

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH WILMINGTON
BUILDING & CAPITAL
CAMPAIGN 2026



ROOTED
AND BUILT

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord,
continue to walk in him, **ROOTED** and **BUILT** up in him and
established in the faith, just as you were taught,
abounding in thankfulness.”

Colossians 2:6-7



A Vision for This Time and Place

First Baptist Church Wilmington exists to become and help others become fully devoted followers of Christ. This calling has shaped generations before us, and now, it calls us forward.

We stand at a holy crossroads.

Faithful leaders before us dreamed boldly, built sacrificially, and prepared space for ministry that they would never personally see. Because of their faithfulness, we worship, learn, serve, and gather here today. Now, it is our turn - to be both rooted in what has been entrusted to us and built for what God is still bringing to life.

1858

Purchased the lot at the corner of Market and 5th

1870

Sanctuary is completed and dedicated

1964

Purchased eight acres on Independence Blvd. and the Sidbury House

1976

Activity Center is completed and dedicated

1996

Purchased the Wilmington Light Infantry (WLI) Building

2005

Purchased the building that is now the Harrelson Center



Why We Must Build



Our historic education building has served us well for decades. After extensive study, prayer, and professional evaluation, it has become clear that repairing the building offers only temporary solutions. The most faithful and responsible path forward is to tear down and rebuild - expanding the footprint to meet growth needs for all ages, preserving the historic character of our downtown presence, and creating spaces that fully support ministry today and for generations to come.

Remaining rooted in downtown Wilmington matters. This place, at this location, is central to who we are and who we serve. From children and youth to adults, from worship and discipleship to mission and outreach, our building must reflect the vibrant and faithful church God is calling us to be.



What We Are Building Toward

Spiritual Formation is at the heart of First Baptist Church. Week by week, lives are shaped in classrooms, hallways, rehearsals, kitchens, and gathering spaces. The Rooted and Built campaign seeks to create spaces that match the depth and breadth of our ministries.

Our key building priorities include:



AMAZING KIDS & YOUTH SPACES

Families are central to our identity, and we are growing at every age level. We will design safe, secure, joyful, and highly functional spaces where children and youth can grow in faith, belonging, and leadership.



A ROBUST GATHERING & FORMAL ENTRY SPACE

Community is formed in the moments before and after worship, in chance conversations and shared connections. A centralized, welcoming entry and gathering space will strengthen hospitality, deepen relationships, and offer a clear, warm welcome to all.



BEAUTIFUL & FUNCTIONAL ADULT SPIRITUAL FORMATION SPACES

Readily accessible classrooms, appropriate sizing, updated technology, and thoughtful furnishings will support meaningful discipleship and lifelong learning.



FUNCTIONAL MISSION SPACE

Hundreds of community members use our campus each week. Purposefully designed spaces for meals, dining, showers, laundry, and an accessible clothing closet will strengthen our ongoing commitment to serve our neighbors with dignity and love.



AN UPDATED KITCHEN

We prepare thousands of meals each year. A renovated kitchen will meet ministry needs, safety standards, and fire codes while allowing us to continue feeding bodies and spirits well.



A WORSHIP ARTS SUITE

Thoughtfully designed choir, rehearsal, and storage spaces will support and enhance our worship arts ministries, allowing creativity and excellence to flourish.

A Faithful and Transparent Process

This vision has been shaped carefully, prayerfully, and collaboratively over time through:



A comprehensive building study determining the need to rebuild



Dreaming and discernment around ministry priorities



Assessment of current and future faith formation needs



An Ad Hoc Building & Design Team – Hanna Barkley, John Daniels, Ken Dull, Donn Evans, Jim Everette, Carlton Fisher, Bobby Harrelson, Kimberly Harris, Randy Ivey, Becca Jones, Eric McKeithan, Barrett Owen, Mike Queen, Brooke Sumner, and Jeff Troutman



Work with Bruce Bowman as architect and McKinley Building Corporation as general contractor



Multiple design plans and revisions



Approval processes with the Wilmington Historical Preservation Commission



In-depth cost analysis



Property acquisition to support construction and renovation



A feasibility study



Continued design, construction, and ministry planning

If approved, construction would require a 12–15-month season of worship and ministry at the Activity Center during demolition and new construction. We anticipate breaking ground in early 2027 with a Capital Campaign this year.

