

Guiding Principles for Newport's Master Plan

The Master Plan Design Process has been a time of prayerful contemplation of where we as a church are, and where we see God calling us in the next 10 to 20 years. More specifically, we have spent considerable time thinking about both the challenges and blessings of our current building. The results of the planning study are reflected in the Master Plan drawings.

It is hard to address all of the design concepts of the Master Plan in just a few paragraphs, but here are some of the highlights. We found the original 1960's design concept – namely that Worship is central to our lives together – still holds true. We have sought to reinforce and expand upon this concept. We also found that there needed to be some clarity to the circulation, and some expansion of the Narthex. To accomplish the above goals, we are proposing a Narthex expansion to the north coupled with incorporating the east courtyard into interior space. This will provide a greater sense of connection to the Sanctuary, clarity of circulation, increased fellowship space, and expanded foyer space for both the Sanctuary and Great Hall.

The Sanctuary / Chancel will be remodeled. This Sanctuary remodeling will include seating revisions to accommodate wheelchairs, window revisions to allow better natural light and connection with the west courtyard, acoustical improvements, and new finishes. The Chancel will receive accessible ramp and revisions to the steps. It will be lowered slightly and reconfigured to allow maximum flexibility. The rear walls and ceiling may be reconfigured to improve the already superb acoustics and to provide support for desired technology for the informal service (projector and screen). The organ will receive modifications to separate the organ speakers from the house main speaker, and will relocate both the organ console and speakers so the organist and choir can better see the director and hear the organ.

Also proposed is a remodel of the Great Hall. This remodel will provide general aesthetic upgrades including kitchen renovations, new mechanical systems, and partitions that open and close to improve the multi-use nature of the space. The remodeling will also provide stronger connections to the proposed fellowship patio on the eastern side of the building.

Another guiding principle of the design is the consolidation of ministries. We have proposed pulling all the Christian Education and Fishpond Classrooms to the upper level and have grouped them together. Similarly, we have moved the music ministries to the upper level and grouped music offices, rehearsal room, music library, and instrument storage together. Additionally, the new location of the music ministries is adjacent to the Sanctuary / Chancel for ease of movement, setup, and use.

We have pushed the offices to the lower level and grouped them together with the workroom, restrooms, conference area, and separate, mid-week entry. This will allow better supervision of arrivals and departures and provides separation between the two primary midweek uses – Fishpond and Administration. The youth will also have

dedicated space on the lower floor, which will relate well to the proposed sport court in the lower parking lot.

Small additions have been proposed at the southwest and northwest corners of the CE wing, primarily to ease circulation. The northwest addition comprises a stair tower and a lift to allow wheelchair access from floor to floor. The addition on the southeast corner will provide additional classroom space.

The last major feature is the creation of the fireside room adjacent to the Narthex. This room will be a multi-function space incorporating Adult Education, the Library, general hangout space, and small groups such as Session and committee meetings.

We feel that the proposed changes in the Master Plan will enhance the original design of the church and will make it even more welcoming to our present Newport family and those who might be looking for a spiritual home. As Jim has said, “We want a building as gracious as our theology.” With this Master Plan, we feel we have achieved that goal.

The Architectural Team