

Frank Lloyd Wright Trust's Unity Temple Tour Fact Sheet

This fact sheet provides background information that may serve as a guideline for discussion at each of three tour intervals. Trust educators will offer interpretive methods during training to help you convey information in a natural manner that will engage your audience. **There is more information provided than you may be able to complete in the time allocated.** Include what you think are the points of greatest interest to your group or what you are comfortable conveying smoothly.

Each interpreter must be able to give a tour that includes all three intervals in any sequence. The interval times are not exact, but **it is suggested that you try not to speak more than 15 minutes at any one of the three intervals.**

Introduction

Welcome to Unity Temple. My name is _____, and I'm a trained interpreter with the Frank Lloyd Wright Trust.

- Unity Temple was designed By Frank Lloyd Wright in 1905, constructed from 1906 to 1908, and dedicated in 1909. The 2017 restoration architects aimed to restore the church as it was in 1908.
- Today over 100 years later, Unity Temple remains an active church. Please be respectful of its spiritual function.
- This tour is approximately 45 minutes in length and you will be seated during a portion of the tour.
- Just three blocks away is Frank Lloyd Wright's Home and Studio where this building was designed.
- During Wright's years in his Oak Park Studio, he created the first uniquely American style of architecture – the Prairie Style. We will discuss the Prairie style characteristics of Unity Temple on this tour.

Restoration Introduction

- In 2017, the 150th anniversary of Wright's birth, Unity Temple completed a major restoration project that took around two years to complete. Throughout the tour, I'll point out aspects of the restoration.
- The restoration included an updated mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, including new heating and cooling systems, and accessibility upgrades to accommodate people with disabilities.
- The restoration architects, Harboe Architects of Chicago, aimed to restore the Temple to as it was in 1908.

Temple Exterior, Approximately 15 minutes

(Exterior East Terrace)

- Several factors influenced the choice of Frank Lloyd Wright for the Unity commission:
- Wright had built Oak Park homes for several members of the congregation including the family of Edwin Gale who sold the property for Unity Temple to the congregation for \$10,000.
- Wright's mother was an influential member of the congregation.
- Wright was a longstanding resident of Oak Park and his studio was just three blocks from the new Unity site.
- The Pastor of Unity Church Rodney Johnson was liberal minded and wanted a modern building.
- Wright was 38 years old when he received the commission for Unity Temple. He was a young architect of established reputation.
- The exterior of this building is poured in place concrete, which means the concrete was poured into removable wooden forms to dry in sections on site.
- The original concrete was textured. Wave patterns on the exposed surface of the concrete suggested the original pour into the mold. Wright considered the irregularities of surface as part of the building's natural ornament and organic beauty.

- In the 1970's as the structure began to show cracks, Frank Lloyd Wright's son Lloyd suggested the solution of "shotcrete," which was sprayed over the surface to stabilize it. The shotcrete (Gunnite) has a more even appearance than the original concrete.
- As part of the 2017 restoration, cracks were sealed and additional shotcrete added. The exterior was soda blasted that allowed the new shotcrete to visually blend with the adjacent existing material and remove staining.
- Wright stated he chose concrete for Unity Temple because it was inexpensive and the Unity Temple budget was only \$45,000. The process of pouring the forms is time-consuming and construction ran over schedule. The final cost of the building was \$80,000.
- Apart from budget restrictions, concrete was a bold and innovative design choice by Wright.

Additional Background on concrete for selected use as appropriate

Ancient Romans are credited with the first widespread use of concrete. By the beginning of the second century B.C., the Romans were already building large-scale construction projects in concrete. The Pantheon, a temple to the gods of Rome, and the Colosseum were constructed with concrete. Concrete used in the modern era differs from that used in antiquity, but shares the characteristics of being inexpensive, strong, and durable.

Modern era reinforced concrete construction dates as an industry to the 1850s, not long after Portland cement was patented. Historically, this was one of the most common forms of building basement walls. The same technique used below grade was repeated with above-grade walls.

Unity Temple, completed in 1908, is the first great modern concrete design building in an evolving sequence of 20th century design masterworks in concrete – including Le Corbusier's Notre Dame du Haut Chapel at Ronchamp, 1954; Oscar Niemeyer's Brasilia, 1956; Wright's Guggenheim, 1959; Eero Saarinen's TWA Terminal at LaGuardia, 1962 (dubbed the concrete bird); and Louis Kahn's Salk Institute in LaJolla CA, 1966.

