

Enhancing Space: Banners 101

Renewing Space: Redesigning Worship Space

Making Space: How to Manage Church Fixtures

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Enhancing Space: Banners 101

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I became a member of the Unionville Presbyterian Church in 2006. One of the traditions at U.P.C. is the use of banners to enhance the sanctuary and the enjoyment of the church service. This was new to me. As I listened to and participated in the service, I came to see that the banners helped me to focus on my Christian beliefs. Banners are like stained glass windows. They tell the story of God's message of glory and presence. I found myself looking forward to each new season of the church calendar as it meant new banners were to be hung. As one who enjoys sewing, I was impressed by the designs and use of colour. When the resident banner maker moved away, I was asked to continue the tradition of designing and caring for the banners at our church. I accepted with some trepidation but have come to enjoy the challenge of creating new designs and seeing them displayed in the sanctuary.

Below are some helpful tips for creating a banner for your church.

Selecting the banner design

To help you design the banner you would like to make, first decide the theme or goal of the banner (whether a universal theme or one for a specific occasion in the church calendar year). The theme should communicate the church's beliefs, be clear and brief, and fit with the total design, possibly using a short quotation from the



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Bible. You may wish to create an original work or find inspiration from others. If this is to be your first banner, you may want to copy another banner design. When looking for ideas or inspiration, there are several publications available from The Book Room.

The design

When designing the banner, several elements should be taken into consideration. Is the grouping of the words and design pieces interesting? Do the words fit the design and convey the intended message? Is there a focal point and within that, is there balance? Is everything neat in appearance and plainly marked for understanding? Spacing of the words and the design pieces needs to be taken into consideration along with their proximity to the edge of the banner.

Another aspect of the design should be the colours. Choose three to four colours plus black and white. Consulting a colour wheel may help in selecting complementary colours. (When putting the design on paper, you may want to use coloured pencils to help you decide on the colours for the banner.) And finally, consider where the banner will be placed in the church. Does the design fit and complement the space for which it was intended?

Choosing the fabrics

For the body of the banner, choose a fabric with adequate weight and body. If it is too light a fabric, you will need to back the fabric using either a fusible backing or muslin to give the banner stability. The fabrics you choose for the background and design should add interest through colour and texture combinations.

Types of fabric for the background - cotton duck, heavy felt, denim, poplin, corduroy, gabardine, some upholstery and fabrics.

Types of fabric for design elements - they can be the same as background fabric, only using different colours - other fabrics are satin back crepe, cotton, silk, felt, organza and metallics.

Embellishments - ribbon, rickrack, piping, seam binding, beads, buttons, sequins, old jewellery, fringe, glue on paint, yarn, markers, braids, ribbons, embroidery floss - there really is no limit to what can be used to embellish the banner.



Bonding fabrics and materials - double-stick tape, glue gun, good bonding glue, iron-on bonding web (glue does not bind with polyester), sewing.

And finally - you will also need a projector and craft paper to enlarge the design, a sewing machine if needed, a large table to work on, good cutting shears or a rotary cutter.

Estimating the size and yardage

When buying the background fabric, allow for the length of the banner plus hems. Allow 8 cm for the dowel insert at the top and 4 cm for the bottom hem. As well, allow 2 to 3 cm for side seams. It is always wise to buy a little extra to allow for cutting errors, shrinkage, pre-shrinking as well as quilting if it is involved.

Lettering

Consult typography/calligraphy books or websites for inspiration. Some people like to arrange the words naturally by just "eyeballing" the spacing, or you may wish to measure for word placement.

Construction of the banner

I like to hem the banner at the beginning of the construction, especially if the bottom is to be irregular; however, you can finish the hem and seams afterward if you choose.

Once the background fabric has been cut and backed if necessary, and you have finished all the edges of the banner, create tabs or fold the top edges in such a way as to fit a dowel for hanging. Once that has been finished, lay the background flat on a large work table or a cutting board.

Put the design on paper and then enlarge it on large craft paper. Use an overhead projector or opaque projector to enlarge the design. If no projector is available, you can use the age-old grid method. (This method is not as accurate and takes more time.) Cut out the pieces of the design. Lay the paper template pieces flat on a piece of iron-on, double-sided interfacing. Draw the outline onto the interfacing and carefully cut out each piece. Iron each piece of the interfacing to the back side of the selected fabric and cut out the pieces.

