

The Sisters of the Holy Cross

To best understand the significance of the chapel to our community, it is important to start with the story of our founding.

The Sisters of the Holy Cross are a group of women religious of the Roman Catholic faith who journeyed from France to Indiana in 1843 to help the priests and brothers who had preceded them at the then-fledgling Notre Dame University.

But shortly after arriving, they found themselves called to serve a different purpose as the American Civil War raged around them. Twelve sisters were asked to serve as nurses on the Indiana and Kentucky fronts of the war, administering care for the bodies and souls of those soldiers.

Following the war, some of the sisters were sent West as railroad managers and miners stretched our nation toward the Pacific and requested the spiritual services of the Church as they built settlements. A group of Sisters eventually arrived in the Utah area and opened Holy Cross Hospital in 1875. Then, a few years later in 1882, they relocated to the South Temple street location to expand care for that growing area with a new building, which was completed in 1883.

Since their beginning, the Sisters of the Holy Cross have focused on ministries that help build communities of justice and love, eradicate material poverty and end gender discrimination against women.

In 1995, due to the changing nature of health care and the needs of the local community, the health system was sold to a for-profit health care entity. That same year, the sisters created Holy Cross Ministries (HCM), an innovative new ministry to reach the underserved and under-insured in the area. HCM assists migrant communities in the region, providing legal immigration support, child and family development programming, and education, health, and counseling services.

Then, in 2023, CommonSpirit Health, the nation's largest nonprofit health care organization, announced the acquisition of the five hospitals and 35 area clinics in Utah, renaming the hospitals for the Sisters of the Holy Cross and marking the return of faith-based health care to the region.

CommonSpirit Health's mission is to "make the healing presence of God known in our world by improving the health of the people we serve, especially those who are vulnerable, while we advance social justice for all."

Holy Cross Hospital -Salt Lake City

Holy Cross Hospital - Salt Lake has grown to be a major medical center providing expert care delivered with kindness to all those who need it.

Conveniently located near the heart of the city, this historic acute care hospital remains one of the most trusted medical centers in all of Utah.



158-bed facility

Whole-person care
24 hours a day,
seven days a week

More than 10,000
emergency department
visits a year

Services extend beyond
emergencies, ranging
from imaging and
lab services, cardiology,
orthopedics, robotics
and many specialty
surgeries



Holy Cross Hospital Chapel

Many hospitals, even those without any religious affiliation, have some space devoted to prayer and reflection. But the chapel at Holy Cross Hospital has been a formidable spiritual anchor for the community amidst the changing world swirling surrounding it.

Upon first seeing it rising from the street at South Temple, you are immediately struck by its singularity – an impressive structure composed of angles of brick and gleaming stained glass. The chapel was designed by the architect Carl M. Neuhausen, who was also the architect of several other notable landmarks including the Cathedral of the Madeleine, the Thomas Kearns Mansion, and the St. Ann Orphanage.

When its doors were opened in 1904, the chapel was dedicated and the altar was consecrated by Rt. Reverend Lawrence Scanlan, the Bishop of Salt Lake.

Ecclesiastical details, such as 11 stained glass windows depicting important Biblical scenes circling the chapel and colorful frescoes on the walls and ceiling, make the chapel as much a center of religious art as it is an historic landmark. Achille Peretti, an Italian painter, and sculptor from New Orleans, painted the murals.

The chapel is now on the National Historic Registry and the Utah Register of Historic Places, making it a landmark that draws interest across our nation. It is thought to be the oldest Catholic church in Utah and the only structure remaining from the original Holy Cross Church. When it was decommissioned in 1995, it became a nondenominational chapel, but has been in continuous use since its founding.

Over the years, the chapel, like any century old building, has fallen into some disrepair. While minor projects have been completed, major renovations, such as plumbing and roofing updates, floor repairs and similar, are decades overdue.

Worsening matters dramatically, the building sustained significant damage in a 2020 magnitude 5.7 earthquake that shook much of the city – the first major earthquake on record in a city not built to withstand such events.

The result is now a majestic building threatened by gaping cracks in the walls and foundation, crumbling plaster, leaking pipes and outdated fixtures. Further, because it is not a usable spiritual or community space at this time, there are additional cracks in our ability to provide the full-person care we desire.

