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The modern church at the heart of Advent Christian Village life, now equipped with Renkus-Heinz ICONYX

ICONYX clarity graces Florida's oldest retirement community church

USA – It may be Florida's oldest retirement community, but Advent Christian Village (ACV), founded in 1913 as a unique intergenerational community in north central Florida, boasts a spacious modern church at the heart of its campus. The church recently became the proud owner of a state-of-the-art Renkus-Heinz ICONYX digitally steerable array sound reinforcement system.

ACV is an accredited, comprehensive community offering home ownership, rental housing, assisted living, skilled nursing and rehabilitative care, located on 1,200 acres of woodlands and scenic landscapes overlooking the historic Suwannee River.

The church at the heart of the campus is led by Senior Pastor Rev. Steve Lawson, Minister of Pastoral Care Rev. John Harper and Minister of Music and Christian Education Rev. Rosemary Humbles. It ministers to the needs of all generations, providing Christian education, chancel and youth choirs, ensembles, prayer ministry, hand bell choirs, drama and instrumental groups, as well as a variety of fellowships and mission trips.

Although it was equipped with an audio system at the time of its construction, it swiftly became evident that the PA didn't serve the needs of the congregation – whose average age is 70 – too well. The essential ingredient of intelligible speech was missing and many people had a hard time understanding the spoken word.

The church decided to call in audio specialists SL Productions with a brief to upgrade the audio system to deliver the highest possible sound quality for both speech and music. There was one major pre-condition: the system should be visually unobtrusive, effectively 'disappearing' into the walls' wood paneling.

Jason Jones, SL Productions' owner and senior audio designer, says: "One of the church members heard our radio ad and called to find out what we could do to help them.

"The customer wanted the best, and wanted an architecturally invisible solution, so we chose Renkus-Heinz ICONYX loudspeakers for the application. The ICONYX was able to give incredible sound quality yet disappear into the woodwork." SL Productions was supported by regional Renkus-Heinz rep Richard Hembree at Griffith Sales.

A pair of IC24 columns, one mounted either side on the rear wall, allowed the entire seating area to be covered evenly from front to back and side to side, while directing acoustic energy into the listening plane and away from the large open ceiling. Renkus-Heinz BeamWare beam steering software provided precise modeling and set up for to the individual DSP settings for each of the 48 coaxial drivers and active amplifiers within the two cabinets.

The community itself assisted with two of the project's biggest challenges: mounting the loudspeakers and running power to them without disturbing the wood paneling. Says Jason Jones: "The church had a carpenter come in and create mounting points for the speakers, and the village electricians were able to find a cavity in the wall behind the speakers and fish the power through."

Compact stage monitoring was also provided in the shape of three Renkus-Heinz TRX81 2-way cabinets, which were stained to blend in with the stage floor color.

The final ingredient was a Biamp Nexia SP digital audio processor, which handles the all the outputs of the console for the monitor sends and supplies processed audio for the TV feed that the church provides to the village cable network.

Jason Jones adds: "The client was ecstatic with the system. They were happy with the way the cabinets disappear into the woodwork and delighted with the quality and even coverage throughout the room."

Headquartered in Foothill Ranch, California, Renkus-Heinz is the worldwide leader in the design and manufacture of powered and non-powered loudspeakers, system specific electronics and fully integrated Reference Point Array systems.

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