

Unitarian Universalist Association

# A Guide to Preserving Historic Unitarian Universalist Churches

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## **Introduction**

This guide is designed to be a starting point for congregations interested in protecting and preserving their architectural heritage. The goal of this guide is to provide congregational leaders with an overview of historic preservation practice in the United States and to offer beginning guidance on best practices for the stewardship of historic religious buildings.

Unitarian Universalist congregations are stewards of some of our nation's most beautiful and historic religious buildings. From New England to California, our congregations occupy churches which have hosted important events in UU and American history; housed eminent religious and philosophical leaders; and exhibit striking architectural style. The diversity of our church buildings over space and time reflects both regional influences and the many traditions and beliefs that make up our religious movement. Together they present a narrative of Unitarian Universalist history and religious life in the United States. This guide is designed to help UU congregations learn more about historic preservation theory and practice and how it can help them become better stewards of their historic church buildings. The guide will give a general overview of the various preservation laws, policies, and guidelines in place in the United States; explain the benefits of listing a church on national and local historic registers; discuss how preservation practice can assist in congregational fundraising; present general guidelines for proper care and maintenance of historic church buildings; and provide a list of resources for more in-depth study of particular issues.

## ***What is Historic Preservation?***

Simply stated, historic preservation is the protection and conservation of buildings, districts, sites, or landscapes which reflect elements of our local, regional, or national history. Preservation efforts in the United States take place locally and nationally through government agencies, nonprofit preservation advocacy organizations, and groups of concerned citizens. People often associate preservation with saving landmark buildings from demolition, but the act of historic preservation also encompasses the proper maintenance and sensitive treatment of more commonplace but integral historic resources in our communities. The idea of historic value in a preservation context is broad, reflecting the values and activities of many cultures and classes over time. Although grand examples of architecture or the sites of important historical events benefit from preservation activities, a greater number of resources with wider-ranging significance, such as vernacular houses, commercial districts, factories, and neighborhood churches, receive preservation attention every day across the country.

Preservation also refers to a way of working with buildings to further their survival. The Secretary of the Interior of the United States defines historic preservation as “the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity and materials of an historic property.” This guide will address historic church properties from both preservation perspectives.

## ***Why Preserve?***

Historic preservation has a variety of purposes and rewards. The most obvious benefit of preserving historic resources is their contribution to the continuity of community life, exposing the layers of culture and activity that came before us. Other less tangible benefits include strengthening the local economy, property value protection, appreciation of local or national history, and an increased sense of civic pride. The preservation of historic churches carries its own special set of purposes and rewards. Historic houses of worship play a singular role in the lives of their members and the community. They provide a sense of

stability and permanence with their longevity, forge a sense of community by opening their doors to other groups, and offer their neighbors a place of refuge and comfort in crises. In the context of Unitarian Universalism, a local historic church may stand for the voice of liberal religious values and individual religious expression in its neighborhood, making the building an important symbol for like-minded citizens. Historic churches are an excellent example of how a community can come to associate a building with shared values and how devastating the loss or decline of such a structure can be to the collective psyche. It is as important to preserve historic religious buildings for their importance to community life as it is to preserve them for their beauty or association with important events.

### ***Unique Problems in the Preservation of Historic Churches***

Congregations who own historic church buildings face a number of physical, financial, and philosophical problems surrounding their use and preservation. The single greatest obstacle to church preservation is philosophical. Because the function of a church is to serve its members and the larger community, many congregations with scarce resources would prefer to put those monies into programming rather than their building's physical needs. Many of the issues that most threaten historic churches stem from this dilemma: deferred maintenance, poorly planned additions and renovations, and insensitive maintenance of historical fabric. Demographics are another key problem in historic church preservation. Rises and drops in church membership have great effect on the church building. Older churches are sometimes too small for the congregation's present size or ill-suited to modern worship needs, requiring reconfiguration of space or additions to the original building. Carrying out such renovations to historic buildings in a sensitive manner can significantly add to planning, design, and construction costs. If an historic church building is underused because of a drop in membership, small congregations can find themselves financially burdened with the upkeep of a large building. Both instances create a situation where a congregation is faced with either insensitively changing their building or leaving it for a more suitable structure. Despite these obstacles, the number of successfully preserved UU churches across the country prove that it is possible to both serve the congregation's needs and be a responsible steward of your historic church building. Given the importance of religious communities in civic life, careful stewardship and thoughtful planning regarding your building is in itself a service to the community, ensuring that your congregation will be active for many years to come.

### ***Keys to Success***

Most successfully preserved and maintained historic church buildings have several things in common. The first is a sound maintenance plan informed by architectural or engineering professionals familiar with historic buildings. The second is a supportive funding structure with some monies set aside specifically for building maintenance in the annual budget or endowment. The third is a mission to maximize the use of available space within the building. Productive, cooperative use of your sanctuary and auxiliary spaces can provide much needed income and community investment in your historic building. Lastly, successful managers of historic religious properties collaborate with area preservation groups, taking advantage of their help, expertise, and financial resources, to help in the planning, analysis, and execution of their building work. This guide addresses each of these activities beginning on page 5.

While proper maintenance, budgeting, space efficiency, and collaboration are important in preserving historic religious properties, it is also imperative for church leadership to understand how they can use local and national historic designation to their advantage and how such designations and certain local zoning ordinances will affect their renovation or addition plans.

## **Historic Registers, Districts, and Zoning: What are They and What do They Mean for our Congregation?**

During the 1960s, many Americans began to take a greater interest in the condition of their physical environment. As a result, the decade saw Congress pass several key pieces of legislation establishing national policies for the protection and care of our country's cultural and natural resources. One of these laws was the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 which instituted a formal, governmental structure for historic preservation policy in the United States. The NHPA issued three mandates: the keeping of a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by the National Park Service, the review of all

federally funded projects that might impact resources listed on the National Register (called a Section 106 review), and the establishment of state historic preservation offices (SHPOs) to carry out federal preservation policy at the state level. These national preservation policies set the framework for preservation practice in the United States.

On the state and local level historic preservation law varies. Most states have state registers of historic resources that mimic the federal National Register and some have legislation in place that is similar to the NHPA in its mandates. Most states also have enabling legislation in place to allow cities and towns to pass local preservation ordinances to protect historic resources in their municipality. This section will describe how listing on federal or state historical registers or location in a community with a local preservation ordinance affects your church building and the opportunities it presents for assistance.

## ***National Register of Historic Places***

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is an inventory maintained by the National Park Service (NPS) of buildings, sites, artifacts, and districts that are important to the historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological, and engineering history of the United States. Resources listed on the NRHP must fulfill at least one of the following criteria: association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history; association with the lives of people important to the past; architecture embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master; or yield or have the potential to yield important information about history or prehistory. National Register properties also exhibit integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. Most resources on the NRHP are over fifty years old, but there are special considerations made for younger resources of merit. The historic significance of National Register properties can be local, regional, or national in nature.

