith and an expression of open hospitality to others seeking to be faithful. Moving this more into the middle of the sanctuary reminds us we are all called, welcomed, and invited to the table.
7. Lighting needs to be improved in the sanctuary. It is very dark. Wall sconces might add light closer to human level as well as offering an alternative to lighting for more intimate worship experiences (Good Friday, Maundy Thursday).
8. If the front door is replaced with glass and not used as an entrance -take down the dark wooden wall. Re-position a new wall (with windows and doors) to match the line of the balcony. This area could have comfortable chairs and tables for small groups, be additional gathering space, and used as a cry room. This becomes a multi-purpose space.

## **Worship Styles and Music**

In many ways the issue is not over style of worship but the integrity of worship. Are we creating worship that comes from us and our talents or are we creating worship experiences in order to compete with other popular churches? Creating replicas of other churches in either traditional or contemporary expressions does not speak to integrity. The popular 'praise music' tends to be conservative in its theology, does not include social justice issues

and supports hierarchical thinking. This is a wonderful time to re-think all worship styles and expressions - making each of superb quality and intention. In every case give thought to how a 'guest' would understand and navigate through a worship service. Invite generational diversity into this conversation. Give careful thought to introducing a contemporary service. Contemporary worship needs to be done well and be done in a fashion that matches who you are as a congregation. Once again - replicating other churches is not wise. What works in other churches is not just the style, the band, the big screen - it's the environment of the space, the climate of the church, and the careful flow of the service. Two styles of worship can often divide a church. It is often suggested that rather than having two worship styles/services - introduce three. Offer different kinds of worship expressions such as Taize (contemplative) or gospel rock (musical) or a conversation style (interactive learning throughout the service - often done around tables) and the more traditional.

The following comments are prompted by a resource of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America called **Principles of Worship** (in bold italics)

***Music is a communal and relational activity. The assembly is the primary musical ensemble, and its song is the core of all music in worship. The acoustics of a room and the physical arrangement of the assembly are best suited for worship when they contribute to the vitality of a congregation's song.***

Because the voice of the congregation is the primary instrument in worship, care must be taken that the congregation knows, easily reads, and can hear each other in song and voice. Some congregations have the choir members sit in the congregation until time to see. This allows their strong voices to support those around them. Teaching new songs is important. Ease and enthusiasm do happen when the words are projected. With heads lifted rather than down in the book finding the right place, the song is experienced with greater quality and energy. Song leaders and choirs are important to give confidence to the congregational song.

A wonderful new musical resource for worship is *Worldmaking: Congregational Songs for the Unfolding Church*. The songwriter is Richard Bruxvoort Colligan. The beauty of *Worldmaking* is the ease of teaching congregational responses for worship. Go to [www.worldmaking.net](http://www.worldmaking.net) to hear the songs on the CD as well as his newest CD of the Psalms. The contemporary language invites those who are on the edges of faith and rekindles the faith-filled.

***We worship God with our bodies, through singing, movement, dance, and gesture. Acceptance and understanding of gestures, postures, movement, and dance in worship may be strengthened when the assembly is prepared in advance.***

As you re-think worship and worshipful space, keep in mind the movement of people in the congregation, use of multiple instruments, the space needs of the liturgy and liturgists, sharing through drama, and even the possibility of dance choirs and signing for the hearing impaired. Allow the whole sanctuary space to be used - not just the chancel.

***Instruments and technology are used with care. Depending on the context, the worship space, and the styles of music, instruments including organs, pianos, keyboards, drums, guitars, and many others can be used effectively to lead congregational song. Worshiping communities are encouraged to make use of the entire dynamic spectrum, including silence.***

Use of varied musical styles for worship was valued. Having one worship service a month with a unique style could invite interest and new talent.

## Spirituality

We have entered a time in history where change is constant, complex, and chaotic. This is an unsettling experience for many. This is also an important time to encourage spiritual grounding to re-frame the daily stressors. Medical professionals are naming the healing aspects found in meditation, prayer, and quieting. **Spiritual Growth** is one of your core values. How could First Baptist further create opportunities to teach and offer space for this to happen?

### **Considerations:**

**Spiritual Gifts** - Give thought to offering a **spiritual gifts** inventory to those who wish to discover more of their spiritual selves. Gathering people of like gifts to talk about how they use their spiritual gift invites further integration of that gift into a person's daily life pattern. Ask how they might be better supported by the faith community. Create a think tank for new ideas. First Baptist is filled with talented people who are active in leadership in their work settings and the community. How can the church support and strengthen people to use their spiritual gifts 'in the world'?

