

Notes from the Editor



I started out in architecture school before deciding that I really needed to respond to God and a call to ministry. My three years in architecture school did teach me, however, that amazing building transformations are possible as needs and people change inside those buildings. I am awed when I work with one of our Church Extension Architectural Consultants and see their creative imagination transform church buildings that time left behind into once again functional facilities welcoming the body of Christ into their doors. This issue of Cutting Edge is really all about change. Perhaps you've noticed a new look -- or a new name or logo

for Church Extension. The two congregations highlighted in the lead article changed their facilities to exemplify those amazing building transformations. Good things are happening across the denomination as congregations address building needs and issue a clear statement of hospitality.

Please take a moment to fill out the enclosed survey and tell us your thoughts about Cutting Edge. I commit to you that each one will be read and carefully considered as we plan for future issues.

Thanks for your ministry,

Ryan D. Hazen

CuttingEdge

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Cutting Edge is devoted to reporting on creative programming trends and issues which may be related to planning and financing physical facilities for congregations and units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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simplifies name
[adds new logo and tagline

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inclusion award

**Church
Extension**
Building churches, Touching lives.

CuttingEdge

Summer 2001

Churches tackle two issues with one solution

[by Ryan D. Hazen



COVER STORY

Churches built pre-1960 usually have two major building issues that cry out for help.

First, accessibility to those who are physically challenged was not a high priority and awareness to the issue was low in years gone by. Today, thankfully, accessibility is on the radar screen of many congregations and they are studying ways to solve accessibility issues.

Secondly, many church buildings constructed before 1960 were built as neighborhood churches with the main entrance on the front of the building, usually facing the street. Times have changed. People today drive farther to church and drive more cars than when those buildings were built. (My wife and I many times drive two cars to church because of our commitments on a particular Sunday.) Many congregations over the intervening years acquired adjacent parking; however, the added parking lot is usually not adjacent to the main entrance. The once main entrance is now unused (many times not even unlocked on Sunday) and everyone now uses the back or side door because it's the closest way into the church from the majority of the parking spaces. One church leader once told me that they unlock the front door on Sunday



Before | First Christian Church in Ponca City, Oklahoma

mornings to help the greeters identify the visitors since only visitors use that door.

I've recently worked with two Disciples of Christ congregations who recognized these issues in their buildings and set out to make changes.

First Christian Church in Ponca City, Oklahoma realized through a Faithful Planning process that their building, while beautiful and historic, needed some help. First Christian Church had become reoriented with the acquisition of parking to the west of the church away from the traditional main entrance. With the new parking, most church members enter the building through a cavernous walkway leading to a side door or through a tower with steps heading in either direction.

After sorting through the building issues and working with the architectural firm of Lewis Associates of Ponca City, the Building Committee at First Christian Church presented

a building solution that has met with strong congregational support. A Capital Funds Campaign to provide initial funding for the project is in progress with construction slated to begin this Fall. The project will re-orient the main entry to the parking lot and hopefully, if funds permit, add a covered, drive through canopy. In addition, the remodeling of interior spaces will greatly expand gathering areas and a new elevator will provide vertical access to all building levels. The projected cost of this project without the drive through canopy is \$1.6 million.

John Bohannon, Chairperson of the Capital Campaign Committee at First Christian, summarized his support of the project in this way, "we would be remiss if we did not seize this opportunity to make our building an effective place for ministry in the years and decades ahead."

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After

Priorities are impossible to set unless there is an understanding of Why you are doing the activities to be prioritized. If an organization doesn't understand Why and share that understanding, priorities become arbitrary and sometimes decided by a personal whim. Shared Whys lead to strongly shared priorities.