At this time, there are 68 UU churches and auxiliary buildings individually listed on the National Register and many more are included under its umbrella by virtue of being located in National Register districts, where individual resources are not singly listed. According to the NRHP guidelines, religious structures are usually not eligible for listing on the National Register because of issues of separation of church and state, but the NRHP guidelines do contain special considerations for the listing of religious structures based on non-religious importance. These criteria include architectural significance, contributing to an historic district, historic events that took place inside the structure, and religious events that contributed to broad patterns of local or national history.

## **What does National Register listing mean for our building and congregation?**

It is a common misconception that listing a home, commercial building, or church listed on the National Register of Historic Places will put heavy restrictions on how they can use or physically change their building. In fact, listing on the National Register is largely honorary, affords little real protection for historic buildings, and places no restrictions on the property owner. The only measure of protection that comes with listing on the National Register is the Section 106 review process outlined in the NHPA. Section 106 states that if the federal government funds any undertaking that could adversely affect a site or structure listed or eligible for listing on the National Register, a review process must be undertaken and a good-faith effort must be made on the part of the federal agency funding the work to mitigate damage to the historic resource. This does not mean that properties or districts listed on the National Register will not be adversely affected by the undertaking, only that alternatives must be investigated before proceeding with the project.

Listing on the NRHP has many benefits, the largest being the sense of pride that comes with gaining national recognition of the beauty and importance of your church building. National Register properties also enjoy more tangible rewards, as listing is usually the first criteria for qualifying for national, state, and local level financial assistance with your preservation projects. (See section on Preservation and Fundraising.) If you think your church building may be eligible for listing on the National Register, please refer to the resource section at the end of this guide for more information on how to nominate your property.

## ***State Historic Registers***

State historic registers, or state historical surveys, are usually similar in inclusion criteria and structure to the National Register of Historic Places maintained by the National Park Service. These lists serve as inventories of the historic resources located within the state. Some states have preservation laws that mirror the NHPA, complete with a state-level Section 106-style review process for state funded undertakings and their possible adverse effects on properties listed on the state register. In most cases, properties listed on the National Register are also listed in their correlative state register. Some states do not have a separate register on the state level and rely only on the National Register for inventory of historic resources in their state. The major benefits of being listed on a state historic register are the technical advice and funding opportunities that come with it. State historic register listing, like National Register listing, has little impact on the property itself outside of the state-funded project review process.

## ***Local Historic Districts***

Historic districts serve to protect a sense of place created by a grouping of interrelated historic buildings, landscapes, and associated elements. The historical fabric of these areas is usually narrative of an aspect of local history. Districts can be residential, commercial, or industrial and contain buildings of mixed dates, styles, and uses. There are two kinds of buildings in historic districts: contributing and non-contributing. Contributing buildings are structures which have historical significance and add to the overall effect of the district. Non-contributing buildings are generally newer buildings built after a certain date determined by the district's creators, and are generally not included in the protection afforded contributing properties.

Cities and towns create and manage local historic districts through the passage of a local preservation ordinance which outlines the boundaries of the historic district(s), establishes a local district commission to review changes within the district(s), and sets criteria for the review of those alterations. Municipalities usually form local historic districts to gain more control over potentially damaging or unwanted change in an historic area. Establishing local historic districts is often a key part of a city's zoning or master plan as districts are proven tools for economic revitalization, improving quality of life, attracting new residents and tourists, and reinforcing a sense of community pride.

The establishment of local historic districts already listed on the National Register may seem redundant at first. It becomes clear how important local historic districts are, however, when we compare the special protections and oversight they provide to their buildings to the relatively nonexistent protection offered by listing on the National Register. Local historic district commissions, enabled by local historic preservation ordinances, actively manage growth and change in a local district. The level of oversight varies from place to place depending on the powers granted by the local preservation ordinance. Some historic districts only review design or construction plans, give suggestions, and try to work with the property owner to mitigate unwanted changes to the individual building or district. Others have the power to delay or deny building or demolition permits if they feel the new construction or renovation work is incompatible with the surrounding district or with the overall design of the individual building in question. Local historic districts typically only regulate the exterior of buildings, not the interiors, and sometimes only regulate changes that are visible from a public way. The municipality usually appoints members to the historic district commission with expertise in fields such as architecture, real estate, preservation, law, construction, finance, and other related professions. Most commissions also include district residents. The most common items or projects local historic district commissions review are

- modernizations, such as the addition of large antennae or satellite dishes, door and window renovations, and metal and vinyl siding;
- building rehabilitations, to ensure that key architectural elements or overall historic character of a building is not destroyed or compromised;
- streetscape alterations such as sidewalk and street width, street lights, street seating, and fences;
- new construction, including new buildings and additions, that may be incompatible either with the district as a whole or the original building being added on to;
- signage, especially in commercial districts.

## What does inclusion mean for our building and congregation?

Inclusion in a local historic district is like a form of insurance for your historic building. It drastically reduces the possibility of incompatible construction adversely affecting your property. As a participant in this type of districting, your congregation also bears responsibility for sensible growth and change to your building and grounds. Exterior changes to your building, such as additions, exterior accessibility devices, changes to architectural details, window replacements, and roofing materials, as well as changes that affect the organization of space or character of space around your building, such as building a new parking lot, putting up fencing, or erecting a new sign, must go before the local historic district commission for design approval. The local historic district commission will review your plan at a public hearing and decide based on criteria set forth in the preservation ordinance whether the changes will be compatible both with your existing historic building and the district. While this process may seem restrictive, it serves a positive purpose in that it is the expression of the value your community places on historic buildings and neighborhoods that speak to a common past in which they take pride. Local historic districts provide the only real protection for historic resources in our cities and towns and they depend on the cooperation of the community to do the important work of preserving the past for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

## Preservation and Fundraising

Historic preservation can be an important tool in raising funds for your building program. Although different areas offer different levels of funding, listing on national and state historic registers open a number of fundraising possibilities.

### ***National, State, and Local Funds Available with NRHP listing***

Listing on the National Register of Historic Places or your state historical register, either individually or within a district, makes your building eligible to receive numerous grants or low interest loans from government and nonprofit groups. Most funding is targeted towards solving preservation emergencies, such as badly deteriorated windows, masonry, or steeples, or towards preservation planning activities. These grants are often small, but provide important seed money for preservation efforts. For more specific information on the funding sources listed below, please refer to the Resources section at the end of this guide.

### **National Level**

The only source of preservation funding on the national level at this time is the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Chartered by Congress in 1949, the Trust is the U.S.'s only nationwide nonprofit preservation organization. The National Trust's National Preservation Loan Fund provides below-market rate loans of up to \$150,000 to public agencies and nonprofit organizations to help them preserve properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Priority is usually given to projects that help state and local preservation organizations expand their activities, properties damaged by natural disaster, or properties included on the National Trust's list of the Eleven Most Endangered Historic Places. The National Trust's Preservation Services Fund provides matching grants of between \$500 and \$5,000 to help nonprofit organizations, universities, or public agencies start preservation projects. Funds can be used for start-up costs such as hiring an architect, lawyer, urban planner, or economic consultant.

