

Creative Spaces Case Study Series

Trinity St. Paul's and Tafelmusik: Jeanne Lamon Hall



This Creative Spaces Case Study Series is Supported by:







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Introduction

These in-depth case studies serve as a resource for arts and heritage organizations embarking on a capital project to learn from the successes and challenges of others in the sector.

In these case studies, we analyze the **why** (why they took on this capital project), the **what** (what were they building and creating), the **who** (who are they serving, who supported this project, who led this project and who they hired), the **how** (how was the project financially supported and what positions were created/how were they funded), and **the ongoing** (what happened after? How is the building maintained/operated? Is it sustainable? How is revenue generated?) behind each project.

We looked at a wide range of spaces from across the province with varying operational models, sizes, locations, project sizes and artistic disciplines. The case studies focus on each organization's process for completing their project; from the planning phase, to the building phase, to the operations and maintenance phase. Following the completion of all 19 case studies, a Best Practice Summary released on ABO's website, free for all to access.

The case study series is supported by the Learning Series, which is a collection of webinars and workshops that support ABO's core programs. Webinars that highlight the capital projects featured in the 2018-2020 case studies series are available on the ABO website. Please check https://www.artsbuildontario.ca/learning/webinars/ for more information.

The case study series is supported by the Department of Canadian Heritage and Canada Council for the Arts.

ArtsBuild Ontario

ArtsBuild Ontario is the only organization in Ontario dedicated to realizing long-term solutions to building, managing and financing the sustainable arts facilities needed in our communities.

ABO offers tools, resources and programs that support arts organizations with their creative space projects. ABO's core programs include Asset Planner for the Arts, the Creative Spaces Mentoring Network, and the Learning Series.



Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik

Interviewees

- Carol Kehoe, Executive Director, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Choir
- John Abberger, Tafelmusik Board of Directors, Principal Oboe Tafelmusik Orchestra
- Kendra Fry, General Manager, Trinity-St. Paul's
- Lorna Niebergall, Trinity-St. Paul's Board of Trustees

Historical Background of Trinity St. Paul's

Built in the Revived Romanesque style, Trinity-St. Paul's stone was quarried from the Forks of the Credit River. It is part of the body of work of architect Edmund Burke, whose splendid buildings are so much a part of Toronto's cityscape. In recognition of its fine architecture, which is revolutionary in its democracy, Trinity-St. Paul's has been designated as a Heritage Building by the Toronto Historical Board.

Appreciation for the church's architectural presence is widespread. In a column in the Toronto Star, Entertainment Editor Kathleen Kenna called Trinity-St. Paul's "one of the most romantic venues in Toronto." The sanctuary is built on an amphitheatre or auditorium plan emphasizing acoustics and visibility. This makes it an ideal location for musical performances as well as an enriching setting for worship.

Mandates

Trinity-St. Paul's United Church

Worship of God, nurture of one another, and the struggle to be faithful to God's purposes lie at the centre of our community and our outreach. We affirm that all who seek to live faithfully regardless of ability, age, class, ethnicity, gender, race or sexual orientation are full participants and are urged to take full responsibility in the life, membership and leadership of the church.

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir

Tafelmusik's vision is to be an international centre of excellence in period performance for generations to come. To sustain this vision, Tafelmusik is now creating artists and audiences for the future through artist training and audience development activities.

Tafelmusik's mission is to engage audiences locally, provincially, nationally and internationally with historically informed live and recorded musical experiences on period instruments.



Partnership between Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik

Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik began a partnership in 1981, as Tafelmusik was in search of performance and office space. At this time, Trinity-St. Paul's was introducing their space to more community groups who matched their mandate around faith, justice and the arts. Since the partnership was established, both the church and Tafelmusik have worked collaboratively on capital projects to serve the congregation, Tafelmusik patrons and community. Past projects include reducing the size of the sanctuary (when the St. Paul's congregation joined Trinity) to create a narthex/gathering space following worship and performances, as well as constructing Tafelmusik's offices in the church basement. Tafelmusik is recognized as a primary tenant at Trinity-St. Paul's and both organizations continue to work together to optimize the space. The partnership between Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik will last a minimum of 46 years with Tafelmusik's Occupancy Agreement lasting until 2027.

