

Q&A With Pastor Ed Newell, Amplify Church

Amplify Church is located in the Indiana Theater Building at 637 Philadelphia Street. They have been working on various renovations, along with building owner Tom Harley, over the past few years. Recently, they unveiled a new marquee that harkens back to a classic 1950s movie marquee. We chatted with Amplify's Pastor Ed Newell about the project.

How did this project come about? Whenever we first had the opportunity to enter into a long-term lease with building owner Tom Harley in Jan 2016, the renovation of the marquee was something we were already discussing at that point. The renovation was a dream of his, but without a tenant to help maintain the space and bring in income, it was difficult to pursue alone. As we went into the agreement, we knew we wanted to treat the theater with care and one day if we are no longer in the space, we wanted to leave the space better than we found it. Overall, we love Indiana. We love IUP. Renovating the marquee, renovating the theater, using it weekly, and making it available for others to use is something we are very proud of.

Is this a replication of the original marquee? This isn't actually the *original* marquee. The original from the 20s/30s (see photos in newsletter) had a much different look. The version we replicated was from around the 50s. In order to do the design, we consulted with Tom Harley for any photos he had of that version, and handed them off to Wagner Signs for them to use to make the design.

How important was it to make it look as much like the marquee many people remember? Striving for authenticity was probably our number one priority. We didn't want to make the marquee what we wanted it to be; we wanted to make it what it was - what many remember it being. Restoring and replicating the marquee gives it a significantly more personal relationship with town, in my opinion, in comparison to just renovating it based on a new design.

How long did the entire project take? The entire project has been about two-and-a-half years in the making. There was a lot of preliminary work in meeting with borough committees, funding, designing and coordinating with quotes and vendors. When we finalized an agreement with Wagner Sign's, the process took about a year, about 10 months from the signed contract.

In March 2018, Wagner removed the existing marquee components. They fabricated the new marquee in their shop from April until May, completing the final install on May 25th.

Can you tell us a little about Amplify Church and particularly, what led to creating an Indiana Campus? Amplify has long desired to make a positive impact in our community. Our Senior Pastor, Lee Kricher, met his wife Linda at IUP in the 70's. The original bible study that launched our church happened on 7th Street. The church was established in the community of Plum in 1976, and it wasn't until 2007 that out of passion for Indiana and IUP that we began doing ministry here again. We ran a college program on campus from 2007-2014, launching a Sunday service at the Indiana Theater in August of 2014.

Our vision is to lead as many people as possible into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ. We want to create experiences that anyone feels comfortable. Whether you've always gone to church, never gone to church, or ran away from church - we hope to be a place you can be comfortable.

We have services every Sunday at 11am that include full children's ministry in our newly remodeled children's environment for kids ages birth-fifth grade. Youth ministry is launching this summer and our college ministry runs during the IUP calendar on-campus Tuesday nights.

If you want see the marquee, as well as our recently remodeled interior, come visit on us on a Sunday or the first Friday of every month for our free family movie nights! We are #ForIndiana.