– Stan Brown, Board Chairperson



Same Song / Second Verse

Park Avenue Christian Church in Des Moines, Iowa is a church just south of downtown Des Moines on a busy thoroughfare. For years, the main entrance of this church was through the tower in the front of the building. Over the years, the church acquired adjacent property and added parking in the back of the building. This only meant that members would walk around the building to a side door to enter the building. At either door, stairs in

both directions waited just inside making the building inaccessible to those needing assistance. As a stopgap measure, the church provided closed circuit broadcasts of the services in a separate but adjacent fellowship hall building. This solution was thoughtful but did not convey the welcome message that the congregation wanted.

In 1995, church members decided it was time to make the building welcoming to everyone.

Renovations completed in 1998 added a beautiful new entryway off of the main parking lot. The new entry is complete with an elevator making all levels of the building accessible to those who need assistance and a grand staircase that draws the visitor in and clearly communicates welcome. Closed circuit broadcasts to the fellowship hall have been discontinued. Pastor Paul Koch said, "we wanted this to be a personal statement. The inspiration was Isaiah 56:7 where Isaiah, speaking for God, says 'My house shall be a house of prayer for all people.'"

The exterior of the new entrance was enhanced by the addition of two 11-foot stained glass windows. Jerry and Linda Green from Rockwell City, Iowa, heard about the church through Bill Bass, at that time the Upper Midwest Deputy Regional Minister. They donated a stained glass window they acquired 20 years ago at an auction for a church that was destroyed. Their gift prompted another couple, the McClains from Rockwell City, to donate a window they purchased at the same auction.

The total cost of the entry project at Park Avenue Christian Church was \$450,000 which included some other interior renovation and parking lot paving.

These two churches are indicative of the work that is going on in countless churches to address two critical issues, disoriented entries and lack of accessibility, in older buildings. Church Extension partnered with both of these congregations to provide a number of services. We can partner with yours as well. Call us or send us a note to talk about how we might assist your congregation.

Board of Church Extension simplifies name - adds new logo and tagline

The mission of Church Extension since 1883 has been to assist local churches in planning, financing, and maintaining facilities to be used as tools for ministry for spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We're now doing that with an easier name and a new logo and tagline. Our name tells what we do -- help extend the church so that the Gospel may be heard. Our logo speaks symbolically of that mission through the partnership of connected churches, in facilities that are contemporary and classic with the power of the cross of Christ as the reason for our existence. In addition, as we

channel the energy of the Great Commission into physical form, we will be a partner in starting 1,000 new congregations in the coming 20 years -- one way that happens is by congregations starting congregations -- a church inside a church.



Disciples church receives inclusion award

Congratulations to Madison Avenue Christian Church in Covington, Kentucky.

This congregation was the recent recipient of the 6th Annual Inclusion Network Leadership Award.

The award gala, held at the Cincinnati Hyatt Regency on January 22, 2001 honored those in the tri-state (southern Ohio, northern Kentucky and eastern Indiana) leading the way in the community for the inclusion of all. The message of Rev. Mike Delaney, pastor at Madison Avenue Christian Church,

is clear -- everyone deserves the opportunity to be accepted, understood and supported -- especially when it comes to issues of the soul.

In 1996, four young men ages 18 to 40 -- all residents in a local group home -- walked through the church doors one Sunday morning and quietly sat in the back pew. Six months later the men asked to be baptized, and Reverend Delaney purchased the church's first set of educational manuals adapted for people with learning disabilities. A year later, their baptism marked the birth of a new era of inclusion at Madison Avenue.

Building modifications were made

and adaptations were made for those with sight impairments. Greg Gannon was called to coordinate a formal inclusion outreach ministry. Since then, the congregation has held eight educational workshops on disability issues and weekly opportunities that foster friendship and understanding. Every Sunday, the congregation offers an inclusive religion class as a part of the educational offerings. Through the faith and friend program, members with a disability are paired with other members. "Our goal here is to further every member's talents and abilities so that they can be an inclusive and contributing part of the church family," said Mr. Gannon.

Congratulations Madison Avenue Christian Church, Covington, Kentucky. Keep up the good ministry!

"Our goal here is to further every member's talents and abilities so that they can be an inclusive and contributing part of the church family,"
– Greg Gannon

Survey

Let us pick your brain - and help Week of Compassion at the same time.