### **State Level**

Funding at the state level comes from a combination of government and nonprofit sources. All states have a state historic preservation office that may offer matching grants or low interest loans, but availability depends on the level of funding the office receives from the state legislature for this purpose.

Massachusetts, for instance, has a program available through its SHPO called the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund. This fund was established by the state legislature to fund preservation projects within the Commonwealth and makes 50% matching grants in support of the physical preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites listed in the State Register of Historic Places. Most states also have a state-

wide nonprofit preservation advocacy group. Massachusetts' statewide preservation advocacy organization, Historic Massachusetts, Inc., operates a revolving loan fund that makes low-interest loans to nonprofit and public organizations for preservation projects. Some statewide nonprofit preservation organizations and SHPOs have programs specifically for religious properties. The New York Landmarks Conservancy, for instance, operates a Sacred Sites Grant Program which makes matching grants to religious properties throughout New York State.

## Local Level

Local preservation funding, especially for religious properties, is often quite limited outside large metropolitan areas. Most funding at the local level is via a citywide nonprofit preservation group or city government. For example, Historic Boston, Inc., one of Boston's citywide nonprofit preservation groups, operates The Steeples Project, which makes grants and provides technical assistance for building assessments, exterior repairs and steeple and dome illumination. For further information on local resources, please refer to the Resources section at the end of this guide.

Most of the grants and loans available for preservation work require that work done on the properties in question follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. As with most grants, you will be responsible for reporting back to the granting organization on your progress and on the work's completion. Some grant programs require that a member of the organization be appointed as a coordinator for large projects.

## ***Qualifying for Corporate and Foundation Grants and Raising Interest Beyond your Congregation***

Most religious groups do not qualify for corporate or foundation giving because of their sectarian activities, but this does not mean that this major funding area is completely lost to congregations. One of the most popular ways to qualify for corporate and foundation grants is to share space in your building with other nonprofit organizations who would qualify. Space sharing and its benefits and drawbacks will be discussed later in this guide. Another qualification method involves forming a separate nonprofit entity associated with your congregation. Missions for these entities vary, but generally focus on one of two issues: existing to preserve the physical structure and environment of an historic religious building, or to support non-religious charitable work going on in the church building (such as a soup kitchen, after-school program, senior group, etc.). Because these activities are not tied in with the beliefs or practices of the church itself, they are usually eligible for corporate and foundation giving. Many churches have had great success in partnering with other organizations who use their building to apply for grants that help renovate space, buy office or industrial equipment, and provide accessible entrances to the building. Some communities have formed alliances with other area churches and religious groups to form a non-profit for cooperative action on a single issue in the community or for applying for grants for the upkeep of their neighborhood. This is also an attractive option for raising interest in your building beyond your congregation and opening the possibility of additional gifts from local residents.

If your congregation decides to explore the nonprofit entity or partnering options, there are several points to consider.

- The boards of associated nonprofit entities cannot contain only church members. The board must include other members of the community to give the group the credibility it needs to operate. This can diminishes the congregation's control over their building, which does not make the nonprofit entity an appealing option for some congregations.
- If your congregation decides to enter a long-term partnership with a community group who uses your building, try to choose a group whose mission closely matches your church's. Common goals will make negotiating space needs, establishing fundraising objectives, and general relations easier.

## **The Starting Point: How You Can Be a Better Steward of Your Historic Building**

Although there are many external issues involved in the preservation of historic religious properties, the

most crucial elements of successful preservation are in the congregation's own hands. Comprehensive maintenance planning, supportive budgeting, and making the best use of your space are essential to keeping a church building viable. Cooperative partnering with other organizations, preservation-related or otherwise, is also important.

### ***Documenting Your Building's Physical History***

Documenting repairs and physical changes to your building is of paramount importance. Many religious organizations operate on "institutional memory" and when a building committee chair resigns or as future generations take over more responsibility in the congregation, important information can be lost. The two primary kinds of records that should be kept relate to building maintenance and major physical changes. When building additions or making any structural changes to your church, final versions of plans and photographic evidence is very important in order to leave an historical record for future congregants. A long-term maintenance manual should include descriptions and performance history of building materials and finishes, a history of past repairs and alterations, and basic historical data about the building, such as when it was built and by whom, manuals for building systems and a list of special services contracted. If your congregation has someone who takes care of identifying maintenance issues and overseeing repairs, make sure he or she writes down their methodology and a schedule of their tasks they manage.

#### **Cellular Antennae and Section 106 Review Process**

As mobile phone use grows in the United States, cellular service providers are constantly looking for new sites for their antennae. Church steeples have become a very popular placement choice for three reasons: they provide a desirable location for an antenna because of their height and central locations, the steeple structure hides what many residents consider an eyesore, and the church benefits financially from the competitive rental fees for their space. Cellular service providers must apply for a license from the Federal Communications Commission for placement of each of their antenna. If the cellular provider wishes to locate an antenna in a church listed on the National Register, or included in a National Register district, the Section 106 review process mandated in the National Historic Preservation Act kicks in to ensure that the listed property is not adversely affected by the licensure. Many antenna installations require physical changes to your building since cellular signals cannot transmit reliably through wood, and the Section 106 process requires due consideration of the implications to the building of making necessary changes. Most Section 106 reviews are conducted by the local SHPO, which is mandated to carry out federal preservation laws at the state level. The Section 106 review process cannot stop antenna licensing outright, only recommend for approval or disapproval based on the planned changes and their affect on the building. Generally, antenna placement goes smoothly with Section 106 review as most SHPOs realize what a positive financial impact antenna leasing can have for religious groups.

### ***Repair and Maintenance Assessment, Planning, and Budgeting***

#### **Dangers of Deferred Maintenance**

Churches face many difficult decisions regarding how to spend their funds. When monies are limited, congregations often feel that they must target resources towards programs and services rather than more mundane items like building maintenance. Deferred maintenance is the number one threat to the survival of historic religious buildings and the number one stressor on congregational finances. Often only the most visible maintenance problems are solved, or the congregation tries to economize by making a quick-fix repair that does not adequately address the problem. Over time, neglecting routine maintenance and failing stay apprized of your building's condition can result in critical problems will cost your congregation many times what it would have cost to repair the problem in a timely manner. Usually, these expenses are completely unexpected and unplanned for; in extreme cases, years of deferred maintenance have forced congregations out of their buildings. A solid maintenance and building assessment plan is essential to the preservation of historic church buildings. This type of planning breaks maintenance jobs into manageable units, both in terms of manpower and budget, and prevents unwelcome surprises.

## Comprehensive Maintenance Planning and Assessment

The foundation of a successful repair and maintenance plan begins with a thorough building condition report. Few congregations have the expertise within their membership for such a task, particularly with an historic building, and the services of a professional structural engineer or architect will most likely be required. The architect or engineer should examine your building from top to bottom and provide you with a report on the condition of each part of the structure, from roof to foundation, on the interior and exterior. Your building specialist will detail necessary repairs, both immediate and less time-sensitive. A common argument against hiring professional help in assessing the condition of a building is the cost. For a congregation with limited financial resources, however, having a professional structural report on your building can actually help you save money in the long run by allowing you to target your restricted funds more effectively. Occasionally, a local nonprofit group or SHPO may make small grants to help congregations with these types of assessments.

