




# **Saving Sacred Places, Strengthening Communities**

**A Case for Support of  
Partners for Sacred Places**



AT THE INTERSECTION  
OF HERITAGE, FAITH,  
& COMMUNITY





**We're giving sacred spaces  
new life, along with their  
communities.**

"And David danced before the Lord with all his might" (2 Samuel 6:14). These words inspired the congregation at Shiloh Baptist Church in Philadelphia to share their former Sunday school building with Brian Sanders' JUNK contemporary dance company through Partners' **Making Homes for the Arts in Sacred Places** program. This partnership has brought new funds and energy to a small congregation and created new space for the arts in a magnificent historic building.

*Shiloh Baptist Church (Philadelphia, PA),  
photo by Ted Lieverman*

*Cover: St. Peter's Church (Philadelphia, PA),  
photo by Daniel Kontz*



For the last 30 years Partners for Sacred Places has been at the vanguard of a national movement to avert a growing crisis: the deterioration and loss of historic sacred places and the resulting harm to communities across America.

When sacred places close, communities not only lose a place of worship, they lose vital programs that serve children and youth, seniors, the homeless and hungry, immigrants, ex-offenders, and others in need. Residents lose a local landmark, a meeting hall, a garden, a playground, a child care center, and a concert venue. **Sacred places at risk put communities at risk!**

Partners is the only national nonsectarian organization to tackle this issue. Our innovative research and programs have helped thousands of sacred places across the country develop new partnerships and raise more funds from outside their congregations so that these vital anchor institutions can continue their life-changing work for people of all faiths and people of no faith. Yet, an estimated 6,000 to 10,000 sacred places close each year due to congregations' inability to support both their mission-related work and their building maintenance. **We must all do more to save sacred places at risk and their vital community programs.**

With your help, we can expand Partners' existing programs, extend our remarkable history of innovation and entrepreneurship, and build organizational capacity that will help sustain our work well into the future. **Will you support Partners' first-ever campaign: Saving Sacred Places, Strengthening Communities?**

# Today's Impact

Thanks to our role as a nonsectarian national nonprofit, Partners brings a unique perspective to the vital role that sacred places play as both houses of worship and as civic assets, as well as the potential of congregations to enliven and serve their larger communities. As historic places of worship face ever greater challenges from diminishing membership and resources, Partners has responded with an ever-growing family of tools to strengthen and protect these important community assets, including:

## Research

Partners has been a research leader, defining and energizing the study of the public value of religious assets with our 1998 landmark study, ***Sacred Places at Risk: New Evidence on How Endangered Older Churches and Synagogues Serve Communities***, and our 2016 study, ***The Economic Halo Effect of Sacred Places***. Thanks to these studies, which documented dozens of ways sacred places contribute to their communities and local economies, congregations around the country are able to advocate for increased community support.

## Training & Support

Partners offers in-person and remote training and support to congregations and others with older religious properties. Our signature program, **New Dollars/New Partners**, has helped leaders from over 1,000 sacred places build their capacity, form new community partnerships, and raise new funds from outside their congregations. Partners also provides individualized support services, working one-on-one with congregations to measure their community impact, facilitate space sharing, raise funds, deepen engagement with their local communities, and more.

## Grants

Partners has provided more than \$5.2 million in capital grants to sacred places over the last decade, which have been leveraged by recipients to secure an additional \$32 million. In 2016 Partners established the **National Fund for Sacred Places** in collaboration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Fund is a grant-making and capacity-building program to help significant historic sacred places successfully complete major capital projects and to bring greater attention to the role of sacred places in America.



# Tomorrow's Potential

The **Saving Sacred  
Places, Strengthening  
Communities Campaign**

will enable Partners to sustain and build our work over the next decade and more, empowering communities across the country to maximize the value of their sacred places.

*Church of the Advocate (Philadelphia, PA),  
photo by Daniel Kontz*



## Campaign Objectives

*Expand Support for* **Congregations & Their Communities**

\$5,500,000 Goal

*Innovate in Response to* **Changing Needs**

\$3,000,000 Goal

*Increase Partners' Capacity & Sustainability*

\$1,500,000 Goal

**Total Goal: \$10 Million**



# Expand Support for Congregations & Their Communities

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**\$5,500,000**

Partners has developed a variety of programs to support congregations around the country. Your support will allow us to continue and expand these successful programs, helping congregations in communities around the country realize their potential as civic assets. Help Partners bring our proven programs to a community near you.