To help you visualize your banner, lay each piece on the backing according to your pattern without ironing them on yet. Step back and view your design from a distance and different angles. Check colour combinations and material textures. Do they work? Is it what you envisioned? Now is the time to examine and critique the design. If it doesn't look the way you would like it to, change it either by adding, taking away or changing some of the pieces of the design.

Once you have decided your banner is the way you envisioned it, iron the design pieces onto the background. You may also wish to finish the fabric pieces with a decorative machine finishing stitch. Finally, add any embellishments with fabric glue or a glue gun.

Storage of the banners

Storage of the banners requires an accessible space in order for the banners to be available when needed. Hanging dowels are the best way to store the banners. At U.P.C. we have a unique way of storing our banners. Two very kind and talented members of our congregation designed and built a storage cupboard that enables us to hang them on dowels. This system allows us to easily identify and retrieve the banners as the seasons change.

If the dowel system is not an option, try to obtain unused fabric tubes from a fabric shop. Cover the tubes and banner in white tissue paper, being careful not to crease the banners. Label and lay the roll flat on shelves for storage.



Banner binder

As your church accumulates banners, take photographs of them and put them in a binder under the headings of the church calendar (Lent, Easter, Christmas, etc.). Assign a number or letter to each photo and the corresponding banner. This will help you to identify the right banner when needed.

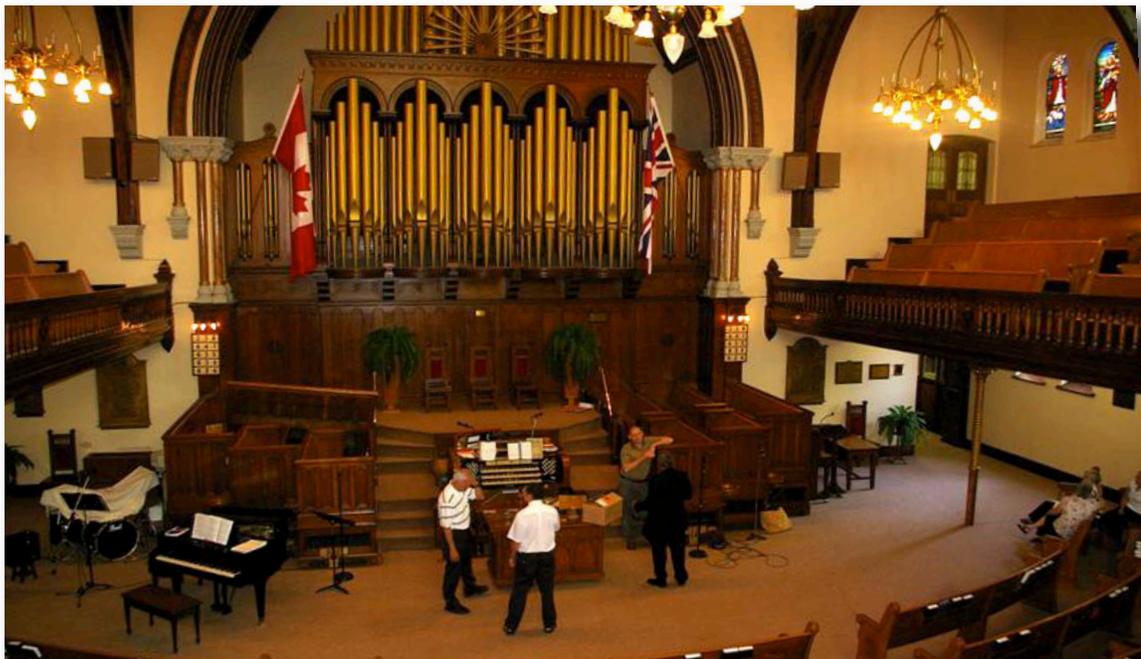
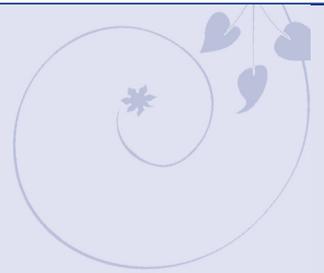
References

- Beck, Sally. *Banners on Favorite Bible Verses*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998.
- Harms, Carol Jean. *Banners for Worship*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1988.
- Pike, Joyce, and Anne Robinson. *Banners for All Seasons*. Colorado Springs: Meriwether Publishing, Ltd., 2001.
- The Book Room has these and several other resources for banners available for order. Call 1-800-619-7301.