With your building condition report and repair recommendations in place, your congregation can begin to make a long-term maintenance plan. Some items on the condition report may be major repairs that will require special fundraising. Others may be routine maintenance items that were put off for too many years and need to be picked up again. Prioritize the problems according to urgency and develop a budget and timetable for the proposed work. Part of this plan should also include a routine maintenance schedule and building inspection to identify potential problems early. Having a clear maintenance, preservation, and assessment plan in place can also help with your fundraising by showing potential grantors that you have set concrete goals and planned your projects well, assuring them that their grant monies will be well-used.

## Budgeting and Endowment

Not every congregation has the ability to specify funds for building maintenance, but if at all possible, congregations with historic buildings should consider setting aside a small portion of the budget each year for maintenance costs. The best policy is to put aside slightly more than necessary for the current fiscal year in order to build up a reserve for larger repairs that need to be done further down the line. If your congregation has an endowment, or is planning a capital campaign, it would be wise to consider establishing a fund expressly for building repairs and general upkeep. In the long run, this arrangement can free the congregation to raise capital funds for goals beyond basic building preservation, putting more resources towards programming.

## ***Sensitive Additions and Renovations***

The physical state of a church building is not the only element a congregation must consider in caring for its historic property. Managing growth can be the greatest challenge in caring for an historic building. Many congregations find themselves in need of more space for programming or wanting to renovate their existing space to better suit their needs. Historic buildings present a variety of unique problems when it comes to adding on or renovating, but the larger challenge is how to make necessary changes in a manner that is both sensitive and complementary to the existing building, preserving the fabric and character of the structure, while making a viable new space for the congregation. Serving both congregational and historical interests is possible but requires sound planning, appropriate professional help, and a congregational desire to preserve their history while preparing for the future.

Ideally, a new addition or renovation should not radically change, hide, damage, or destroy character defining elements of your building. The changes do not have to slavishly mimic the original design of your building, but should provide some continuity of material, form, or style. The first step in ensuring that your congregation makes its changes responsibly and sensitively is to identify what elements of your building contribute to its historical value. Historical value can mean any number of things, and be rooted with any number of constituencies. Perhaps your congregation treasures its sanctuary space and would never want to see it renovated to exclude the wealth of architectural details, window placements, pulpit placement, or pew arrangement. Your neighbors may like the way your church anchors the block with its imposing façade and enjoy the visual richness of its exterior design. Architectural historians or religious scholars may esteem your church as an example of a common, but pervasive, style of design and usage that contributes to the story of religious life in your region. Identification of historical elements can inform your overall planning

process and result in a renovation or addition that is beneficial to your congregation and your building's historic continuity.

Congregations put a lot of thought and planning into their renovation or addition projects, identifying needs, deciding upon solutions, and recommending action to implement those solutions. They hire professional fundraising help, professional architects to design their addition, and contractors to carry out the work. When making physical changes to an historic building, it is also important to consider the impact your changes will have on the historical character of the building and to perhaps seek or hire professional preservation help. Whether your church knows the story of its building backwards and forwards or is just beginning to think about their structure as an historical artifact, your SHPO or local preservation organization can be enormously helpful in the planning process. These organizations can help you in the preservation aspects of planning your construction work; assist you in finding qualified and reputable architects, contractors and specialists with experience working with older buildings; point you towards potential funding sources; and generally educate members of your building committee and congregation about preservation practice. If your church is located in a local historic district, it is also vital to consult with them throughout the design and planning process to ensure a smooth hearing when your plans come up for review. The commission can give you valuable advice and save your congregation time and money by getting your plan approved the first time.

## Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings

The Department of the Interior is the federal agency responsible for government oversight of historic preservation in the United States. The Secretary of the Interior is charged with establishing professional standards for the preservation of historic properties and for providing advice on the preservation and protection of cultural resources listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. In this capacity, the Secretary of the Interior has issued a list of standards for sensitive historic rehabilitation geared towards preserving the historic integrity of the buildings. These standards have become the benchmark for responsible physical changes to older buildings. In most cases, these guidelines are voluntary, but some state or local grantors may require adherence to the standards as a condition of their assistance. Regardless of your circumstances, however, the Secretary of the Interior Standards are sound guiding principles for treating your historic building sensitively and renovating in a way that preserves the best features of your structure. The standards are as follows:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not

be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alteration, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The full, illustrated text of the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings is available online at [www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/rhb/](http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/rhb/).

### The Threat of Fire in Historic Church Buildings

As will be seen in the case studies later in this guide, fire is a major threat to historic church buildings, particularly during renovations and other types of construction. For this reason it is imperative that your congregation incorporate fire safety into your construction planning process. Generally advised procedures include:

- Discussing your project with the fire department and engage their assistance in developing a fire protection and fire emergency plan for your contractors.
- Developing a written disaster plan including budgeting a small amount for temporary roofing, salvage operations, documenting existing conditions, etc.
- Move important church materials, such as records and historically important moveable items, off-site to a safe place.

Common causes of fire during construction have been identified. If possible, avoid:

- Open flame torches, commonly used to seal roofing materials or cutting metal
- Paint removal with heat guns
- Petroleum-fueled space heaters
- Spontaneously combustible chemicals
- Smoking by site workers

Prohibiting smoking on the job site, storing flammable liquids off the site, and performing welding and metal cutting off-site are all good measures to take in preventing fire on your construction site.

It is also important to maintain sufficient construction insurance coverage. Your congregation may need to shop around for adequate construction insurance for historic buildings, as most companies will only insure for modern replacement value of your space. Reconstructing the building to its original appearance and form is costlier, and requires an insurance policy that covers like replacement.

### The Accessibility Challenge

Although religious institutions are exempt from the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, making Unitarian Universalist church buildings accessible is an undertaking that serves to affirm the inherent dignity and worth of all persons and the right of all people to participate fully in community life. Unfortunately, most historic church buildings are not accessible, nor were they designed to be. When endeavoring to make your building more accessible, it is important to keep the historic significance of your exterior and interior space in mind. There are a wide variety of features which contribute to historic value, including sense of space and type of physical material, which could be negatively impacted by accessibility changes. Space analysis and determination of barriers to the disabled should also take place in order to best

determine how to make entry and usage comfortable for all members. Once this information is in place, your congregation will be in a better position to provide a high level of accessibility with a low level of impact on your historic building. Your congregation may also want to consider consulting with an accessibility specialist or historic preservation consultant in the process. The Unitarian Universalist Association's Faith in Action Department has resources to aid your congregation in an accessibility evaluation available on the UUA website at [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org), and the National Park Service has a special section on accessibility in the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation Historic Buildings located on the web at [www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/rhb/access01.htm](http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/rhb/access01.htm)

## ***Space Sharing***

Sharing space in your building with the community affords many positive opportunities for your congregation. It can be an extension of your church's ministry, better connect your congregation to the community, provide important sources of income, help leverage fundraising dollars, and create important partners in the care of your building. Common examples of space sharing include providing meeting space for various area support groups or teen and senior organizations or more contractual space sharing arrangements like day care centers, classroom space for area schools or colleges, community center space, food pantry storage, meal programs for the disadvantaged or homeless, or regular performance space for a local arts group. The scale of fees for using congregational space can range from nothing to market rate depending on the circumstances. Making unused space available to the community during the week provides a service for the public, offering lower cost space than available in other venues, and also provides a great level of income and neighborhood involvement for the church.