Project Summary

This case study will focus on the \$3.3 million renovation project of Jeanne Lamon Hall in Trinity-St. Paul's in partnership with Tafelmusik that took place from 2013 to 2016. This project saw the church's sanctuary transformed into a professional venue for performance and refined space for worship. This involved improving the acoustics in the sanctuary, installing new seating, adding a permanent stage, improving audience sightlines and the overall aesthetic of the space. It also saw the lobby, box office and narthex renovated to create a physically accessible space. The project was made possible by the long-term partnership and trust between the congregation of Trinity-St. Paul's, the Board of Trustees and Tafelmusik.

The "What"

Who owns and operates Trinity-St. Paul's?

Trinity-St. Paul's is owned by the United Church of Canada and held in trust by the Board of Trustees at Trinity-St Paul's United Church, which is an amalgamation of two congregations. The building is operated with a split governance structure that has delegated many powers of the Board of Trustees to the Building Management Board. While the Board of Trustees administers the capital assets and finances of Trinity-St. Paul's, the Building Management Board and its staff are responsible for day-to-day operations for the congregation and community use of the space.

What were Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik building together?

Tafelmusik was in need of a permanent performance hall they could call home. After spending 25 years completing needs assessments and feasibility studies on the revitalization of Trinity-St. Paul's, and considering Koerner Hall, they moved forward with plans to renovate the sanctuary. Key years and milestones are listed below in the timeline of this project:



- In 1991, Tafelmusik has experienced significant growth as an organization and requests to Trinity- St. Paul's to amend the acoustics of the sanctuary. At this time, Bob Essert from Sounds and Space Design reviews and provides recommendations to bring the hall from a B- to an A standard for classical orchestras.
- In 2004, Tafelmusik comes forward with a larger plan to realize acoustic improvements and open up public space to create a lobby outside the sanctuary as well as install a permanent stage that would result in efficient set up and take down between the church, Tafelmusik and community.
- In 2006, Diamond and Schmitt submits a proposal for the project, which was estimated at \$15 million to execute. The proposal included automated shutters that opened and closed over large stained glass windows, acoustic enhancements, a hydraulic stage lift and air conditioning however, this proposal was not embraced by the partnership between Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik due to cost and scope of the project.
- While Tafelmusik considered Koerner Hall as a possible new performance venue in 2008, Trinity-St. Paul's presents Tafelmusik with an opportunity for a continued partnership and connection to a space heavily associated with its organizational identity.
- In 2011, Tafelmusik successfully secures funding to move forward with the sanctuary renovations for a \$3.3 million project. The project was executed in two phases over 2013 to 2016:
- Enhanced acoustics of the sanctuary. This includes removing worn carpets and refreshing the floor, as well as adding acoustic wooden slats to the orchestra level walls.
- Improving seating by replacing main floor pews with theatre seating as well as restoring balcony pews and adding new upholstered seat cushions. Main floor accessible seating was also added.
- Installing a permanent stage designed to enhance and improve sound as well as audience sight lines by raising the platform. The stage was expanded to provide space to mount a larger orchestra and provide storage underneath.
- Improve the aesthetic of the space including new paint on walls, ceilings (following
 original paint designs from very old Trinity photographs) and antique screens, refinished
 railings, new oak floors and woodwork coordinated with the original oak organ-screen
 behind the new stage/platform, main floor maple acoustic walls, enhanced lighting on
 walls and aisles, etc.

It is important to note that having an elevated stage was supported by the congregation of Trinity St. Paul's, but is not typical of a United Church sanctuary as it is customary that the congregation, ministers and lay leaders worship on the same level.

