

The Challenges

Not only is the building in need of repair, but the current basement presents some ongoing challenges. I have heard discussions about these challenges for as long as I have been at Varsity... a dozen years. Broadly speaking, the basement is less-than-ideal space. While we can continue to live with these challenges, it is worth noting what we are bumping up against on a weekly basis:

- The entrance area to Basecamp and the Nursery is small and causes a bottleneck every Sunday during drop-off and pick-up. This will also be a significant obstacle if (when) we install a platform lift to make the basement wheelchair accessible. See the design section for more details.
- The main teaching area is quite dark as there is almost no natural light. Even though we have many windows (that need to be replaced), most of them light up classroom space that is not being used for much beyond storage.
- The small classrooms are not particularly functional, and most are underutilized.
- The kitchen is inadequate for preparing or serving food. More specifically, there is limited counter space and no serving window.
- The north end of the basement is very poorly heated, requiring multiple space heaters during the winter months.
- The office space is functional at best (also poorly heated).
- The existing windows are beginning to leak and contribute to high energy costs.



Most of these challenges affect the children in the Basecamp and pre-school programs, although they also limit how this space can be used by other groups (Youth Group, small groups, etc.). Given that we are already facing critical repair costs, we have begun to wonder if this is the moment to envision a redesigned basement.