Before soliciting community partners, it is important to evaluate your own usage of your building and what types of activities your space may accommodate. It is also vital that you have a clear mission in soliciting space sharing agreements and that the types of groups or organizations you negotiate with mesh with that mission. Because there are some liabilities and concessions involved, the closer your congregation's mission and goals are to that of the organization(s) who share your space, the more rewarding the relationship. Inviting the public to use your building can increase energy costs, security risks, insurance liability, and manpower for supervisory and scheduling needs. Some congregations also worry about losing a degree of control over their building. It is important to have written agreements with your space-sharing partners and enforce the guidelines set by each party to ensure that your use of your building is not unexpectedly or gradually compromised.

Overall, however, the benefits of sharing your building with the community can outweigh potential drawbacks, particularly in preserving your building. Additional partners using your space can also mean additional partners in maintaining, repairing, renovating, and raising money for your space. Space sharing also plays a major role in the spiritual life and ministry of the congregation, helping members of the community and bringing the community into the building on a regular basis, creating a greater public investment in the institution.

## ***Training of Key Staff***

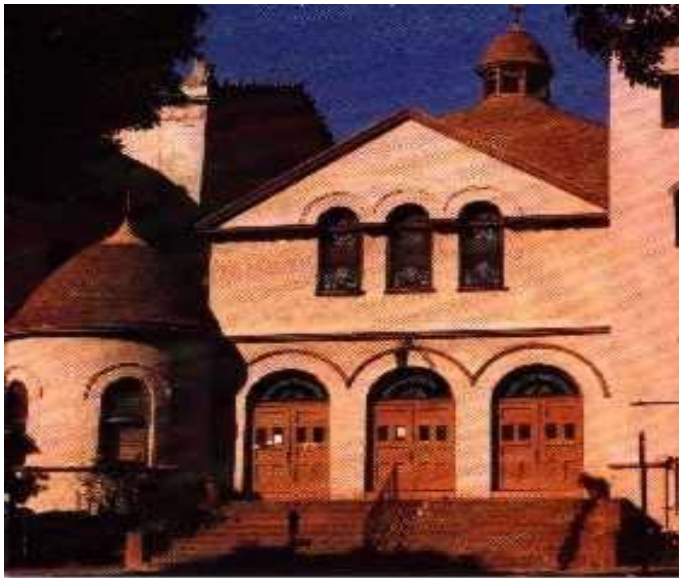
Few congregations are fortunate enough to have all the building and preservation expertise they need within their membership. When a church relies on the good will of their members to take care administrative and building functions, it is important to ensure that these volunteers have proper training. Your state and local government or preservation organization can be immensely helpful in this area. There are numerous training opportunities pertaining to issues of building assessment, maintenance, and general preservation practice, some at low or no cost to your church. Contact your local or state nonprofit preservation group for more information.

## Models for Success: Five Unitarian Universalist Congregations and Preservation

### ***First Unitarian Church of San Jose, San Jose, CA***

Built in 1892, the First Unitarian Church of San Jose is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is designated a California Historic Landmark and is listed on the City of San Jose Historic Registry. In addition to providing a church home for its congregants, First Unitarian opened the Third Street Community Center in 1997 as a separate nonprofit organization. The Center offers an after school program for low income and immigrant children, ESL classes, a neighborhood computer learning center, as well as offering meeting space for community groups.

Beginning in 1992, First Unitarian launched a Second Century Campaign to restore their church building,



**First Unitarian Church of San Jose, San Jose, CA**

expand religious education space, and improve accessibility. At the time, the church was suffering from a variety of problems rooted in deferred maintenance, particularly damage from water infiltration and an earthquake. The congregation commissioned a full structural analysis to determine the problems they needed to tackle first. The church also conducted a programming planning process to address their rapid growth in membership and building use and hired an architect and construction company with experience with preservation and historic churches. First Unitarian's studies showed that expansion was necessary to meet their congregation's needs.

The congregation began the first phase of their construction in 1995 to stabilize

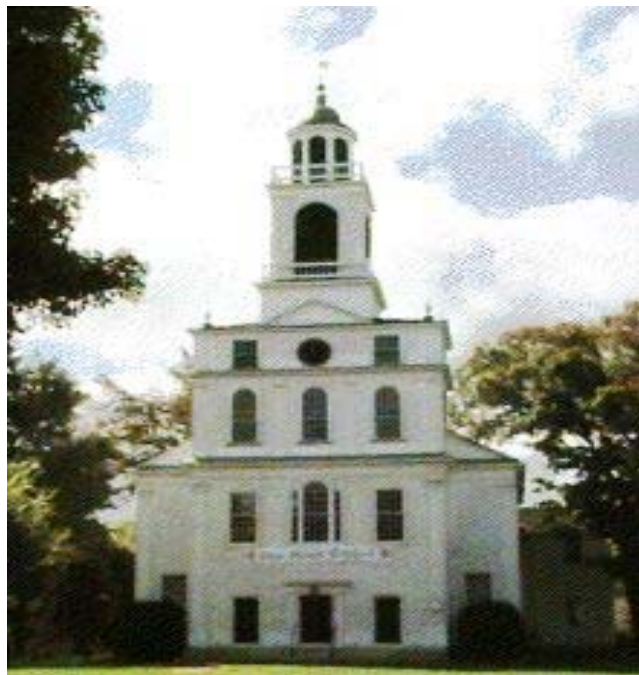
the building and replace their patterned shingle roof. First Unitarian special ordered replacement shingles from Texas to keep the historic character of their shingled domed roof. During construction, a massive fire swept through the building causing a complete roof collapse in the social hall, one third of the roof to collapse in the sanctuary, and complete water damage of all the interior plasterwork. First Unitarian now faced a larger preservation, reconstruction, and fundraising project than they had originally planned for. The insurance settlement from the fire only covered about \$3.2 million of the \$8 million construction bill and the fire had also damaged key historic elements of the church that would need to be replaced in kind or rehabilitated.

