



## Green Lake Church Campaigns

### Green Lake Church construction (1946-1947)

- The beautiful new Green Lake Church opened December 13, 1947.
- Dr. Ernest Ching was in charge of the campaign to raise the funds. It was not an easy task.
- Shortages of construction materials post-World War II were a serious challenge, and prices were escalating.
- Construction costs kept going over budget, requiring North Church members to dig more than once into their pockets to meet the cost overruns. Incomes were not high, and many individuals and families sacrificed.
- Miracle of miracles, Green Lake's architectural standards (high, beamed ceilings; the neo-gothic format; stained glass windows) and musical principles (pipe organ) were never compromised. The members kept giving.
- \$130,000 (in 1947 dollars) was the cost.

### Education Wing (1966)

- Green Lake was a huge success. At one point two services each Sabbath were required. Space in the new church was severely lacking—especially for children's Sabbath School divisions. There was no kitchen.
- In 1966, the "Education Wing" campaign was spearheaded by Dr. Paul A. Johnson.
- The needs were many: several new Sabbath School



### Test Your Knowledge

The main purpose of the Green Lake Foundation is to:

- a. Finance the purchase of balloons for church potlucks.
- b. Clean the organ pipes yearly.
- c. Support all the ministries of Green Lake Church.
- d. Create endowments for future purchases of stained glass windows.

Answer on Page 2

- rooms, an extension of the foyer to the east, an additional stairway, a church library, four restrooms, storage space, and new entrances on both Woodlawn and 64th. One large classroom, a 24 x 42 ft. space, had a service kitchen at one end to accommodate social affairs and other meetings where food could be served.
- Everybody saw the need and pitched in. \$100,000 was raised.

### Casavant Organ campaign (1977)

- The original pipe organ had been pieced together from miscellaneous sources—including pipes that had been used in theater organs in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- After three decades of yeoman service, the original pipe organ needed to be replaced or completely overhauled.
- Dr. Gordon Hale led the successful church-wide effort to raise \$100,000 for a new Casavant organ. There was wide participation.
- The original Green Lake Church organ was given to Gem State Academy, where generations of students have used it.

### Elevator and Roof campaign (2000) -- ("Together We Can")

- Don and Shirley Mehrer saw that an aging group of members and handicapped members had great difficulty in navigating the stairs between the three levels of the church. Many were opposed to an elevator, some because of high initial costs, some over never-ending maintenance costs, and some because of aesthetics.
- At the same time, the cedar shingles from the church roof were more than 50 years old; some were starting to fall off. The roof was leaking onto some pews and onto the sanctuary floor, with resulting water damage and stains.
- While only some Green Lake members supported the elevator project, all saw the need for roof replacement. Donors were encouraged to earmark donations to either one, or both, of the projects.
- The campaign goal included \$50,000 for an endowment to maintain and service the elevator—so that annual

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elevator maintenance costs would not become a stumbling block.

- More than \$450,000 was raised for both projects, and an endowment of nearly \$69,000 for the elevator's maintenance and eventual replacement was established.
- More than 100 donors contributed to the campaign's success, including children. Ken Walters chaired the campaign committee. Shirley Mehrer, a member of the committee, devised a program for getting Green Lake children's divisions involved in the project. This broadened participation to include the younger set, who saw their names inscribed on the donor board.
- The money raised, work on both projects was quickly finished. People with limited mobility and handicaps are forever grateful to have easy access between levels of the church, and everyone can now easily navigate between floors, Sabbath School and church services, and classes.

### Platform campaign -- ("Staging Our Future")

- By 2007 the Casavant organ was 30 years old and in need of major renovation and refurbishing. Some members urged that instead of investing large sums in the existing organ, it might be wiser to replace the organ. But the price tag for a new organ was daunting. New plans were developed to find a more affordable organ solution. Planning and quiet fundraising for a new organ began.
- The platform in the sanctuary was another issue. The Design and Planning Committee proposed a new platform. The Green Lake Orchestra had also been successfully launched, and the old plywood platform extensions ("boxes") that had been constructed had to be hauled up from the basement to enlarge the sanctuary stage for special events. Some were worried about the safety of balancing an orchestra of children on a "temporary" stage. Storage was also a problem, and the deacons found the continual hauling of boxes onerous.
- In 2010, a \$100,000 goal for the platform campaign was set; Ken Fairchild and Amy Worrell-Kneller co-chaired the fund-raising committee.
- The Green Lake Foundation and lead donors provided a \$17,000 matching grant that matched gifts dollar for dollar, propelling the effort to reach its \$100,000 goal in early 2011.
- More than 100 donors contributed to the campaign.

