

Historic Trinity Church begins decades-overdue restoration

May 7, 2018 by Matthew Marani



Today, Manhattan's historic Trinity Church commenced an approximately two-year restoration project. The last restoration of the church occurred over seven decades ago in 1946. New York's Murphy Burnham & Buttrick is leading the restoration of three-century old church.

Trinity Church is one of the oldest parishes in New York City. The congregation moved to its Richard Upjohn-designed Gothic Revival house of worship in 1846. Since then, Trinity has built three additions to Upjohn's original design, including the All Saints' Chapel. Upjohn was a cofounder of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and a prodigious ecclesiastical architect in New York and New England.

The nearly \$100 million project will bring the church to contemporary accessibility and environmental standards through the construction of wheelchair-accessible ramps along the church's entrances, gender-neutral restrooms, and a new steel-and-glass canopy adjacent to the south elevation.

While a significant portion of the project is dedicated to new alterations, Murphy Burnham & Buttrick are fully repairing and restoring the church's stained-glass

windows, redesigning historic pews, and replacing non-original clerestory fenestration. Additionally, the church's chancel will be adapted to Upjohn's original design, boosting seating capacity by 140 seats.

In a statement, Trinity Church Vicar Reverend Phil Jackson said the decades of deferred window maintenance shrouded the church's interior detailing under a layer of shadow. Through the restoration, Jackson hopes to highlight the nave and main body's impressive Gothic rib vaults and collenettes by giving "back its light."

Murphy Burnham & Buttrick has amassed a wide scope of residential and religious restorations across New York City, including an expansive top-down project for St. Patrick's Cathedral, which involved the conservation of interior and exterior masonry and stained glass windows, and even the insertion of a nine-well geothermal plant below the cathedral.

During the restoration process, Trinity Church's nave and main body will be closed off to parishioners and visitors. The project is slated to be completed by spring 2020, and Trinity Church hopes to reopen the nave soon after.