Tadao Ando is the contemporary architect who is best known for advancing refined architectural design in concrete. Many other contemporary design architects are now working in concrete, including Chicago's Jeanne Gang at the Aqua building.

(Move to Lake Street building façade and along the west walkway to the tree)

- The exterior of Unity Temple is simple and monolithic. It nearly fills the property (100 feet along Lake Street by 170 feet along Kenilworth). Its massive walls block the traffic noise of Lake Street.
- Compared to the English neo-gothic style churches built along Lake Street (First United and Grace Episcopal), Unity Temple is radically different in appearance. There is no bell tower, no steeple, no sculpture, and no religious ornamentation. Because the appearance of the finished building was so different from that of typical churches, the congregation eventually agreed to call the building Unity Temple, evoking its ancient architecture sources.
- In his early career, Wright referenced earlier styles of architecture. The entry of his Oak Park home included a classical Greek frieze, and he was also inspired by the ancient Middle East. The ziggurat form appears throughout his career even to his final building, the Guggenheim Museum completed in 1959
- The only relief in the uninterrupted concrete exterior surface is a clerestory of leaded glass with ornamented columns. The ornamented columns were cast in concrete and may suggest motifs that appear on Mayan temples or reference nature suggesting the vertical stalks of hollyhocks. The line of columns, which visibly support the flat roof, suggest the pillared temples of antiquity and convey classical and biblical architectural associations.
- The roof, especially the roof slab over Unity House, was in such bad structural condition in 2017 that it was entirely replaced. All of the roofing and draining systems were replaced at that time as well.
- Wright's original renderings of the exterior show his integration of nature, with plantings spilling out of boxes along the base of the windows and columns and in large planters at the entries.

- In addition to the clerestory windows, Wright introduced leaded glass “slot” windows at the corners of the structure. These slim glass screens introduce natural light into the multi-level corner stairways within the building. Although they may evoke the vertical lancet windows of Gothic-style churches, Wright actually conceived them as expansion joints for the concrete since no other expansion joints allowed for subtle shifting of the solid walls.
- As part of the 2017 restoration, the landscape architects implemented what they believe is the original landscaping for the Temple.

(Move onto West Terrace)

- The entry into Unity Temple is quietly placed along the side of the building and the scale is modified to a lowered height of human proportion. Sometimes referred to as Wright’s “Path of Discovery,” this change in scale and orientation also evokes the striking influence of Japanese architecture on Wright.
- Wright first experienced Japanese architecture at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where a replica of the Phoenix Hall of the Byodo-in was constructed as a Japanese pavilion.
- In 1905 when Wright received the commission for Unity Temple, he and his wife Catherine had just returned from their first trip to Japan, a 3-month stay that included visiting temples and shrines in Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya, Kyoto, Nara, Nikko, and Osaka.
- The quiet walled outdoor entry terrace with garden elements leads through a screen of leaded glass doors into an entry room with low ceiling and muted colors, all of which evoke entries to traditional Japanese domestic and religious architecture. Wright maintained a lifelong love of Japan and returned there many times when he was working on the Imperial Hotel from 1913 to 1922.
- The entry to Unity Temple is not boastful, but moderate. Above both the east and west entry doors bronze letters inscribe: “For the Worship of God and the Service of Man.” The progression into Unity Temple unites sacred and secular realms into one universal truth, just as the entry unites outdoor and indoor light and space.

Unity House, Approximately 15 minutes
(Prairie Style)

- During the first decade of the 20th century Frank Lloyd Wright developed the Prairie Style, the first original American style of architecture. Although Prairie Style is primarily associated domestic architecture, Unity Temple embodies many of its characteristics
- At the center of the hall is a great fireplace, above which Wright intended to install a painted mural that was never executed. For Wright, the hearth was the “ heart of the home” and center of family life. All of his prairie houses are designed around this feature. Wright intended that Unity House would also have furniture of his design and carpets similar to a domestic home.
- In his Prairie houses, Wright initiated a new open plan with a large central room that flowed into the adjoining living spaces, creating multi-purpose areas for shared family activity. Unity House creates a similar space for the congregational family. On each side of the central hall are open connecting alcoves that Wright intended to partition with folding leaded glass doors that would allow for flexible use. These doors were never executed and were replaced with curtains. (If this hall were a domestic home, the alcoves might be a dining room and a study.)
- Woodwork creates a continuity of line that unites the room into a single composition, another characteristic of Prairie style. Much of the trim was restored in 2017 to retain its original finish and was cleaned. All of the trim was documented, removed, restored, and reinstalled at that time.