Unfortunately, the State of California had no funding available for historic building, so First Unitarian had to be innovative with their own resources. The presence of the Third Street Community Center garnered \$600,000 in funding from the City of San Jose, which the church could use to renovate and upgrade areas of the building dedicated to community use. The Packard Foundation granted \$1 million, half for the community center and half for the church. VEATCH and the UUA helped with a grant and loan. The church also mailed to the membership list of the local preservation action council asking for help. These efforts supplemented three phases of capital fundraising from the congregation, which has brought First Unitarian to within \$100,000 of their goal. Today, the congregation is back in their church building, and is finishing up the final building projects they first planned eight years ago.

## ***First Parish in Bedford, Bedford, MA***

The First Parish in Bedford, MA was built in 1817. Besides being a beautiful example of nineteenth century religious architecture, the church incorporates various elements from well-known regional architect Asher Benjamin's pattern book, *The Country Builder's Assistant*. First Parish is a contributing building in the Bedford Center National Register Historic District, which is also a local historic district monitored by a historic district commission. Preservation and responsible building stewardship is a "given" for First Parish and the congregation has taken consistent action to protect their building from adverse environmental effects or insensitive change.

In 1995, First Parish began planning a complete renovation of their interior and a major addition for religious education, administration, and meeting space to the rear of its building. The addition would be larger than two previous additions to the building and the church had somewhat limited construction options because of their small lot size. Careful planning for the project was essential, both to make the most of the available space and to ensure that the addition's design would be compatible enough for approval from the historic district commission. First Parish formed a Space Needs Committee to study their available space and gauge future needs. The congregation conducted growth studies for their religious education activities over ten years, spoke to other churches who owned historic buildings and were experiencing rapid growth about their renovation experiences, and invited knowledgeable speakers on church preservation to address the building committee. The church sought more advice from national and local preservation organizations like Inspired Partners, Partners for Sacred Places, and Historic Boston Inc., whose lighting designer consulted with the congregation.



**The First Parish in Bedford, MA**

First Parish hired appropriate professionals to ensure that their renovation project was both sensitive and effective. The church employed an architect who had experience working with historic churches and other historic buildings in the Bedford area. A preservation consultant also proved helpful with renovation plans for the most sensitive area of the building, the sanctuary. This space housed many significant historical elements such as original pews, a grand pulpit, and an organ. The congregation had strong emotional ties to the sanctuary, and careful planning for change was vital. The preservation consultant documented previous renovations in the building's 180-year history from physical, photographic, and documentary evidence and helped the church with design issues. The result of all this hard work was a nearly seamless addition to the rear of the building funded by a major capital campaign for the congregation and renovations of existing space that included both historic and modern considerations and easily passed the local historic district commission review process.

## ***First Unitarian Church, Denver, CO***

First Unitarian Church in Denver was built in the 1890s and is located at the heart of the city in a dense residential neighborhood. In 1983, First Unitarian formed a Facilities Planning Committee and began a capital campaign to carry out a \$225,000 improvement plan for their church, which at the time was in poor condition and not conducive to the congregation's needs. The committee studied the congregation's growth and programming to determine their new space requirements and hired an architect with historic

preservation experience to help them implement their plans.



**First Unitarian Church, Denver, CO**

The importance of historic preservation, the neighborhood setting, and the building's significance were kept in mind from the onset. Tragedy struck in 1985, however, when a fire gutted the building and water damaged the entire interior in the process of putting out the blaze. Thankfully, the stone superstructure of the building survived. After the fire, the Facilities Planning Committee was charged with redefining the renovation plans, now with a \$1.5 million budget as a result of the insurance settlement.

The Facilities Committee, ministers, and project architect conducted numerous hearings to solicit input from the greater congregation and to keep everyone informed of what was

happening with the building after the fire. The decision of the Facilities Committee was to make as little change to the exterior of the building as possible. The only change to the outside of the building was a grand entry stairway and handicapped access ramp. The stonework for these additions required the reopening of an old quarry to match the original stonework as closely as possible. A large stained glass rose window destroyed by the fire was replicated by the great grandson of the original artisan.

In contrast to its exterior, First Unitarian's interior space was completely renovated, replacing traditional design with a more contemporary look and movable chairs for more flexibility in worship styles. Efforts were made to bridge the differences between old and new, however. An original stained glass window of the Good Samaritan, which the congregation was able to save from their previous church, was installed in the entryway to the sanctuary and the organ pipes in the choir loft, which also survived the blaze, were reinstalled to keep continuity with the past. First Unitarian credits the awareness and commitment of their committee members and congregation to the significance of their building and their selection of an experienced historic preservation architect as the keys to their successful renovation and preservation project.



**First Unitarian Church of Denver, view of sanctuary.**

### ***Arlington Street Church, Boston, MA***

The congregation at the Arlington Street Church first gathered in 1729 and had several buildings before their present church at the corner of Arlington and Boylston Streets in downtown Boston. The church was built in 1859 by architect Arthur Gilman, a noted civic architect in Boston. The church was one of the first buildings in Boston's newly created Back Bay and houses the largest collection of Tiffany stained glass windows in any one church. Arlington Street Church is on the National Register of Historic Places, the Massachusetts State Register of Historic Places, and is a Boston Landmark. Many notable historical events have occurred at Arlington Street Church and the role of its congregation and ministers at the forefront of

the civil rights and anti-war protests in the 1960s and 1970s add to its cultural importance.

Deferred maintenance has long been Arlington Street's biggest issue. In 1994, the congregation began the first part of a phased fundraising effort to care for their ailing building. The congregation was fortunate to have several members with preservation experience who volunteered their time and expertise to helping solve Arlington Street's problems. They began by securing a small grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to commission a structural report on the church building. This report focused on structural problems, accessibility issues, and made recommendations, with budgeting, for what needed to be done to the building.

The final report said that Arlington Street Church would need \$2.2 million to complete the renovations necessary to preserve the building. The steeple on the church was about to collapse and needed immediate attention. By 1996, Arlington Street had raised \$1.2 million, thanks in part to a \$200,000 grant from the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund, administered by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The money raised in this first phase of the capital drive went towards steeple maintenance, brownstone restoration, downspout, gutter and flashing repair, and clock repair. This was supplemented by a small grant from Historic Boston Inc.'s steeple lighting grant program, which paid for spotlighting on the newly repaired steeple. Arlington Street's Renovation, Access, and Preservation Committee and their Capital Campaign Committee oversaw the renovation work, bringing both fundraising and architectural expertise into the supervision process.



**Arlington Street Church, Boston, MA**

Phase two of the capital drive, which is now underway, will raise approximately \$800,000 to repaint the sanctuary and a third phase will raise funds to renovate the Parish Hall space in the basement and put in an elevator. The elevator project is an excellent example of a congregation working together with their community to accomplish similar goals. Directly adjacent to the Arlington Street Church is the Arlington MBTA subway station. This station is currently not handicapped-accessible and the MBTA plans to install an elevator. The only abutting property owners amenable to the idea was Arlington Street Church. The church and the MBTA are working together to plan an elevator configuration that will make the church and the subway station accessible. This will save the church almost \$300,000 and will also bring in some income from the real estate taking on a small parcel of grass near the side church entrance.

