Redesigning the megachurch: reintroduction of sacred space into a highly functional building

Javier Valencia
Redesigning the Megachurch:
Reintroduction of Sacred Space Into a Highly Functional Building

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture
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DEDICATION

In first place I would like to dedicate this project to God who has helped me in everything and has never abandoned me. I also dedicate this project to my parents Ricardo and Nury Valencia, my sister Angelica, my grandmother Elsy “nana” and Isabel Corsino who was someone very important in my life and who I will always love.
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REDESIGNING THE MEGACHURCH: REINTRODUCTION OF SACRED SPACE INTO A HIGHLY FUNCTIONAL BUILDING.

Javier Valencia

ABSTRACT

“Megachurches offer a unique way of being religious in modern society; one that fits the social and religious context of many people says Scott Tumma “Beyond Megachurch myths”. These Massive congregations of two to fifteen thousand participants occupy an undeniable space in the religious and social landscape. It is not only their massive buildings, locations, activities or television broadcasts
that make these churches important. It is the role that they play in changing society (Hartford, 2006)"

Architecturally the Megachurch has failed today, it has become a “big box”, a well developed building which houses thousands of members and provides them with all the necessary entertainment and functions that are needed; but, has lost its essence. The Megachurch today has lost its focus; it is focused on the function that the building has to offer and has failed to recognize the purpose of the space. By achieving a highly functional space the sacredness of this space has disappeared.

This thesis presents an investigation into how to deal with the notion of sacred space in today’s Megachurch; it will introduce the sacred biblical pattern of coming into the presence of God through architecture, it will deal with how
to make an extremely massive space into a personal and spiritual. The goal of this thesis is to redesign the Mega-church as a highly efficient building that provides the user with the sense of awe, majesty and reverence that is lost in today’s Megachurches.

The sacred aspect of this thesis project will be emphasized in the architectural poetics thru the use of symbolism represented in the right use of spatial organization and embedded religious cues; also will be focused on the materiality and the archetypes used to express a sacred feeling; Furthermore the study of natural light and structural systems for vast large spaces in a sacred manner will be investigated.

The outcome of this project intends to change the negative connotation of the Megachurch today; it intends
to teach society that this institution can be a sacred place to worship God and not just a place to be entertained.
1. PROJECT INTENT AND RESEARCH METHODS

This thesis project would investigate and develop an innovative Megachurch that would attempt to remedy the considerable architectural, religious and social issues faced by these institutions and its members (figure 1). The draw of members from small communities, the main focus on entertainment than religion, the role in changing society, the application of secular business models, the reflection of U.S. trends such as urban sprawl, the proliferation of “Mac mansions” and the size of its facilities are some of the challenges that are faced by the Megachurch and its members. As a potential solution to assist these institutions and individuals who continually struggle to maintain their own identity in a positive sense. This thesis project proposes a new design for the Megachurch that addresses
the architectural, religious and social problems that these institutions face today.

This innovative Megachurch would become the exceptional and unquestionable tool to create a holistic design that addresses the relationship between building and user that respond to a contextual situation. This project intends to reintroduce the idea of sacred space such as a church into a “big box” massive space, while still satisfying the programmatic needs of the space by implementing new and past theoretical methods reestablishing the relationship between sacred space and function in a Megachurch.

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Some of the techniques this design will use include: The investigation and understanding of religious background related to church design to be used in a metaphorical sense, Use of natural and artificial light to bring the sense of awe, exploration of structural systems, study of spatial proportion and relationship between the building and the user, research and implementations of materials to be proposed for the project, study and understanding of modern technological features that a Megachurch requires, study of programmatic functions that will be needed for the project, volumetric studies as form generators.
In order to develop the design of this unique Megachurch, conceptual research methods will be utilized. Some of the systems to be investigated are: case studies on the design concepts of diverse architectural schemes, tactics of simulation and 3-D modeling, investigation through correlational research, and the design and qualitative investigation through the involvement of design critiques. In order to validate the proposed solution, an evaluation of the project will be necessary.
2. INTRODUCTION

When I walk into a Church... One is immediately aware that one has stepped into the presence of what St. Paul would call the whole family in heaven and earth. You have stepped into the precincts of heaven!” Thomas Howard.

