

Innovative Cultural Uses of Urban Space

RELIGIOUS SPACES

arts uses in religious institution spaces



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a NOCD-NY profile series



look for:

- adaptive reuse
- construction zones and vacant lots
- public outdoor space: short- and long-term
- publicly owned facilities
- religious spaces
- shared space

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MICHAEL KREIGH was president of the Board of Trustees of the New York Society for Ethical Culture from 2001 until 2007. During his tenure he led the board in renovating their auditorium in an effort to attract a greater quantity and higher quality of programming to the space. During his presidency the Society went from annual budget deficits to a balanced budget, in part because of the auditorium renovation and subsequent arts and programming business that was attracted.

Michael led Pratt Center for Community Development's efforts to provide front-end architectural services to not-for-profit, community-based organizations from 2008 until 2011. During his tenure with Pratt Center, Michael developed the Sustainable Houses of Worship program, which sought to work with houses of worship on energy conservation, building refurbishment and space utilization.

cover, left to right: Gallim Dance at Church of St. Luke and St. Matthew; Trinity Project at Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church.

photos: Thomas McGovern, c. bay milin



INTRODUCTION

Religious space across the country is underused by the congregations that manage them and is increasingly employed for cultural purposes that extend beyond the beliefs, mission, and focus of those congregations. With most religious denominations in the United States experiencing a decline in active membership and in light of the significant growth in small nonprofit arts organizations, it is likely that arts and religious groups will increasingly share space.

Decline in Religious Attendance

According to a blog article published in ChurchLeaders.com, between 2000 and 2004, the Catholic Church in the United States experienced an 11 percent decline in attendance, followed closely by other mainstream denominations, which lost attendance at the rate of 10 percent. Evangelical churches experienced the smallest decline in attendance, at 1 percent.¹

Mainstream denominations constructed the majority of the historical religious facilities that are common in New York and other cities across the country. Increasingly, these religious facilities are underused, if not closed altogether. At the same

time, the cost of maintaining a religious facility is significant and increasing constantly; thus it is essential that the facility be used as much as possible for activities that are likely to bring revenue and community support.

Growth in Numbers of Small Performing Arts Groups

At the same time that church attendance in major denominational groups has been declining, there has been an explosion in the number of arts groups, especially small groups with budgets of less than one hundred thousand dollars a year. A Rand research brief reports that between 1982 and 1997, there was an 80 percent increase in

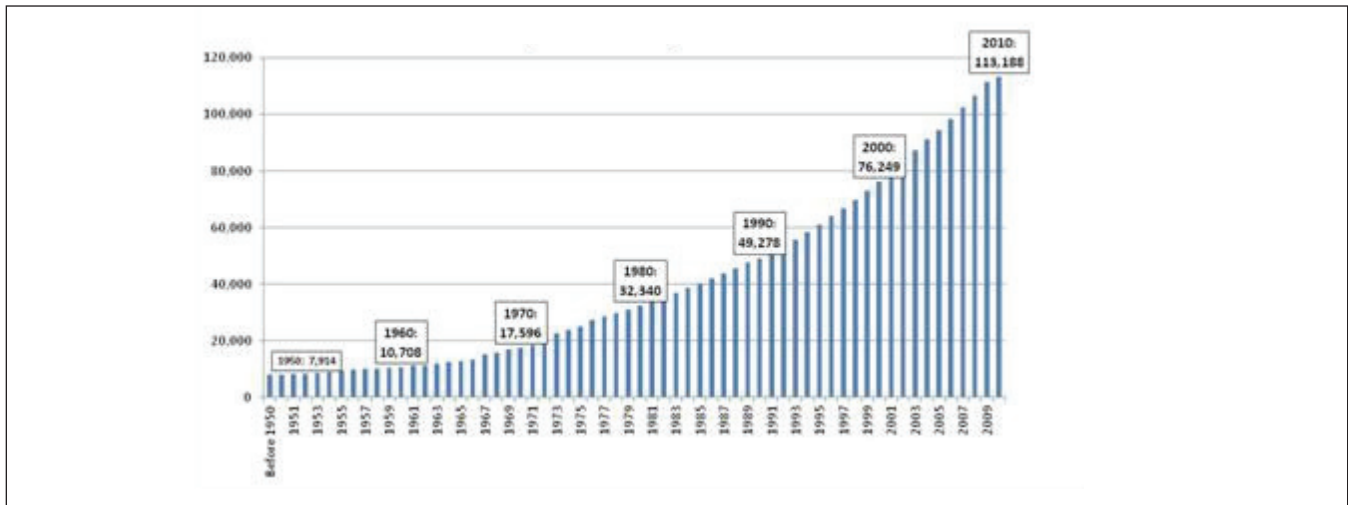
1 <http://www.churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/139575-7-startling-facts-an-up-close-look-at-church-attendance-in-america.html>