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continue to walk in him,



Rooted and Built up in Him

and established in the faith, just as you were taught,

abounding in thankfulness.”

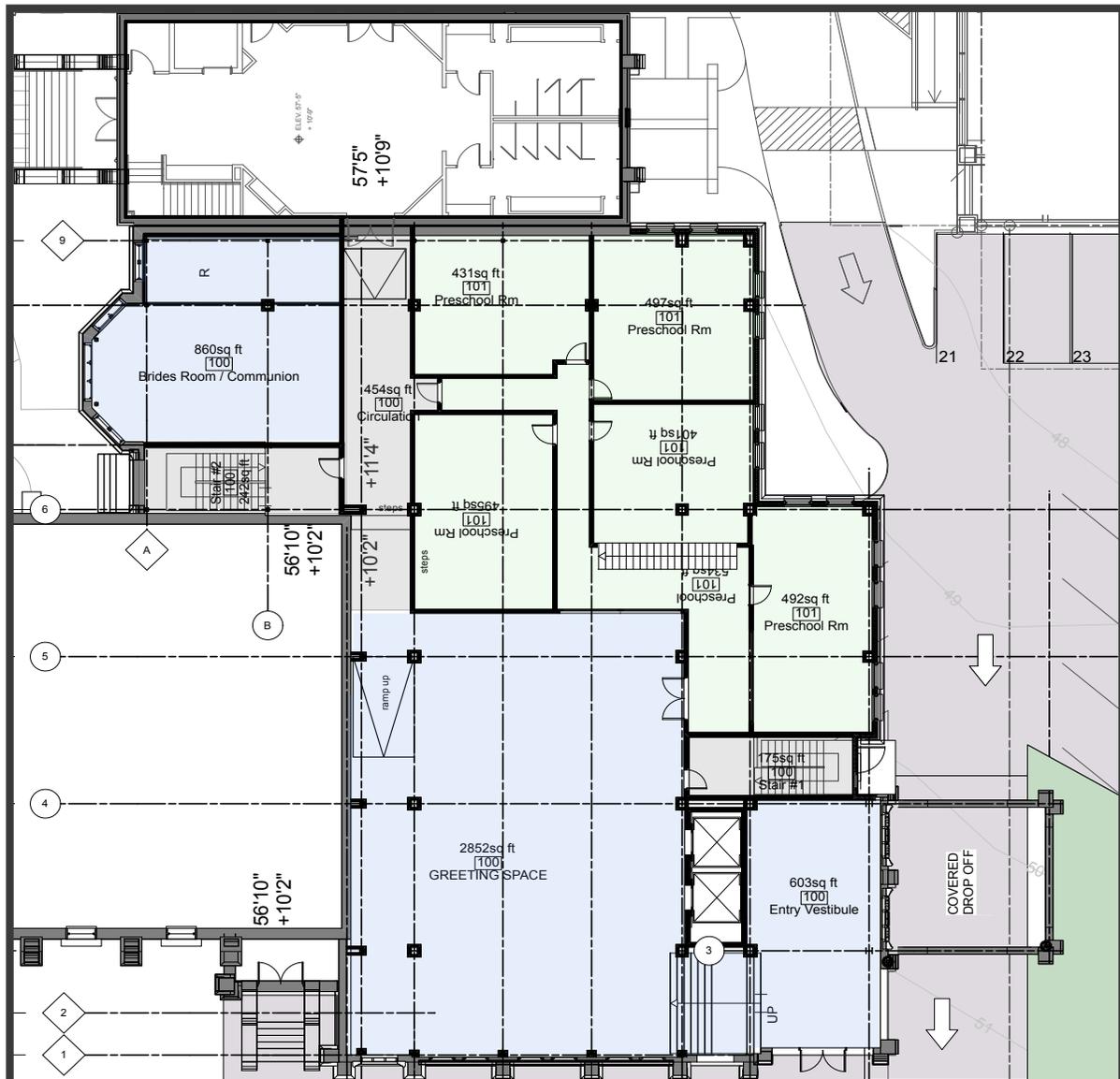


Space Name	Square Feet
Brides Room / Communion	859.9
Circulation	453.7
Entry Vestibule	603.1
GREETING SPACE	2851.8
Stair #1	175.5
Stair #2	241.6
Preschool	533.8
Preschool Rm	594.9
Preschool Rm	431.1
Preschool Rm	494.9
Preschool Rm	400.7
Preschool Rm	496.6
TOTAL SF:	8138 sq ft

The Plans

A complete rebuilding of the current education building and WLI basement, expanding the footprint and increasing square footage to support growing ministry needs with thoughtful renovation and accessibility improvements to the Sidbury House and the newly acquired property at 19th North 5th Avenue.

