The First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant is a Gothic style structure, built in 1930. Walls and floors are of stone, but the original ceiling was constructed of perforated metal panels with sound absorbing fibrous backing. The reverberation period was lower than desired for choral and organ music, and robust hymn singing. A previous attempt to reduce the sound absorbing effects of the ceiling failed when the canvas sheets glued over the perforated panels delaminated and fell. All sound absorbing ceiling panels have now been replaced with reinforced and rigid gypsum board inserts. The result is an increased reverberation period, especially at low frequencies, that enhances the full range of music and hymn singing. Choir singers have also been re-oriented into an “ensemble” seating arrangement at the front of the room, with space for instrumentalists in the now flexibly furnished Chancel. There are new wood sound reflector-diffusers installed behind and beside the singers; these reflector-diffusers are designed to match the architectural style of the room’s existing original wood features. The previous sound system provided poor speech intelligibility and room coverage. The new system has multiple visually discrete “line-array” column speakers that are “zoned” to deliver clear, intelligible speech to all seating locations. The new sound system is all digital in its operation, having a large mixing console with pre-sets for simplicity of operation. Its capabilities include full speech reinforcement, light music reinforcement, and recording. A video system has been prepared to have record and projection functions.

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