

Galva church combines two purposes in one space

The Galva Christian Church in Galva, Kan., had a 1950s structure in need of repair, no parking lot and only enough money to build a sanctuary and office. A planned daycare facility had the money to build, but couldn't find the right place in downtown Galva. The solution? Melding the two groups into one structure.

Both groups had been talking with Kelly McMurphy with Landmark Architects, Hutchinson, and several of the people on the daycare board also were members of the church. It seemed like a perfect partnership, according to Wayne Williams, who served as the church building committee chair and also sat on the daycare board of directors. The daycare would build the classroom and multipurpose room wing and use it during the week, and the church would use the classrooms for Sunday school and evening activities, while providing the daycare with a place to build and a parking lot.

"The daycare was the only way we could afford the project," Williams said. "There was no way for us to build a classroom wing without it."

Williams, who owned the Galva Lumber Yard at the time, was soon sold on the idea of a design/build project as a way to know costs upfront – particularly important since the church was working with a very tight budget. McMurphy brought Fuqua Construction onto the team and the project was off and running.

"This was a very unique project. I was already working with Robert Baldwin and his sister on the daycare project — who were also part of the Galva church — when it was decided to have the two entities partner on the project," McMurphy said. "The design and construction had to be coordinated and compromises reached for the good of all. I brought Max on the job because I knew he would give a good, reliable cost and quality construction."

According to Williams, McMurphy took the lead on the daycare design because he had more knowledge of regulatory requirements, and Fuqua continued that careful attention



PROJECT PROFILE Galva Christian Church

Location: Galva, Kansas
Completed: 2000
Project Scope: New Church Building & Daycare Facility
Square footage: 24,800 sq. ft.
Design Build Team: Fuqua Construction & Kelly McMurphy, Landmark Architects

to requirements throughout the construction process. He made sure that any changes made were done to code. The church building committee was primarily concerned with the church design and allowed the daycare to do what needed to be done for it. Fuqua and McMurphy coordinated the two groups so the effect would be seamless.

It took approximately six months of working through design considerations to have a final plan in place and a pro-



Varying textures of wood, brick and painted walls bring interest and warmth to the spacious sanctuary. Windows on both exterior walls provide an abundance of natural light.

jected price. Williams said that in a church of 80 to 100 people, designing anything can be a little tricky because "they all think they are in control." Fuqua came to board and church meetings and did a good job of explaining what was happening and why, he said.

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Especially appreciated by the building committee was that Fuqua and McMurphy made it possible for them to see other churches or buildings where suggested techniques had been used. One of the committee's concerns was that, by code, the daycare had to have wired glass in the windows, which they thought might not be aesthetically pleasing. Fuqua showed them how it would look and they were fine with it. And, he bent over backwards to include items that the church felt were important, while keeping the project within the budget.

"One of the things he was particularly good at, since we were worried about the money, was letting us know what needed to be done now, and what could be done later," Williams said. "There was a bathroom behind the baptistery drawn into the plan and we asked whether that could be done later. He broke down the costs for us to do it in the original construction or add later, and we decided it made more sense to add it then. There also was supposed to be carpeting going down the stairs to an unfinished basement that is used as a tornado shelter and rainy day play area for the daycare. That was something that we could always add later."

Another thing the church wanted to do was save the memorial stained glass windows from the old church. Williams said Fuqua never questioned the request and personally measured the windows and worked them into the new church plan.

"We saved maybe a little bit by using the old windows. There are clear, energy efficient windows on the outside and the stained glass are on the inside of the building," Williams said. "But, the important thing wasn't the cost savings. It was bringing part of the old church to the new church. They look great. You would never know that the old church had been one-third the size of the new one.

According to Williams, one of the things he especially appreciated about the design/build approach was that local subcontractors could be used if they were within a reasonable bid range, rather than in a traditional bid job where the low bid got the job regardless. In a small town like Galva, it was important that local people, if they could supply quality work at a competitive price, be able to participate in a project this size, or at least have an opportunity to bid.

"Max was so great. He bought as much of the building supplies locally that he could if cost allowed, and got as many local people involved as possible," Williams said.

As a lumber yard owner, Williams had worked with a number of contractors over the years, and was very impressed with the way Fuqua managed the project. He was always available to answer questions and explain what was happening and, Williams said, he couldn't remember Fuqua pulling the crew off to go work on another job once he got started. That was especially important since a wedding was scheduled for the new church on New Year's Eve weekend, and weather delays had pushed the projected completion date from the end of November to Christmas. The building still had a new paint and carpet aroma competing with the flowers on the wedding day, but it was done.

"Max did everything he could to have the church done for the wedding – and it wasn't his fault we had it scheduled so

close to the completion date," Williams said with a smile -- the bride was his daughter.

That willingness to get done what needed done, go the second mile to meet both clients' needs, and provide a quality finished project drove the entire design and construction process and didn't end when the keys were handed over, according to Williams. After the job was done, parishioners started hearing a strange squeaky/whistle sort of sound in the sanctuary when there was an east wind. They called Fuqua,



Stained glass windows used in the sanctuary and foyer were brought from the former church building. Separate entrance for daycare is located to left of primary entry.

who came over, crawled up on the roof and into the steeple and found it was loose. A few tightened screws and the problem was solved.

"That's how he is. A phone call about a problem and it would be taken care of," Williams said.

After nearly eight years in the new facility, both the church and the daycare have found their partnership to be a good one and the building to be very functional and attractive, meeting both groups' needs. Williams is convinced that the decision to do a design/build project was right and was a very cost-effective way for the church to use their money in the most efficient manner.

"If we would have been our own general contractor, it would have been a disaster," Williams said.

He appreciated Fuqua's professionalism, ability to work with people, expertise and guarantee that the customer would be satisfied with the work – or he would make it right.

"I've always said that anyone who can afford a pickup truck, a trailer and some tools can call themselves a carpenter or a contractor. They're not. They don't have it. Max does. We couldn't have picked a better person than Max, and I wouldn't recommend him if I didn't believe that. He is local and that can be an advantage. But, if he lived in Missouri I'd still recommend him for doing a job here. You know someone has done a good job when you can't remember a bad thing that happened. That's a contractor who manages the project well."

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