



# FATHS FORM

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### First Presbyterian Church of Burbank » Burbank, California

An urban church built in the 1950s, First Presbyterian was virtually untouched for over 60 years. The tall volume, enclosed over the years by stained glass, was dark and “windowless.” The challenge was to modernize the sanctuary for current worship programs, maintain the stained glass, and bring in natural light.

The center aisle was eliminated and a diagonal aisle from the new entry door to the chancel was added. The off-side placement of the chancel allowed the traditional choir and contemporary praise team to share equally the “front” of the performance area. The thrust chancel with wrap-around seating creates an engaging worship experience with a projection surface focus above. The balcony was brought forward and followed the circular seating geometry. A catwalk along the side of the nave connects the balcony to the new elevator tower, which provide clear access to all the floor levels of the entire campus. The wood entry doors were removed and replaced with glass, exposing a small prayer chapel open to the community. The ceiling of the

chapel was replaced with a large skylight up-lighting using LED lights. The lights change color with the liturgical seasons, which creates a kinetic exterior. The basement’s internal walls were removed to create a large youth space. The new courtyard was pulled back from the building, creating a lower level youth patio, connecting the youth with the rest of the campus. Every design decision removes barriers and possible discomfort a visitor might experience. What was created is a ministry tool to more easily reach the un-churched and de-churched.

#### Jury Comments

*This renovation discovers new potential in this old building and is truly transformational. It is difficult to achieve a graceful assembly space within a shoebox shape. The new space has power and grace, instilling new life in the congregation. The outdoor community space is a treasure, a gesture of welcome.*





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