



# SACRED PLACES

THE MAGAZINE OF PARTNERS FOR SACRED PLACES • SUMMER 2006

## *Sacred Landscape:*

**Gardens and Parks Welcome  
the Community into  
Older Religious Properties**

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### About Partners

**Partners for Sacred Places** is the only national, non-sectarian, nonprofit organization dedicated to the sound stewardship and active community use of America's older religious properties. Founded in 1989 by religious, historic preservation and philanthropic leaders, Partners provides assistance to the people who care for sacred places and promotes a greater understanding of how these places sustain communities.

#### PARTNERS' PROGRAMS AND SERVICES INCLUDE:

- ❖ **Training.** *New Dollars/New Partners for Your Sacred Place* is an intensive program that gives congregations with older buildings the skills and resources to broaden their base of support.
- ❖ **Workshops and Conferences.** Partners' staff speaks on a variety of topics at national and regional conferences throughout the country.
- ❖ **Publications.** Some of Partners' books include:
  - *Your Sacred Place Is a Community Asset: A Tool Kit to Attract New Resources and Partners*
  - *The Complete Guide to Capital Campaigns for Historic Churches and Synagogues*
- ❖ **Information Clearinghouse.** This web-based resource provides information related to the care and use of older sacred places. ([www.sacredplaces.org/information\\_clearinghouse.html](http://www.sacredplaces.org/information_clearinghouse.html))
- ❖ **Advocacy Initiatives.** Partners works with civic leaders, funders and policymakers, urging them to adopt policies and practices that provide new resources to older religious properties.

## from the Executive Director



Back in the day, it was often difficult for Partners to provide hard, tangible evidence of our impact on individual congregations and communities. From our founding in 1989, we knew Partners served effectively as a national advocate and information center for congregations with older buildings, but site-specific results were elusive.

Things changed dramatically several years ago when Partners introduced *New Dollars/New Partners*, which has had a demonstrable impact on hundreds of congregations in cities ranging from San Francisco on the West Coast, to Cincinnati and Minneapolis in the Midwest, to Atlanta and Boston in the East. Furthermore, a formal evaluation of the program showed that *New Dollars* provides congregational leaders with important skills for community-wide capital fundraising, and two-thirds of participating congregations have developed new or deeper partnerships with community organizations within a few short months.

The tangibility of Partners' impact is stronger than ever, now that we are establishing two regional centers of activity—Philadelphia and Fort Worth. We are serving each city/region via a comprehensive program offering training, repair planning grants, capital grants and other services. Each program is focusing on congregations that are integral to the growth and development of key neighborhoods or towns in the region.

The Philadelphia Fund was launched just three months ago (see article on page 6), and the Fort Worth office will be officially launched this fall (see page 6). They are receiving significant funding from respected, knowledgeable donors who have done their homework regarding the power and reach of Partners' programs.

A word should be said here about the key role played by our Board of Directors and regional advisory boards in building and sustaining our programs. They have helped to vouch for Partners with potential funders, have opened doors to individual donors, and have guided and vetted our programs from conception to implementation. They have gone above and beyond what many boards do for their organizations, and deserve our heartfelt gratitude.





# New Dollars/New Partners Coaches Find Inspiration in their Helping Role

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As Partners continues to expand *New Dollars/New Partners for Your Sacred Place*, our national training program that teaches congregations with older buildings how to broaden their base of support, we recently introduced a coaching component to help congregations sustain momentum between training sessions. Volunteer coaches help congregational teams organize their work, troubleshoot problems, monitor their progress and hold each other accountable for completing program tasks.

*New Dollars* coaches work with a congregation one to two days a month for a year. They attend the four *New Dollars* training modules; meet with the training team to help them identify congregational gifts and those in the surrounding community; and follow up by phone to keep the team on track with tasks. Coaches can be staff or board members of the sponsoring organization, lay leaders from area congregations or seminary students.

Partners developed the coach model in response to feedback from *New Dollars* participants who told us they needed additional encouragement between training sessions. Last year, Partners piloted a coach program in Philadelphia using students from the University of Pennsylvania. During the pilot, we learned that a coach doesn't need to be an expert in the field but rather a cheerleader or nudge to help the congregation stay focused on the process. Based on the success of the Philadelphia pilot, the coach model is taking off across the country. In Minnesota and Michigan, *New Dollars* coaches are drawing inspiration from their volunteer role.

James A. Turner, a window restoration specialist and long-time grassroots organizer, coaches two congregations in Detroit's urban core who are part of 13 interdenominational congregations from across the state participating in Michigan's first *New Dollars* training. Turner is a board member of the Michigan Historic Preservation Network, the sponsoring organization. Both congregations have significant social justice histories, and Turner sees his role as helping them identify the rich gifts they offer to the community. "What is so exciting for me is recognizing that every church has a story to tell," Turner says. "So often, people work at what they do and don't get to sit back and recognize their value to the community. *New Dollars* gives them the tools to put that into words."

In Minneapolis, The Rev. David Wangaard is also feeling energized by his role as a *New Dollars* coach. "I'm learning things I didn't know, like how to write a case statement," says Rev. Wangaard, the Bishop's Associate for Urban and Multicultural Ministries for the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the sponsoring organization for the Minneapolis *New Dollars* training. One of the major issues facing the urban churches he works with is maintaining the physical structure of a building that is often too large for their small congregation. "These congregations do a huge amount of community ministry so their buildings are always full but they struggle to keep the buildings up. What I like about *New Dollars* is that it helps them to see their buildings as assets rather than liabilities."

