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## St. Chrysostom's Episcopal Church



Building type  
Religious and Cultural

Location  
Chicago Illinois

Site Area  
site area-not available

Project Area  
Approx 12,000+ sf  
of renovation

Client  
St. Chrysostom's Episcopal  
Church

Completion Year  
From 2003-2005 and ongoing

**History:** This community is one of the foremost Episcopalian congregations in Chicago, forming a complex that consists of a main church, a day care facility, a gymnasium, and additional performance facilities for music and culture. The style of the complex is Gothic, consisting of an agglomeration of buildings in the form of a traditional Chicago U-block oriented toward the street with a frontal courtyard.

**Client Brief:** The church's nave, exterior walls and courtyard required substantial repairs and maintenance; additionally, the organ originally housed in one of the aisle corners at the front of the church was to be replaced by a new C.B. Fisk organ located toward the rear of the nave. It was intended that this new position would prove more visually dynamic, flanking the sides of a magnificent



stained glass window crowned by a rose.

**Design:** Cyrus Subawalla, while a Principal at HBRA, focused on numerous design components of the church, explicitly those of the main nave, day care center, and basement redesign; alongside a comprehensive reevaluation of all accessibility issues pertaining to the point of entry. All of these tasks were supplemental to a comprehensive study of the exterior and the addition of an elevator.

The primary design intent was to restore the church in a manner that would complement a wonderfully designed pipe organ. With the assistance of some of the finest artisans in Chicago, the nave and rose windows were restored and are now properly vented and protected in accord with modern standards. Additional research conducted during the cleaning of the tile flooring restored the surface's original character. Likewise, the trusses and the plaster ceilings were restored and repaired, substantially improving the acoustic qualities of the church. A number of rooms in the basement were redesigned to add support space for the church, specifically through the inclusion of green rooms and rehearsal rooms. Finally, the entrance sequence of the church was also improved through a complete restoration of the glazing of the cloistered hall at the end of the open courtyard.

Top left: Renovated stained glass window  
Top right: Renovated nave



A comprehensive study of the detailing of the exterior was conducted in preparation for the restoration of the outer limestone, alongside a refinishing and replacement of both the historic windows and all copper elements. An elevator was added to support handicap accessibility at all levels.

Team

Cyrus Subawalla-As principal HBRA

Top left: Pipe organ

Top right: Pipe organ construction