(Assemble around the model of Unity Temple.)

- Wright’s mother Anna Lloyd Wright gave her young son a gift of Froebel blocks that she had purchased on a visit to the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. Friedrich Froebel was the inventor of kindergarten and his blocks were educational toys that inspired creativity in young children as they learned the lessons of geometry and mathematics. Wright often referred to this gift as the basis of his interest and ability in architecture. The powerful geometry of Unity Temple affirms Wright’s earliest design instinct.
- Wright wanted the sanctuary to be a cube and he defined Unity House as an echoing shape behind it. The building is a brilliant massing of geometric shapes in balanced

relation to each other. The articulation of the building is entirely vertical and horizontal - from the shadows between two concrete forms set slightly apart to the patterns of light through the vertical and horizontal lines of the windows.

- Cantilevered concrete roof slabs project five feet in front of the columns creating a powerful horizontal above the sequence of columns.

(Main Floor Interior Discussion)

- While the exterior of the building is monochromatic, the interior is filled with color and light, suggesting the illuminating power of spiritual fellowship. Unity House was originally brighter in coloration than the sanctuary, in keeping with lively social and educational activity intended for the space.
- The plaster and paint was an integral aspect of the restoration. Prior to the 2017 restoration, there were several plaster patches due to previous roof leaks. Those repairs did not match the material properties of the original plaster. During the restoration, much of the plaster was replaced, matching the original lime putty plaster, with custom oil paint applied in a ragged off finish.
- Skylights admit natural light from above through the crisp geometric designs of the glass, sometimes associated with the pattern of leaves against the sky. The shapes are rectangles and squares. The colored glass sections are all squares. The glass is opaque white with touches of green, brown, and yellow.
- The skylights are recessed between 15-foot ceiling beams (or coffers), which are hollow. Their purpose is to frame the glass in deep light wells; they do not support the roof. Four vertical corner piers are the primary structural support of this room and four piers support every room in Unity Temple.
- As part of the restoration, the existing skylights are maintained in place and a new skylight was installed over the historic skylight.
- Fixtures were restored to match their original configuration eliminating the brass blocks.
- The minister's study occupies the second floor above the entry hall and overlooks the Unity House and all of its various activities.

(Proceed to the balcony level to view the windows.)

- These balcony alcoves were originally open to reveal the windows that encircled the space. They were enclosed for classroom use and will be reopened when the restoration of Unity Temple is completed.
- Wright himself created the designs of his leaded glass windows, and these designs and their color combinations were unique to each building.
- During the 2017 restoration, conservators removed the art glass. The original glass was conserved and was reinstalled with zinc coming matching the original configuration.

Additional Background on glass for background to incorporate as appropriate

The term “leaded glass” refers to the window style that originally used lead to frame and secure the various pieces of glass into a pattern or composition. This framing system is called coming. Wright used zinc instead of lead because it created a lighter, more delicate line than lead. All of Unity Temple’s windows have zinc comes. The more recent term “art glass” refers specifically to colored glass. Both the term “leaded glass” and “art glass” are correct.

Wright began to work with a Chicago glass company to produce these windows. He developed a good working relationship with the company and continued to use them for many more projects. The company took the name Temple Art Glass Company, perhaps because of their initial project with Wright.

Frank Lloyd Wright’s square geometric designs in glass at Unity Temple pre-date Piet Mondrian’s pure geometric abstract paintings, which begin to appear 1916-18.

Wright is the first designer to create purely geometric designs in colored glass. The interplay between clear glass and colored glass can be considered a pictorial image of nature, such as flowers. The windows form a continuous ribbon of light that encircles the building and repeats the pattern of white squares and horizontal lines as a decorative motif etched in light.

Although the building is monumental, the Unity Temple entry affirms human scale and human reason as a guiding principle. On one side of the entry hall are glass doors into Unity House (the parish hall) and on the opposite side are corridors, or what Wright termed “cloisters,” into to the sanctuary.