Wangaard's enthusiasm is contagious. When he told his friend Kurt Meyer, a professional fundraiser, about *New Dollars*, Meyers immediately volunteered to be a coach. "I'm a member of a suburban congregation with a great deal of capacity," Meyer explains. Volunteering as a coach allows him to give back. "I have the opportunity to work with the finest people in the congregation who inspire me."

To inquire about becoming a *New Dollars* coach, contact Sarah Peveler, Director of Training, at 215/567-3234, ext 14, or [speveler@sacredplaces.org](mailto:speveler@sacredplaces.org).

## Staff News

Partners welcomes **Rana Guidimal McNamara** to the Development Department. Rana, Director of Membership and Annual Giving, has been a development professional for the past eighteen years, mostly with Friends schools. Her most recent position was as director of development for an elementary Quaker school.

Partners also welcomes **James Nader**, a Texas architect, civic and faith leader, as the Executive Developer of the newly opened Partners regional office in Fort Worth.

Partners says farewell to Office Manager **Vivian Lovingood** and Development Director **Dan Tomko**.

## Update on Partners

### New Dollars/New Partners Programs

#### Current Programs

Location	Sponsor
Brooklyn, Queens, and Long Island	Episcopal Diocese of Long Island
Chicago	Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois
Cleveland	Catholic Diocese of Cleveland and Cleveland Restoration Society
Connecticut	Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut
Fort Worth	Central Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church and Tarrant Baptist Association
Michigan	Michigan Historic Preservation Network
Minneapolis	Minneapolis Area Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
New Jersey	Presbytery of New Brunswick
New Jersey and New York	Palisades and Hudson River Presbyteries
North Carolina	Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina
Philadelphia	Philadelphia Regional Fund for Sacred Places

*Many thanks to the following architects and conservators who donated their time in 2006 to New Dollars/New Partners:*

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#### In Memoriam



It with great sadness the we mark the recent passing of Tom Phelan (1925–2006), a founding Board member of Partners and one of the nation's strongest advocates for finding new ways to help congregations care for their historic sacred places. At a time when few religious leaders of any faith were willing to be

outspoken, Tom led the way in encouraging Partners to think boldly. He was a driving force behind our founding, and for many years both before and after, he was mentor, sage and good counsel. Ordained a Roman Catholic priest, he lived much of his life in the City of Troy, New York, a beloved leader at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute where he served as long-time dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and resident chaplain. Many of Partners' old friends will remember Tom from our national Sacred Trusts conferences and other workshops where he was often featured as a keynote speaker. Perhaps his favorite topic was addressing the issue of making sensitive liturgical changes to historic church interiors. We were always happy to offer him a bully pulpit. Tom provided intellectual breadth, vigor and energy to many organizations, Partners among them, and we are grateful for that legacy.

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## Partners Opens Regional Office in Fort Worth, TX

Partners for Sacred Places recently opened a regional office in Fort Worth, TX. The new office brings Partners' unique blend of historic preservation and community building to the North Central Texas region. The project was started with a \$1 million grant from the Dick Bundy Donor Advised Fund through the Greater Wichita Falls Community Foundation.

"Partners has reached a level of maturity, knowledge and capacity where we feel we can extend our impact by working in local regions, hands-on and up close," explains Partners Executive Director Robert Jaeger. "We want to apply what we know, and we want to learn more from local experience."

A team of local religious, community, historic and design organizations worked to bring Partners to Fort Worth, led by local architect, civic and faith leader James Nader. Fort Worth boasts a strong faith community, a long tradition of building on history and culture, an active philanthropic and civic community, and ongoing efforts in community and economic development-making it the perfect place for Partners' regional office. The office will be operated by a small staff, an Advisory Board of community leaders and a roster of dedicated experts in construction, stewardship and community ministry, all managed and supported by the national organization.

Initially, Partners will concentrate its efforts in Fort Worth communities but will expand these efforts regionally in two or three years. Over the next five years, Partner will make a significant impact on congregation renewal, including: 200 congregations receiving capacity-building support; 60 that will complete *New Dollars* training; 47 that will receive training and technical assistance matching grants totaling over \$200,000; and 32 that will receive seed construction grants totaling over \$300,000.

For more information on the Fort Worth regional office, contact James Nader, Executive Developer, at 817/965-5072 or at [jnader@sacredplaces.org](mailto:jnader@sacredplaces.org).

## Civic Leaders Launch Philadelphia Regional Fund for Sacred Places

On May 19th, 2006, Partners officially launched its Philadelphia Regional Fund for Sacred Places at a high-energy event hosted by Shiloh Baptist Church in South Philadelphia. The event included the formal announcement of the 2006 grant recipients, music courtesy of Shiloh, and remarks by leaders from the public and private sectors who helped raise \$1.2 million to match a challenge grant from the William Penn Foundation.

Major support for meeting the William Penn challenge came from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, and from a variety of private foundations and individual donors.

Grants totaling \$750,000 were awarded to:

- ❖ Chestnut Hill Baptist Church (Chestnut Hill), Philadelphia
- ❖ Church of the Holy Trinity, West Chester
- ❖ Emanuel Lutheran Church (Queen Village), Philadelphia
- ❖ Episcopal Church of the Trinity, Coatesville
- ❖ First African Baptist Church (Southwest Center City), Philadelphia
- ❖ Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Church (Northern Liberties), Philadelphia
- ❖ Overbrook Presbyterian Church (Overbrook Farms), Philadelphia
- ❖ Polite Temple Baptist Church (Germantown), Philadelphia
- ❖ St. Andrew and St. Monica Episcopal (Powelton Village), Philadelphia
- ❖ St. Francis de Sales Church (University City/Spruce Hill), Philadelphia
- ❖ St. John's Episcopal Church, Norristown
- ❖ St. Mary's Episcopal, Hamilton Village (University City), Philadelphia

Members from all grantee congregations, along with Partners' Board of Directors, the Fund Advisory Committee and many other supporters were in attendance, making for a diverse and joyful event.