the number of performing arts organizations. Inversely, overall revenue for performing arts organizations declined during that time, suggesting that the majority of new arts organizations are small, low budget, locally networked, and heavily dependent on volunteer labor.²

The trends described in the Rand research brief have continued and accelerated, according to data published by Americans for the Arts in their 2012 National Arts Index.³

In light of these statistical trends, it is appropriate to take a look at examples of the use of religious

facility space for arts purposes. The following religious institutions and performing arts groups serve as examples and reference points for the subsequent narrative. They represent a good cross section of the kinds of relationships that develop between congregations and the arts groups that use their buildings. For some of them the connection is largely that of a business relationship. In other cases, partnerships arise through which the goals of the religious institution and the arts group mutually reinforce one another. In still others, arts programming becomes integral to the mission activities of the congregation.



Growth of Nonprofit Arts Organizations: 1950 to 2010 chart: Randy Cohen, Americans for the Arts

The examples, which will be elaborated on later, engendered a number of key findings:

- Economics is the principal driving force on both sides
- Economics is not the only driving force
- Written agreements are essential
- Long-term agreements make investment in infrastructure possible
- Visionary leadership is a key factor in relationships that go beyond business
- Change in leadership is a key factor in disrupting relationships that go beyond business
- Constant communication is essential regardless of the format of the relationship
- Disagreements over content are rare
- Community connection is a common goal of arts groups and congregations.
- Spiritual expression as content is common to both.
- Cosmetic and architectural issues are frequently present
- Written agreements are essential to the security of the relationship
- Visionary leadership creates the most exciting possibilities but can also be vulnerable to leadership change
- Constant open channels of communication are essential to the success of the relationship
- Fears of disagreements over content are largely unfounded
- Almost all religious facilities have deferred maintenance and accessibility issues that must be dealt with

² http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB2504/index1.html

³ <http://www.artsindexusa.org/wp-content/themes/AFTA%20for%20WP/doc/2012-NAI-Full-Report.pdf>

PROFILE EXAMPLES

Hope Chapel

Austin, Texas

<http://www.hope.org> | <http://www.hopearts.org/index.html>

Spaces used: Various church spaces, not leased but used for the arts programming that was part of the mission at the time. The church also rented space around the city for use during the arts festival.

Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas, is a conservative evangelical church that became the center of a vibrant arts community in Austin from the early 1990s to 2007 through its leadership in the creation of the Hope Arts Festival, a citywide festival in Austin. The arts ministry and festival was the brainchild of Hope Chapel's arts pastor, David Taylor. Hope-Arts, a ministry of Hope Chapel, was the soul producer of the festival, though it received minor organizational help from members of other congregations who were part of the Hope Chapel arts community but were not worshippers.

Under Taylor's arts ministry stewardship, Hope Chapel viewed itself as a "hospital" church, welcoming those, especially artists, who had been "beat up" in and by the Christian community. In addition to a dedicated arts pastor, Hope Chapel had a pastor dedicated to the women of the congregation, 90 percent of whom were artists. The arts had an integral place in the congregation and in the mission of the church. This made the role of the arts unique at Hope Chapel. David Taylor, who is currently attending Duke Divinity School, would later edit *For the Beauty of the Church: Casting a Vision for the Arts*. This book laments the tenuous nature of the relationship between the church and the arts and argues for the return of the arts to the core of church expression.