“The term Megachurch is the name given to a cluster of very large, Protestant congregations that share several distinctive characteristics. These churches generally have: 2000 or more persons in attendance at weekly worship, A charismatic, authoritative senior minister, A very active 7 day a week congregational community, A multitude of social and outreach ministries, and a complex differentiated organizational structure (Hartford, 2006). “America has seen an explosion in the number of Megachurches over the past
three decades. They are growing bigger, faster and stronger and are thriving in nearly every state of the nation and in much smaller communities than was previously believed possible (Thumma, Travis. 2008). This rapid growth has leaded to disapproval from critics claiming that these congregations or “big box churches” are more concerned with entertainment that with religion itself (herald tribune); creating a new challenge for architects in today’s society.

What is a megachurch?

The word Megachurch refers to large Christian protestant congregations that share various characteristics such as: two thousand or more member attendance, a senior minister, a seven day a week active community within the congregation, Various social and outreach ministries and a complex differentiated organizational structure.
The majority of Megachurches are focused on a very large protestant Christian congregation in the United States (currently there are more than 1200). The United States is not the only country that has this congregations, they can be found in Korea, Brazil, and several African countries. Although an exact world number count is not available today. The largest American Megachurch has close to 49,000 members with a weekly attendance; however several churches in Korea claim to have over 250,000 members.

Although very large congregations have existed throughout Christian history, there has been a rapid proliferation of churches with massive attendance since the decade of the 1970’s. As such, some researchers suggest that this church form is a unique collective response to distinctive cultural shifts and changes in societal patterns throughout the
industrialized, urban and suburban areas of the world.

While size is the most immediately apparent characteristic of these congregations, the Protestant Megachurches in the United States generally share many other traits. The majority of these congregations have a conservative theology, even those within mainline denominations. A large number are nondenominational but the majority are affiliated with a denomination.

Megachurch location

The national distribution of Megachurches reveals a clear pattern. Over 75 percent of these congregations are located in the Sun belt states, with nearly half of them in the southeast region. California had the highest concentration of Megachurches, followed by Texas, Florida, and Georgia.
(Thumma 1993). Sprawl cities, such as Houston, Orlando, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Phoenix, and Oklahoma City, contained the highest number of Megachurches.

In addition, Megachurches tend to have a suburban setting the majority of these congregations are found in the suburb area of large cities. Their location characteristics include a placement in high and visible land, The expanding of the city edge, easy access from major highways. It is very rare to see a church of this nature to be placed in an urban setting other than the older inner city established “First churches”

There are many reasons for this entities for being placed in this strategic points or suburban areas. Numerous researchers have found that in growing areas churches of all sizes grow faster (Hadaway & Roozen 1993:131; Olson
1988). These suburban areas offer expansive, less expensive plots of land suitable for acres of parking lots and the multiple buildings that are needed to support a congregation of several thousand. Zoning regulations are often less restrictive than in established urban communities. Most importantly, the suburbs provide a continuous influx of exactly the type of person attracted to Megachurches -- consumer oriented, highly mobile, well-educated, middle class families.

Nature of the megachurch

Megachurches are non denominational since in Christianity are various denominations such as: Adventists, Anglicans, Anabaptist, Baptist, Calvinist, Charismatic, Congregational, Lutheran, Methodist / Wesleyan, Nazarene, Pentecostal, Plymouth Brethren, Presbyterian, Religious Society of Friends (Quaker), Reformed, Resto-
ration movement, Seventh-day Adventist, Waldensians.

Denomination is an insignificant matter. The church itself (its size, pastor, programs, and reputation) attracts adherents, not its denominational ties. Consequently, almost one half of all Megachurches are independent and nondenominational.