The Fund provides technical assistance, *New Dollars/New Partners* training, workshops and capital grants to historic houses of worship in the city of Philadelphia and in Pennsylvania's Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties. Partners will continue to grow the Fund's resources, and plans to award 8-12 grants annually in the range of \$25,000-\$100,000 each.

For more information on the Fund, please contact Erin Coryell, Director, Philadelphia Regional Fund at [ecoryell@sacredplaces.org](mailto:ecoryell@sacredplaces.org).



Joe Certaine, Director of the Governor's Southeast Regional Office, explains the importance of the Commonwealth's support for the fund.

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Authored by 1:1:6 Senior Project Manager, Lorraine Schnabel

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The Rev. Richard McKeon, priest-in-charge at Zion Episcopal Church, officiates at the dedication of the church's memorial garden for a congregant lost to the September 11th tragedy.

# Sacred Landscape:

## Gardens and Parks Welcome the Community into Older Religious Properties

When the Rev. Dr. C. Lynn Bailey became pastor of St. Johannes Lutheran Church in Charleston, SC in 1995, he inherited a “church that was locked away with a metal fence and a gate that was chained shut,” Rev. Bailey recalls. “We wanted to open it to the community and put beauty there, to send a visible sign of welcome to the community.” So Rev. Bailey and his wife Martha began work on a trinity of gardens for spiritual nourishment, which, over the past ten years, reconnected the church with the surrounding neighborhood.

Across the country, a growing number of churches, synagogues and meetinghouses with older properties are using their outside space to welcome the community and strengthen the social fabric. “Religious institutions are involved in the cultivation of hope in individuals and in communities. A key way to develop hope is through nature,” says the Rev. Thomas Pike, rector of Calvary and St. George’s Episcopal Church in New York City and founding board chair of Partners for Sacred Places. “Most sacred sites were not built to the property line so they have green spaces around them,” he says. “More churches are using these spaces as a gift to the community, like a bouquet of flowers that provides visual impact for passersby.”

Randy Young of Young Goldstein Architects, Inc., an Atlanta firm specializing in religious and church-oriented projects, sees a similar trend: “Churches are paying more attention to their grounds and using them for outdoor activities,” he says. “Creating attractive gardens or labyrinths helps to broaden the reach of the church into the community by opening the doors of its property, not just its building.”

### A Reconciliation Garden

It didn’t take long for the Rev. and Mrs. Martha Bailey to discover there was “an antagonistic relationship with the

neighbors, because the church property looked so bad,” Martha Bailey recalls. Mending fences with residents of the upscale, historic Ansonborough district of downtown Charleston would take time and patience. Martha spent a year clearing away trash from Hurricane Hugo in a walled-in garden. In place of the trash, Martha created The Garden of Beatitudes, a soothing garden with a pond and walkways built from old Charleston bricks they cleared from the hurricane rubble. The congregation began holding service in the garden one day a week. Curious children started to stop by. And slowly, neighborhood families began coming by to enjoy the garden.

In September 2002, neighbors and parishioners dedicated a meditation garden at the edge of the property in memory of the victims of the September 11th tragedy. In December 2005, the Catholic Bishop of Charleston dedicated a Mary Garden at St. Johannes, which features a fountain and flowers symbolic of the Virgin Mary, such as maidenhair ferns, foxgloves, roses and iris. “Lutherans don’t usually have Mary gardens,” Rev. Bailey says, “but we are an ecumenical place in the heart of the city. Our focus is on welcoming everyone.” In that spirit, St. Johannes also keeps its door open all day. “Neighbors tell us that for years they wanted to see inside the church and it was always locked, now they can visit anytime.” Martha says. Not only are neighbors visiting the gardens and making donations to St. Johannes, the congregation has doubled since the Bailey’s arrived ten years ago.

### Creating Memorial Gardens that Welcome the Community

When the Brotherhood Synagogue on Gramercy Park in Manhattan moved into a former Quaker meetinghouse (c. 1859) in the late 1970’s, the congregation made a



**First Presbyterian Church of Chicago operates three community gardens and a greenhouse where neighbors learn to grow their own produce.**

conscious decision to site their memorial wall outside, in a public space. “We wanted to create a welcoming space that a non-Jewish person would feel comfortable visiting, out in a garden rather than inside a synagogue,” says Phillip Rothman, the synagogue’s Executive Director. “And we wanted to respect the building’s past use as a Quaker meetinghouse by not putting up a lot of plaques in the building.”

The centerpiece of their Garden of Remembrance is a long limestone wall of names. Half of the wall features more than 1,300 names of deceased loved ones and the other half features 300 names of individuals lost in the Holocaust. “Many members had grandparents who died in the Holocaust and they didn’t even know if they were buried. This became their final resting place,” Rothman says. Neighbors and synagogue members can purchase a space for the names of loved ones, for whom prayers are offered each year on the anniversary of their death. The synagogue recently created a Biblical Garden that features plants from the Old Testament, such as a thorn bush—the “burning bush” of Moses and the exodus from Egypt story.