The Hope Arts Festival first took place in 2001 and ran for nine years. It attracted artists from around the world. Writing, visual art, spoken arts, poetry, music, and dance were all a part of the festival, which was hosted at Hope Chapel and in secular spaces across the city. Secular spaces were compensated for their space, according to their ►



Musician Todd Garza performing at Hope Arts Festival. photo: David Taylor

normal fee structure. Donna Haskins, who served as pastor for the women who attended Hope Chapel, spoke of how the arts helped congregants explore and expand the boundaries of their faith and how the artists learned to pursue art as an expression of community, as opposed to seeing it as a strictly personal expression of art for art's sake.

Although the church continues to have an interest in the arts, its focus changed when David Taylor left, new leadership arrived, and many of the artists in the congregation departed to return to their former churches in the early 2000s.

Lafayette Presbyterian Church – Irondale Ensemble

Clinton Hill *Brooklyn, New York*

<http://www.lapcbrooklyn.org> | <http://irondale.org>

Space leased: A former Sunday school, with approximately fifty-four hundred square feet of space, renovated to suit the purposes of Irondale Ensemble.

The connection between Lafayette Presbyterian Church and Irondale Ensemble is an example of a long-term relationship between a religious institution and a performing arts group. Having negotiated a twenty-year lease, Irondale Ensemble was able to spend approximately two million dollars renovating a space that had been unused from 1939 until the ensemble relocated to the site in 2008. Irondale Ensemble has exclusive use of the space, mounts two full-scale productions a year, engages in youth and adult education, provides summer camp experiences for youth, and brings its performances to correctional facilities.

Although Irondale Ensemble and Lafayette Presbyterian Church have largely a business relationship, signs of crossover have emerged. Irondale Ensemble has assisted with the production of major church

events, helping to coreograph a celebration for the recent retirement of Rev. David Dyson. The ensemble periodically performs during religious services, and according to Terry Greiss, executive director of Irondale Ensemble, Lafayette Presbyterian Church is beginning to express pride in serving as the ensemble's home.



Irondale Ensemble rehearsing Vicki Haller Graff's Play Project #1: *Faraway Oranges* in the fall of 2012.
photo: Irondale Ensemble

New York Society for Ethical Culture Lincoln Center area *Manhattan, New York*

<http://www.nysec.org>

Spaces leased: Main auditorium, seating approximately eight hundred, and a variety of meeting rooms accommodating small to large groups.

At the conclusion of a strategic planning process a number of years ago, the Board of Trustees of the New York Society for Ethical Culture (NYSEC) made a conscious decision that the society become a cultural center. Today, NYSEC's space is used extensively for cultural projects and musical performances. With a good location and an exceptional and intimate auditorium for musical events, NYSEC has become home to a wide variety of musical and other cultural programming.

Although the dominant use of space at NYSEC is focused on rental income to help maintain and manage its landmarked facility, NYSEC frequently co-sponsors mission-relevant programs of liberal-minded organizations, bartering free use of space for inclusion of NYSEC information in PR material and an introductory statement at the beginning of the program. NYSEC also organizes and produces cultural offerings that express its liberal humanist views, often in collaboration with the Nation magazine and WBAI radio. Programs have included presentations and discussions of current events topics, featuring Amy Goodman, Sam Harris, Gore Vidal, vice president Al Gore, and many others.

NYSEC is currently exploring relationships with orchestras around the city in the hope of establishing a concert series. Long-term relationships, while producing less income per event, tend to provide a more reliable income stream and are easier to manage than short-term relationships.



Mono performs as part of the Wordless Music series hosted at New York Society for Ethical Culture Photo: BBG, Brooklyn Vegan

Our Savior's Atonement Lutheran Church Washington Heights *Manhattan, New York*

<http://www.osanyc.org>

Spaces leased: Sanctuary (movable seating), gymnasium, a variety of smaller meeting spaces and classrooms.