Arlington Street Church has many other community partners. Nearby Emerson College rents space for classes and music rehearsals and Arlington Street has earmarked 10% of the proceeds for their building maintenance fund. Boston's Friday Night Supper program, a separate 501c3 organization that serves meals to the needy and homeless, rents Arlington Street's kitchen and parish hall for a nominal fee. As a separate non-profit organization, Friday Night Supper was able to help Arlington Street renovate their shared space with grant monies.

### ***First Unitarian Church, Chicago, IL***

Founded in 1836, First Unitarian Church is one of the oldest congregations in Chicago. The church moved three times before constructing its present building, a large English Gothic-style cathedral finished in 1931. First Unitarian's architecture was greatly influenced by its minister from 1925 to 1944, Von Ogden Vogt, a noted authority on church art and architecture. When the new building was in its planning stages, Rev. Vogt and architect Denison Bingham Hull traveled to England to study the English Gothic style and decided to design and build their congregation's new house of worship in that style.

Although English Gothic church architecture is solidly associated with Christianity, First Unitarian is a remarkable example of the adoption of traditional religious architecture to Unitarian theology. The interior is filled with images of the worker, industry, the arts, the professions, symbols of different religious faiths,

and themes of life and death. Its only statue is that of Joseph Priestly, alongside an empty niche into which the congregation can project its own heroes. First Unitarian also owns two other adjacent buildings, Fenn House, a Georgian mansion, and the Pennington Center, which houses the church's administrative offices and religious education programs. First Unitarian's two largest challenges in stewarding their building are deferred maintenance and managing other building users.

First Unitarian rents space to a variety of area institutions and groups whose fees account for half of the church's operating budget. The nearby University of Chicago Business School leases all of Fenn House for its programs and a ballet school, day care center, lesbian women's support group, and aerobics exercise group, to name a few, rent space in Pennington Hall and the church itself. The rental fees from these groups cover one hundred percent of the church's janitorial and utility costs with a healthy sum left over to go towards church programming. The financial benefit of sharing their space does present some challenges and pressures, however. Having so many members of the public inside their buildings requires careful oversight and organization on First Unitarian's part. Occasionally the users' needs conflict with the church's and First Unitarian anticipates having to renegotiate with some of their leasers as the church grows its own programs.



**First Unitarian Church, Chicago, IL**

The heavy usage First Unitarian's buildings experience also requires them to be vigilant in their inspection and maintenance planning. First Unitarian's Building Committee regularly inspects the buildings to identify areas that may need repair,

and keep a list of these items for planning purposes. Each version of the list covers three to four fiscal years and the work is funded out of annual income from rental fees. First Unitarian has a vast amount of historic space to maintain and support, and with a proportionally small membership of 196 members, their proficient use of their space helps allows them to be excellent stewards of their buildings.

## Historic Preservation Resources

### ***Partners for Sacred Places***

1700 Sansom Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor

Philadelphia, PA 19103

Tel: 215-567-3234

Fax: 215-567-3235

E-mail: [partners@sacredplaces.org](mailto:partners@sacredplaces.org)

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

**Mission:** Founded in 1989, Partners for Sacred Places is the nation's only non-denominational, non-profit organization devoted to helping Americans embrace, care for, and make good use of older and historic religious properties. Partners provides assistance to people who care for sacred places while promoting a new understanding of how these places sustain communities.

The Partners for Sacred Places website hosts an information clearinghouse of articles on nearly every aspect of religious property care and planning. Partners also sponsors events and conferences, produces publications, and hosts a religious properties professionals group for consultants and others who work with the religious community. They are an excellent starting place for basic and more targeted information on all aspects of preservation and religious buildings.

Partners also provides outreach services and will work with your congregation and community in preserving its religious heritage.

### ***National Trust for Historic Preservation***

Headquarters:

1785 Massachusetts Ave, NW

Washington, DC 20036

Tel: 1-800-944-6847 or 202-588-6000

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

The National Trust also has seven regional offices in Philadelphia, PA; Chicago, IL; Boston, MA; Charleston, SC; Denver, CO; Fort Worth, TX; and San Francisco, CA.

**Mission:** The National Trust for Historic Preservation provides leadership, education and advocacy to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize our communities

The National Trust provides technical advice and assistance, gives loans and grants, advocates for preservation issues on the national level, sponsors conferences, and produces publications. Their website provides a good overview of the issues the Trust addresses and resources they make available to members and the public. The Trust 's historic preservation information booklets entitled *Preservation Information*. They are available for purchase for between \$6 and \$10 via the National Trust website. Those pertinent to the preservation of religious structures are:

*Strategies for the Stewardship and Active Use of Older and Historic Religious Properties*

Diane Cohen and A Robert Jaegar, 1996

Item #2117

*Conservation of Urban Religious Properties*

Anne Nezel, Holly Fiala, Bob Jaegar, Diane Cohen, Fred Milligan, 1990.

Item #2147

*Preservation of Historic Burial Grounds*

Lynette Strangstad, 1993

Item #2176

### ***National Park Service***

Various offices across the United States

[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

Direct link to the historic buildings area: [www.cr.nps.gov/buildings.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/buildings.htm)

The National Park Service website is an excellent place to begin to learn about preservation theory and practice. The Park Service has a host of resources available for download and purchase including information on "good" and "bad" treatments for historic structures, advice on sensitive rehabilitations and additions, common maintenance problems and solutions, and specialized publications for the professional and the novice.

### ***National Register of Historic Places***

National Park Service

1849 C Street, NW

NC400

Washington, DC 20240

Tel: 202-343-9536

Email: [nr\\_info@nps.gov](mailto:nr_info@nps.gov)

[www.cr.nps.gov/places.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/places.htm)

**Mission:** The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part

of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The NRHP website has a searchable database of all listed properties called the National Register Information System, located at [www.nr.nps.gov](http://www.nr.nps.gov). The database can locate properties by city, state, name, theme, or any combination of these four criteria. The Register's website also details how to get a property listed on the Register and gives specific qualification criteria.

### ***Your State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)***

Each state structures its historic resource management office differently. Some are part of the Secretary of State's office, as in Massachusetts, others are stand-alone entities, such as the Connecticut Historical Society. Still others are under the auspices of a Department of Environmental Protection. You can easily find your state's historic preservation office by visiting the National Trust for Historic Preservation's resources web page at [www.nthp.org/main/frontline/resources.htm](http://www.nthp.org/main/frontline/resources.htm). This page allows you to search by region and state for all preservation-related groups and governmental agencies. SHPO information is also available via the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers website at [www.sso.org/ncshpo/shpolist.htm](http://www.sso.org/ncshpo/shpolist.htm). If you do not have internet access, you can contact the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, 444 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 342; Washington, DC 20001. Tel: 202-624-5465.

Your SHPO can provide technical and planning assistance, grant or loan monies, assess your eligibility for state landmark or historic designation, and help your church through the designation process. The SHPO is also responsible for all nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.

