



### New Worship Center First Baptist Church Simpsonville

Simpsonville, SC

Warren and Associates Design-Build was selected to construct an all-new Worship Center for First Baptist Church (FBC) on its main campus in the heart of downtown Simpsonville in southern Greenville County. The new facility seats up to 1,400 attendees. It replaces the church's existing 700-seat sanctuary, which Warren and Associates is converting into a multipurpose facility.

The need for the new Worship Center was in direct response to FBC's unprecedented growth over a 10-year period during which church attendance quadrupled—from 500 attendees in two services at one location, to 2,100 worshippers in six services at two locations.

The Worship Center is designed to complement existing building architecture on FBC's 75-year-old campus. Although it has a traditional look—complete with a 115-foot-high steeple—the 41,500-square-foot Worship Center is being constructed with 21<sup>st</sup>-century materials. Prestressed concrete panels with brick veneer facing give the building a striking exterior—and using this system *shaved nearly four months off the schedule and provided significant cost savings*, while still meeting client expectations for a high-quality end product. Sleek and contemporary materials include a full-height glass curtainwall at each entrance and

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#### Owner

First Baptist Church—Simpsonville

#### Size

- 41,500 sq. ft.
- 1,400-seat capacity
- 2 stories
- 115-ft.-high steeple

#### Construction Amount

\$10.4 million

#### Scope of Work

Preconstruction, design and construction services under a Design-Build contract.

#### Architect

Neal Prince + Partners Architects

#### Construction Schedule

May 2007 to July 2008

*First worship service held July 13.*

*"By using the design-build process, combined with integrating brick veneer panels, we were able to reduce the normal construction duration from 16-17 months to 13 months—a savings of 19-24%."*

- Donald G. Warren, DBIA

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three 9' x 17' roof skylights. The facility's main entrances off Hedge and Church Streets open up into a grand foyer with two welcome centers and a stairwell that leads to the balcony. The "open" two-story lobby creates an inviting atmosphere for members and visitors.

Interior features include a fan-shaped seating area along with a sweeping balcony which cascades down to the floor level. Among the design criteria was to keep rear seating as close to the stage as possible for optimum visibility. This creates an intimate worship setting—even the farthest seat is within 75 feet of the speaker. The balcony is designed in a way that requires only two support columns, further enhancing visibility for attendees in the lower-level seating area.

To support the worship experience, the project called for installation of state-of-the-art acoustical, audio and video equipment and associated infrastructure. Provisions for attaining and maintaining desired sound quality include acoustical wall treatment panels, as well as acoustical ceiling "clouds" suspended from the sanctuary's roof structure to allow adjustment and fine-tuning of sound levels. The facility is designed to accommodate FBC's future plans to broadcast each worship service throughout the entire building.

A two-story music wing houses choir, orchestra and handbell rehearsal rooms. This area includes a 130-seat choir rehearsal room that matches the choir loft in the sanctuary.

Theatrical lighting in the sanctuary and special exterior lighting, which includes steeple lighting and backlit large arched windows, adds to aesthetic appeal of FBC's new Worship Center. Incoming electrical service is underground; existing street-side utilities—electrical, telephone and cable—were relocated from overhead to underground.

The entire building is served by two 80-ton, high-efficiency air-cooled chillers, and a gas-fired, hot-water boiler system, keeping occupants comfortable year-round. The heating, ventilating and air-conditioning (HVAC) system is designed for quietness with special drives, insulation, isolators and other features incorporated to keep noise to a minimum. To conserve energy, those areas used only for short periods of time during the week—such as choir and orchestra rehearsal rooms—are served by small split-system heat pumps.



### Special Features

- Fan-shaped seating area along with sweeping balcony in sanctuary
- Theatrical lighting in sanctuary
- State-of-the-art acoustical, audio and video equipment and infrastructure
- Increased stage space for orchestra; 2 large projection screens on each side of stage
- Newborn nursery
- Artwork cut into the foyer's stairway and balcony handrails depicts the church's goals of prayer, worship, ministry, discipleship and evangelism.

### Site

139 total parking spaces, 2 lots

### Fire Protection

Light-hazard, wet-pipe fire-protection system

### Lighting

- Special exterior lighting
- Steeple lighting
- Backlit large arched windows

### HVAC Design

- (2) 80-ton high-efficiency air-cooled chillers and a gas-fired hot-water boiler system.
- Energy-saving, small split-system heat pumps for rehearsal areas

### Other Facilities—FBC Campus

- Chapel
- Family Life Center
- Existing 700-Seat Sanctuary\*
- Child Development Center

*\* Conversion into multipurpose facility commenced in mid-July 2008.*