



Mariemont Community Church
3908 Plainville Road
Mariemont, OH 45227 USA
513-271-4376

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MCC Nearing Completion of Building Renovation Study

The Emery Memorial, a private foundation whose aim is to further the legacy of Mariemont founder Mary Emery, granted \$15,000 to MCC in fall 2005 to finance a study of our two buildings. The study focused on the physical needs of both buildings as well as how they might adapted to best serve the needs of the church and the community. Childress & Cunningham, an architectural firm with expertise in historic buildings and churches, was contracted by MCC to help conduct the study.

Mariemont Community Church is blessed to be housed in two very distinctive and historic buildings. The Memorial Chapel was the first building begun in Mary Emery's planned community, with groundbreaking in 1923, and is topped by what some historians believe to be the oldest roof in North America – a stone roof from an English tithe barn dating from 1300. The Parish Center, then called the Thomas J. Emery Memorial Recreation Building, was completed in 1930. Originally the Village's community center, it was constructed by Mrs. Emery in memory of her husband. Construction photos of both buildings grace our Parish Center front hallway. The Emery Memorial is the owner of the Memorial Chapel, which they lease on a long-term basis to MCC for \$.50 a year. In 1954, MCC purchased the Recreation Building from the Memorial for use as its Parish Center.

A renovation committee, whose members are Anne Badanes, Don Keyes, Bill Miller, and Joy Norman, has been working with the architects to conduct the study. The committee interviewed a variety of church leaders about their space needs and analyzed how the buildings are currently used by the different ministries of MCC. The committee attempted to look toward the future to determine how the buildings could serve the needs of expanded or new ministries and also examined how the buildings are utilized by various community groups.

Preliminary findings are in!

Many of the results are obvious to anyone familiar with these buildings. In the Parish Center, priorities include new windows, replacement of the boiler with zoned heating and cooling systems, and updated bathrooms. A handicapped entrance through the basement to an elevator would ensure that the building is accessible to everyone on

all floors. At the Chapel, air-conditioning is a high priority, along with updated bathrooms and an improved AV system.

Learning how to adapt these buildings to better serve the current and future needs of the church and the community is exciting. Suggested changes include reconfiguring the lower level (basement) to include nursery through fourth grade classes, thus centralizing Sunday School rooms and improving accessibility to parents, especially our visitors. Our attic is a huge untapped resource and could be converted into great meeting space for our junior and senior high students. The second floor would offer additional meeting space, with the wall between two rooms at the north end removed to make a youth multi-purpose area to be used by the fifth and sixth grades, as well as by the many groups of our very vibrant scouting program. Meanwhile, the south end, with the lovely walk-out to the second floor terrace, would be converted to attractive and comfortable adult meeting and classroom space.

On the main floor, a large multi-purpose room could be created by the removal of the wall between the committee room and the lounge. (The lounge and committee room would be “recreated” on the south end of second floor, accessible by elevator.) The flexibility of a room of that size would allow us to host mid-sized events and its location would provide direct access to the kitchen for meals and coffee service. The combined room would also free us from the necessity of the weekly removal of the chairs from the auditorium, which requires a huge commitment of staff time and causes considerable wear and tear on the furniture.

Our auditorium could then be upgraded to better serve us in its primary function – as a worship center. Improvements would include better acoustics, quality AV equipment, more comfortable seating, and carpeting. Orientation of the room would be towards the east side of the building allowing for continued interaction among members of the congregation. With the addition of a small balcony, the auditorium would comfortably seat over 300 people.

The possibilities are exciting!

The Emery Memorial has indicated an interest in helping fund the needed improvements. The Memorial is committed to the long-term viability of both the Memorial Chapel and the Parish Center because of the buildings’ significance to the integrity of the Mariemont historical district as well as their importance to the Village. MCC will present the findings of this study to the Memorial board on March 29.

Please pray that God will grant MCC favor with the board members of the Emery Memorial on March 29 and that God will guide the committee as they prepare the presentation. Pray also for God’s wisdom in the careful use of all of the resources He has entrusted to us and how He wants us to use those resources. Pray for unity in the Body of Christ at MCC as we move forward with this process. To Him be all of the glory!

For further information on this process and the findings, please contact a member of the Renovation Committee [through the church office.]

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Mariemont Community Church exists to live like Jesus — loving God and sharing His love with others.

Primary Contacts: Denis Beausejour, Senior Pastor; Lois Barbro, Administrator