



Addition and Renovation

Mount Lebanon United Presbyterian Church | Pittsburgh, PA



The addition and renovation to the Mt. Lebanon United Presbyterian Church required quite unusual creativity to address the functional issues identified during the programming period. The church needed a new multi-purpose room to act as a meeting/social space, additional classrooms and meeting rooms, offices for a growing staff and the church desperately needed to improve traffic circulation on a difficult triangular property. The current church complex included the 1929 Gothic sanctuary, a 1922 education wing attached to the previous sanctuary and, at the rear, a 1961 educational wing. All of these buildings were tied together with a complex series of corridors, stairs and interwoven architecture.

CFB recommended the demolition of the 1922 building in the middle of the physical plant. This radical suggestion allowed the development of a drive thru underneath the new multi-purpose room, offices, classrooms and rooftop assembly area. The drive thru solved several functional issues for traffic circulation on this extremely tight site, while allowing covered drop off spaces for worshippers and children attending pre-school. Elevators on either side of the drop-off allow easy access to all floors of the facility. Immediately behind the sanctuary, the new multi-purpose room acts as a meet-and-greet space after services and as a dining space with a new kitchen.

The new addition is both a physical and a stylistic bridge between the Gothic-revival 1929 Sanctuary building and the 1961 modernist education wing. The masonry materials of the new construction, while different from that in the existing construction, evoke the color and texture of the existing limestone. Horizontal bands tie into limestone banding at the existing building's parapets and window heads. Window openings include references to both the rectangular and arched openings found in the existing construction. Elements of the removed 1922 building were salvaged and included in the addition as reminders of the church's history. These include stained glass panels throughout the lobby areas and limestone medallions on the exterior. Lanterns at the rooftop deck and two-story windows in the new multi-purpose room provide physical expression to the church's vision of being a "bright beacon."

Client:
**Mt. Lebanon United
Presbyterian Church**

Completed:
Spring 2001

Size:
24,000 SF Addition

Cost:
\$ 6 million