## **The National Fund for Sacred Places**

The **National Fund for Sacred Places**, a program of Partners for Sacred Places in collaboration with the National Trust, provides capital grants for restoration and renovation projects at significant historic sacred places. Fund recipients also receive a package of *pro bono* consulting services, such as fundraising feasibility studies, congregational trainings, and space assessments. Partners received over 600 applications and supported 54 projects during the program's first four years. Your support will allow additional congregations to participate in this program.

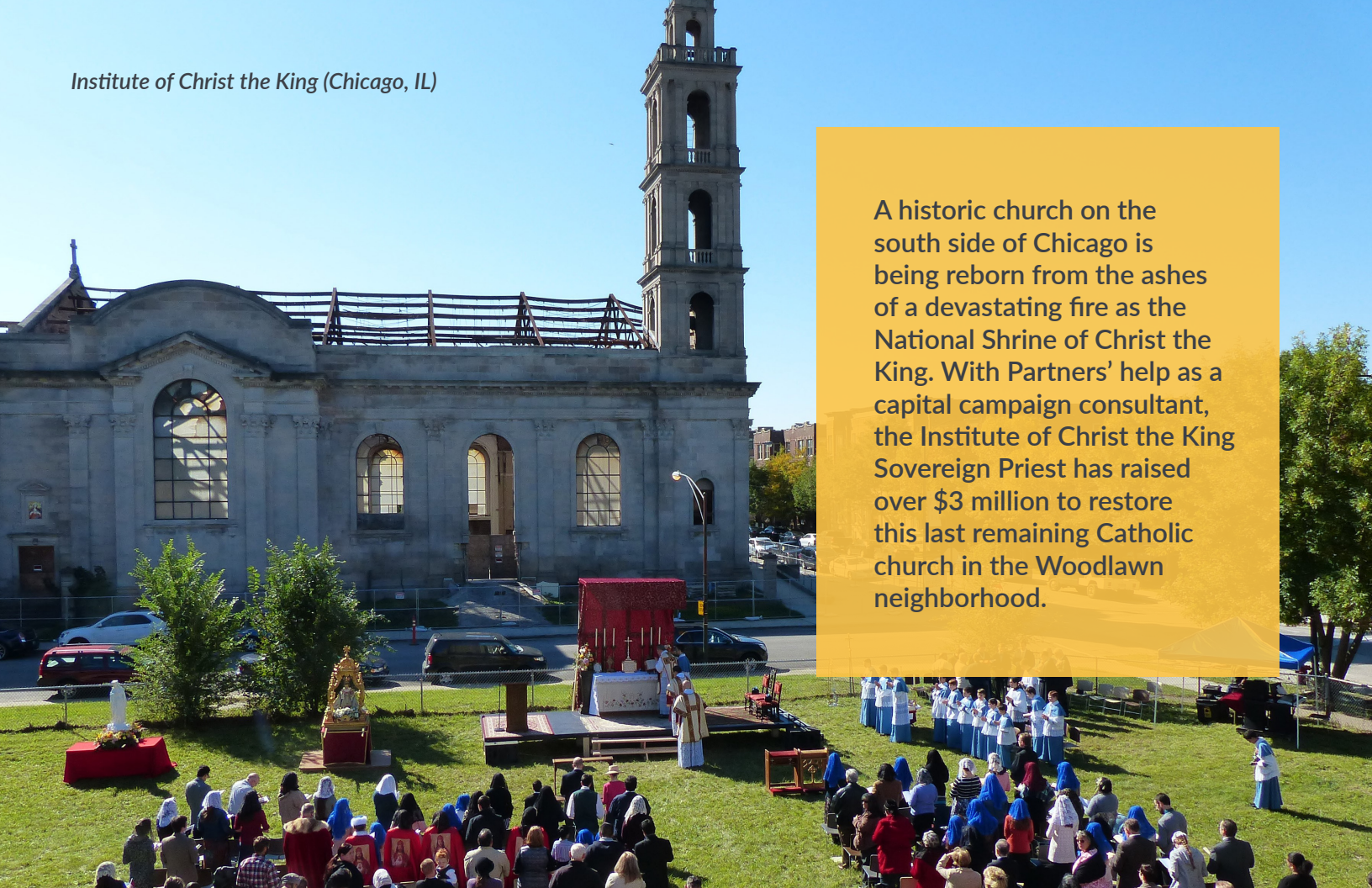
## **Making Homes for the Arts in Sacred Places**

