

WE HAVE WINDOWS!

The construction crew is working full force to install our windows during breaks in the rain. At the same time, the radiant flooring has been laid in the Nursery School and sheetrock is going up in the Religious School classrooms.

Meanwhile, the Sanctuary is going through a major transformation. The wood framing is now complete, and the curved wall that will define our innermost space for prayer and reflection is nearing completion with the installation of incised Hebrew lettering over the Ark. This was no simple feat! Engraving 21 feet of 15 inch high lettering on a curved wall took tremendous skill from a very talented local artisan, Jaap Romaijn, who also will build our new Ark and Bimah furnishings.

With the shell closed in, we can focus on the fun part of the interiors. Although our budget has been very tight from the outset, much creativity has been used to select finishes that will blend warmth, economy and durability throughout the interior spaces. The major public spaces of the Sanctuary, Social Hall and Library will have cork floors, utilizing a renewable resource material that is acoustically resilient with great longevity. The floor in the Gallery that connects these spaces will be a stained concrete finish, linking it to the outdoor terraces and reinforcing the indoor-outdoor flow of the building.

Where possible, we will be imbuing our new home with a spirit of our past. The rosette stained glass window (currently over the main Sanctuary entrance) will be prominently displayed in the library light monitor and will be visible in the new Sanctuary. The sculpted Tree of Life copper door panels from our current front door will be hung in a prominent location on the upper terrace.

In an exciting new development, we will be removing the wood paneling from our current Sanctuary and will use these boards to create our new Ark and Bimah furniture along with pendant lights that will eventually hang in all the major spaces of the new building. In addition, we will reuse our existing pews to create interior benches and seating areas.



Fabric and sinuous weavings are very significant in Jewish culture. This sense of weaving and layering will be evident in the curtain of metal mesh fabric that will hang in the light monitor tower behind the Ark and Bimah, which will glisten and gleam from the sunlight reflected off its folds.

Even the wall tiles in the restrooms will be accented with hand decorated tiles fabricated by Nursery and Religious School students in a recent series of terrific workshops. These creative opportunities, both present and future, will give added layers of meaning to our experience in our new home.

In the next month, we will turn our discussion from the interiors to their surrounding outdoor spaces, creating the indoor-outdoor flow that is an important part of this project.

As you pass by the site, you will see the windows nearing completion, the exterior siding going up and beginnings of stucco at the light monitors. And although sadly the rain forced us to postpone “Kvitl Day,” we definitely will have another opportunity to put our prayers, hopes and thoughts into the walls of our Sanctuary.

Alex Bergtraun