

# University of Akron picks bid from developer who says historic church will become center for technology

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A historic church property that has been vacant since 2006 and was damaged in a fire three years ago may finally get new life as a center for emerging technologies.



© Karen Schiely, Akron Beacon Journal A crew from Quality Masonry Co. in Marion stabilizes the structure of the former St. Paul's Episcopal Church and former University of Akron Ballet Center on Feb. 28, 2019. The building was damaged in a 2018 fire.

It would be a tribute to the inventor who commissioned the original building's design, as well as the architect who designed it, said developer Tony Troppe, who submitted a winning bid to purchase the former St. Paul's Episcopal Church from the University of Akron.

"We recognize the need to be good stewards of the past so we can incite new energy for the location in the future," Troppe said. "We are considering several ideas for adaptive reuse of the property so that we can make the structure relevant for a whole new generation of knowledge workers."

The University of Akron announced Wednesday that it has accepted a bid to purchase the property, consisting of two buildings at 354 E. Market St. on the north side of the campus. The university said Troppe's bid was \$100,001.99, while the other bidder, Progress Through Preservation Inc., submitted what the organization called "a nominal bid" of \$3,500.