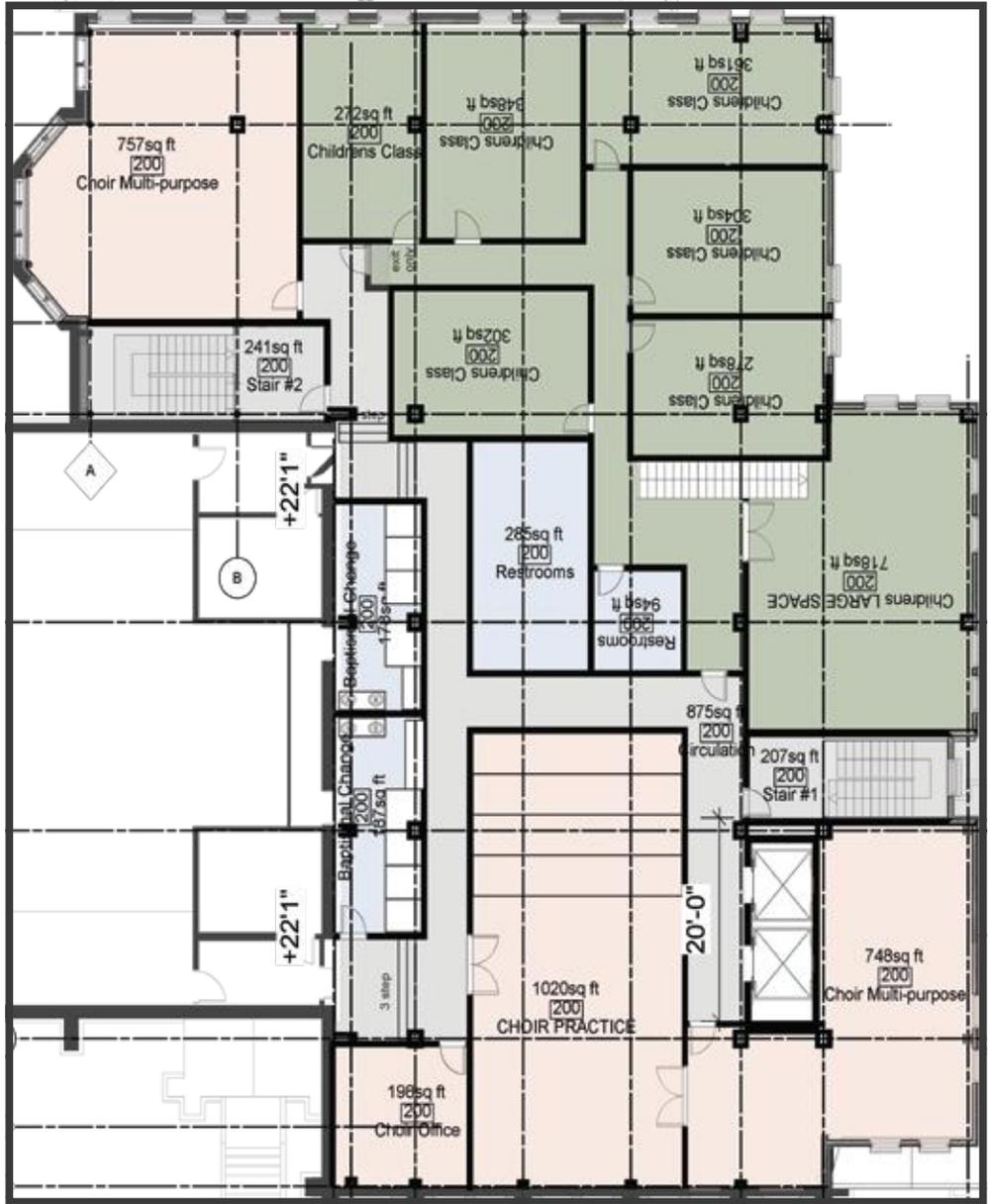
Main Level Education Building



NORTH FIFTH AVE

Upper Level Education Building

Space Name	Square Feet
Baptismal Change	178.3
Baptismal Change	187.0
Childrens Circulation	440.2
Childrens Class	277.8
Childrens Class	302.2
Childrens Class	304.2
Childrens Class	360.6
Childrens Class	348.4
Childrens Class	272.4
Childrens LARGE SPACE	717.5
Choir Multi-purpose	757.4
Choir Multi-purpose	748.5
Choir Office	197.6
CHOIR PRACTICE	1020.0
Circulation	874.6
Restrooms	284.5
Restrooms	94.2
Stair #1	206.9
Stair #2	241.5
TOTAL SF:	7814 sq ft



Lower Level Education Building



Space Name	Square Feet
Basement Circulation	1057.6
Electrical	147.2
Restrooms	215.6
STAIR #2	236.4
STAIR #1	177.0
Student Classroom	385.2
Student Classroom	647.8
Student Classroom	423.8
Utility	206.2
FELLOWSHIP HALL	3139.0
KITCHEN + PTRY	786.1
TOTAL SF:	7422 sq ft

