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Grace First Lutheran Builds New Home After 12-Year Wait



Pastor Joel LiaBraaten, KNCC project manager Brian Powell, and Don Stevens of BBT Architects.

by DANIEL PEARSON CBN Editor

During the summer of 2008, Grace First Lutheran Church officially moved from its old location at 231 NW Idaho Avenue in Bend, originally built in 1916, to a new 14,160-square-foot building on Shevlin Park Road at the northern end of Northwest Crossing.

The entire structure is being built in three phases. Phase one includes a temporary, ground-floor narthex with the capacity to hold 180-or-so people, along with a large kitchen, conference room and office space for the church's administrative staff. On the second floor, churchgoers will meet in classrooms for Sunday School and Bible study as well community use, all while enjoying easy access to the ground floor amenities via an indoor elevator connecting both floors.

Grace First Lutheran's congregation will be able to begin enjoying its new digs in full when the building's second phase is completed, including a full-sized sanctuary large enough for 300-or-so people,



A stained glass window at Grace First Lutheran Church.

a family center and a commercial-style kitchen capable of preparing and serving meals for several hundred people at once, bringing the entire new facility to just more than 31,000 square feet, Grace Lutheran Pastor Joel LiaBraaten said.

"This is the third home for what was originally called the First Norwegian

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Q and A with David Rosell

What Makes You Tick?

by SONDRA HOLTZMAN
CBN Feature Writer

David Rosell is president of the Rosell Financial Group in Bend, a comprehensive, fee-based financial advisory firm. David is also the 2008 chair of the board of the Bend Chamber of Commerce.

Q Tell us something about your company and your role in the company.

Rosell Financial Group is in the business of changing our client's lives by providing them with the peace of mind they have been searching for. Our clients are business owners, professionals and retirees who have worked hard and accomplished much.

Our goal is simple: To help them plan for their future and take the carefully chosen steps necessary to help turn dreams into realities.

Whether it's for major financial objectives or a single, individual goal, our clients want to know what's ahead. We can help them avoid wrong turns by assisting them in the creation of their own financial roadmap.



David Rosell

Q What is the growth potential for your company and your industry in general?

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How Your Company CAN Survive Economic Challenges

by DR. TOM DECOTIIS

The recent economic downturn looks to be claiming its first corporate victims. Among the list of once strong retailers scurrying for bankruptcy protection are industry giants Linens 'n Things, Bombay Company, Sharper Image and Steve & Barry's. This raises a frightening question: can your company make it through?

Absolutely. In my new book *Make it Glow* (Greenleaf Book Group Press 2008) I explain that in a down economy people focus their spending on companies they trust. As consumers get choosy, mediocre choices fall by the wayside for one reason: These companies have not earned enough customer loyalty to survive a challenging economy.

Here are my five essential tips to propel your company through this recession and prepare for even more success:

1) Focus Your Employees on Creating Positive Customer Transactions. Insist that your employees provide a great experience every time and teach them how to do it. Train every employee in proper customer service procedures and ensure they clearly understand the importance of the customer to the company's, and their own, survival. In difficult times, companies do not get a second chance to make a good impression on their customers.

2) Ensure Your Customer Feels Valued. Customers need to be valued, not just for their money, but for who they are. In order to do this, make sure that your

company is addressing your customers' need for a strong sense of belonging and significance. For example, make sure that your staff is positive and proactive with complaints rather than negative and reactive.

3) Set Your Customers Expectations. It is not a matter of exceeding customer expectations, but guaranteeing that your customers are never disappointed. Use your company's unique selling point (USP) to shape your customer's expectations. Saks Fifth Avenue sell their consumers on their exclusive and elegant shopping experience, and when customers go into their retail outlets they are not disappointed.

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Building in Central Oregon

Grace First Lutheran Church

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Congratulations on the completion
of the Grace First Lutheran Church.
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CPI STAFF PHOTOS

Grace Lutheran's new facility is located in a single-family housing zone of NorthWest Crossing, which required an architectural style prevalent in the early 1900's to be followed.

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Grace First Lutheran
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Lutheran Church," said Don Stevens, a congregant and the architect who designed and prepared the plans for the new facility. "It was started by Norwegian woodcutters from Minnesota who used to live in all the old little houses by the Old Mill District."

Originally, church leaders looked at remodeling the aging downtown facility, but they had very limited room for parking. The church tried to cut a deal with the library across the street to use open parking spaces on Sunday morning, and the city required a lease for them to do so. But the library decided it wanted to do other things, Stevens said.

At the same time, officials from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America decided they wanted to start a new church on the west side of Bend in order to increase membership.

Grace First Lutheran decided it made sense to relocate and become that new church sought by the ELCA, Stevens said.

"They had a loan division and we received financing for the project that way," Stevens said. "We looked for property from Juniper Ridge all the way to southwest Bend and eventually settled on this new location."

A group of church members donated funds to purchase the property, and Trinity Episcopal Church bought the old church from Grace Lutheran with plans of its own to expand programs now housed in Trinity's main facility downtown.

Grace Lutheran was given one year to move from its old location, and while the church continued to operate in its original location it ended up paying rent to the new owners at Trinity Episcopal.

The lease was set to expire in August 2008, and Kirby Nagelhout Construction Co. started moving dirt at the new location on Shevlin Park Road in July 2007.

"We had some unique challenges," Kirby Nagelhout said. "We had to cut and fill the lot because it was unbalanced land here. The original site was quite a slope. We had to bring in materials and build a wall at the same time. That helped us get through the winter and to get the project finished on time."

Grace Lutheran's new facility is located in a single-family housing zone of NorthWest Crossing, which required an architectural style prevalent in the early 1900's to be followed, Stevens said.

"We originally came up with a Frank Lloyd Wright style but moved away from that and tried to capture a style similar to the great lodges of old West," Stevens said. "The ELCA has an architect on staff that reviewed our plans and agreed it was a fantastic look. The look has the feeling of a large church but one with good acoustical value. I was originally worried the acoustics would be too brilliant because of the size of the narthex and the height of the ceiling. I thought we'd have to bring in acoustical pads to absorb sound, but the sound just swells and creates the proper aura. The room where services are held, because of the acoustics, turned out to be one of the best parts of the design."

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Grace First Lutheran Church Building in Central Oregon



One of the stained glass windows at the new building for Grace First Lutheran Church.

A large stained glass window from the old building was relocated to the new facility and refurbished by Bend Stained Glass. Its current location, just down the entrance hall and to the left, marks where the entrance to the sanctuary will be once all construction is completed, Stevens said.

"I think of all the projects I've been

involved with in my lifetime this is one of the top two finest things I've ever worked on," Stevens said, and LiaBraaten agrees.

"Our discovery process for this church has gone on for 12 years," LiaBraaten said. "I'm very happy we are finally here and I'm looking forward to the rest of the project being completed."

BUILDING VISION INTO REALITY



Congratulations to Grace First Lutheran Church and thanks to all our suppliers and subcontractors for helping to make this project a success.



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Interior Design: Candy Eilertson
Structural Engineer: ZCS Engineering
Civil Engineer: ZCS Engineering
Landscape Architect: DEA – Dave Olsen

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Square Footage: 14,159
Financing: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Developer: First Lutheran Church
Project Cost: \$3.8 Million
Sitework Start: June 2007
Completion: August 2008

Project Manager: Brian Powell
Superintendent: Sean Lewis
Architect: Stevens Architect (Now merged with BBT)

Congratulations to the staff & congregation of Grace First Lutheran. We couldn't have done it without the great work of Kirby Nagelhout Construction & Candy Eilertson, Interior Designer.



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