**Test Your Knowledge Answer: C.** Green Lake Church has various ministries—Nurture, Outreach, Worship, Education, Music, and others. While all ministries serve the overall mission of the Church, some donors have wished to emphasize some ministries in their gifts to the Green Lake Foundation. Their wishes are always respected and scrupulously followed by the Green Lake Foundation Board. ✧

### Final Push of the Organ campaign -- ("Pulling out all the Stops")

- Quiet fundraising for a new organ had already begun in 2006.
- In 2007 the church held an auction to launch the organ project and to begin fundraising for an endowment for organ improvements and maintenance. One church member matched all funds raised at the auction up to \$50,000.
- An "anchor" gift had been made for a new organ in 2007 and 2008, without which the campaign would never have been possible. Other gifts had been made even sooner.
- By 2010 the new organ configuration had been settled on and the goal for the organ campaign was increased to \$550,000. This included \$100,000 for an endowment to maintain and upgrade the instrument.
- Amy Worrell-Kneller and Schuan Carpenter were co-chairs of the Committee for the final organ campaign push.
- By 2012 the campaign was completed, with a total of \$420,758 in gifts collected for the organ fund. With the addition of investment earnings from gift funds held by the Green Lake Foundation during the campaign, the campaign raised \$459,000—an amount sufficient to cover the costs for the new organ as well as needed modifications to the platform. A success!

Today, the overwhelming consensus is that all our capital campaigns have been hugely beneficial to the church, our members, and to the church ministries. ✧

## Why a Foundation?

Foundations have been a huge force for human advancement and benevolence since their invention at the beginning of the last century. It has been over a century since Andrew Carnegie of U. S. Steel and John D. Rockefeller of Standard Oil established foundations and endowed institutions to be named after them. Eighty years ago, in 1936, Edsel Ford—son of Henry—established the Ford Foundation. The founding charter stated that resources would be used for "scientific, educational and charitable purposes, all for the public welfare."

Foundations promote many wonderful causes—education, human rights, civil liberties, literacy, environmental protection, research and knowledge creation, delivery of social services, and so on.

Joel Fleishman, a law professor at Duke University, wrote the definitive 2007 book, *The Foundation: A Great American Secret*. Fleishman found that although the U.S. had more than 72,000 foundations, just over 10 percent of the public even knew what a foundation is—or that they even exist! And for those who had heard of them, their operations often still remain a mystery.

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# A Conversation with George Neiswanger

On October 12, 2013, Alvin Kwiram interviewed George Neiswanger, one of the Founding Members of the new Green Lake Church that was built in 1947. Here are some highlights of that interview, which has been edited for length and clarity.

## **When did you arrive in Seattle?**

I came here in 1945 to go to graduate school in the School of Business at the University of Washington. I had lived in the Walla Walla area and had graduated from Whitman College.

## **What church did you attend when you came to Seattle?**

Mrs. Arthur Grauman's sister, Irma, lived in Walla Walla and was like family. It was destined that I would attend the church the Graumans came to—and that was the “old North Church” at the corner of 47<sup>th</sup> and Interlake. The pastor was Wesley Unterseher.

## **How did the “old North Church” become the Green Lake Church?**

The members got dissatisfied with the inconvenience of that building, called the “telephone building” because it was awkwardly arranged for a house of worship. It had been a switching station for the telephone company.

## **Who were the key players in that decision to move?**

There was one major key player and that was Dr. Arthur Grauman. He had been in the Seattle area during World War I as a serviceman, and he came back in 1926 to begin his medical practice. He always had the idea that he'd like to have it called the “Green Lake Church” so started looking for property. He said: “I want it right by Green Lake.” He sold the rest of the church on it.

*Dr. Grauman started looking for property. He said: “I want it right by Green Lake.” He sold the rest of the church on it.*

## **Was this an empty lot then, the entire block?**

No, the houses just to the south of us

were there. There was one house up on Woodlawn Avenue that we tore down when we built the addition to the church that now includes the library, the pastor's offices and Sabbath School rooms.

## **When did Green Lake Church open its doors?**

In early December, 1947. Elder Wesley Unterseher, pastor of the North Church, was still the pastor.

## **Who were the key people involved in the planning and building?**

One giant in the finance area was Dr. Ernest Ching. He was quiet and imaginative but of firm resolve. And he kept having to adjust his sights for how much needed to be raised as costs escalated. For example, we were going to have an electronic organ—then the budget doubled from \$5,000 to \$10,000 since we decided we should get a pipe organ.

## **Who was the general contractor?**

Bill Blankenship, who was actually a senior carpenter who moved up to be general contractor so we didn't have to hire one.