Jane Campbell is a member of the Unionville Presbyterian Church. She sings in the choir and manages the banners at U.P.C.

Renewing Space: Redesigning Worship Space

Steve McInnis



could see the choir director when she played the piano for them.

The location of the pulpit was at issue too. Many of our ministers from the 1980s and later took exception to the many stairs leading up to the pulpit and to the distance between the congregation and preacher. Although the visibility was very good between

Woodstock is home to some breathtaking 19th century architecture, and Knox Presbyterian fits right in. We are proud of our beautiful church. The sanctuary seats over a thousand and has a showy display of organ pipes, chandeliers and wood grain. The stained glass windows remind us of events from scripture.

The way we were . . .

Originally, at the front of the church there was a flat stage, raised approximately 30" from the floor, with room for a 35-voice choir, the minister and two to three elders. In the 1930s, it was deemed appropriate to renovate the area to accommodate antiphonal choir singing. The choir was moved to the right and left sides of the chancel facing each other and the pulpit was in the centre of the chancel above the organ and choir. In recent years the choir has not sung this way, but rather has regrouped to form a modified arc while singing anthems. In addition, the upright grand piano had to be moved into a central location by the tenors and basses during the Sunday anthem so that the choir

the pulpit and any pew in the sanctuary, laity seldom mounted the steps to the pulpit. When laity read scripture or gave announcements, as was increasingly the case, they did so from the lectern, located at floor level. While the lectern was visible to only 75% of the church, this was a minor drawback, since there was always adequate seating with good visibility for the attendance on any Sunday. Children's stories were told from the floor level as well, however, and the gathering of kids was visible to fewer than half of the congregation. They were heard but not seen. Another drawback to the chancel arrangement was that the baptismal font had to be kept hidden from view during most of the year due to lack of floor space. On baptismal Sundays, the font was moved to the front but then hidden away after the service - no small feat with a 500 lb piece of marble. This symbol of the sacrament of baptism needed to be more visible throughout the year.

When in the early 2000s we introduced into the service a praise band with a drum set and guitars, it

quickly became evident that something would need to be done with the front of the sanctuary. The second symbol of our sacraments, the communion table, was potentially going to be moved out of view, beside the baptismal font, so that the praise band could be more visible while leading the congregation. The available area was insufficient for our needs if we were going to offer a blended worship service.

A move toward change . . .

At the annual meeting held in 2004, the congregation decided that we would begin a fundraising program, and by 2007 the funds were in and the chancel was renovated. The result is a platform roughly twice the size of the 1890s original, raised only two steps or 15" above the floor level, with higher elevation for the back two rows of the choir. Pews were removed from the seldom-used front row to accommodate the larger platform. Much of the wood from the old chancel was reused, for example, for privacy screens in front of the choir seating, although the flooring and newel posts are new. The new wood was carefully stained to match the original. The result fits perfectly into the architecture of the building.

Now the pulpit is more easily seen from any seat in the sanctuary. An added benefit is that the pulpit can be easily moved anywhere on the platform to suit worship needs. The choir loft at the back of the platform has seating for almost 40 people. The praise band of up to 10 voices has adequate room too, although the drums are still out of direct view of most of the congregation. The children can now be seen during the children's time, as they sit up on the platform to hear the story. We located the baptismal font carefully where it would be both prominent and permanent. The communion table is

almost always front and centre of the platform, although it is easy to move and trades places with the pulpit occasionally.

The platform is fully wired with microphone plugs, sound monitors and electricity receptacles. There are 17 microphone plugs in a 12-channel mixer. The new platform is far better designed for the occasional drama presentation, for example, for a Christmas pageant. The sanctuary is one of the best and largest venues in the city for cultural events and is rented to various groups for musical concerts.

