



Building Our Future - *Beyond Ourselves*

Program Statement

March 2023

Introduction

These nine lists are not all inclusive but represent attributes of a building and grounds that members and friends of the congregation believe could prove useful in living our UU values. The initial list was a compilation of phrases captured directly from open-ended responses shared by 204 respondents in a 2019 survey. However, the lists have grown considerably through the years of discernment leading up to the 2023 “Stay or Go” vote. Additional suggestions are welcome and will continue to be added.

As you review these lists, think about the tools that could prove useful to fulfilling our mission. What factors contribute to a compassionate and welcoming environment? How might space enhance spiritual growth? How could different or more room affect our justice work? What will the next generation and future UUs need?

Entrance / Lobby

- Design an entrance that is clearly visible, welcoming and easily accessible
- Extend roof structure to provide colonnade or portico that protects those entering
- Handicap and limited mobility access parking close to entrance and on even grade
- Efficient traffic flow to accommodate drop-offs
- Nearby coat room with tall and lower racks, large enough to accommodate coats when large group is present and located to minimize messiness but also to eliminate bottleneck
- Easily accessible supply / “broom” closet for tools and supplies such as snow shovels, ice melt, extra mobility devices such as wheelchairs and walkers, with hard surface flooring for ease of cleaning and maintenance
- Attractive name tag storage sufficiently placed to not create bottlenecks when large numbers of congregants and friends arrive and/or leave
- Entrance floor surface that is non-slip, easy to maintain, inset floor mats
- Natural light
- Seating

- Signage - both permanent directional signage and well-located, easily read temporary
 - Display space both wall space for 2-D work and 3-D artwork including locked, light cabinet
 - Cabinet space for storing welcoming supplies, with multi level countertop to accommodate both standing and wheelchair access
 - Rack for ease of distribution of informational materials (8.5x11, trifold, etc.)
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Sanctuary

- Natural light and use of wood celebrating the sacredness of nature
- A sanctuary that is central to all church activities
- Horizontal layout rather than long/deep space front to back (White Bear layout rather than traditional space such as Unity)
- Being able to open the sanctuary space to the Commons / Hearth Room to accommodate large groups and flow of activities
- Gently sloped floor
- Chancel
 - With chalice to serve as a focal point
 - Large enough to easily accommodate pulpit, piano, guest speakers and performers
 - Well lit
 - Ramped for ease of access for all
- Telescoping pulpit easily adjustable for multiple voices in worship service and programs
- Good acoustics for spoken word and music; conducive to performance including overall ambience, as well as specifics for enhanced sound and lighting
- High quality instruments to enhance the use of music for services and other gatherings
- Media projection and enhanced sound system
- Multiple camera angles for online, multi platform viewing
- Better Audio Tech desk console (space for 2 techs, horizontal space for laptops, etc)
- Space sufficient for organ, piano and harpsichord
- Choir space
- Alcoves for ushers and accessible space for forms, supplies, etc used in services
- 'Quiet' room / space for families
- Nearby rooms that enable participation by individuals or small groups not comfortable in large group settings
- Well placed, designated space for individuals using mobility assistance devices
- Multiple entrances/exits with main entrances from the rear / opposite the pulpit
- Chairs and/or pews with storage for hymnals incorporated
- Comfortable seating (not hard chairs) that include a combination of furniture with and without arms
- Flexible / movable seating
- Hearing loop in floor for telecoil-capable hearing aids and/or provide bluetooth capability

- Placement of the historic candelabras
 - Means to incorporate seasonal silk banners (possibly to feature just one to follow the change of seasons)
 - Space and means for other artistic enhancements (banners, props, etc.) as needed for services and programs
 - Light switches placed near exits (in addition to light controls at Audio Tech desk)
 - Sufficient sanctuary storage with power
 - Shelving for supplies (chalice oil, candelabra candles, “high holy day” candles and candlestick holders, sand, votive lights, vases, flower arrangements, etc.)
 - Racks for hanging linens and banners
 - Extra sound equipment such as microphones, mic stands, etc.
 - Space for guest musicians to store instrument cases
 - Space for practical tools such as ironing board, iron, step stool and/or ladder depending on height
 - Ability to offer the sanctuary space for community events (talks, music performances)
 - Ease of access to green space to and from a service enabling the flow of the congregation for such events as Maypole, Flower Communion, Water Communion, Winter Solstice, etc.
 - Adjacent “green room” for performers and prep space for marriage/union services, memorial services, etc.
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Office / Staff Space

- Space sufficient to accommodate current staff and staff growth with private space as may be needed for counseling but also flexible and open space to support integrated staff workflow
 - Retain some form of mailbox set up for ease of sharing materials with staff, board members and other individuals in leadership roles
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Restrooms / Private Space

- Well located and of sufficient size to accommodate large group use of sanctuary and/or gathering space(s)
- Male, female, family, gender neutral
- As needed in children’s area
- As needed for hosting Sanctuary Guest
- Nursing area to best meet the needs and comfort level of the nursing mother
- Located adjacent to “green room”