“The reason for a sacred space is to be welcoming and the outside needs to communicate welcome as much as the inside does,” says the Rev. Richard McKeon, priest-in-charge at Zion Episcopal Church in Dobbs Ferry, NY, which recently dedicated a memorial garden on its property to a congregant lost in the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center. “A memorial garden provides a place for

meditation and prayer—it’s the perfect match of purpose and form,” he says.

Zion Episcopal Church sits on two acres of property in this 19th-century Hudson River village. “It’s the only green space in downtown Dobbs Ferry so we wanted to make it available to the public,” Rev. McKeon explains. The church explored creating a public sculpture garden but found the cost too prohibitive. When a congregant asked Rev. McKeon to hold a memorial service for his partner, Michael LePore, who died in the September 11th tragedy, Rev. McKeon suggested creating a memorial garden in LePore’s honor. The

idea struck a chord with villagers who contributed generously to the garden. Landscape architect and Zion member Elizabeth Martin designed a ¼-acre garden with a low, curving stone wall that carries water into a reflecting pool. Dogwoods and Japanese maples encircle the garden, which was designed to be low-maintenance. Since dedicating the memorial garden in September 2005, the church received two more memorial contributions for its outside space—a rose arbor and outside altar. “It’s a lovely way to use memorial contributions that allows us to give something back to the community,” Rev. McKeon says.

### **Making a Picture Gallery for the Neighborhood to Enjoy**

Partners founder Tom Pike encourages congregations to find creative ways to make their property visually appealing even when it isn’t possible to make it open to the public every day, (which involves added cost and potential liability.) He suggests the church light its stained glass windows from the inside each night. “Setting the timer to go on for an hour or so each evening creates a kind of picture gallery for the community,” Rev. Pike says. He also encourages congregations to light their steeples and domes so the community can enjoy the architectural features of the building. (*See article on Historic Boston’s steeple lighting project on page 14.*)

### **Creating “Outdoor Rooms” for Ministry**

St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Winston-Salem, NC, is in the final stages of a comprehensive



landscape master plan for its 5-acre property that includes a series of “outdoor rooms,” says Catherine Hendren, Chair of the church’s landscape committee and its St. Francis Fellowship, an “earth ministry” committee that was formed to address global environmental issues but soon shifted its focus to developing the church grounds as “a model for caring for creation right here at home,” Hendren explains. When St. Paul’s began planning a \$15 million construction project to renovate its education building and add a new fellowship hall five years ago, the St. Francis Fellowship made a compelling case to include a comprehensive landscape plan. “We wanted to extend the ministry of the church into the community by creating inviting places to sit, congregate and exercise,” Hendren says. St. Paul’s hired Raleigh landscape architecture firm Little & Little to design the master plan.

A key focus of the landscape plan was renovations to a sunken, multi-level “cloister” enclosed on three sides by the church and education building which was only accessible from the church. Everyone in the parish had a story of being locked in the cloister at one time or another, Hendren recalls, so making it accessible from the outside was critical. A stone staircase provides access to the cloister for the first time from the church’s exterior and joins all four levels. New features include a baby’s garden with a rubber surface for crawling and an eight-inch spruce “hill” for toddlers to climb.

Before developing the plan, the church sought input from its 2,500 parishioners and over 100 residents from the historic West End neighborhood, asking what they would most like to see changed. An overwhelming majority wanted St. Paul’s to change its parking lot—one and a half acres of barren asphalt that dumped a torrent of water into the road during heavy rains. Little & Little designed a three-level terraced parking lot with extensive drainage system that is landscaped with rock walls, climbing vines, shrubs and trees.

### **Farewell Liturgy to the Trees**

When St. John’s Episcopal Church in Jamaica Plain, MA, had to remove several prominent trees on its property as part of an underground drainage and landscape renovation project four years ago, the congregation held a “Liturgy of Farewell to Our Trees” and invited neighbors to join them. The trees were damaged by disease and hurricanes but there was much resistance from the congregation and neighbors to cutting them down, recalls Franklyn Salimbene, who chaired the Capital Planning Committee and coordinated the landscape project. “A large blue spruce in front of the church was a play tree for the Sunday school children—and many adults remembered playing on it as children,” he says. However, the spruce and other trees had grown so tall that in summer the church was not visible

from the street. “Part of a church’s presence in the community is its building,” Salimbene says. “It has to be visible.”

The Sunday before the trees were cut down, the rector, choir and 50 congregants walked from tree to tree sprinkling each with holy water and incense, and blessing it. Sunday school children drew pictures and notes saying goodbye and pinned them to the trees. The church distributed a flyer to neighbors explaining why the trees had to come down and inviting them to the liturgy so “we didn’t get any angry phone calls from neighbors,” Salimbene says. When new trees were planted a year later, St. John’s held a similar ceremony welcoming the new trees.

Thanks to the underground drainage system, the church basement (which for many years was moldy and underutilized) is now regularly used by parishioners and community groups. A brick patio with stone benches and a canopy of new maple trees installed in front of the church where the blue spruce stood provides the congregation with its first level terrain for outside gatherings on the hilly property. “The project helped us reconnect with the community,” Salimbene says. “Now the church is more visible and the grounds are more inviting.”

### **Turning a Neglected Lot into a City Park**

When St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in downtown Atlanta was built in 1906, the neighborhood surrounding it was residential. In the 1930’s, the neighborhood turned commercial and St. Luke’s became a commuter church. With the construction of an interstate highway, sunken 25 feet below street level in the 1960s, the neighborhood became a no-man’s land, says Randy Young, president of Young Goldstein Architects, Inc., and president of the Board of Trustees of The Park at St. Luke’s, Inc., the non-profit entity that manages the park.