Phase 2:



- The lobby/narthex, staircase leading to the balcony and upper vestibules were recarpeted, painted to match the sanctuary, relit with new overhead lighting, the banisters refinished
- Enhanced stage lighting, upgraded multi-media equipment, installed fall arrest
- The N-S beam supporting the balcony was replaced, as they were deemed to have warped
- Improved accessibility including wheelchair and walker access with a ramp and rails into the hall/sanctuary and automated doors. The box office was refurbished and added an accessible ticket counter.
- Added flat screen display system in lobby/narthex
- Added coat storage in the main lobby/narthex and upper lobbies

The "Why"

Why did Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik take on this project?

The need to revitalize the sanctuary was driven by mutual gain and strong partnership. As Tafelmusik grew as an ensemble and its artistic excellence increased, they required a performance hall that would serve the intimate nature of Baroque performances. The sanctuary, prior to renovations, lacked proper acoustics and comfortable seating for musicians and patrons. Tafelmusik also explored the possibility of moving to Koerner Hall, which was under construction at the time with the Royal Conservatory of Music. However, the familiarity, strong partnership and accessible nature of Trinity-St. Paul's was deemed to best serve the organization as a preferred venue for their future performance hall.

From Trinity-St. Paul's perspective, the need for the renovation was twofold: the renovation would serve their mandate as a centre for faith, justice and the arts as well as provide monetary sustainability for the church. The renovation would keep existing user groups of the sanctuary/performance hall happy and attract new renters, and result in more funds to support the building. It would also fulfill their mission in supporting the arts by providing a professional arts space for the creative community.

Why did Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik engage its community in this project?

The congregation was a significant stakeholder in this project and was consulted continually throughout the visioning process. Tafelmusik and Trinity-St. Paul's underwent a series of needs assessments and a feasibility study from Diamond and Schmitt, all of which consulted existing stakeholders invested in the sanctuary/performance hall including the congregation, musicians, as well as other music organizations renters. The purpose of these consultations was to ensure that the renovation of the sanctuary served the needs of existing users as well as the needs of Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik. The documents that are most relevant to the renovation of the sanctuary are a needs assessment from 2004 and a feasibility study from 2005 from



Diamond and Schmitt Architects, as well as a needs assessment from 2008 for Koerner Hall as Tafelmusik's potential new performance space.

The "Who"

Who does Trinity St. Paul's and Jeanne Lamon Hall strive to serve?

Trinity-St. Paul's building as a whole serves the church, its tenants, and community groups - all of whom fall under their mandate. Current tenants include a Montessori daycare and school, Toronto Consort, a full time restaurant caterer, International Socialists, a Middle Eastern language School, the Toronto Health Coalition, several 12-step groups, dance groups, and more. In the last year, Trinity-St. Paul's saw 483 individual rentals, 80 of which were on a recurring basis.

In terms of the sanctuary/performance hall, the space serves the congregation during times of worship as well as arts and community organizations, with precedence given to Tafelmusik as primary tenants and users of the space who have invested in its capital rejuvenation.

Tafelmusik is granted first refusal for dates after important church dates are reserved, following by Toronto Consort who has second rights.

Who led the project?

Tricia Baldwin who was the Executive Director of Tafelmusik, developed the funds for the project and led its execution for the organization along with Music Director Jeanne Lamon. Bob Fugere and Lorna Niebergall, who are long-time members of the Board of Trustees at the church, as well as Kendra Fry who was hired as General Manager, led the project on behalf of Trinity-St. Paul's.

Who were the key partners in the project?

The primary partnership that drove this project forward was between Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik. The United Church of Canada was also a partner in the project, as they needed to approve any funds from Trinity-St. Paul's to support the project.

Who opposed the project?

