



Central Schwenkfelder Church

Our Church, Our Future

The Campaign for Central Schwenkfelder Church

For more than 70 years, thanks to the generosity and vision of our founders, the Central Schwenkfelder Church congregation has been blessed with a facility that has served us well. It has been a place to gather to glorify God, grow spiritually, support one another, and serve and witness to our community.

Now, we are embarking on a transformative project, designed to ensure that the Central Schwenkfelder Church building will support our mission to preach the Gospel and serve God today, and in the years to come. To bring our plans to fruition, we are seeking the support of all those who are willing and able to join us on this journey to be a part of the renewal of our church for future generations.

“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples in all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

(Matthew 28: 18-20)

Our Community of Disciples

Central Schwenkfelder Church is a place of community and connection, where families who care about each other come together to worship and serve God as disciples. With Christ-centered preaching, this congregation has pride in its heritage and a commitment to communal and personal study, striving to know God and serve others as an expression of its faith. Music fills the rafters of the Sanctuary, and the Praise Team lifts up their voices in Fellowship Hall. Sunday School rooms are filled with children eager to know about God and grow in their faith like their parents and grandparents before them.

An equally important aspect of our congregation is its welcoming environment for newcomers. We aim to provide a home for those seeking to know and serve God. And we are eager to grow – striving to revitalize the congregation in its mission to be connected to the broader community as well as reaching and retaining the next generation.

Because we are inspired by this shared mission, because our congregation is strong, and because our people and programs are outstanding, it can be easy to overlook a problem we face: the tired appearance and dated layout of our facilities. The striking reality is that our building does not reflect the warmth and sense of welcome our congregation embraces. Updating is needed in order to fulfill our Church’s mission today.

*"I am made all things
to all people, that I
might by all means
save some."*

(Corinthians 9:22)

Why Now

To understand the need for the church in today's world, one must recall the way our congregation gathered for worship and study when the church was first built more than 70 years ago. In the design, the Sanctuary was for worship and Fellowship Hall was for social gatherings and meal-sharing.

Today, in addition to the traditional worship service, there is a contemporary worship service held in Fellowship Hall. It is rare that a church is successful in offering two styles of worship; Central Schwenkfelder is truly unique in this. But hosting the two services limits the informal gathering space available for our congregation and changes need to be made for it to continue to flourish. In addition, a congregation that relishes its informal time together is eager to have more open spaces to gather for fellowship.

The Sunday School rooms as originally constructed met the needs and expectations of families at that time, but do not align with the changes in educational programming and the heightened safety concerns of parents today. The pastoral and lay leadership has embarked on various revitalization projects and realigned the staff to support and grow our church's ministry to young families. The programmatic growth in this area now needs to be met by facility changes to create Sunday School rooms with adaptability and improved security for children in the classrooms, which will also benefit the Happy Days Preschool program.

Overall, there is a desire for the building to embody our congregation's commitment to welcoming all who enter its doors with an ease of navigation throughout. Accessibility and safety for members of all ages is paramount, and the planned renovations will eliminate congested circulation areas and significantly improve the building's ADA compliance. Over the years, our congregation has adapted resourcefully to the constraints presented by the space. Now, in being responsive to God's call to extend His Kingdom, we are envisioning the future of Central Schwenkfelder Church as a place with up-to-date technology and security systems and inviting gathering spaces for worship and fellowship.

*“Remember this:
Whoever sows
sparingly will also
reap sparingly, and
whoever sows
generously will reap
generously.”*

(2 Corinthians 9:6)

The Congregational Response

In response to concerns about the aging of the congregation, the trend of decreasing church attendance by young families, and the need for renovations in the Sunday School area, we have embarked on a thoughtful planning process that seeks to meet the needs of all age groups.

A Master Facilities Planning Committee was formed in 2019 and sought input from multiple focus groups, culminating in a Congregational Workshop in January 2020 to review the initial plans and obtain feedback. Surveys taken at the workshop indicated that a significant majority of our current active membership agreed that the church building is in need of updating and was in favor of developing the plans further. A Resolution was then passed at the February 2020 Annual Congregational Meeting to continue with the development of a breathtaking vision for the future under the leadership of the newly formed Renovation Committee.

Renovation plans include the following:

- A fully-accessible side entrance with a canopy, making it more welcoming and convenient in all weather conditions;
- Refurbishing Fellowship Hall to better serve the Contemporary Worship Service, including screens, lighting, and video capabilities;
- Updated technology and audio-visual equipment throughout to respond to the expectations of church-goers today, and to accommodate virtual aspects of our programming going forward;
- A refreshed appearance for the front vestibule and redesigned Narthex for better circulation;
- A new common area and café (“The Hub”) to encourage attendees of both worship services to connect with each other;
- More private areas for pastors to meet and pray with individuals after worship services;
- Larger and more flexible spaces for Sunday School classes, to better serve all age groups;
- Increased security in classrooms;
- Better accessibility throughout to serve all congregants; and
- Updated restrooms, expanding in number and size.

Everything you encounter when visiting Central Schwenkfelder Church - from parking, to entering the building, to sharing refreshments, fellowship, and study of the Scriptures - contributes to your overall experience on a Sunday Morning.

From a spiritual aspect, the worship service is the most important, and this plan will support both the traditional and contemporary services by providing the facilities to allow each service to be the best it can be, helping to foster spiritual growth and providing space for deeper connections with each other.

These relatively limited changes in footprint will result in a transformative change in the way our building reflects who we are as a congregation and enable our many ministries to expand God's Kingdom.

"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked."

(Luke 12:48)

An Invitation to Invest

These plans to update and expand our Church to better serve the community amount to an estimated total cost of \$6 million.

Our goal is to raise the entire cost in donor commitments. We recognize that this is an ambitious goal, but we believe it is a wise and worthy investment. We are creating a respite from the secular world – a place to hear God's Word, grow our congregation and spread the good news of God's salvation and love in Jesus Christ through outreach to others both here and abroad.

We also know that our faith has been handed down from generations, and we worship today in a Church built by those who came before us. Others sacrificed then so that we might grow in faith and service now. We hold dear the commitment to do the same: to share our faith and a beautiful, sacred worship space with new members and the next generation.

We believe that we, the congregation of Central Schwenkfelder Church, can come together to reach our campaign goal. We also know that if we all contribute, the result of our shared commitment will be an even more powerful symbol of the strength of our congregation.

On behalf of all those who will use and benefit from these renovations, both now and in the future, we thank you for considering your part in this extraordinary project!