Help us by completing the enclosed survey. Tell us what you like about Cutting Edge and what you'd like to see that would help you in your future ministry. This is your chance to get your two cents in -- but your thoughts are worth more than that! For every survey returned (we have a mailing list of over 8,000) we'll donate 50 cents to Week of Compassion.

Cutting Edge Reader Survey

Please give us direction and let us know how Cutting Edge is helping you in your ministry by taking a few minutes to complete and return this questionnaire to us.

- I read Cutting Edge:
 - Always
 - Almost Always
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
- After reading Cutting Edge I usually:
 - File it for future reference
 - Pass it along to others
 - Throw it away
- Articles in Cutting Edge usually have:
 - Too much detail
 - Just the right amount of detail
 - Not enough detail
- Please rate Cutting Edge on (Circle One):

	Very Poor (1)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Excellent (10)
General Appearance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
General Readability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value of the Articles to You	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Length of Articles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Number of Articles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality of the Articles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
- A recent article in Cutting Edge I found helpful was _____
- I especially like:
 - Seeing what other Disciples churches have done
 - General futurist articles
 - News (coming events)
 - Seeing what others are doing outside the denomination
 - Other (please specify) _____
- What do you like best about Cutting Edge? _____
- What do you like least about Cutting Edge? _____
- I read Cutting Edge:
 - Immediately when it arrives
 - Within a week
 - When I get a chance
 - When I see it again on my desk
 - Never
- Other resources I consistently read (please check all that apply):
 - NET Results
 - Your Church
 - Congregations (Alban Institute)
 - Leadership
 - The Clergy Journal
 - Christian Standard
 - Other (Please specify) _____
- What are some topics that you would like included in upcoming issues of Cutting Edge? _____
- What is the best way to receive Cutting Edge?
 - Paper copy
 - e-mail
 - Internet magazine with e-mail notification
 - Other (please specify) _____

Survey (Continued)

13. What one thing should we keep the same about Cutting Edge? _____

14. What one thing should change about Cutting Edge? _____

15. Demographics:

Position: Sr. Minister Associate Minister Other Church Staff Regional Staff
 Church member Other (Please specify) _____

Age Under 21 22-35 36-49 50-65 65-80 80+

Location Northeast Southeast Midwest Southwest Northwest

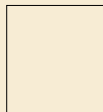
Approximate population of the village / town / city in which you live: <10,000 10,000 -50,000
 51,000 - 250,000 251,000 - 500,000 501,000 - 1,000,000 >1,000,000

16. Other comments? _____

FOLD
HERE

FOLD
HERE

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Vision Builders! completes first build - Looks to #2

Thanks to more than 150 volunteers from Disciples of Christ churches in 12 states, members of Misión Cristiana de Palm Bay, Palm Bay, Florida, now have a new church building. The new facility, consisting of a sanctuary, classrooms and office



space, was dedicated in a grand celebration on April 8, 2001. The congregation began nesting in the facilities of First Christian Church in Melbourne, Florida and had grown to more than 100 members.

The new building of their own will allow the congregation to continue to expand their ministry in central Florida.

Vision Builders! is a new church building effort utilizing many volunteers under the supervision of a construction manager and is a joint initiative of Church Extension's New Church Ministry and Homeland Ministries.

Members of the congregation still provide funding for materials and labor that is not done by volunteers.

Next up for Vision Builders!

This May and June is Lluvias de Gracia (Showers of Grace) Christian Church in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

For more information about how you or your congregation can be involved in upcoming Vision Builders! projects, contact:

Jayna Powell
 Director of Volunteers in Mission for Homeland Ministries,
 410-788-6309 or
 jpowell@dhm.disciples.org.

Misión Cristiana de Palm Bay, Palm Bay, Florida
The new facility, consisting of a sanctuary, classrooms and office space, was dedicated in a grand celebration on April 8, 2001.

