

\$15 million gift will help restore Baylor's Tidwell Bible Building

April 25, 2019

WACO—Baylor University announced a \$15 million lead gift from The Sunderland Foundation of Overland Park, Kan., to help renovate and restore the Tidwell Bible Building.

Major components of the restoration project include preservation of the limestone carvings depicting scenes from the Old and New Testaments and the stained glass windows in Miller Chapel.



During its more than 60 years as part of the core of Baylor's campus, Tidwell Bible Building has served tens of thousands of Baylor students who have completed religion, philosophy, history, sociology, nursing, modern foreign language and sacred music classes in its classrooms. Today, the

facility—dedicated in 1954—remains home to the religion and history departments. (Baylor University Photo)

The project also includes the addition of a prayer chapel that provides a view of campus from the top floors of Tidwell that will be accessible by elevator for the first time in the building’s history.

The project is among nearly \$300 million in capital improvements planned as part of the Give Light fund-raising campaign that will support Illuminate, Baylor’s academic strategic plan.

“These are exciting times as we celebrate the progress of Give Light, which will strengthen our commitment to our Christian mission, impact every aspect of campus life and position our academic programs and our students for success. We are deeply grateful for The Sunderland Foundation’s transformational gift that will restore a truly historic and important building on our campus for future generations,” Baylor President Linda Livingstone said.

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‘A cultural touchstone at Baylor’

“Tidwell Bible Building remains a cultural touchstone at Baylor—few students pass through this campus without venturing inside for a core class in history or religion,” Livingstone said. “As we move forward with

Illuminate, our strategic plan and Give Light, the campaign supporting that plan, our commitment to improving and expanding upon our curriculum also has highlighted the infrastructure needs within the university.

“This significant gift from The Sunderland Foundation and other generous support will allow Baylor to restore Tidwell to its original beauty—carefully preserving its architectural significance while revitalizing its ability to serve as a place of excellence in Christian higher education.”

In addition to improving infrastructure such as the facility’s electrical wiring, plumbing, elevator service, and code and accessibility remediation, the renovation of Tidwell’s 57,000 square feet will dramatically expand and enhance areas devoted to academic instruction, faculty offices and community building, university officials noted.

Includes Sunderland Academic Center

The renovated building will house the Sunderland Academic Center, which includes:

- Small- and large-sized, flexible classrooms to enhance teaching.
- Administrative and faculty offices—currently spread throughout the building—consolidated into common spaces to facilitate collaboration, research and programs.
- Greater accessibility and modern infrastructure throughout the building to enable technology-enhanced learning.
- Group meeting and work spaces and graduate student workspace to encourage greater engagement.

“Baylor University is a special university under remarkable leadership, and we are excited by the ambitious vision for the future as outlined by President Livingstone,” said Kent Sunderland, president of The Sunderland Foundation.

“We personally know of the significance that this historic building has had on so many lives and look forward to seeing Tidwell’s impact further extended through renovation and restoration.”

Construction on Tidwell is expected to begin in late 2020, lasting about 18 months. During that time, faculty offices will be relocated to the Cashion Academic Center, while history and religion classes will be held in various buildings across campus. The restored Tidwell Bible Building is expected to open in 2022.