In the late 1980’s, parishioners sought permission from the Atlanta Department of Transportation (DOT) to create a park in a 1.35-acre triangle of trash-strewn land between the highway gulch and the church property. The DOT granted St. Luke’s a long-term lease to develop and maintain the land, and the church transformed it with grass, trees and shrubs, park benches and brick pathways. A few Sundays each summer, St. Luke’s holds Mass-on-the-Grass in the park, which culminates in a picnic.

St. Luke’s has a history of community outreach, establishing one of the first community kitchens in Atlanta and a job-training program that was so successful it became a separate non-profit entity—The Atlanta Enterprise Center. St. Luke’s current ministry for the neighborhood’s large homeless population includes a soup kitchen, a health clinic, post office and counseling services. As a result of this prominent ministry, the majority of people currently using the park are homeless. “We created the park as a gift to the city,” Young says. “We wanted it to be

*“The project has helped us reconnect with the community. Now the church is more visible and the grounds are more inviting”*

FRANKLYN SALIMBENE, CHAIR OF THE CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE, ST. JOHN’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN JAMAICA PLAIN, MA



*“The reason for a sacred space is to be welcoming and the outside needs to communicate welcome as much as the inside does.”*

REV. RICHARD MCKEON,  
PRIEST-IN-CHARGE AT  
ZION EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
IN DOBBS FERRY, NY

**Martha Bailey enjoys a quiet moment in St. Johannes Lutheran Church’s Mary Garden, one of a trinity of gardens for spiritual nourishment.**

available to everyone. While we didn’t create the park for the homeless, we’ve accepted that they are the main group using it.”

### **Striking a Balance Between Public and Private Use of Outside Space**

Creating a welcoming place for the homeless has not been without its challenges. In 2000, with permission from DOT, the park board installed a gate around the park and hired a part-time security guard to discourage people from damaging the park. “There was a great debate about the fence,” Young recalls. “The homeless are so often spoken of in a negative way and we wanted to make them feel welcome but we also needed to control access. We have found that with some degree of security and upkeep on our part, the homeless who use the park respect it pretty well.”

Edward Daugherty, a landscape architect in Atlanta since 1952, has helped many congregations with older properties strike a balance between public and private use of their outside space, including his own church, All Saints Episcopal. Built in 1904 on a small swath of land in what is now the heart of midtown Atlanta, All Saints slowly acquired 85 to 90 percent of an entire city block through donations, Daugherty says. Like many older religious properties, the campus was not planned, so the end result was an open square with a building on each corner, including a day care center and an inpatient rehab program. In the 1970’s the church installed a 120-foot long arching walkway made of cortense steel with a clear plastic

roof that links the north and south ends of the property and created several access points where the public can enter the gardens and cemetery in the center of the campus. The archway was designed to look like a “space diagram of a gothic cloister, intentionally ephemeral, to invite the public inside,” Daugherty says.

Some guests overstay their welcome, however. “In recent years, because people were using it as a urinal and an overnight camping space, we had to put in discreet gates,” Daugherty explains. “Like All Saints, we’ve had to find a balance between opening the grounds during the day with the necessity of closing them at night,” Daugherty says

### **Transforming Vacant Lots into Community Gardens**

In the Woodlawn section of Chicago’s South Side, First Presbyterian Church of Chicago operates three community gardens and a greenhouse that bring together the diverse residents of this transitional neighborhood which is emerging from 40 years of neglect. Once a thriving shopping district, Woodlawn suffered an economic collapse in the late 1950s. Riots and arson in the 1960s and 1970s left 65 percent of the properties in the neighborhood burned out and vacant, recalls long time pastor Rev. Gerald Wise. The population shrank by two thirds. To help remaining residents, First Presbyterian created one of the first Head Start programs in the country and reached out to Woodlawn

residents with hot meals and food distribution. In the late 1980s, the church began purchasing parcels of vacant land surrounding its property through tax sales.

Partnering with the Center for Neighborhood Technologies, the church turned the vacant lots into community gardens and a greenhouse to teach local residents how to grow their own produce. The first garden, God's Little Acre, is tended by senior citizens who harvest everything from corn and squash to tobacco, cotton and peanuts. Another garden, developed on the site of an old Episcopal church, is tended by nearby University of Chicago students, community residents and children from the Head Start program. A third garden, overseen by a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) learning center, grows vegetables that are distributed to neighborhood families. The gardens bustle with activity: CSA recently sponsored a conference on alternative energy sources there and students regularly hold fairs and art shows at the gardens.

"The gardens provide a non-threatening way to bring people in the community together," Rev. Wise says. "On any given day you can see a great mix of people getting their hands dirty together—people raised as share croppers in Alabama, students from the university, and the new influx of African American professionals who are part of the gentrification of the area." Most gardeners are not members of First Presbyterian. In the 1950's the church had 3,000 members. Now 200 people call the massive 1929 Gothic revival church home. "We are growing again and the gardens have something to do with that," Rev. Wise says.

## Hints for Developing a Landscape Plan for Your Sacred Space

- ❖ Involve the community and current users of your building(s) and grounds in the planning process through open meetings, surveys and newsletters.
- ❖ Work with a professional landscape architect to design your landscape plan.
- ❖ Consider practical issues such as maintenance, security, liability and the full range of potential users of the space while developing the landscape plan.
- ❖ Use the landscape development as an opportunity to encourage multi-generational use of your space.
- ❖ Incorporate your congregation's theological beliefs or faith perspective into the landscape plan.
- ❖ Partner with local organizations such as horticultural societies, community-supported agriculture groups, and government agencies such as parks, recreation and transportation departments.
- ❖ Remain flexible to changing needs and patterns of use during the development of the landscape plan.



