

Q: Is Middle Church firm about the decision to rebuild?

A: Absolutely! Middle Church was asked by the Collegiate Church to explore moving to another Collegiate Church site or purchasing/leasing another building in the East Village. We did due diligence – which included listening to the voices of our community – and determined we would build back our home. Staying in East Village community and doing our local, national, and global programming is our unique calling. We are not going anywhere!

Q: What is happening on the Middle Church Site?

A: Our rebuilding project takes place in three phases

- The first phase of our work is the demolition/salvage of our badly damaged façade, which is underway. We expect this project to take three months to complete. Salvaged materials will be repurposed in our new site.
- The second phase of our rebuild is to refurbish the five-story townhouse at 50 E 7th Street, and the two-story social hall that connected the townhouse building to the sanctuary, which was destroyed in the fire. This phase will include a two-story gathering space where the social hall was and allow us to do programs and worship in our own space.
- The third phase of our rebuild is to seek a mission-aligned partnership that leverages our site for maximum community impact. We are researching options now based on neighborhood needs – the need for affordable housing among them, a zoning analysis, and a feasibility study. A partnership would involve a ground lease rather than a sale of our land, and the partner would deliver to us a large sanctuary/concert/theater community space as part of the deal.

Q: How long will it take to rebuild the church?

A: The first façade phase is expected to be completed in three months. Phase two at 50 E 7th Street will take approximately one year from now. We hope to invite you into our refurbished space by Thanksgiving, 2024. We don't have a clear timeline on phase three, but we just contracted for our studies.

Q: What is the status of the neighboring lot (from which the fire started)?

A: There is confusion as to whether that lot on the corner belongs to the church. It does not, it belongs to Faith Popcorn. Since the fire, our relationship with the owner has been tenuous. We have finally been able to obtain the controlled access zone we need to do work on the façade. We continue to hope for collaborative, neighborly relationship, such as we have historically had with our neighbor to the south.

Q: How does the Middle Rising One Fund Campaign work?

A: We aim to have completed our roughly \$15MM campaign with cash, grants, and pledges by December 2025. Funds will create Middle's Center for Spirituality, Justice, and the Arts on the site of its historic 1892 former building that can support transformational ministry for centuries to come, featuring:

- A multipurpose physical space to host and broadcast worship and conferences, and serve as performance space for artistic events, theater, and community gatherings.
- Classrooms, dream/play space for adults and children, a gallery, and an industrial kitchen that can facilitate educational, spiritual, artistic, and feeding programs.
- Collaborative working spaces for staff and neighbors.
- Justice Programs and Initiatives
- A Freedom Rising School and a Center for Reparations and Racial Healing.
- Education, Small Groups, Social Groups, 12-Step and Wellness Groups.
- And much, much more!

Visit middlechurch.org/rebuilding-faq for more information!