**Making Homes for the Arts in Sacred Places (AiSP)** brings together sacred places that have space to share and artists or arts organizations looking for a new home. The program has facilitated over 50 matches between congregations and artists in cities across the United States. Your support will allow Partners to continue bringing together these natural partners.

## **New Dollars/New Partners**

**New Dollars/New Partners** is an innovative, year-long training program that combines the best of the resources, techniques, and knowledge developed by Partners since 1989. Congregations that typically participate have a historic sacred place, capital needs beyond the current financial capability of the congregation, and a desire to deepen their community connections and to use their buildings more effectively. Your support will allow Partners to provide capacity-building training to additional congregations.





A historic church on the south side of Chicago is being reborn from the ashes of a devastating fire as the National Shrine of Christ the King. With Partners' help as a capital campaign consultant, the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest has raised over \$3 million to restore this last remaining Catholic church in the Woodlawn neighborhood.

### **Playing & Preserving — Pipe Organs & Music**

This pioneering initiative in Philadelphia has assessed the condition and playability of several dozen important pipe organs, educated sacred places on the significance and care of their instruments, and sponsored performances for children and neighbors that bring together organists and young musicians. Your support will help us bring this program to new cities.

### **Hands-on Consulting**

Partners has developed a unique set of tools and resources that are reflective of our view of sacred places as vital community assets. Our consulting services draw upon our research and training experience and provide tailored experiences for congregations and community stakeholders. Your support will help us provide consulting services to under-resourced congregations.

**"I can't tell you how much the Sacred Places training has meant to me personally. It has given me the inspiration, confidence and motivation to take on these tasks and the belief that I really could do this and make a difference."**

**—Sylvia,  
Spencer Presbyterian  
Church (Spencer, IN)**



# *Innovate in Response to* **Changing Needs**

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**\$3,000,000**

With an estimated 6,000–10,000 sacred places closing each year, it's clear we must develop new tools to help sacred places at risk, and that we must act now. Your support will allow Partners to respond quickly and efficiently to congregations' changing needs by funding two pilot projects and an Innovation Fund. We will integrate our learnings from these projects into future programs and tools for congregations across the country.

## **Sacred Places as Nonprofit Incubators and Education Centers**

Building on Partners' success facilitating space-sharing between congregations and arts organizations, Partners will pilot projects to facilitate space-sharing between congregations and other types of partners, including nonprofit, child care, and adult education organizations. As a result of these projects, congregations will expand the important role they currently play as homes for community-serving programs – raising much needed funds for their facilities while meeting urgent needs for affordable quality early childhood education, adult education, and nonprofit workspace.

## **Community-minded Reuse of Sacred Places That Have Become Endangered**

Partners will develop a guide for congregational leaders considering disposition of their buildings so they have the tools and knowledge to thoughtfully respond to a transition in ownership. In addition to creating a written guide, Partners will directly support congregations in transition through workshops and presentations. This project will fill a gap in current resources available to congregations and is expected to result in the preservation of countless sacred places which would otherwise be lost.





Urban Grace (Tacoma, WA)

With support from Partners' **National Fund for Sacred Places**, Urban Grace, an ecumenical congregation in Tacoma, WA, restored the meeting hall of its historic building for a wide variety of programming uses, including a free hot breakfast served to over 200 people each week and a monthly clinic that provides footcare and health screenings for breakfast guests.

## Innovation Fund

What is the next big idea to save sacred places at risk? We may not know ... yet. Partners' staff and volunteer leadership develop ideas for new programs on an ongoing basis in response to our growing understanding of congregations' needs, new research, and opportunities that arise. We know from past experience that it can take years to raise the funds needed to implement these new ideas — time that could be better spent strengthening congregations. Your support will create an Innovation Fund, which will be used at the discretion of the Board of Directors to fund innovative programs and research that can significantly impact sacred places at risk. This will dramatically reduce the time needed to implement new ideas, increasing our efficiency and support of congregations.