Unity Sanctuary, Approximately 15 minutes

(Group is seated on the main level)

- Wright described this space as “The Noble Room.” Our approach was along a dark corridor and up several stairs into this light-filled main floor of the sanctuary. Because of the lower level of the entry corridor, we feel that we are on an elevated platform – ennobled.
- The other elevating characteristic of this room is the light. Wright called the entry corridors “cloisters.” Cloisters are covered walkways open along one side to outdoor courtyards and gardens. Wright was suggesting that this space is like an outdoor experience.
- Wright stated that he wanted to create the effect of “a happy cloudless day.” Look up to the ceiling and you see intersecting concrete beams into which are set 25 square skylights of identical design in amber and yellow. Wright said that even on a cloudy day, these skylights transform natural light to sunlight.
- The ribbon of clerestory windows lightens the weight of the concrete coffered roof, which seems to rest lightly on the air. The pattern of white squares in the clerestory glass gently evokes the dentil molding of classical temples.
- The light is from above, filtering through geometric glass designs into a room that is a perfect cube with suspended light fixtures in the form of spheres and cubes. The space is a composition united by light and geometry.

(Universalism, Unitarianism, and the History of Unity Temple)

- In order to understand why Unity Temple was such a perfect design solution for its function, it is useful to briefly review Universalist and Unitarian ideals and the religious philosophy of Frank Lloyd Wright.

- Wright's father had been a Universalist preacher. With their emphasis on a loving God, Universalists were early advocates of abolitionism and were the first church to ordain women.
- Wright's family on his mother's side were Welsh Unitarians, and his uncle Jenkin Lloyd Jones was a distinguished Unitarian preacher with a parish on Chicago's south side, where Wright and his wife Catherine were married. Wright identified with the independence of thought and rational humanism of Unitarianism, though he was not a member of any congregation during his adult life.
- In 1886 Universalist Augusta Chapin became minister of the Oak Park Unity Church. Over the next decade she attracted new members to the congregation, including Frank Lloyd Wright's mother Anna. One of the reasons that Unity Church began to seek a new church was that Augusta Chapin was so successful in growing the congregation.
- In 1893, the year of the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago also hosted the Parliament of World Religions, and Augusta Chapin left Unity Church to work on this great event. The influence of Eastern regions on liberal congregations in Chicago was a significant result of this conference.
- Rodney Johonnot succeeded Augusta Chapin at Unity Church. A lawyer and graduate of Harvard Divinity School, Johonnot was known for his very liberal views. Ordained as both a Unitarian and Universalist minister, Johonnot led a church and congregation that was independent and liberal – but not yet officially aligned with Universalist Unitarian denominations.
- When Unity Church burned to the ground in June 1905, Johonnot published a booklet titled, *A New Edifice for Unity Church*. He wanted a modern building that he wrote: "would embody the principles of unity, truth, beauty, simplicity, freedom and reason." Frank Lloyd Wright, given his background, understood these principles and embraced them. Unity Temple had the best possible match of architect and client in Wright and Johonnot.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) is the final factor in this mix of ideas. Emerson was ordained as a Unitarian minister, but soon became an independent proponent of a uniquely American philosophy that permeated 19th century American art and culture.

- Transcendentalism was a belief that God is manifest in the beauty of Nature and all living things – a universal presence around us and within us. He wrote: There is a profound harmony between the physical world and the human soul.” Frank Lloyd Wright often stated that he worshiped God with a capital “N” for Nature.

(Organic Architecture and Universal Harmony)

- The sanctuary was the last portion of the building to be completed. The congregation met in Unity House for more than a year waiting for the completion of the sanctuary.
- The sanctuary is the most complete and elegant expression of Wright’s Unity Temple design. All of the essential design elements combine in this room, which defines organic architecture – all parts are naturally integrated.
- There is simplicity and reason in its geometry and orderly arrangement of its functions. Seating is democratic. No one is seated more than forty feet away from the pulpit.
- The open and elevated space declares the democratic freedom of each person.
- Everyone is illuminated in natural light – the truth of fellowship.
- Wright’s design articulation of the room is sophisticated with its combinations of vertical and horizontal linear elements and geometric volumes in space. Wood moldings, glass, and suspended fixtures, are balanced in harmony within one unified space.
- No technical functions of space are apparent. Heating and cooling systems are hidden in the four great support piers. The organ is not visible, only the vertical wood screen from which music emerges. Only beauty and unity are apparent.
- Unity Temple sanctuary is the work of a young architect who had a tremendous innate gift that distinguished him early in his career. Unity Temple was his first great public building in 1908, and fifty years later, the Guggenheim Museum would be his last.

This concludes our tour.

- If you would like to take a few moments to linger here on your own, please do so. You may walk up to the higher levels of seating if you wish. Make your way to the exits on

either side of the pulpit. This is the way the congregation always exited the sanctuary, moving toward the minister and not exiting to the back. Please depart without disrupting any other tours being conducted. Thank you.