**Rituals for Meaningful Lives** - In this day of rapid change, there is a yearning for rituals that allow us to express our thoughts, feelings, and meanings that are too deep for words. Rituals can relieve stress by offering a movement through a life situation. Rituals are expressions of our spiritual sides and help give clarity and meaning to our everyday. Our younger generations appreciate rituals as they help make sense of life. Rituals can be created to fit needs - remembrance of a stillborn child or miscarriage, a blessing after divorce, a blessing of so many months free from an addiction. Ritual expressions help bridge the everyday life with a faith connection that might offer deeper relationships and ways of healing.

**Community Wide Rituals** - We have experienced community and world sorrows that seek expression as a community. Community rituals speak to a specific need in the community or larger world - Columbine, the death of JFK, the Challenger disaster, the World Trade Center, and the current war. Churches are places people seek to reflect and come together to hold their grief and sorrow. Some questions that shape these rituals:

- Are the symbols that will be used broad enough to include everyone who chooses to participate, whether they are Christian, Jewish, Moslem, atheist; rich or poor, etc. Will all likely be able to enter wholly into the ritual?
- Are the right people present? Should this ritual include civic leaders, ethnic leaders, or other public figures from the community?
- What is the best place to hold the ritual? Does the ritual need to be held on a specific site to redeem a given space from violence or to acknowledge a specific loss? (Questions from [Transforming Rituals: Daily Practices for Changing Lives](#) by Roy Oswald - published by the Alban Institute)

**Labyrinths** are becoming more and more popular as spiritual and physical wellness tools. Hospitals and medical centers are constructing them as they see the benefits to healing and health. Grace Cathedral in San Francisco continues to provide excellent resources on the history and use of the labyrinth. Web site is [www.gracecathedral.org/labyrinth/](http://www.gracecathedral.org/labyrinth/) If the sanctuary space is made more flexible - without the pews - a canvas labyrinth or one created in the flooring could be used in this space. Walking the labyrinth could precede a committee meeting, a difficult personal decision, an unwinding to be present with God, etc.

Introduce this 'reflective practice' to children and youth. Opening this opportunity to the larger community could also happen on a regular basis.

## Rest Rooms

Rest rooms are exceedingly important to a building's ministry. 'Restrooms in churches tell much about their hospitality. Is there enough lighting or is the space dark? Is the decor simple and not overdone with outdated artificial flowers and craft items? It is also too frequent that toilet paper rolls do not roll and paper towel dispensers are not filled. Restrooms need to exude cleanliness and not clutter. Having too many decorative items on the counters and on the walls gathers dust and creates a sense of clutter. This does not feel clean. Is the smell fresh? Are sinks, stools, and flooring clean? Is it easy to turn on the faucets, do they drip, are soap dispensers full and operational? Is there an area for diaper changing in both men's and women's restrooms? Have incidentals been cared for such as tissues and hand lotion? Do you have a container with free pads and tampons available for emergencies? Each of these details is instrumental in offering hospitality to all who use your facility.' (Taken from SEEING YOUR FACILITY WITH NEW EYES FOR CHURCHES by Mendenhall)

Rest rooms are necessary for activities in the church to run smoothly. The main entrance and off the gathering space are natural and logical places for rest rooms to be located.

### Considerations:

1. Consistent use of the universal signs for restrooms on the wall. Replacing men and women restrooms with uni-sex can be efficient and flexible.
2. Include wall secured drop down changing tables.
3. Counter space is needed in all restrooms to rest a purse, book, or a child's toy.
4. Update rest rooms with a fresh coat of paint every few years
5. Bathrooms in churches are too often decorated like those in a home. The public bathrooms must speak of simplicity. This also helps to give a clean and up to date impression.
6. Check to see that the stall doors lock safely and easily and if possible -doors opening out.