Our Savior's Atonement Lutheran Church is located in Washington Heights in Upper Manhattan. It has a small music-and-arts-oriented congregation. Through its Cornerstone Center, Our Savior's Atonement (OSA) has made a conscious effort to focus on the provision of space for the arts and other cultural activities as a means of increasing activity in the building, encouraging community connection, and generating revenue.

The Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance rents office space from OSA and maintains a gallery, showing local art, in its offices. A number of other performing arts programs are also based in its building; these include

- Broadway Performing Arts Center (children's dance)
- Cornerstone Pottery (pottery classes)
- Uptown Writers
- Washington Heights Jazz Choir

Music at OSA (MOSA) is a concert series that is produced by members of the congregation and funded through grants. MOSA also partners with Carnegie Hall to host performances of its Neighborhood Concert Series. There is no charge for attendance, though donations are encouraged.

A new undertaking is its WHIN project, which began in the summer of 2012. It was spearheaded by OSA's recently retired pastor, J. Barrie Lawless, to reach out to the underserved Latino population in the neighborhood. It offers affordable music instruction for children based on El Sistema.⁴ OSA is providing free space to the program until WHIN establishes itself and can pay rent.

OSA also leases space for many other kinds of activities, including birthday parties, and additional arts events.



OSA Cornerstone Center offers a variety of spiritual, artistic, educational and recreational activities. photo: OSA Cornerstone Center

⁴ <http://elsistemausa.org>

St. Luke and St. Matthew Episcopal Church – Gallim Dance Clinton Hill Brooklyn, New York

<http://stlukeandstmatthew.org> | <http://www.gallimdance.com>

Spaces leased: A secondary chapel/social hall, some office space.

At the beginning of 2012, Gallim Dance officially became artists in residence at St. Luke and St. Matthew Church. In exchange for low-cost rehearsal space, Gallim has committed to a substantial cosmetic upgrade of the space. It will also collaborate with St. Luke and St. Matthew to present performing arts programming, community outreach, and spirituality programming. The relationship has grown to include an upcoming arts festival, a block party, second-Sundays arts programming, youth and community dance programs, and restorative yoga sessions. These activities are viewed by both the church and Gallim as community-building activities from which they both benefit.

Arts offerings will include jazz, with a focus on local artists. Concerts on second Sundays will have a visual arts component, which will encompass receptions with an opportunity to meet all contributing artists.

In addition to using the space for rehearsals, Gallim has been able to consolidate its administrative area with the church's front office. According to representatives from both sides, the relationship continuously enhances the operations of both.



Performers with Gallim Dance, the new artists-in-residence at the Church of St. Luke and St. Matthew, practice in the church's upper parish hall.

Photo credit: Kyle Thomas McGovern

Trinity Project, Southeast Williamsburg Brooklyn, New York

<https://www.facebook.com/TheTrinityProject>

Spaces used: An entire building that once served as a residence for nuns and then brothers, among other uses. Spaces are mostly small single-room dormitory type. Some meeting rooms.

The Trinity Project was founded by a group of energetic artists who were given access to an unused brothers' residence owned by Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church in southeast Williamsburg. The artists traded labor, including art instruction in the church's parochial school and maintenance work in the church buildings, for studio and rehearsal space.

Bartering for space worked well to establish the initial connection and begin to foster a relationship between the artists and the church. Monica Salizar, one of the founders of Trinity Project, describes the artists' presence in the building as that of squatters with permission. The current leadership of Trinity Project is working with the church to solidify a relationship that will involve the payment of rent and utilities.

Among the examples in this profile, Trinity Project is the most ad hoc in the development of a relationship between a religious institution with space and an arts community in need of space. There have been both positive and difficult experiences along the way. The church has gained arts education for its school, maintenance help, and event production planning from the artists. The artists have free or low-cost studio space in which to pursue their art. The church has had to cope with the sometimes unruly and insensitive behavior of the artists and the artists have had to understand that there are some limits to their artistic expression in the context of a religious facility. These challenges have been negotiated and the relationship continues. However, it is clear that the relationship will not be a secure one until the artists begin to pay rent and a more codified landlord-tenant relationship evolves.