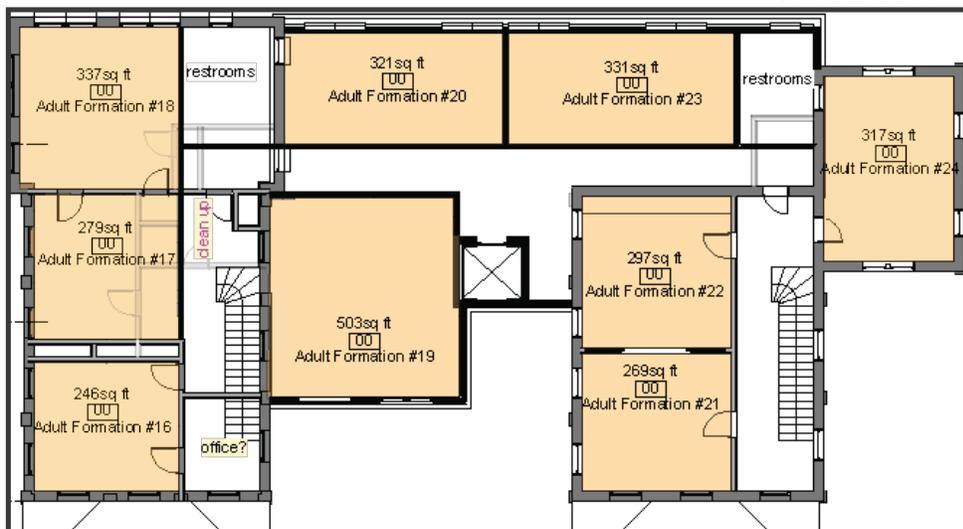
NORTH FIFTH AVE



Adult Education Villas

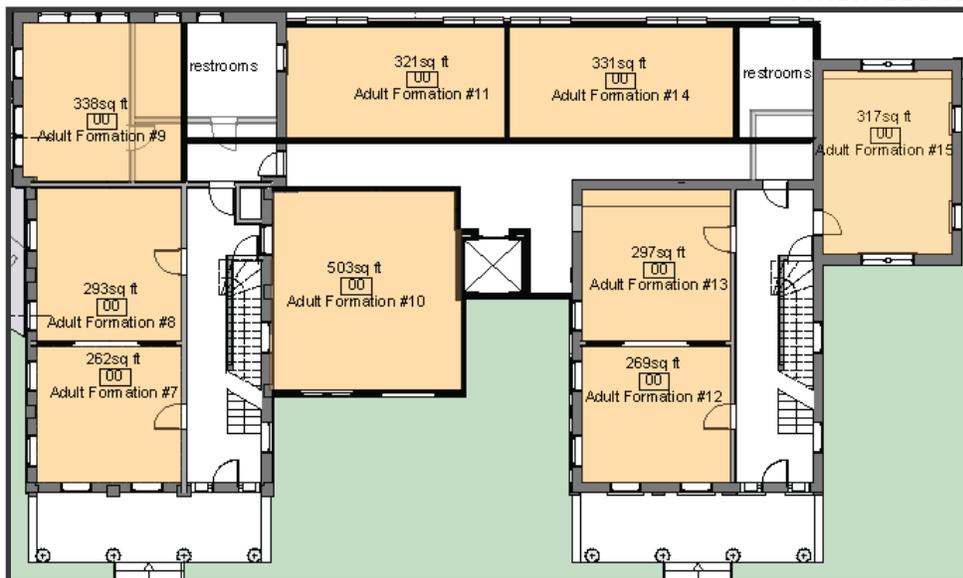
UPPER LEVEL

Space Name	Square Feet
Adult Formation #20	320.5
Adult Formation #21	269.3
Adult Formation #18	337.4
Adult Formation #23	331.5
Adult Formation #22	297.1
Adult Formation #17	279.5
Adult Formation #16	246.2
Adult Formation #24	316.9
Adult Formation #19	503.2
TOTAL SF:	2902 sq ft



MAIN LEVEL

Space Name	Square Feet
Adult Formation #7	262.1
Adult Formation #8	293.2
Adult Formation #9	338.1
Adult Formation #10	503.2
Adult Formation #11	320.5
Adult Formation #12	269.3
Adult Formation #13	297.1
Adult Formation #14	331.5
Adult Formation #15	316.9
TOTAL SF:	2932 sq ft



LOWER LEVEL

Space Name	Square Feet
Adult Formation #1	262.1
Adult Formation #2	293.2
Adult Formation #3	337.4
Adult Formation #4	449.6
Adult Formation #5	484.2
Adult Formation #6	316.9
TOTAL SF:	2143 sq ft





The Financial Vision

The projected cost of this project is \$12-15 million. Before moving forward, we must discern together whether this vision is attainable without burdening future ministry with unsustainable debt.

Our hope, and our prayer, is to fund this project over three years, allowing us to build faithfully while remaining free to continue the mission God has entrusted to us. This campaign is not about bricks and mortar alone. It is about legacy, stewardship, and hope - preparing space for the next 100 years of ministry at First Baptist Church.

An Invitation to Be Part of the Story

Rooted and Built is a sacred invitation.

We invite every person whose life has been shaped by First Baptist Church in the past, present, and future, to prayerfully consider their role in this moment.

Stewardship calls us to offer:

- Our presence, as we worship and do church a bit differently during construction
- Our talents, as we continue to teach, reach, and share God's love
- Our financial gifts, offered sacrificially and joyfully

Every gift matters. Every pledge matters. Some will be able to give generously upfront; others will give faithfully over time. Together our collective faithfulness will make this vision possible. Pledges may be given weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually over three years.

Rooted in Faith. Built for the Future.

We believe God has placed this vision before us - for this time and this place. With gratitude for the past and hope for the future, we build God's dreams together.

Rooted in Christ. Built for the next generation.