

REACH and RENEW RECAP

Sanctuary soundbox removed; ceiling sealed



The Reach and Renew Campaign at First Congregational United Church of Christ of Madison is a five-year initiative (from 2011 through 2016) to renew our health, renew our hospitality, and renew our home.

The heating and cooling system has been upgraded, and now changes are being made to increase its efficiency. The ceiling tiles in the Sanctuary had perforations that allowed heat to escape, but before the ceiling could be sealed, the sound box hanging above the Sanctuary needed to be removed. The box, a fabric-and-wood shell hiding two old speakers and a large

horn, was superfluous since the sound system was improved some years ago, but it was left in place because taking it down was costly and thought not to be a priority. Now it was a necessity.

On February 13, workers in the attic detached the edges of the box so that it could be lowered on ropes, while volunteer spotters waited below to make sure it did not crash into the pews. Once the box was safely down, the horn and speakers were lowered in turn and eventually carted off.

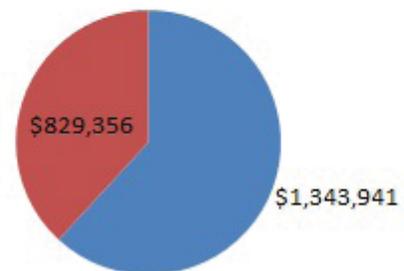
Starting the week of February 17, the ceiling was sealed and painted. Using a hydraulic lift, the painter first applied a coat of blue sealant, followed by cream-colored paint that will make the Sanctuary look brighter.



[See more photos, page 2](#)

Pledge status as of 2-28-14
Current pledge total: \$2,173,297

■ Payments received ■ Not yet received



Preserve our past. Inspire our future.

The Reach and Renew Campaign seeks to **renew our health** by focusing on the congregation's worship, missions, and programs; to **renew our hospitality** by encouraging the use of our space by outside groups; and to **renew our home** by making upgrades in our building. The focus in February was the Sanctuary ceiling.



At left: On February 13, the old sound box, which had been on the ceiling for decades, was lowered slowly and carefully so it did not swing wildly and cause damage. While it was descending, a volunteer down below with a cell-phone kept in touch with the workers in the attic who were holding the ropes so they would know how much farther it had to go.



Above: Up in the attic, building manager Bob Zeier (left) helped as another worker strained to cut the wires holding the box in place. **Below:** A worker peered through the hole in the ceiling to make sure everything, including insulation and a few remaining strips of chicken wire, had been removed.



At left: Once the box was safely down and the horn and speakers were lowered, there remained hanging strips of insulation that had served as sound baffles. One by one, the insulation strips were released from their chicken-wire enclosures and dropped to the floor below. Then the old items that had clung to the ceiling for decades were carted off. **At right:** A hydraulic lift was needed to allow the painter to apply blue sealant and cream paint on the high ceiling of the Sanctuary.