Trinity Project event on the rooftop of Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church

Photo credit: c. bay milin

KEY LESSONS

As can be gleaned from the brief descriptions of the institutions and their relationship to their tenants, there is a range of intentions behind the shared-space relationships that evolve and a range of results.

Economics Is the Principal Driving Force

Driving the relationship between most religious facilities and performing arts groups is the need for income on the part of the religious facility and affordable space on the part of the arts group. Consequently, a significant number of these relationships begin as business relationships, as is the case for the New York Society for Ethical Culture, Our Savior's Atonement Lutheran Church, and Lafayette Presbyterian Church. Even so, collaboration and mission sharing can evolve as extensions of the business partnership.

The economic benefit to the religious facility can be significant. The New York Society for Ethical Culture was able to close a quarter-million-dollar annual budget gap through better management and significantly increased space rentals. Lafayette Presbyterian Church benefited from an approximately two-million-dollar renovation of space in its building, as well as rental income. St. Luke and St. Matthew benefited from a sixty-thousand-dollar cosmetic makeover of the space that Gallim uses. In most of the examples presented, the rental income helps to balance the budget on an ongoing basis.

Yet Economics Is Not the Only Driving Force

Arts groups and communities can and do come together with congregations to share in community building that is of mutual benefit. In two examples, Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas, and St. Luke and St. Matthew in Brooklyn, New York, economics takes a backseat.

In the case of Hope Chapel, pastoring to the arts became a ministry, and the Hope Arts Festival became a way to bring members of Austin's conservative faith community together. For Hope Chapel in particular, the presence of an arts ministry provided a tension that, according to Donna Haskins, a past pastor, helped congregants explore the boundaries of their faith and the artists explore the limits of their self-expression.

For St. Luke and St. Matthew, the relationship with Gallim Dance has been intentionally negotiated as one of collaboration. Rev. Michael Sniffen and Gallim artistic director and choreographer Andrea Miller wanted a relationship that went beyond one of landlord and tenant. As a result, their lease agreement took the form of a community partnership arrangement that required Gallim and the church to collaborate on a specified amount of community outreach and spirituality programming.

In the case of Trinity Project and Most Holy Trinity Church, the relationship was initiated as a barter arrangement that exchanged use of space for arts education in the church's parochial school and the performance of maintenance work around the church.

Written Agreements Are Essential

Regardless of what drives the relationship, a well-defined set of ground rules is important in developing mutual trust and security in the relationship. St. Luke and Gallim spent a year negotiating their community partnership agreement and though it has been in place for less than a year, both credit it in part for the success of their relationship.

Efforts, which were ultimately fruitless, by Gallim to negotiate an agreement with a different religious institution serve as a cautionary tale for being overly cautious in codifying rules. Gallim feels that the negotiations failed partly because there was an attempt by both sides to codify every

possible situation into the agreement, which created an atmosphere lacking in trust and caused negotiations to be protracted and overly difficult.

Trinity Project is the only example in this group that lacked a formal agreement, deferring instead to an ad hoc process of negotiating the relationship. The result has been more opportunities for misunderstanding and a more tenuous situation for Trinity Project.

Long-Term Agreements Make Investment in Infrastructure Possible

For Lafayette Presbyterian and Irondale Ensemble, the length of the rental agreement term is as important as the agreement's strength as a relational document. Irondale was able to raise more than two million dollars in funding to invest in the space it uses at Lafayette. It could not have done so without its twenty-year lease. In general, arts groups have access to more capital funding sources than those available to religious institutions. Under the right circumstances these groups can bring considerable funding to the table for building repair and upgrade. Longer leases are an essential component for funding commitment.

Visionary Leadership Is a Key Factor in Relationships That Go Beyond Business

Hope Chapel, in Austin; St. Luke and St. Matthew, in Brooklyn; and Lafayette Presbyterian, also in Brooklyn, are cases in which a great deal was possible because of the strength and vision of the leadership.

The Hope Arts Festival and Hope Chapel arts ministry were driven by the vision of their pastor, Dave Taylor. The partnership of St. Luke and St. Matthew and Gallim was driven by the vision of their leaders, Rev. Michael Sniffen and artistic director/choreographer Andrea Miller, respectively.

