



Celebration with spotlights: Relighting of the Church of St Mary's Birth in Grevenbroich

Client: Parish of Grevenbroich / Germany
Architecture: Planwerk a Büro für Architektur, Grevenbroich / Germany
Electrical planning: Elektro-Ingenieure-Planungsbüro Jansen, Kerken / Germany
Lighting design: Planwerk a Büro für Architektur, Grevenbroich / Germany
Photography: Dirk Vogel, Altena / Germany
Place: Grevenbroich
Country: Germany

A recent lighting upgrade at the Grevenbroich parish church saw the pendant luminaires replaced by flexible ERCO spotlights on track. The results are convincing in terms of economy, technology and design.

The Roman Catholic parish church of St. Mariä Geburt in Grevenbroich, a small town near Düsseldorf, was built in 1930. The interior surprises with an unexpected, and similarly unusual, spatial form. The long rectangular, single-nave sanctuary is spanned by a low pointed barrel vault that instantly reminds one of an upside down hull. Deep lunette-type window reveals accentuate the vault, lending the space a rhythmic structure.

The interior was recently subjected to refurbishment. The renovation work also consisted of fundamentally redesigning the church lighting. The interior was previously illuminated by two parallel rows of glass pendant luminaires. Replacing the old, plastered-in cabling would have probably meant replastering the entire vault. For preservation reasons, but above all to reduce the renovation costs in Grevenbroich, alternative lighting options were sought. The track spotlights from ERCO provided a solution that ideally brought together cost-efficiency, technical feasibility, quality of design and flexibility.

The ERCO track system: Easy installation

One of the many advantages for the builders was the fact that a track system did not require new wiring. Furthermore, the U-shaped layout of the track was achieved using the existing fixtures for the pendant luminaires. However, the most convincing argument as far as the parishioners were concerned was that the ERCO solution significantly improved the quality of lighting inside the church. Whereas before, the decorative glass pendant luminaires had emitted diffuse, non-directional light, the track-mounted Optec spotlights now allow for a differentiated and easily variable lighting concept. The solution combines general lighting with eye-catching accent light.

Celebratory atmosphere through wallwashing and accentuation

Optec 24W lens wallwashers in warm white achieve uniform vertical illuminance for optimum ambient lighting inside the church, creating an atmosphere that brings its unique architecture to life. Supplementary accent lighting is provided by Optec spotlights of the same wattage and color temperature, with spot and wide flood distributions, emphasizing important areas and objects. Focus is given to the altar with the ambo, a lectern, in front, whilst at the same time accenting two chapel statues elevated on ledges to the left and right of the chancel. In addition to this, special light scenes were programmed for occasions such as Good Friday or Easter mass, to underline the significance of these holy days. According to reports from Grevenbroich, the response by worshipers is consistently positive. In the new light, the space now appears much more friendly and festive than before.