## **We have heard that building supplies were somewhat scarce just after World War II.**

Yes. Dr. Grauman, Elder Unterseher, and Bill Blankenship met here every morning, had prayer, and then went to work to try to get the things needed for construction.

## **What was the cost of the church?**

It was first supposed to be about \$50,000, but that kept rising. After construction, repairs, and some upgrades, about \$130,000 was the actual initial cost. Dr. Ching was remarkable in leading the effort to raise the money.

## **Who were some of the early leaders of the congregation?**

Bob Craig and Earl Mercill—in addition to Dr. Grauman and Dr. Ching. And Irene Lottman was a brilliant leader particularly for the Sabbath School programs.

## **What changes were made in the design process?**

The ceiling of the church which is nice and lofty and allows for plenty of head-room above the balcony. Dr. Grauman wanted a Gothic look and when the first beams went up he said, “This will never do. We've got to raise the ceiling.” So the ceiling is eight feet higher than originally planned.

## **What role did you play in those early stages?**

The pews came from Wisconsin but needed to be put together and installed. I helped with putting the benches together.

## **Are any people still alive from the charter members?**

Olive White, Janet Grauman Johnson, and Mildred Jensen (who returned in 1948 as she and Lyle had been in Chicago temporarily), Alf Aus. Betty V. Young was an original member. And Jesse Dwyer.



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## Church History Quiz

True or False:

1. Green Lake Church actually held a baptism in Green Lake.
2. Dr. Arthur Grauman, a founder of Green Lake Church, gave an architectural tour of the church to the Primary Sabbath School division.
3. Green Lake has never cancelled a Sabbath church service due to inclement weather.
4. Green Lake Church practiced gender segregation in its early days—with females assigned to one side of the sanctuary, males the other.
5. The Green Lake Church building was purchased from Episcopalians in 1946.
6. A famous Adventist artist from Andrews University in Michigan designed the stained glass windows at Green Lake Church.
7. Our church is still saddled with a mortgage on the cost of our current organ.

Answers: 1. T; 2. T; 3. F; 4. F; 5. F; 6. F; 7. F.

## George Neiswanger, *continued*

### We have all heard the stories about conflicts with the Washington Conference over the church design. Set us straight. What really happened?

The conference strongly objected to having both a pulpit and a lectern on the platform. They wanted only a pulpit in the center.

### How was that resolved?

Dr. Grauman said: “Show me from the Bible that you can’t have both.” And they were stuck.

### What else?

The Conference felt the Sabbath School should be held in the sanctuary, not in the basement. Dr. Grauman pointed out that churches have chapels and many other rooms for special purposes. So they yielded on that.

### Do you remember other early discussions or arguments?

There really weren’t many theological arguments. Dr. Grauman was a prudent man. He didn’t step on any landmines he didn’t have to.

### There was a general spirit of toleration of different points of view?

Right. That was characteristic of Green Lake from the beginning. We had members seeking a church home where they didn’t get criticized because they disagreed with what others insisted was “the right way—and if you don’t agree, then you need to be helped!” [Laughter]

### In two or three years you will have been coming here for 70 years. What’s kept you coming back?

Number one, the fact that it is a church that receives people on a spectrum of attitudes towards what the Bible says that they can believe. Another one, stubbornness.

### Which pastors were most memorable to you?

John Robertson, Rudy Torres, Herb Hill, Magne Fugelheim. ✧

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## Why A Foundation, *continued from page 2*

Our city is home to the world’s largest foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. But the vast majority of foundations are not huge and were not endowed by founders of gigantic corporations. They are founded by people who have a vision of how to make a positive difference in the imperfect world in which we live.

There are literally tens of thousands of small foundations—set up by ordinary folk like us to support their churches, their values, their schools, their hospitals, their communities. They are making a difference, a big difference.

Twelve years ago the Green Lake Church established our own Foundation. Yet some of our members and friends say they don’t know much, if anything, about it.

The purpose of this Newsletter is simple: to show Green Lake members and friends three things: (1) why we

exist, (2) how we operate, and (3) what we are striving to accomplish.

Our Green Lake Foundation’s purpose is revealed in the **Test Your Knowledge** feature on page 1. See if you can get the right answer!

In this inaugural issue of our newsletter, we are joining the Capital Campaign Committee in kicking off a \$500,000 campaign to raise endowments to advance the ministries of our church. A beautiful campaign brochure, “Shaping the Future; Helping Now,” gives the details.

Our newsletter acknowledges the devotion of those early members as well as the culture they established. We inherited a spectacular building and a rich tradition.

One more thing. Please take the Quiz on Green Lake Church’s history on this page. If you get a perfect score, you are entitled to take two desserts at the next church potluck. ✧