**“One of the reasons why we raised more than we expected was because of what happened spiritually in the congregation. The natural outcome was a financial contribution.”**

**—Pastor Ben Robinson,  
Urban Grace  
(Tacoma, WA)**

# *Increase Partners'* **Capacity & Sustainability**

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**\$1,500,000**

While Partners has made a critical difference for thousands of congregations in our 30-year history, we need to increase our own capacity in order to meet the needs of sacred places at risk throughout America. Your support will allow Partners to increase our capacity, expanding our ability to support sacred places and live our mission in the future.

## **Communications Capacity**

Sacred places are at risk throughout the country. We must do more to let congregations know about the tools and resources Partners has to offer, advocate for increased support for congregations as community assets, and spread the news of Partners' good work. Your support can help provide the dedicated staff and resources needed to establish a communications program that will strengthen congregations and position Partners for growth.

## **Endowment**

While Partners has granted millions to sacred places around the country, we have never established an endowment. Through this campaign, your support will form the start of an endowment, providing increased financial stability in the short term, with a future goal of ensuring uninterrupted support of congregations during economic downturns.

**"Often those of us who minister out of older facilities can get stuck in a 'poor us' mentality. Partners revealed that we have resources of which we have been unaware and those resources can be discovered, promoted and released so that our buildings become more effective servants of our communities."**

**—Pastor David Kromminga,  
Sherman Street Christian  
Reformed Church  
(Grand Rapids, MI)**





Born in an era when support for older sacred places was new and untested, Partners has demonstrated time and time again our ability to grow and innovate.

The **Saving Sacred Spaces, Strengthening Communities Campaign** will enable Partners to respond to new needs, create new tools and programs, and build a new coalition of civic leaders and funders united by a common cause: ensuring that sacred places remain a rich and vital part of the social fabric of our communities.

**Can we count on  
you to help us  
bring this bold  
vision to life?**



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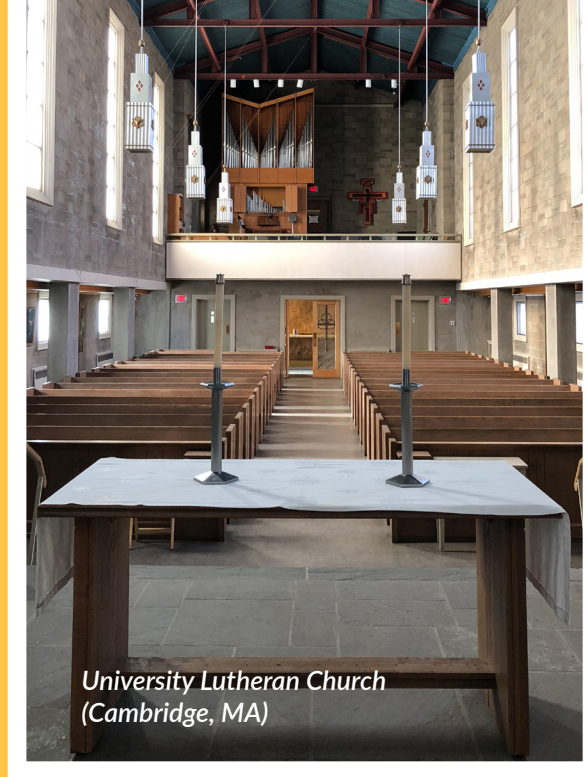
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OF HERITAGE, FAITH,  
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## Partners for Sacred Places

### National Headquarters

1700 Sansom Street, 10th Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

(215) 567-3234

(215) 567-3235 (fax)

partners@sacredplaces.org

### Our Mission

Partners for Sacred Places, founded in 1989, is the only national, nonsectarian, nonprofit organization focused on building the capacity of congregations of historic sacred places to better serve their communities as anchor institutions, nurturing transformation, and shaping vibrant, creative communities.

[www.sacredplaces.org](http://www.sacredplaces.org)