The platform, much more accessible now, is still a concern for some of our members with mobility limitations. There are only two handrails, at the extreme left and right edges of the platform. We are considering further renovations to make the platform more accessible. We are always considering ways to improve. Like our Christian lives, our building continues to be a work in progress.

Steve McInnis is an elder at Knox Presbyterian Church in Woodstock, Ontario. He chaired the capital projects committee that oversaw the platform renovation at Knox.



Making Space:

How to Manage Church Fixtures

Don Muir



Many church buildings, especially the sanctuaries, are home to gifts donated through the generosity of members and friends of these congregations. The gift might be a piano, a pulpit fall, a baptismal font, or any number of objects that are meant to aid worship or contribute to the ambiance of worship spaces. Very often, they also serve to honour and preserve the memory of individuals.

Sometimes the gift becomes a source of controversy or distress. Understandably, a great deal of sentiment may be attached to a gift. Making any changes to it could be charged with emotion. For example:

1. If someone suggests that the piano, donated in memory of a former choir director of 40 years, be moved from the sanctuary to the church

school room, there may be some who strongly object because the piano has always been in the sanctuary and the choir director had nothing to do with the church school program.

2. The pulpit fall may bear the cross of St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. If the congregation evolves into an ethnically diverse membership, the symbol may no longer be meaningful or representative of the people attending worship. A proposal could be put forward to retire the pulpit fall and replace it with something more suitable. Some might consider the very idea preposterous while others appreciate the inclusive nature of the suggestion.

3. After a major renovation of the chancel, the original baptismal font may no longer match the decor or fit the available space. Retiring the old font and designing something more appropriate may be discussed. Those who were baptised at the font, or brought their children to it, could be saddened to think it might be replaced.

Questions arise. What can be done, or what should be done, with gifts that are dedicated to the glory of God and loving memory of individuals but no longer serve the purpose for which they were intended?

A great deal of pastoral care needs to be exercised when dealing with gift donations. Changes to them ought not to be made lightly nor should a congregation feel eternally obliged to use gifts given. It is the responsibility of the session, possibly in consultation with other interested parties, to make final decisions about receiving gifts, how they will be used, and how they will be moved about the church or disposed of as necessary. When making such decisions, the session ought to be sensitive to the donors and the history of the congregation while simultaneously taking into account how the congregation will faithfully serve the ministry of Jesus Christ in the future.

Two points are helpful to bear in mind when considering these issues.

First, even though an object is dedicated to the glory of God, it may be removed from service. We do not believe that an object becomes sacred simply because we give thanks to God for it and for the life it memorializes. The gift is intended to enhance the ministry of the church. Once it no longer achieves this purpose, a congregation should be free to move it to another part of the church where it might

be used in a new way, or to dispose of it. Depending on the nature of the object, it could be given to another church or a museum, sold or discarded.

Second, if a person has been issued a charitable receipt for the gift, no matter when the donation was made, it is not legal to give the gift back to the donor when the church no longer has a use for it. This happens most often when a congregation is being dissolved and the building is to be closed and sold. Imagine, for example, in memory of a family member, an individual donated a silver chalice for use during communion. When the gift, worth \$150, was donated, that individual received a receipt in the amount of \$150. Once the receipt is issued, the gift belongs entirely to the congregation and the individual has no claim on it. Canada Revenue

Agency makes it clear that no person can receive any “consideration” or “benefit” for a tax received donation. Returning a donated item means the donor is receiving something for the tax benefit and that is not permitted, even if it is many years later. A donor could purchase a donated item back from the church, provided a fair market value is paid to the church and no further receipt is issued.