Trinity-St. Paul's has reassessed its identify periodically throughout the years, specifically around how the space serves their mission. Tafelmusik is a primary tenant in the space, but it took constant communication between both partners to ensure goals of both organizations were equally met. Some congregants questioned how much of the space's purpose was devoted to Tafelmusik instead of the church, since aspects of project plans conflicted with traditional practices within a United Church space. For example, the stage design included a platform that would elevate ministers during a church service, when congregants and ministers should be on the same level. Another example is the donor board in the narthex/lobby as it is not customary to promote personal recognition for giving to the church. However, it was through a process of conversation and continual engagement with the congregation that



ultimately gained their support, recognizing the sanctuary/hall would effectively serve their mission through the arts. The church congregation collectively contributed around \$560,000 to fund the project.

Tafelmusik's ensemble operates on a consensus model, yet no consensus was reached among musicians around the design of the space. Primary issues that subsequently arose concerned lighting for musicians and audiences as well as seating. These disagreements were managed through continual discussion with the project team and involvement with musicians.

Who was on the project team?

Many roles played a part in the success of the sanctuary/performance hall renovation. Project teams for each organization are below:

Tafelmusik:

- Tricia Baldwin, Executive Director
- Jeanne Lamon, Music Director
- Alex Skoczylas, Marketing Director
- Andy Cannon, Board Member who headed capital campaign
- Campaign Manager

In terms of new staff hired to support the project, Tafelmusik brought on a Campaign Manager who led fundraising for the renovation. However, Tricia Baldwin and Jeanne Lamon, Executive Director and Music Director respectively, continued to lead the project for Tafelmusik.

Trinity-St. Paul's:

- Bob Fugere, Board of Trustees
- Lorna Niebergall, Board of Trustees
- Kendra Fry, General Manager

Trinity St. Paul's changed its staffing structure mid-way through the renovation. While no additional staff were hired, the role of a Building Manager evolved into a General Manager, as Trinity-St. Paul's newly-hired Building Manager resigned prior to construction and Lorna Niebergall and Bob Fugere from the Board of Trustees filled in for the role. Kendra Fry was brought on mid-way through the project with a wider portfolio of responsibility. The General Manager was/is responsible for overseeing the building, tenants and staff, which allowed for an operational role to respond to immediate decisions during the building phase of the project.

Tafelmusik and Trinity-St. Paul's formed a Building Committee for the project, which consisted of the above project teams.



Who was contracted for the project?

Tafelmusik and Trinity-St. Paul's contracted ERA Architects who subcontracted Clifford Restoration Ltd. ERA Architects specializes in heritage restoration and worked with Anne Minors Performance Consultants and Bob Essert of Sound Space Design to support the seating design and acoustic improvements of the space.

The "How"

How did the project go from concept to construction?

A grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage's Canada Cultural Spaces Fund along with other public funds and donations allowed for the project building phase to begin. Tafelmusik and Trinity-St. Paul's preparation work over the last 25 years proved to be fruitful once public funding was secured as a unified vision for the sanctuary had already been fleshed out between partners and construction could start soon thereafter.

How was a construction plan formed?

ERA Architects and Clifford created the construction plan, which was finalized within the two-year timeline based on a grant from the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund. The Building Committee and contractors worked together to establish the plan. In terms of day-to-day decision making during construction, Trinity-St. Paul's Board of Trustees and Tafelmusik's leadership managed decisions during Phase 1 of the project, but the General Manager at Trinity-St. Paul's took over many day-to-day responsibilities of the Board of Trustees in Phase 2.

How was accessibility included in the project?

Accessibility was a key consideration in the project. Accessible seating was added along the back wall of the main floor of the sanctuary/performance hall. A ramp and electronic doors at the sanctuary/performance hall's entrance were installed, as well as an accessible ticket counter at the box office. The stairs leading to the sanctuary/performance hall are marked with visual breakpoints (different carpet colours) indicating a change in floor levels.

Extensive consideration was put into the potential installation of an elevator to the balcony, but this was prevented by two factors: the substrate could not support it and accessible bathrooms would need to be installed in the second floor, which would be impossible to carve out in the designated heritage building.



How were energy efficiency and the environment incorporated?