For Lafayette Presbyterian Church and Irondale Ensemble, a critical moment in the negotiations was successfully navigated when Rev. David Dyson affirmed to the church council that a lease with Irondale Ensemble had to be free of restrictions on the ensemble's artistic expression. Their long-term contractual relationship offers security that the policy on artistic expression will not change even if the leadership does. This security has withstood the recent retirement of Rev. Dyson.

Change in Leadership Is a Key Factor in Disrupting Relationships That Go Beyond Business

While relationships that are built on strength of leadership often lead to a more visionary collaboration between congregation and arts community, they are also more vulnerable to change when that leadership changes.

Hope Chapel experienced a change in leadership in the early 2000s and with it the church vision changed. Rev. Donna Haskins did not represent this new vision as better or worse, just different. As a result of the change, a large number of the artists in the congregation left and returned to the churches they had previously worshiped in. While Hope Chapel maintains an arts ministry, it no longer produces the Hope Arts Festival and does not have the vibrancy beyond its walls that it once had.

Constant Communication Is Essential Regardless of the Format of the Relationship

It should come as no surprise that open and constant lines of communication were identified as significant factors in a successful relationship by every organizational entity in this profile. It is impossible to codify every kind of scenario into an agreement. Organizations are not static entities. The unexpected and unaccounted for arise and require flexibility and adaptation.

When Irondale Ensemble and Lafayette Presbyterian encountered issues with being ticketed for sanitation violations as a result of homeless people picking through garbage that was put out after performances, Irondale Ensemble immediately communicated its regret over the situation and has actively worked with the church on a solution to the problem. This kept the situation from festering and souring the relationship.

Disagreements over Content Are Rare

There is one great and common fear that religious organizations and arts groups share, though from opposite sides of the coin: disagreement over artistic content. It is almost inevitable that someone in church leadership will raise a fear of inappropriate content and that arts groups will fear censorship of their artistic expression. In practice it appears to be rare that there is an issue, though it does happen on occasion.

Terry Greiss at Irondale Ensemble believes that it was important to seek out a relationship with a liberal congregation. He described Lafayette Presbyterian as a church with a long tradition of liberalism that probably made it easier for the pastor to convince the congregation not to place restrictions on content. This is neither an unexpected perception nor one without basis in fact.

Hope Chapel in Austin, however, is an example of a conservative evangelical congregation that fully embraced the arts with good results, though it took patience and work on both sides. Rev. Donna Haskins described how the tension between the boundary-pushing artists and the boundary-setting church was a good one for both. The church learned to expand its boundaries and the artists learned that pushing boundaries purely for the sake of pushing them was a questionable thing. Rev. Haskins believes that the artists became less selfish and self-centered in the process and learned to see their work more fully in a social context. While some restriction on content did

happen (apparently hastily arranged fig leaves were needed on one occasion) it did not, according to Rev. Haskins, happen often.

Meredith (Max) Hodges, executive director of Gallim, spoke of how the company felt no inhibition in its creative expression. She described the company as pursuing a high-art narrative that did include things like nudity at times. According to Ms. Hodges, Rev. Sniffen and the vestry of St. Luke and St. Matthew “appreciate art for what it already is, not what they need it to be.”

In this profile group, successful practice and exhibition are shown to be possible when housed in both conservative and liberal religious institutions. In the rare case when conflict arose, prompt communication led to a resolution most of the time.

Community Connection Is a Goal in Common

It is increasingly common for religious institutions to grow disconnected from their surrounding neighborhoods, as native congregants age and new generations commute from outside the neighborhood. Most of the religious facilities highlighted hope that vibrant arts programming can attract new local communities to expand their congregation. Most Holy Trinity and Lafayette Presbyterian have reaped some tangible rewards from this approach, but churches are often disappointed when the new activity in their building does not bring them new members.

What seems to be a reasonable goal for congregations is a community collaboration model, in which congregations share their buildings for community benefit, viewing them as centers of community for a variety of activities and programs, both religious and secular.