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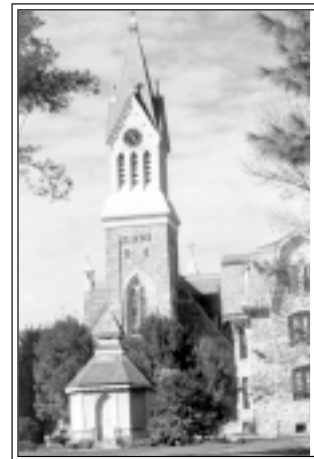
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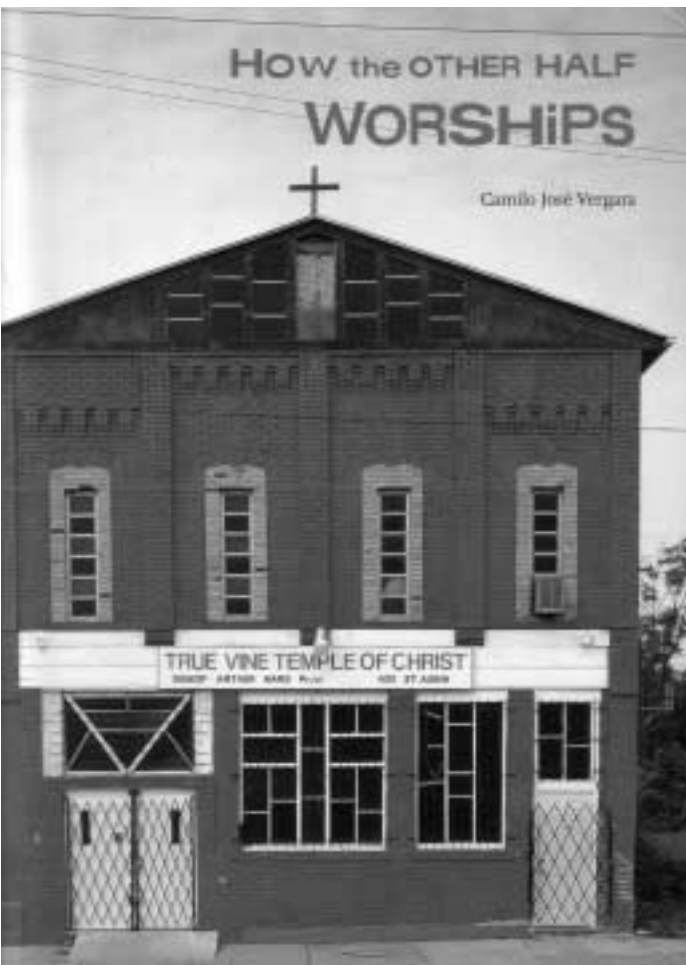
## Book Review: *How the Other Half Worships*

In this sequel to his 1995 book, *The New American Ghetto*, Camilio Jose Vergara echoes the title of Jacob Riis' pioneering work of photojournalism about New York City tenement life in the late 1890's, *How the Other Half Lives*. Vergara's book, like Riis', will help Americans view and understand lives of which most of us know little.

In his introduction Vergara writes: "I was able to show how ordinary structures assume, modify, and shed a religious character, how traditional churches—if they fail to adapt to new congregations—are demolished, and how new buildings are designed and built from the ground up as churches."

Vergara's gorgeous coffee table book is an examination of inner city houses of worship and how they reflect the congregants' belief systems, religious practices, and connections to their cultural roots. Rich with vibrant color photographs and stimulating text, *How the Other Half Worships* constantly impresses readers with the resilience with which people, transplanted to low-income urban centers from rural America and other countries, transform those neighborhoods to reflect their culture and religious practices.

Available through Rutgers University Press ([www.rutgerspress.rutgers.edu](http://www.rutgerspress.rutgers.edu)), *How the Other Half Worships* will be a welcome addition to the library of those interested in the intersection of architecture, culture, community and religion.



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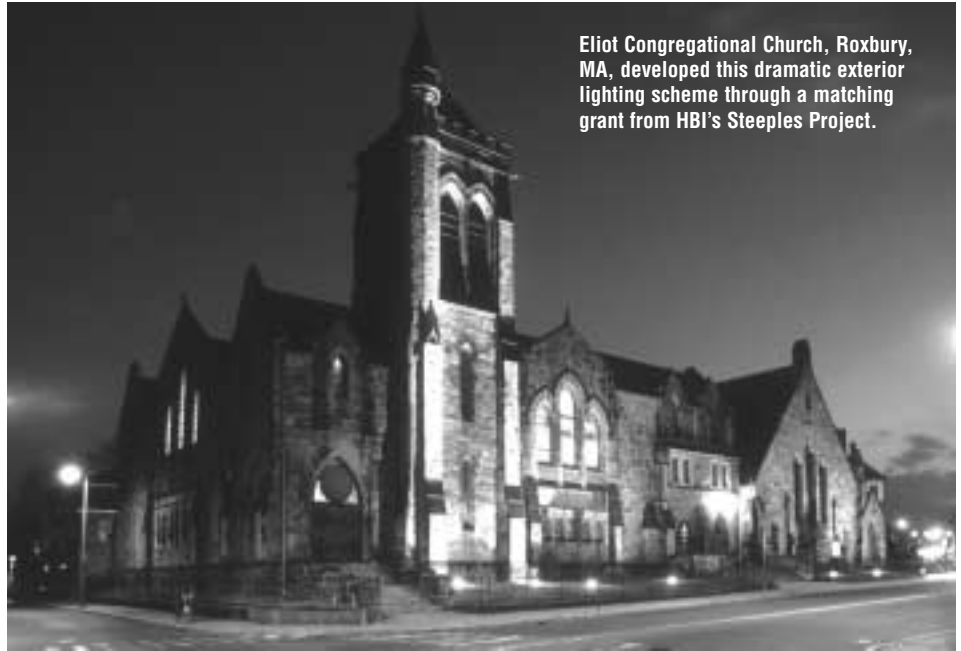
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# Historic Boston's Steeple Project Lights up the Skyline