The front of house lighting in the narthex/lobby area had LED lights installed as part of the project. Both spaces would have been outfitted with LED lighting, but this was value engineered out of the project due to budget constraints. A year following the project, the entire building was outfitted with LED lights.

How were contingencies managed?

There were four significant contingencies that arose throughout the project. The first was that the back wall of the sanctuary/performance hall had to be built twice. To accommodate ramp access to the sanctuary/performance hall, which was part of Phase 2 of the project, the back wall and doors needed to be reconstructed. Second, a supportive beam that crossed the narthex/lobby was flagged by an engineer as insufficient, which resulted in balcony closure for two months while extra supports were built, funded by the Board of Trustees. The original supportive beam was later confirmed as structurally sufficient, rendering the two-month balcony closure and extra supports unnecessary. Third, painting the sanctuary/performance required \$40,000 of unforeseen costs in building scaffolding to support the job, delaying the project's timeline and costing more for the project. Lastly, the City of Toronto inspected the lights in the narthex/lobby and found they were not up to code for fire safety standards, despite Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik having code consultants previously confirm they were compliant. Over the next two days before opening, 72 embedded lights were removed, a substructure was built underneath, and the lights were reinstalled.

How were day-to-day operations impacted?

The project took a toll on the capacity of both the church and Tafelmusik. As no dedicated Project Manager was hired by Tafelmusik, that organization's leadership took on the responsibility in addition to existing duties. While the project took place over two summers in 2013 and 2014, in between concert seasons, the extra work resulted in significant overtime for senior staff.

Trinity-St. Paul's' new Building Manager resigned within days of the start of construction, which resulted in two representatives from the Board of Trustees – with professional backgrounds in development, community and real-estate – managing Phase 1 of the project on a volunteer basis. The General Manager, hired in December 2013, took on significant responsibility for Phase 2 of the project.

Since construction took place around an entryway into the building, passage during construction was chaotic for staff and tenants. Simple things like finding a tripped breaker without going through the construction zone was a challenge. Having construction workers enter and exit through the building with an open door to the back garden quickly resulted in security problems. These moments required constant problem solving as well as compromise



and communication between construction workers and those using the building on a daily basis.

How was the project funded?

Tafelmusik applied for public funding on behalf of the partnership with Trinity-St. Paul's as most funders do not support religious organizations. Tafelmusik secured funding through Canada Cultural Spaces Funder, Ontario Trillium Foundation, City of Toronto's Culture Build Investment Program, Canada Council and Ontario Arts Council. The City of Toronto gave its largest grant to this project. The congregation raised \$500,000 and Trinity-St. Paul's supported the project with an additional \$60,000.

How were programs managed during construction?

While the sanctuary was under construction, the congregation held church services at Bloor Street United and elsewhere in the building. This significantly impacted Trinity-St. Paul's bottom line as those spaces and the sanctuary were not available for community use, costing \$250,000 in potential rental revenue.

From Tafelmusik's perspective, construction was completed between concert seasons in the summers of 2013 and 2014. Tafelmusik used Koerner Hall as their performance venue at the end and beginning of seasons surrounding construction. After opening to the public in October 2013, construction continued in the narthex/lobby and sanctuary/performance hall over the holidays. This time was spent fixing and repairing aspects of the space, readying it for January 2015 when the project was complete.

The "Ongoing"

How did Trinity-St. Paul's project new financials?

The new vision for the revalidation of Trinity St. Paul's provided an opportunity for sustainability for the church as a community space dedicated to faith, justice and the arts. There were no formal financial projections as to how much the space would provide in rental revenue, but three years after adjusting the rental fee structure (see rate sheet in resources), the building is now fully supporting itself. Prior to the project, Trinity-St. Paul's was undercharging their space rentals versus operating and capital costs. A plan was formed to slowly increase space-use rates, creating a sustainable business model for Trinity-St. Paul's while supporting community groups who use the space. This rental increase would be a necessary challenge for the growth of Trinity-St. Paul's.

