

First Christian Church, Decatur, Illinois, completes building project, opens coffee shop

First Christian Church saw the completion of a major building addition and the opening of a coffee shop in the church building in December.

The project included a new Fellowship Hall, extensive renovation of the church's old Fellowship Hall, reconfiguring of office space and addition of new entrance spaces.

The new Fellowship Hall is much larger than the old one, and will be able to seat a congregational meal for the church. It can be used as a gym or meeting space.

One of the issues the construction addressed was "people flow." Between services, the small lobby area was completely jammed as people came and went, and stopped to speak with friends. The project added a second major entrance to the building and a second set of doors into the sanctuary area.

The results of the change were immediate. With less crowding, people stopped, lingered and spent more time with one another. The traffic jam at the sanctuary entrance was relieved and it became much less stressful to get from one place to another in the building.

The old Fellowship Hall now hosts a coffee shop, a children's play area and a lot of mingling space. A bookstore will be added later. The idea behind this part of the addition was to create a space where people could spend time with one another and build relationships without time pressures or other agendas. The space features various types of seating, a fireplace, wifi access, newspapers and a widescreen tv.

The coffee shop, the Mosaic Café, began business on Sundays during December, and in mid-January began daily hours. The café features a variety of coffee drinks, hot chocolate and smoothies as well as a selection of pastries.