People often desire to bless a church and honour the memory of a loved one with a gift. However, none of us should lose sight of the fact that, ultimately, the worship we offer God and the service by which

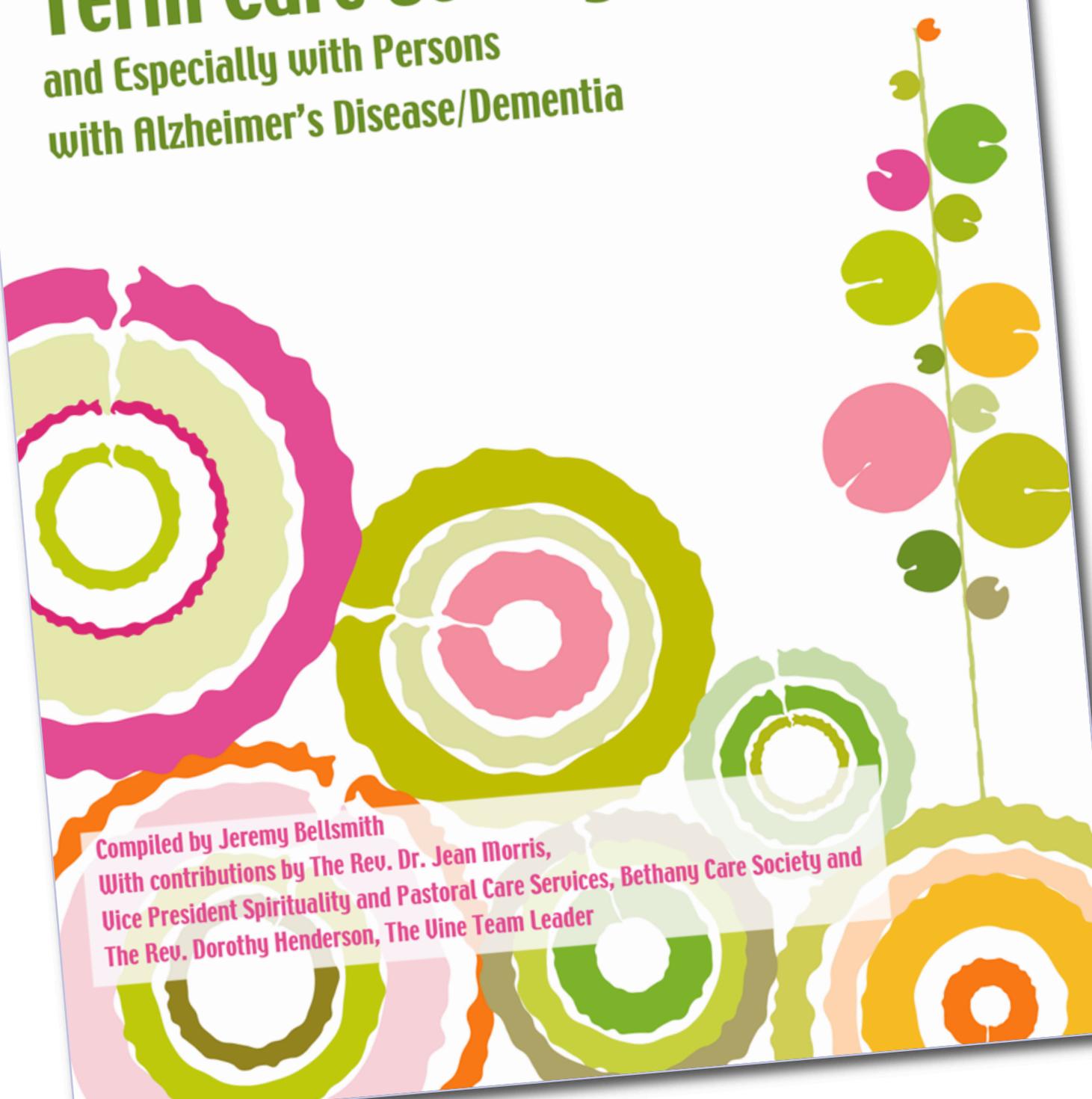
we demonstrate God’s love is more important than the things we use to achieve these ends.

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Worship in Long Term Care Settings

and Especially with Persons
with Alzheimer's Disease/Dementia



Compiled by Jeremy Bellsmith
With contributions by The Rev. Dr. Jean Morris,
Vice President Spirituality and Pastoral Care Services, Bethany Care Society and
The Rev. Dorothy Henderson, The Vine Team Leader

Available for free from Canadian Ministries/The Vine

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