The best scenario for congregations and arts groups is one in which their missions and visions involve quests and intentions that have common

ground, be it to find meaning, promote community, or express compassion. Gallim and St. Luke and St. Matthew have shared visions as well as organization-specific missions. Having secured a company base, Gallim has solidified its presence in the dance world (further strengthened by its proximity to BAM [Brooklyn Academy of Music]) and has opened up its creative process to the broader public, now that it can invite groups to its studio. In conjunction, St. Luke and St. Matthew is using the partnership to reconnect with its community, establishing a new focus on arts and wellness and reclaiming its identity as a patron. Gallim's commitment to community outreach is further strengthened by St. Luke and St. Matthew's network of relationships within the community.

Spiritual Expression Is Content Common to Both Arts Groups and Congregations

In a very real sense, a sometimes separate, sometimes related spirituality is blossoming within religious facilities that are homes to arts groups. Arts groups share a sense of community mission with the congregations of their buildings. Irondale presents in schools and prisons; Gallim, in partnership with Dance Wave, brings high school and middle school students to its rehearsal studios and mentors and teaches them.

In addition, arts groups, particularly performing arts groups, often share a sense of spiritual attunement to the religious spaces they are occupying. Terry Greiss, of Irondale, expressed the feeling that the ensemble, alongside the congregation, had become stewards of Lafayette Presbyterian Church's magnificent building. Max Hodges of

Gallim explained how dancers were inspired to dance "taller" by the sixty-foot ceilings of their space and that they were inspired by their space to engage in even more community outreach.

Cosmetic and Architectural Issues Are Common

All the New York City facilities of this profile had or have deferred maintenance issues that they had to address or have their tenants address to bring the spaces to a useable and presentable condition. The New York Society for Ethical Culture (NYSEC) had to undertake renovations of its auditorium that exceeded one million dollars to make it attractive and useable by its renters. Irondale Ensemble spent in excess of two million dollars to renovate its spaces and encountered a situation in which it had to upgrade the fire alarm system for both its spaces and the church at its own expense. Gallim was required, as part of its agreement, to paint and freshen finishes in their space at St. Luke and St. Matthew. The artists at Trinity Project tolerated substandard conditions in their building and self-renovated in exchange for their low rents.

Another issue that has surfaced for NYSEC, and is an issue that almost all older religious facilities have to cope with, is accessibility. Although religious facilities are generally grandfathered in, when their activities extend beyond those of the congregation, they are open to legal challenge on their accessibility. NYSEC is in the process of installing a wheelchair ramp as a result of a lawsuit brought by an individual who could not gain access to its program through the provisions it had made up to that point in time.

CONCLUSION

New York City and cities across the country are awash in religious-building spaces that are underused and struggling to be maintained. Concurrently, there has been substantial growth in the number of small arts groups seeking space. Space in religious facilities is attractive to arts groups because it is relatively low in cost, often iconic, and frequently inspirational. Moreover, small performing arts groups and religious institutions have parallel desires for community connection and expression. There is an underlying spirituality to the creative process of arts groups, especially in the performing arts, that overlaps with the spirituality of religious institutions. There is also frequently a shared commitment to serving community. For all these reasons, religious institutions and performing arts groups can benefit from sharing space.

There can be significant and expensive facility-related challenges associated with the opening of religious facilities to uses beyond those of the congregation. Deferred maintenance and accessibility are almost always issues.

Although there is often a fear of disagreement over content, there are few issues in practice. When situations do arise, they are generally resolvable through good communication. Conflicts are less frequent and more easily overcome when there is a solid written agreement in place.

Several varieties of relationships have been reviewed in this profile. The most vibrant examples seem to be those that go beyond a simple landlord-tenant relationship to become one of intentional partnership in community outreach and communal expression. This change is possible when the vision and mission of the congregation and arts group overlap and are reinforced. While arts groups cannot be expected to adopt the spiritual and mission intentions of the hosting congregation, there is often significant similarity in spiritual and mission intent. Under these conditions both the arts group and the congregation can expect to gain more than what would be achievable in a simple business relationship.

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look for:

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- publicly owned facilities
- religious spaces
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