Sources

Joseph Siry's *Unity Temple: Frank Lloyd Wright and architecture for liberal religion*

Robert McCarter's *Unity Temple: Frank Lloyd Wright*

Detailed Unity Temple Restoration Information

The following is detailed information about the two-year restoration of Unity Temple to equip Trust interpreters about the 2017 restoration. Some information related to the restoration has been incorporated in the above Unity Temple Tour Fact Sheet.

- Restoration Target Date of 1908, is the date the building was completed.
- Chicago restoration architects, Harboe Architects, completed the restoration.
- Restoration lasted for approximately two years – begun in 2015 and ended in 2017.
- As part of the restoration process, all testing, analyzing, probes, and restoration work completed was fully documented.

Determination of Significant Spaces

The determination of significance of spaces in a historic building informs the design team and future users of the historical hierarchy of the spaces in the building. For example if a modern element/infrastructure needs to be incorporated in the spaces, the architect or engineer uses the noncontributing spaces when ever possible.

Primary Significance Spaces

First Floor- Auditorium and cloisters in the Temple, the Foyer, and the main space and flanking classrooms in Unity House.

Second Floor- Balconies and stairs in the Temple, and the balconies and primary stairs of Unity House.

Secondary Significance

First Floor - The kitchen is of secondary significance since it has been extensively altered and is not part of the main public experience of the building.

Second Floor - The South classroom/sewing room and the minister's office are of Secondary Significance since they have been altered and are not part of the main public experience of the building.

Basement - The stairs leading to the First Floor of the Temple are of secondary significance since they are only partially visible from the primary spaces on the first floor.

Non-Contributing

First Floor - Storage rooms and the service stair west of the kitchen.

Second Floor- Storage or support spaces

Basement- All mechanical spaces in the basement of Unity House and the classrooms and toilet rooms in the basement of the Temple.

EXTERIOR RESTORATION

- **Structural & Roofing**

- Delaminating concrete structural roof slabs were repaired.
- The Unity House roof slab was in such bad structural condition the whole roof slab was replaced. Roofing and roof drain systems for the whole building were replaced. The new roof is a modified bitumen roof with liquid urethane flashing.

- **Concrete and Shotcrete**

- Cleaning mock-ups were conducted to identify the gentlest means for cleaning the existing shotcrete.
- Cleaning methods were examined with a field microscope to assess the effect to the existing aggregate and matrix. Soda blasting was identified and the most effective cleaning method that did not etch the shotcrete aggregate. The existing shotcrete was cleaned with soda blasting, allowing the new shotcrete repairs to visually blend with the adjacent existing material.
- The shotcrete repair technique that was found to be most effective was that areas of shotcrete were cut out to a depth of approximately four inches and repaired with new shotcrete that closely matches the existing shotcrete. Repaired areas were reinforced with stainless steel mesh and pins to minimize shrinkage and cracking.
- Cracks in shotcrete that is sound was repaired with sealant repairs. In addition, new shotcrete repairs were inspected 1 year after construction and any new shrinkage cracks were repaired with sealant repairs.
- Repair methods were mocked-up with urethane sealant impregnated with sand and aggregate that matches the shotcrete to help the repairs visually blend with the adjacent shotcrete. Some of the mocked-up sealant repairs have been in-place for multiple years to confirm their serviceability.
- The parapets that surround the large skylights and the South Chimney had severe wide-spread delamination of the shotcrete due to their increased exposure to moisture and freeze / thaw. The South-West cantilevered soffit that was previously refaced in 2002 has severe staining and damage due to previous failure of the roof membrane above this area. These elements will have the existing shotcrete completely removed, underlying damage were repaired and a new shotcrete coating that closely matches the existing was applied.

- **Skylights**

- Over the Temple space the existing skylight was maintained in place and a new skylight install over the historic skylight.
- The glazing was removed from the historic s skylight and a new skylight that has insulated frosted glazing and a thermally-broken aluminum frame were installed over the existing.
- The new skylight peak is approximately 1 foot higher than the existing, resulting in either no or minimal visual change to the building.
- Unity House Skylight was replaced with insulated frosted glazing and a thermally-broken aluminum frame skylight because the skylight in place was not original in in very bad condition.
- The four skylights over Minister's Office were replaced to reduce visibility from public way.

