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## **Groom Construction continues work on First Baptist Church of Wakefield**

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Wakefield, MA Groom Construction, Co., Inc. has begun construction of the First Baptist Church of Wakefield and the project is moving forward on schedule.

On the evening of October 23, 2018, the First Baptist Church was struck by lightning and quickly became a devastating seven-alarm fire that destroyed the historic 148-year-old building. The church worked with LDa Architecture & Interiors to create a design for the new building and broke ground in April of 2023 with completion expected by Easter 2024.

“The new church building will not only restore the architectural void left on the Wakefield Common when the old church burnt down, but it will also help create a hub for vibrant spiritual and community activity. New church buildings are rare in New England, and we believe we have a special story of

God's will for making this project a reality" said Elaine Pappas, building team chair, First Baptist Church of Wakefield.

The new church is being built on land where the old church once stood and will be built to meet the needs of people today. There will be open & airy space in the Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary, the two largest rooms in the building. All of the spaces are designed for multi-purpose use for Sunday worship activities, and for weekday and evening meeting spaces for concerts, classes, clubs, conferences, activities, and general community events. There will be a large hospitality kitchen lounge for serving refreshments at services, activities, and events with dedicated and communal spaces for infants, toddlers, children, and teens. The new building will serve a thriving, multi-generational congregation and support current church ministries that will continue to bless others locally, nationally, and globally.

"We're thankful for the opportunity to build such a meaningful project and realize the deep significance of this building to the parish and community. Our team has enjoyed working with everyone at First Baptist Church and we're excited to be working once again with the talented architectural team at LDa Architecture & Interiors" said Mike Allan, Project Manager, Groom Construction.

"God is doing a new thing at First Baptist. The new building represents a new energy, focus and strategy to connect the next generations to the love and life of Jesus. We're excited to see who God is calling out to join us in this mission. Many thanks to our teammates at LDa and Groom Construction. They have risen to the challenge of designing and building a facility that fits our budget and gives us a great platform for ministry to all ages" said Pastor Douglas Dry, First Baptist Church of Wakefield.

Kim Barnett, principal at LDa, said, "LDa feels incredibly fortunate to be part of this important project for First Baptist Wakefield and the Wakefield community. Working with the church's dedicated building team, we were inspired by the former church building and the history of New England churches on the green to design the new church. The building is meant to meet the needs of today's congregation while aiming to attract the congregation of tomorrow. Keeping all the spaces as open to each other as possible was important to connect the fellowship and worship spaces within the building. This design also creates flexibility for the building to be used in many ways by the congregation and community."