



Bose® Solution Provides an Inspiring Experience for Parishioners



Sound performance you can hear in the seats. Results you can see in the parishioners' faces.

the venue:

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran church, a sprawling worship center serving nearly 9,000 members with a vast 1,000-seat main sanctuary.

the challenge:

Ensure speech is delivered clearly and intelligibly, and music is heard with feeling and emotion.

the solution:

A clustered system consisting of Bose® Panaray® LT 6400 mid/high-frequency loudspeakers and Bose Panaray MB12 modular bass loudspeakers. Bose Modeler® 6.0 sound system software helped to accurately predict the system performance, before it was installed.

the result:

Clear speech and natural-sounding music throughout the church.

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran church, located in Apple Valley, Minnesota, has come a long way in its relatively short history. The church began as a small neighborhood congregation, using borrowed space for worship and functions. Just 25 years later, it has grown to serve nearly 9,000 members and educate more than 1,100 students in its classroom facilities.

The centerpiece of the church is a 1,000-seat main sanctuary, elegantly designed with graceful, soaring ceilings. Sound was lost to the ceilings, resulting at times in unintelligible speech and music, leaving parishioners with a less-than-optimal experience. Kurt Hyster, audio-visual technician for the church, remembers, "When I was sitting here I just could not hear very well."

"What's really fun for us is to look at the people. You can tell on their faces how engaged they are and how appreciative they are of what they hear."

– Paul Harrington, church pastor

Needed: A New Sound System for Christmas

Not only did the church decide to install a new audio system, but it also wanted it done right away. Pastor Paul Harrington and the church's audio-visual group teamed up with CompView, a large regional sound engineering firm, and Bose Corporation.

"We get the call, they want to do the church, and they want to do it before Christmas," explains Jack Hudnut, territory representative for Bose. "The building creates a visually striking appearance, but that appearance also meant it would be a difficult space to work with.

"When you move from seat to seat or location to location in the sanctuary, the audio was wildly different in quality," Hudnut continues. "In addition, we had many visual constraints to deal with."

Shelley Hawkins, district sales manager for CompView, is also a church parishioner. As she explains, the stakes were high.

"I knew this better be good or I'd hear repercussions for years to come," Hawkins says. "There were many issues with angles and ceiling height, but the key issue was to deliver clear, crisp sound throughout the room in a timely fashion."

The Right Solution, Fast

Bose and the CompView team quickly identified the challenges and presented their solution: Bose® Panaray® LT 6400 mid/high-frequency loudspeakers and Bose Panaray MB12 modular bass loudspeakers in a 2X end fire bass array hung directly over the sanctuary's speaking areas.

"The bass array allowed us to direct all the energy forward, away from the speaking area," Hudnut explains. "That gave us the impact throughout the space we were looking for."

The Bose Panaray LT 6400 provided a better solution for the sanctuary. The loudspeakers offer a horizontal and vertical dispersion pattern that provides coverage of a large seating area, while directing energy away from reflective surfaces

such as ceilings. The Panaray LT 6400 mid-high loudspeakers are designed to work with Panaray MB12 modular bass loudspeakers. This is especially useful for installations such as the Shepherd of the Valley church, where a separate bass source is required to better control low-frequency energy.

"They came in and right away told me exactly where my dead spots were," Hyster says. "I knew then we would meet our goal: When we amplify sound it doesn't sound amplified, but just sounds natural."

Enhancing the Parishioner Experience

The results are not only easy to hear, but as Pastor Harrington notes, they are also easy to see in the parishioners' faces.

"There are three things we do in this room," Harrington says. "Speak, sing and listen – everything we do here is audio-driven. What's really fun for us is to look at the people. You can tell on their faces how engaged they are and how appreciative they are of what they hear."

And parishioners agree. "Sound is now a big part of the experience. Whether it's the sound of the pastor's voice or the sound of the music," says Todd Sipe, parishioner.

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– Kurt Hyster, audio-visual technician

Kitchen manager and parishioner Bobbi Li Hyster heartily concurs. "When it sounds really good, it just hits you so you feel the music as well as you hear it," she says.

Pastor Harrington concludes, "When they sing an anthem and it touches people you just know it. We get lots of comments on our music program, and we want to keep it strong and relevant and inspiring."

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