Eliot Congregational Church, Roxbury, MA, developed this dramatic exterior lighting scheme through a matching grant from HBI's Steeples Project.

In the late 1980s, some of Boston's most historically and architecturally significant houses of worship were slipping into decline. A combination of aging buildings, deferred maintenance and changing demographics threatened the physical structure of these religious properties and jeopardized the social service programs housed there, many of which provided a lifeline to surrounding neighborhoods. To stem the tide of decline, Historic Boston Incorporated (HBI), a non-profit that puts people and resources together to preserve endangered historic sites in Boston, created the Steeples Project. The project provides matching grants of up to \$50,000 to Boston's historic churches and synagogues for technical assistance, major repairs and exterior lighting.

HBI's Steeples Project was part of a national movement in the mid-1980s to early 1990s, in which several local historic preservation groups began providing technical assistance, training, seed grants and capital grants to historic religious properties. What sets HBI apart from other groups in this movement is its focus on lighting steeples, towers and domes to emphasize the importance of sacred places in the urban skyline. HBI brokered an innovative community partnership with Boston's Public Works Department, Street Lighting Division, to enable sacred places to draw power for exterior lighting projects from the city lighting grid. "This is a miniscule cost to the city but it lifts a

great financial burden from the churches, temples and synagogues," says Jillian Adams, Project Manager for the Steeples Project. When the street lights come on, so do the spotlights on the steeples, towers and domes. In another example of forward thinking, HBI was the first organization outside of Philadelphia to sponsor Partners' *New Dollars/New Partners for Your Sacred Space* training for congregations.

With supervision from HBI staff and trained preservation specialists, Steeples Project grants fund comprehensive building conditions surveys; major repairs to building envelopes; and professional lighting designers to develop and install exterior lighting schemes. The project also teaches congregations about long-term planning for building maintenance and fundraising. Congregations can qualify for grants if they are: architecturally and historically significant, with steeples, towers or domes that are visual landmarks; endangered due to management, financial or demographic challenges; and provide human services that improve the quality of life in transitional Boston neighborhoods.

Since the Steeples Project started in 1993, HBI has raised over \$1.4 million from 15 charitable organizations, nearly all local to Boston. One of the greatest challenges HBI faces is making the case to funders for continued support. By building on the strengths of the project, paying close attention to feedback from

*Editor's Note: Sacred Places focuses our Funding Brief this issue on a non-profit organization that makes grants to historic religious properties because its approach to raising continued support from foundations can serve as a model for other communities.*

grant makers and keeping an eye on new funding possibilities, HBI has successfully funded the project for 13 years.

### **Making the Case for Urban Religious Properties as Community Service Anchors**

In developing its case for the Steeples Project, HBI tied the buildings' repair needs to the critical role they played in the community—housing social service programs that strengthen and sustain struggling inner-city neighborhoods. HBI drew on the research and publication of its “Religious Property Casebook” (1991), which highlighted 40 endangered religious properties with historic and community significance, to demonstrate a critical need for the project. Recognizing that some funders are interested in restoring the outside of historically significant buildings while others are interested in increasing the capacity of congregations to provide social services, HBI tailors each approach accordingly.

board members and foundations.” As projects funded through the Steeples Project reach completion, HBI uses testimonials by dynamic religious leaders expressing how HBI helped them save their church, often taking potential funders on site visits to these congregations. HBI also conducts a formal evaluation of the project every two to three years and incorporates these findings into their fundraising case. Such evaluations allow HBI to demonstrate the effectiveness of the project and get quotes that can be used in future grant proposals.

### **Highlighting the Strengths of the Project**

By paying close attention to feedback from grant makers over the years, HBI has learned which aspects of its project are most attractive to funders and highlights them in their case statement. “One of the strongest pitches we make is that every dollar we take in goes directly to the historic property,” Breikreutz

funds. For example, HBI has helped grantees successfully apply for more than \$1 million in funds from the Massachusetts Historical Commission's Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) grants over the past 13 years.

Another element of the project that funders find attractive is the intensive technical assistance HBI staff provide to each congregation. This hands-on project oversight guarantees that the projects succeed and that the money is well managed. “We spell out the number of staff hours (200 per project) that we provide to each congregation in the budgets we submit to funders so they can see the resources we add to their contribution,” Adams explains. “We make it clear to funders that the grant award is just the first step,” she adds. “We work with these congregations for years—changing the culture of the institution to make building maintenance a priority.”



HBI Steeples Project grantee Second Church of Christ, Scientist in Roxbury, MA, gets a roof inspection.