Commons / Large Gathering Space and Hearth Room

- Ease of access allowing flow from entry way into Commons / large gathering space and Hearth Room
- Chapel for small group quiet discussion, meditation, etc., with flexible arrangement and seating; Sufficiently large enough to accommodate piano for enhanced small group services
- Adequate storage for folding tables chairs as needed in this shared space
- Adequate storage of miscellaneous church supplies, decorations, etc.
- Utility sink in or adjacent to the Commons for ease of working with flowers and/or projects that are not food related
- Media projection and integrated technology
- Enhanced sound system to facilitate programming
- Layout such as to allow overflow from sanctuary when space needed for large services
- Ease of access to the kitchen for deliveries, trash removal, etc.
- Welcoming space to replicate the Hearth Room with:
 - Natural light
 - Fireplace
 - Comfortable seating and appropriate furniture
 - Media projection
 - Plants
- Access to an outdoor courtyard / patio from Commons to allow for gatherings to flow outside when weather permits
- Access to children's play area from the commons as well as the classrooms
- Room that offers a more "private" feel for weddings / union services (for prep and dressing) and for memorial services (for family respite)

Kitchen

- Industrial caliber kitchen with high quality appliances (multi-burner range, multiple ovens, refrigerator, exhaust fan, etc.) and multiple prep and cleaning areas
- A sink designated just for handwashing
- Dishwashing station with food removal area, sprayer, dishwasher / sanitizer and drying area
- Cabinets for dishes, utensils, flatware, kitchen supplies, large items such as coffee pots
- Freezer(s)
- Counter and pass-through from kitchen to Commons
- Nearby exit for ease of delivery
- Integrated recycling center
- Ease of workflow

- Power on different circuits
 - ADA compliant in terms of turning radius, accessible storage, etc.
 - Countertops and prep areas of different heights to accommodate vertically challenged individuals, as well as those in wheelchairs
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Classrooms, Meeting Rooms & Other Program / Mission Driven Spaces

- Sufficient classroom space with flexible design to accommodate a variety of activities and ages
 - Open and integrative between age-specific spaces
 - Ease access to storage closets / cabinets for each classroom
 - Integrated technology (strong wi-fi, good media equipment, etc.); incorporate AV throughout the building to maximize the usefulness of other spaces in addition to the sanctuary
 - Dedicated nursery pre-school space
 - Dedicated YA space
 - Library space to house collection and accommodate small group meetings
 - Easily converted space that can be segregated as needed to house a Sanctuary Guest
 - Storage for music and musical instruments
 - Storage for historical documents, archival items (example: old bible)
 - Sink for ease of cleanup and/or access to water for craft activities
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Physical Plant & Infrastructure

- Natural light throughout the building
- Green construction - certification level to be determined; at least sufficient to qualify for UUA *Green Sanctuary* certification
- Accessibility standards to retain our *AIM* certification from the UUA, as well as our *Welcoming* certification
- Low maintenance exterior materials such as current concrete shingles or more updated product like Novabrik exterior or other option
- Varied storage throughout building
- Janitorial space large enough to store supplies, equipment (vacuum cleaners, floor polishers, etc.) close to kitchen and Commons to facilitate easy cleanup but not within the kitchen
- Intuitive layout with good signage where needed
- Universal design concepts
- Geothermal heat and air conditioning throughout entire facility

- Use of solar (passive and active) and/or wind technology
 - Use of sustainable building materials; Consider alternative construction materials and methods which minimize environmental impact (ex: pros/cons of Cross laminated Wood as compared to conventional brick and concrete)
 - Energy efficient construction, insulation, thermal pane windows, etc.
 - Integrated technology throughout the facility
 - Incorporate stained glass from current building (150th window, Hearth Room, and Chapel) into appropriate spaces as focal points
 - Solar powered electric charging stations for designated stalls in the parking lot
 - Effective onsite collection of rainwater / snow melt
 - Recycling area
 - Bicycle parking
 - Sloped roof with sufficient angle to allow for runoff without snow build up constructed of green materials
 - Overall building and grounds design to allow for expansion and/or remodeling should it be needed in the future
 - Initial design should include ease of expansion and future planning for all areas of the building (sanctuary, classrooms, administration, and general gathering spaces)
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Site

Factors to consider when considering a new site:

- Sufficient acreage to gracefully accommodate:
 - Church building
 - Memorial Garden
 - Outdoor seating
 - Parking to exceed code - general, handicap and limited access
 - Accessible children's play area
 - Snow removal / snow piling
 - Stormwater retention; artistically landscaped water garden
 - Community garden
 - Future building expansion
 - Nature trails with quiet reflective space with seating
 - Firepit
 - Labyrinth
 - City/County planning and zoning documents pertaining to future land use and development
- Incorporate natural features and, as Rev. Victoria Stafford states, a design that allows the building "to sit gently on the land"

- Flood plain
- Logical traffic flow from the street and on the property to the front entrance, other entrances, and within the parking lot
- Easy to reach location with connections to current mass transit and, as possible, future routes and current/future bike paths
- Aesthetic landscaping, incorporating seasonal perennials for color and variety spring through fall
- Incorporate a bell tower on the property or the building
- Use no-mow grass, eliminate mowing, develop prairie plants, bee/butterfly/bird friendly plants & trees
- Rain garden(s) based on the location of structures, roads, and the site topology and/or water retention landscaping to minimize erosion, runoff from impermeable surfaces, etc.
- Consider buckthorn eradication (if present) at time of build
- Consider permeable parking lot
- Possible green burial cemetery, in addition to the Memorial Garden, that would simply resemble prairie or other natural area without high-maintenance lawn, vegetation or monuments
- Possible multi-use projects in partnership with community partners such as but not limited to affordable housing
- Buckthorn management

Note: While certainly an extensive list, there may be other attributes that you identify that could enhance our UU space, please send your suggestions to: president@uurochmn.org