Did the new space provide a new revenue source?

The newly renovated sanctuary/performance hall and new vision for Trinity-St. Paul's led to broader impact in the arts community and more revenue. In 2013, rentals for the whole building provided \$418,000 in revenue (somewhat diminished due to construction), which has



grown to \$694,000 in 2018. This growth is a direct result of increasing rental rates among all renters and opening up a new professional concert hall for the arts. In addition to Trinity-St. Paul's new revenue generation, Jeanne Lamon Hall has resulted in box office success for arts partners, where the majority have seen an increase in attendance.

Were new staff hired after the new space opened?

Trinity-St. Paul's needed to increase its staff team in order to match the demands of a professional concert hall. They hired three new staff for their technical team, an additional full time front desk position and a Custodial Supervisor. The role of the General Manager was upgraded and another staff position changed into facility management.

While Trinity-St. Paul's operates the building, Tafelmusik hired an Operations Manager with facility expertise to inform future capital projects.

How is Trinity-St. Paul's being maintained and operated?

Trinity-St. Paul's maintains and operates the sanctuary/performance hall and all spaces within the building. The only exception is that Tafelmusik provides their own front-of-house staff for concert performances.

Lessons learned in the first 90 days?

Managing expectations of stakeholders once the project was completed was challenging. While the renovation of the sanctuary may have seemed finished, it was not. Four months following opening were spent walking around the space, testing aspects out and revisiting imperfections. As contractors were not aware of deficiencies immediately, not all issues were fixed and were an added cost outside of the project. For example, Trinity-St. Paul's found the revised acoustics for musical performance dramatically affected the space for speaking, and its odyssey to work out a satisfactory sound system began.

Lessons learned in the first year?

After opening a professional concert, the church's mission constantly poses a question to Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik – how does this space affect the identity of both organizations? For Trinity-St. Paul's, this means not losing sight of its core values through the creation/addition of an improved performance hall in their venue. For Tafelmusik, this means new and existing audiences might not be comfortable attending performances in a church. The space evolved from a traditional sanctuary to a professional performance venue, which has increased expectations for an attractive aesthetic in the space. At its core, the space is a church that is now also a recital hall. Both organizations continue to work together to re-evaluate the space's purpose and its impact on one another's mandate.



Case Study Summary

As a space that serves Tafelmusik and many other community groups, Trinity-St. Paul's is a long-standing example of partnership between faith and the arts. Both organizations leveraged their identity with the venue of Trinity-St. Paul's to serve one another's vision. The project would not have been possible without the congregation's willingness to realize their mission through the drastic transformation of the sanctuary into a concert hall. It also would not have been possible without Tafelmusik's leadership in securing public and private support for the project. The relationship between Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik continues to serve as an example for other arts organizations in search of space and places of faith as a model of successful partnership built on trust, transparency and collaboration.



Resources

The following resources below have been provided by Trinity-St. Paul's and Tafelmusik as additional information for readers.

Websites:

- Trinity St. Paul's Centre for Faith, Justice and the Arts
 - o Rental Spaces
 - o Rental Fee Schedule
 - o Virtual Tour
- Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir
 - o Support Us: Venue Revitalization Project

Needs Assessment:

 Needs Assessment, September 2008 from Tafelmusik for Koerner Hall and the Royal Conservatory of Music

Capital Campaign Marketing Materials:

- Tafelmusik Brochure: Our Venue Revitalization Project
- Trinity St. Paul's Brochure: Renewing Spirit 125
- "Before" Photos of Trinity St. Paul's Phase 1
- "Before" Photos of Trinity St. Paul's Phase 2

ArtsBuild Ontario Webinars:

- Alternative Creative Spaces and Adaptive Reuse Projects: Featuring Trinity St. Paul's and Idea Exchange
 - o Recording
- Space Management 101: Keys to Success: Featuring Trinity St. Paul's
 - o Recording