### ***Your Statewide or Local Preservation Organization***

Services and activities vary among state and local preservation nonprofit organizations, but all are helpful in thinking about your historic religious building in a preservation context and providing some technical advice and support. You can locate your statewide or local preservation organization by visiting the National Trust for Historic Preservation's resources web page at [www.nthp.org/main/frontline/resources.htm](http://www.nthp.org/main/frontline/resources.htm). This page allows you to search for preservation resources by region and state. Several notable state and local organizations who have specialized programs for religious properties are listed below.

#### **Historic Boston Inc.**

3 School Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
Tel: 617-227-4679  
Fax: 617-742-7431  
Email: [hbi@historicboston.org](mailto:hbi@historicboston.org)  
[www.historicboston.org](http://www.historicboston.org)

**The Steeple Project:** HBI's Steeple Project aims to help Boston's religious property owners maintain and preserve their buildings, thus allowing them to continue to provide much-needed services to the people of Boston. The Steeple Project awards matching grants to help fund building assessments, exterior repairs, and steeple and dome illuminations. HBI also makes grants to help religious groups create an energy conservation program for their buildings and to make changes indicated by the plan.

#### **New York Landmarks Conservancy**

141 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10010  
Tel: 212-995-5620  
Fax: 212-995-5268

Email: [nylandmarks@nylandmarks.org](mailto:nylandmarks@nylandmarks.org)  
[www.nylandmarks.org](http://www.nylandmarks.org)

**Sacred Sites Program:** The Sacred Sites Program makes a variety of matching grants and below market rate loans to religious institutions in the State of New York for technical assistance, maintenance and repair, and restoration of religious buildings. The program also offers educational materials and events, and publishes *Common Bond*, a technical journal devoted to the care of religious properties.

## Cleveland Restoration Society

3751 Prospect Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44115  
Tel: 216-426-1000  
[www.clevelandrestoration.org](http://www.clevelandrestoration.org)

**Sacred Landmarks Assistance Program:** The Sacred Landmarks Assistance Program provides Cleveland area religious groups with reliable, impartial technical assistance in issues of building maintenance and repair. Site visits, phone consultations, seminars, and printed materials are all available.

## Inspired Partnerships

53 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 852  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Tel: 312-294-0077  
Fax: 312-294-0085  
Inspired Partnerships does not have a website or email address at this time.

## Center for the Documentation and Preservation of Places of Worship

1885 University Avenue West, Suite 55  
Minneapolis, MN 55104-3403  
Tel: 612-659-0401  
CDPPW does not have a website or email address at this time.

## ***Historic American Building Survey***

HABS/HAER Division  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW, NC300  
Washington, DC 20240  
Tel: 202-343-9618  
Fax: 202-343-9624  
[www.cr.nps.gov/habshaer/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/habshaer/)

The Historic American Building Survey began in 1933 as a WPA project to employ architects and photographers in the documentation of America's quickly disappearing historic structures. Still in operation today, HABS has a collection of drawings and photographs of over 37,000 historic buildings from across the country. These documents provide invaluable information on buildings we have lost to the ravages of time and those which still stand today. The HABS website has a searchable database of their holdings. Most of the photos and datasheets are viewable online and downloadable.

## ***American Institute of Architects***

Various local chapters across the United States  
[www.aiaonline.org](http://www.aiaonline.org)

The AIA website has an entire section geared towards the consumer which offers information on what services architects can provide, how to evaluate architects' qualifications for your type of project, and suggested contract documents. The site also has an architect finder that will allow you to specify a building type of religious and a service type of historic preservation, accessibility, or building analysis. Links to local AIA chapters are also provided through the professional section of the site at <http://www.e->

architect.com/institute/chapters/chapter\_search.asp. The AIA produces several publications that can help in finding and hiring appropriate architecture professionals. They are available for purchase from your local AIA chapter for \$3.

*Beginner's Guide to Architectural Services*  
#11-99-02871-1

*You and Your Architects*  
#11-99-02873-8

*Sparks Framework and its Assessment: Charting Your Preferences*  
Ellen Flynn-Heapes, #11-99-18267-2

## **Unitarian Universalist Association Resources**

### **UUA Office for Congregational Fundraising Services**

Wayne Clark, Director  
25 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
Tel: 617-742-2100, ext. 272  
Email: [wclark@uua.org](mailto:wclark@uua.org)  
<http://www.uua.org/cde/fundraising/>

### **UUA Public Information Office**

John Hurley, Director  
25 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
Tel: 617-742-2100, ext. 131  
[www.uua.org/info/](http://www.uua.org/info/)

The Public Information Office of the UUA manages and collects archival materials related to Unitarian Universalist history, including historical files on UUA congregations. Historical files contain items such as clippings, correspondence, and photos, some of which your congregation may not have in its records. The archives are open for browsing by appointment or your church can contact the office to initiate a search for information on your congregation. Some research requests may entail a fee if the office needs to access the UUA archives housed at the Andover Harvard Theological Library at Harvard University.

### **The UUA Congregational Handbook: How to Develop and Sustain Your Unitarian Universalist Congregation**

Third Edition. Edited by Lawrence X. Peers. Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 1995.

*The UUA Congregational Handbook* has several sections pertaining to congregational budgeting, building and facilities programs, and preserving church history. There is also a resource section for other publications related to church building issues. The entire text of the handbook is also available online through the UUA website at [www.uua.org/cde/handbook/](http://www.uua.org/cde/handbook/). *The UUA Congregational Handbook* is also available for purchase through the UUA Bookstore, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108. Tel: 617-742-2100, ext. 102  
[www.uua.org/bookstore](http://www.uua.org/bookstore).

## **Bibliographic Resources**

The Rev. Edwin C. Lynn, minister at the Northshore Unitarian Universalist Church in Danvers, MA, and an architect, has written an eloquent and beautifully illustrated book on religious architecture and its relevance to community and spiritual life entitled *Tired Dragons: Adapting Church Architecture to Changing Needs*.

It is a wonderful introduction to the topic of preservation and religious buildings. Beacon Press published the book in 1972, and it is currently out of print, but used copies are available through Amazon.com and other online book sellers.

Although it was not a focus of this guide, energy conservation in religious buildings is an important issue for many congregations. Many publications and articles are available on this topic through Partners for Sacred Places and others. One key publication in this area is *Reducing Energy Costs in Religious Buildings: a Workbook for Congregational Leaders* published collaboratively by Boston Edison, Historic Boston Inc., Partners for Sacred Places, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1990. Contact Historic Boston Inc. or Partners for Sacred Places to obtain a copy.

## **Acknowledgements**

Sincere thanks is due to all the generous Unitarian Universalist ministers, building committee members, and volunteers who shared their experiences with me during the production of this guide. Their stories were both inspirational and educational, providing the invaluable “real world” view on preservation in our church communities. A debt of gratitude is also due to John Hurley, Jerry King, and Richard Candee, who advised on this project and offered their good advice and encouragement.

## **About the Author**

Elaine Stiles is a degree candidate at Boston University’s Preservation Studies Program and an employee in the Development Department at the Unitarian Universalist Association.