



## Twelfth Baptist Church

Serving the Roxbury community for over 150 years, the church at 160 Warren Street has been the residence of three congregations and since 1957, has been the home of the historic Twelfth Baptist Church. “Modernizations” of the façade in more recent years had left the building unidentifiable from its historic design. This project restored the building to its original appearance and helps to reestablish it as a historic landmark that matches the historic status of the congregation.

The Twelfth Baptist Church continues the legacy of the first African Baptist Church founded in Boston and the United States (est. 1805). The Twelfth Baptist Church is the oldest direct descendent of the African Meeting House and was established in 1840. The current building it occupies is also an architecturally significant 19th century example of gothic revival stick style, built in 1872.

In 1957, the building’s original façade was covered in permastone and stucco. The goal of this preservation project was to return the building’s façade to its former historic glory. The failing materials were removed and the original brick and deteriorated clapboard wood siding were uncovered.

Historically accurate wood siding was installed along with restoration of the remaining original trim, ensuring the building’s façade will last for many more years. Replications of lost ornamental details added to the restoration’s success. This restoration also supports the historical significance of this congregation as a champion of social justice from its founding in 1840 as an anti-slavery meetinghouse, to its hosting of civil rights leader and American Baptist minister Martin Luther King Jr. and the current leadership of social engagement, ministry and community by Senior Pastor Reverend Willie Bodrick II.

This project used a Boston Community Preservation Act grant which helps communities preserve historic sites such as The Twelfth Baptist Church. This past Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the ribbon cutting ceremony brought together members of the project team including Wessling Architects, J.L. Dunn & Company, and Senior Pastor Reverend Willie Bodrick II to celebrate the completion of the restoration.