

Glen Mar United Methodist Church

Ellicott City, Maryland

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Ministry Growth Spurs New Campus and New AV Technology

With a growing congregation and an expanding ministry, the leaders at 55-year old Glen Mar United Methodist Church (GMUMC) knew they needed a larger, modern facility to support the long term needs of the community. Upon the purchase of a 21-acre parcel in Ellicott City, MD, architect Alexander Design Studio was retained to design a new 32,000 square foot main building, the first phase in the development of the new campus.

During the initial design phase, GMUMC selected Baltimore-based Crestron dealer, Design & Integration (DI), to design and implement a state-of-the-art AV system that could span several phases of planned growth.

“With the ability to easily have the AV distribution throughout our various expansion phases and be able to transmit AV outside of our facility to the community.”

The new building doubles the prior facility's capacity, providing seating for 600 congregants in the 6,000 square foot multi-purpose room, and includes a large lobby area, nursery, community room, and central media hub.

Glen Mar staff, who connected with the integrator several years prior while attending a DI seminar for Houses of Worship, had several major requirements. They wanted a versatile, scalable



audio/video distribution system with professional capabilities, which could be easily operated by lay people, and within a very tight budget.

DI's engineers collaborated with the GMUMC project team to achieve each of these goals. “After numerous meetings and discussions, we decided simplicity-of-use was a major requirement since we rely completely on volunteers with limited training,” explains Jim Youkers, GMUMC head audio technician. “Simplicity for both traditional and contemporary worship services, with the ability for easy future expansion,” he added.

Creative Ideas and Crestron Keep Big Vision Alive

Additionally, the church wanted the ability to record worship services, and distribute audio and live video throughout the main building, and to new buildings slated to be constructed in future phases. Construction has already begun on Phase II of the planned expansion and will feature a two-story 20,000 square foot education wing.

“This was an exciting project for us,” said Jake Rivera, founder and president of DI, “We were on the project team early, went through the design phase under contract, and followed the project through to completion. As a result, there were limited change orders, excellent team involvement and therefore, a better end product.”

To balance GMUMC's requirements with the budget constraints most churches face, the group decided to utilize some existing components the church already owned, combined with the required new equipment.





A Crestron PRO2 Professional Dual Bus Control System was selected to automate and control campus-wide video distribution and power to equipment racks.

Touchscreen Control Automates a Multi-Purpose Room That Serves All

The PRO2 control system enables multiple sources, including PC, DVD player, CD player and video camera, to be seamlessly distributed to screens throughout various locations in the facility. A Crestron TPS-12B 12" touchpanel allows one- and two-button touch command of audio/video functionality across the campus.

DI programmers created customized touchpanel GUIs and control system commands that delivered the ease-of use operation GMUMC required. This simplicity enables part-time volunteers to operate the system right away, with minimal training, which is a much needed benefit for GMUMC required. Custom touchscreen presets were programmed to automate separate commands for both traditional and contemporary worship services, performing both simple and complex functions with one or two button presses.

The touchpanel interface includes a default "Worship Setup" button which automatically sets various signal routings to multiple displays and recording devices, along with device power-up, for the standard weekly service. No matter what state the system is in, pressing this button puts the system into the correct configuration for a worship service to begin.

The "Stage Mode" button modifies the ceiling speaker array to eliminate audio feedback for live events onstage. The "Amplifier Off" button gives the user the ability to turn off the amps that power the main speaker arrays, while leaving the video and other system features active.

Smart Planning, Scalable Solution = Long Term Growth, ROI

Through organized planning with the architect and AV integrator, GMUMC is equipped with a scalable, cost-effective total control solution that will optimize its ROI (return on investment) year after year.



"They (DI) designed a system that met our future plans and visions," said Youkers. "With the ability to easily have AV distribution throughout our various expansion phases, and be able to transmit AV outside of our facility to the community of those who may or may not be technologically savvy, God's word can and will be heard by those wanting to listen and grow in their lives."

With the success of this project, DI is excited about future collaboration with Glen Mar and the continued support of their ministry. "It's been a pleasure working with the people of Glen Mar and Alexander Design Studio," said Wieser, and "we look forward to continuing that relationship."