The Chapel Project

Though standing in Salt Lake City for nearly 150 years, Holy Cross Hospital Chapel is a glorious building that has been damaged by time, neglect, and nature. Now is our time to provide the care that our founding Sisters began by prioritizing the revitalization of this sacred space. Our project seeks to restore the building and its various internal features to their former glory while also expanding the facilities to embrace the current needs of the community.

As scoped, this project will roughly span 22 weeks focusing on preserving what should be preserved, modernizing what must be updated and growing where opportunities exist. The project will include:

- Restoring the stained glass and painted murals that make the chapel uniquely beautiful and depict important religious iconography.
- Repairing structural damage caused by time and a 2020 earthquake, including masonry, paint, and roof repairs.
- Updating key infrastructure including plumbing, electricity, and technology.
- Replacing or repairing interior furniture and decorations including pews, alters and more.
- Updating accessibility and safety features, including earthquake proofing (seismic architecture).
- Creating a new usable community space open to Salt Lake City residents, employees, patients, and their families.
- Restoring a spiritual home that aids in healing for patients and their families.

Full restoration of the chapel – a project that would bring it back into daily operational use for the whole community – will cost approximately \$10.5 million.



“Just as Christ is the center
of our lives at Holy Cross, the chapel
is the center of healing at our hospital”

— Sister Joann Upjohn



Our Ask

Philanthropy and generosity are at the very foundation of Holy Cross Hospital. The sisters who gave their time and labor to build this area contributed a dollar a month from their earnings to support the fledgling hospital at its inception. They understood the need for a place that would care for both the bodies and souls of the budding community.

Walking with them are thousands of community members who express their commitment to us continuing this legacy of kindness in action through their generous financial contributions each year.

Now, as we approach the 150th anniversary of Holy Cross Hospital opening its doors and embracing our community, we need your help to ensure our historic chapel remains as the spiritual center of that whole person treatment approach that has made Holy Cross what it is today. The timing of this project marks the return of Holy Cross Hospital—Salt Lake to our legacy of faith-based care. Join us in healing the mind, body, and soul of our community.

We invite you to learn more and support the restoration of this historic landmark that will return a spiritual home to both Holy Cross Hospital and the surrounding Salt Lake City community.

For more information or to make a donation please contact:

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CommonSpirit 
Holy Cross Foundation



Preserving a Spiritual Landmark

Support the
Holy Cross Hospital
Chapel Restoration
and Renovation

CommonSpirit 
Holy Cross Foundation

Since 1904, the Holy Cross Hospital Chapel has stood on South Temple in Salt Lake City, welcoming our community as we celebrate weddings and births, mourn losses, show support in times of illnesses and injury, quietly contemplate our inner lives, worship, and so much more.

But time, nature and change have taken their toll on this treasured landmark, leaving it cracked, crumbling and in need of major updates and repairs. As we approach the 150th anniversary of the Holy Cross Hospital's opening in October 2025, we believe now is the time to take up the mantle of our founding sisters centering Holy Cross Hospital Chapel as a spiritual refuge and community resource.

We at CommonSpirit Health Foundation are inviting you to join us as we embark on an exciting project to restore this sacred, historic space in our community while also re-establishing our roots as a spiritual, nonprofit health care facility operated with kindness and generosity at the heart of all we do.

1875	1883	1901	1904
Sisters of the Holy Cross arrive in Salt Lake City area and establish a Roman Catholic Church	New Holy Cross Hospital opened at South Temple location	Ground broken for Holy Cross Chapel	Chapel dedicated and altar consecrated
1928	1938 - 1965	1976	
Altars of the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph consecrated by Archbishop John Joseph Mitty	Various repairs and redecorations take place throughout the chapel	Chapel named to the state historic registry	
1995	2020	2023	
Chapel decommissioned due to the sale of the hospital	Earthquake causes significant damage to the Chapel	CommonSpirit Health acquires and renames Holy Cross Hospital-Salt Lake re-establishing it as a Catholic healthcare facility	
2024	2025		
Campaign reignites to restore and renovate the Holy Cross Chapel as spiritual center of the hospital and gathering place for the community	150th sesquicentennial of Holy Cross arriving into the Salt Lake City Metro area		