## Clutter

Clutter impacts us physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Clutter also smells. When clutter surrounds us we have trouble focusing. We are distracted. It conditions our vision, our thinking, and our breathing. Karen Kingston works with clearing clutter from homes and businesses. She offers this list of ways that clutter impacts our lives:

*feel tired and lethargic, keeps one in the past, congests the body, changes body weight, confuses, effects the way people are treated, makes one procrastinate, causes disharmony, feel ashamed, puts a life on hold, depresses, creates excess baggage, dulls sensitivity and enjoyment of life, causes extra cleaning, feel disorganized, health or fire hazard, costs financially, distracts from important things.*

**Part of every storage issue is the unwillingness to let go. "The true name for the junk room is 'The Indecision Room'." (Don Aslett)**

Go through each room and closet with these three intentions:

1. **What is the value in keeping this?** If it holds a great value it is worthy. Keeping everything from the past is not.
2. **Has this served us well and now we can let go?**
3. **Toss broken, soiled, and incomplete items** The likelihood of fixing, repairing is slim. Immediately take items out of the church – put in the dumpster, take to Goodwill, give to a cause, or sell.

Another approach is to 'zero-base' the room or closet. Take everything out of the space and then ask – what one item is most important to this room. Then add that item. What is the next important item? With each furnishing or item then ask the three questions. The power of this exercise is that only those items that are important to the room are added. At a certain point in the process - the room will feel 'just right' and the addition of one more 'thing' tips it into clutter or depresses the room. This is also an excellent time to 'refresh' by painting walls, replacing rugs and window coverings.

### Satellite Space as Ministry

Not all ministries need to be conducted in this building. It may be important to have satellite space elsewhere in the larger community. This provides an option when facility space is complicated or not available.

### Shared Space

Facility sharing is very likely in your future. Who might rent or borrow space from you on a daily, weekly, occasional basis? Your history speaks to openness in sharing and seeing those agencies and ministries as extensions of your own. Sharing a building with others adds a need for an established policy. You are the stewards of this space, and will also be seen as landlords. The following suggestions come from Rev. Susan Johnson, Hyde Park UCC in Chicago.

1. Space share with non-profits only – otherwise the church is subject to real estate tax
2. Groups/agencies should have their own insurance
3. The mission statement/core values must match or be enhanced by whatever agencies/renters you welcome
4. Do space sharing evaluations as you would personal evaluations – 6weeks, 3months, 6months, yearly
5. Have a legal contract, but it can refer to a document of rules which is separate (because the rules may change over the course of the contract)
6. Have a space sharer potluck once a year – hosting a two hour celebration of space shared and ministries

### Memorial Gifts

Memorial gifts can hold a church in the past. They can become 'emotional clutter' in a congregation. It is difficult to 'get rid of' something with a memorial plaque attached. As the church naturally moves into the future, many memorials are no longer appropriate to the current culture of the congregation or the times. Memorials are 'gifts' and once given are part of the public church. They have been released from the giver's control and stipulation.

One of the duties of a Memorial Committee is to educate the congregation as well as all who give memorials of this. A gift serves its time and no longer.

### Congregational Input Available on CD

The information from the focus groups, community interviews, congregational survey, ministry priorities from the naming session, demographics of the area, and participant 'learnings' from the seminars are not printed in this document due to use of paper. A CD with this data has been given to the moderator and can be made available to anyone who wishes this information.

### Ways to Engage this Document

First and foremost – changes in church buildings and their appointments are not about personal preferences. Changes that are made must come from the larger conversation of being true and faithful to the vision and core values of the church. This is a teaching and learning time for all. It is a time of letting go of that which restricts the vision and giving courage to welcome something new. The vision of moving the church into the future must drive the changes.

#### Cluster Conversations:

**Purpose:** An opportunity for leadership to listen to the congregation concerning the suggestions in the Spatial Impact Document as it engages the future of the church, offering a spiritual context for the future and fellowship.

**Place:** In the homes of the hosting families or all meet at the church in different rooms on the same evening/afternoon with about 8-12 people

**Leaders:** Devotional Leader (to provide spiritual centering), Convener (to present the Document and ask questions), Recorder (to record information–check for confidentiality issues), Hosts (to share home and refreshments)

#### Format

7:00PM	Devotions
7:15	Presentation of the Document
7:45	Conversation/Questions/Answers
8:00	Refreshments/Fellowship as conversation continues
8:30	Conversation Concludes

**Follow-Up:** All information collated and a recommending report formed, and presented to Leadership Council with the congregation hearing about the results of the cluster conversations as soon as possible.

#### Additional Notes:

Pastors may wish to **create a guide** for devotional leaders. Each person may adapt the guide to his or her personal style and understanding.

Do not be surprised if **attendance** is low. Provide for one or two follow-up sessions at the church to re-invite those unable to attend earlier.

Leaders **must not argue or defend** the church or staff or document. Just present the information, hear the questions and listen to the responses. The conversation must stay centered upon the concepts presented.