### **Connecting the Dots Between People and Potential Funders**

Since the early years of the project, HBI has followed what Executive Director Eric Breikreutz calls the “six degrees of separation model. In the fundraising game it's all who you know,” Breikreutz says. “We have worked hard to find the connections between our

explains. “HBI doesn't take any overhead—that positions us very strongly with funders so we put that in bold letters in all our proposals.” Another strength that HBI highlights for funders is the matching element—each congregation is required to match Steeple Project grants dollar for dollar, so funders' money is leveraged with other private and public

### **HBI's Keys to Success**

- ❖ Tied the building repair needs to the critical public value of the social services housed in religious properties
- ❖ Connected the dots between friends of the organization and potential funders
- ❖ Used testimonials from dynamic religious leaders who benefited from the project
- ❖ Evaluated and documented the success of the project and included that in grant proposals
- ❖ Used feedback from grant makers to further refine its case
- ❖ Calculated staff hours contributed to the project through technical assistance and project oversight and included those amount as in-kind contributions in proposal budgets



# Monument Conservation Collaborative: Preserving the Substance and Significance of Gravestones



**“Before” and “after” Monument Conservation Collaborative restored grave stones at Old Dutch Church in Kingston, NY.**

Nestled in the heart of historic Kingston, NY, Old Dutch Church serves a congregation that has worshipped here since 1659, when the Dutch colonized the Hudson River Valley. While the current bluestone church was built in 1852 (the fourth church to be erected on nearly the same site), the cemetery surrounding the church is one of the oldest in the region, with graves dating back to the 17th century, including early Dutch gravestones carved with images of skulls and crossbones. The cemetery contains the graves of over 72 patriots from the Revolutionary War.

By the late 1990s, time and environmental elements had taken their toll on the ancient burial ground. High concentrations of acid rain from concrete factories along the Hudson River deteriorated the gravestones. Pollutants and algae stained the graves to the point where their inscriptions were unreadable. Many grave markers were fractured. Others had fallen down. To restore the cemetery and preserve it for future generations, Old Dutch Church called on the experts at Monument Conservation Collaborative (MCC), a Connecticut-based partnership whose diverse talents address the academic, artistic, scientific, mechanical and practical aspects of stone monument conservation.

Founded 11 years ago by conservator and marble restoration specialist Irving Slavid, MCC provides master plans, makes recommendations for stone conservation, executes treatments and provides specialized courses and training. MCC’s goal is to preserve both the physical substance and historic/artistic significance of monuments and gravestones, and to retard continued environmental decay. “Because of the close proximity of the visitor to the artifact and the high level of scrutiny given to the inscriptions, cemetery conservation practices demand closer tolerances of color and texture than are typical in building preservation,” Slavid explains. To address this, Slavid’s team includes a stonemason specializing in preservation and restoration and a chemist who specializes in the analysis and preservation of traditional construction materials.

MCC began work at Old Dutch Church cemetery in 1999. They photographed each grave marker, deciphered the worn transcriptions and created a complete map of the cemetery and its holdings. They then developed a restoration plan. Between 2000 and 2003, MCC painstakingly repaired and conserved 149 gravestones. They re-set fallen grave markers, repaired fractured stones and cleaned and chemically treated



marble stones suffering from “sugaring”—when environmental chemicals cause the marble to crumble away like sugar.

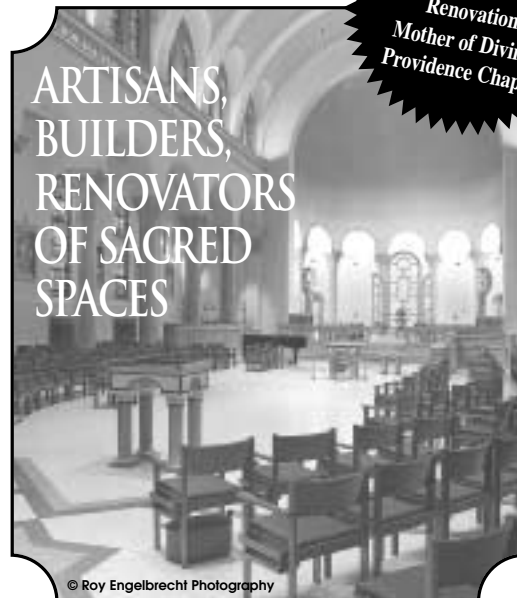
The majority of grave markers in the cemetery are carved from local sandstone, which, because of its high clay content, shrinks and swells with the weather causing the stones to split or “delaminate.” About 100 years ago, stewards of the cemetery tried to stem this deterioration by encasing the sides and tops of many gravestones in ornate copper caps. Because the copper casings extended into the ground, they trapped moisture and further damaged the stones. MCC carefully removed the copper caps; cleaned the gravestones of loose debris, stains and biological growth; applied chemical consolidates to strengthen the stone; and filled cracks with a fluid grout that allows the stone to continue to “breathe.” Once the stones were stabilized, MCC trimmed the bottom off the copper caps to allow for the release of ground moisture and reattached them to the stones. By carefully digging around the base of severely delaminated stones, MCC retrieved shards of their stone faces and restored them so their inscriptions could be read once again.

*Monument Conservation Collaborative is a member of Partners' Professional Alliance. For more information on this membership resource for congregations and design professionals, please see page 18, or contact Rana Guidimal McNamara at [rmcnamara@sacredplaces.org](mailto:rmcnamara@sacredplaces.org) or 215/567-3234 ext. 15, or visit Partners' website: [www.sacredplaces.org/professionals.html](http://www.sacredplaces.org/professionals.html).*

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