

After 119 Years, Sanctuary Gets a Warmer Glow

MOST RENOVATIONS and facelifts aim to make things look a little younger and fresher. But that was not the case with the work completed last month at the historic Swedenborgian Church at Washington and Lyon streets.

On February 16 the congregants entered through the garden and past a crackling fire in the massive fireplace, just as they always have, and returned to their sanctuary after the first major renovation in the church's 119-year history.

"It's so toasty in here," said office manager Dana Owens, who supervised the project. The fireplace was the primary source of heat until radiant heating was added during the renovation underneath the refinished wooden floorboards. Discreet lighting was tucked into the madrone trees and rafters that support the roof. The stained glass windows were restored and the thick, rounded wooden doors were refinished.

The Swedenborgian Church, built in 1894, is the birthplace of the Arts & Crafts movement in the United States. Its simple handmade maple chairs with tule rush seats were the inspiration for all Mission-style furniture that followed.

On March 16, the Swedenborgians will launch a monthly lecture series on the art and architecture of the unusual church, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. For more information, call 346-6466 or go to sfswedenborgian.org.



JIM KARAGEORGE

The historic Swedenborgian Church still looks the same, but it has new heating and lighting and the stained glass windows have been restored.