- **Windows**

- The original steel window frames were removed from the building, corrosion was removed, steel members and joints were repaired and a new protective paint coating was applied prior to reinstallation.
- After evaluation and documentation by conservators, all of the art glass was removed conserving the original glass that was then reinstalled coming matching the original configuration and made with zinc.
- All non-original wood windows at South end of Unity House, were replaced with custom wood windows that match original windows remaining in closets.
- The existing original wood windows at closets of Unity House were restored.

- **Doors** - The existing wood entry doors a Foyer were restored. The two non-original exterior doors and frames at Unity House were replaced with wood doors and frames.

- **Lettering** - The bronze letters at entryway were removed to allow for shotcrete repair, cleaned and re-coated with incralac prior to being reinstalled.

- **The landscape architects** have implemented what they believe is the original landscape for the Temple.

- **Access for guests with mobility-related disabilities** are provided by a stainless steel ramp on the north side of the building. Within the building a wall mounted stair lift

will move individuals from the east side cloister to the main floor. The building also has two separate chair lifts that were purchased to move individuals who cannot climb stairs or are in wheel chairs up and down the stairs.

INTERIOR RESTORATION

- Restoration of interior finishes include: plaster and paint restoration, wood trim restoration and reinstallation, concrete and magnesite floor restoration, wood door and hardware restoration, renovation of secondary significant interior spaces, light fixture restoration and reinstallation of restored lighting art glass, supplemental lighting and lighting controls, MEP upgrades, restoration of site paving and landscaping, replacement of the existing exterior accessibility ramp.
- **Plaster & Painting**
 - The texture, color and materials of the plaster are integral to the appearance of the painted finishes.
 - Mock-ups of multiple approaches for recreating the original finishes were prepared to assist in identifying the appropriate approach for the project.
 - Much of the existing plaster at the ceilings under the roof slabs had been previously patched and replaced due to previous roof leaks. These previous repairs typically do not match the material properties and appearance of the original plaster. In order to sound the existing concrete roof slabs for delamination and then provide the concrete repairs, it was necessary to remove the plaster from the underside of the roof slabs.
 - The plaster was replaced, matching the original lime putty plaster in materials and texture.
 - The custom paint is an oil paint applied in a ragged off finish.
- **Trim and Millwork**
 - The original finish on trim was a pine resin and linseed oil finish. Due to the tendency of this finish to yellow and darken over time, a rubbed Tung oil finish was used for the restoration.
 - The wood in the Temple still retained its original finish. It was cleaned to remove soiling.
 - The wood in Unity House has been previously refinished and was lighter than it was originally. It was refinished to match the original finish in the Temple.
 - In order to restore the plaster and paint finishes, all of the wood trim was documented, removed, restored and reinstalled.

- **Flooring**
 - The concrete and magnesite flooring were restored. Cracks and spalls were carefully cut-out and repaired with materials that closely match the original materials, finish and appearance.
 - Areas of previous patches for running electrical conduit in the floor were cut-out and replaced with material that closely matches the original.
 - Existing clear finishes was removed, the flooring was cleaned and new water based acrylic was applied to match the original finish.
- **Doors & Hardware**
 - The interior doors and hardware were restored. Damaged joints and previous alterations were repaired. Where doors are missing or had been severely altered they were replaced to match the original doors.
 - Door hardware was restored to operate properly and the original finishes were restored.
- **Light Fixtures**
 - The original light fixtures were restored. Art glass in fixtures were rebuilt with new zinc coming and coming was restored to its original brass finish.
 - Wood joinery was repaired. Wood finishes were cleaned and where the finish did not match the original or is damaged, it was refinished per the historic finish analysis. Metal finishes were restored.
 - Missing fixtures, no original elements and poor quality reproductions were recreated.
 - Lamping was modified to LED to reduce heat build-up and allow for dimming to provide both period lighting levels and higher output for current use requirements.
- **MEP (Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing) Systems**
 - MEP systems were updated including: new ground source heating and cooling system (nine wells were installed on the site,) electrical and plumbing system improvements, new fire alarm and smoke detection system, emergency lighting incorporated into existing original light fixtures, new exit signage.
- **The Kitchen, Second Floor Nursery of Unity House, Minister's Office and the Temple basement spaces** were renovated to meet their current program needs.
 - Non-original walls in minister's office were removed.

- In the Second floor of Unity House low storage partitions were installed and non-glare glass partitions were installed to provide privacy in class rooms while keep the original feeling of an open balcony that was there historically.
- The final palette was influenced by the historic finishes, yet these spaces were not restored to their original appearance or configuration. Contributing elements in these spaces, such as the art glass windows in the Minister's Office, were restored and maintained.