Size of the megachurch

The most overt characteristic of Megachurches is their size, the number of persons attending in a given week. The number used to label a congregation with this name is a weekly attendance of two thousand people. The size of some Megachurches can be deceptive. More often churches estimate their attendance based on the number of people their sanctuary holds.
3. PROBLEM

Megachurch architecture is being expressed as means of attracting new people to fill these places. The goal of this approach is to create new religious forms, to remake the traditions, so they are acceptable and relevant to a modern person who had been turned off by traditional religion.

To accomplish that, the buildings of churches using this approach are quite ordinary looking, duplicating everyday structures such as office complexes, schools, warehouses. Inside these structures, persons are greeted by large lobbies with well-lighted signs, information booths, and often a mall-like court yard complete with refreshments. Their sanctuaries are usually spacious auditoriums,
with comfortable theater seating, large stages, and a minimum of religious symbols. The architecture of this orientation, “communicates a message - that religion is not a thing apart from daily life” (Goldberger 1995). The sermon, probably delivered from a clear plexiglass removable podium, conveys a biblical but practical, non-dogmatic, this-worldly message that also suggests religion should not be separate from daily life.

The architectural style does not only convey the message of the movement but also is sensitive and adaptable to the context in which it resides. A different approach requires a building which expresses the realities of their everyday lives. This orientation, can be found in most of the older “First Churches” that have grown to Megachurch proportions. This approach is characterized by a retention of the images of traditional Protestant Christianity.
The implication is that this larger expression is not only more successful and more exciting, but it is more authentically Christian than other churches. It is traditional Protestantism, but on a “mega” scale.

Megachurch architecture also entails a blending of this conventional form with the nontraditional style. This “Composite” orientation attempts to retain some connection to traditional religion but also embraces modern architectural forms and a contemporary worship format. The Megachurches of this type often superimpose a traditional building facade onto a unconventional, conventional, “user-friendly” structure. The exterior, or at least the street exposure, of the church may appear “church-like,” while the interior resembles a theater, with comfortable individual seating, state of the art sound and light system, and an adaptable performance stage.
This building often has both the conveniences of the nontraditional church building and the symbols and trappings of familiar Christianity. Worship may be an equally eclectic mix of hymns, jazz, and praise choruses, combined with liturgical readings and charismatic healing sessions. This can be seen in the worship format at Chapel Hill Harvester Church in Atlanta. This congregation exemplifies this blended approach architecturally, with mixed results (Goldberger 1995).

Problem within architecture

Megachurches are using architecture as means of just attracting people, architecture is no longer a tool in which people can be informed about the religion but just an image that attracts people. Architecture only plays an aesthetic role and does not contribute to the people.
The Megachurch architecture and religion in this sense is disconnected. There is no common bond between the essence of the message which is GOD and the building itself.

It might be a bigger problem than what it seems, critics say that the roots of the problem lay on their religious foundation rather than the architecture itself. However it is important to ask ourselves if architecture can remedy any of this.
4. HYPOTHESIS

Now that the problem within Megachurch architecture has been established it is important that the Masters Thesis project focuses on the solution for it. Before attempting to solve the problem it is important that parameters and criteria are established so the end result can be judged.

The first step is to ask and determine what is the base and foundation for designing or redesigning a “Megachurch” in a sacred manner. Previously mention a Megachurch is defined as a Christian entity or congregation. Therefore this Masters Thesis project will focus in its essence. What is the base and foundation for the Christian believe?
What is Christianity?

Christianity (from the word Χριστός “Christ”) is a monotheistic religion centered on the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth as presented in the New Testament. The Christian faith is essentially faith in Jesus as the Christ (or Messiah), the Son of God, the Savior, and God (Yahweh or the “Lord”) himself.

Adherents of Christianity, known as Christians, believe that Jesus is the Messiah prophesied in the Hebrew Bible (the part of scripture common to Christianity and Judaism). Orthodox Christian theology claims that Jesus suffered, died, and was resurrected to open heaven to humans. They further maintain that Jesus ascended into heaven, and most denominations teach that Jesus will return to judge all humans, living and dead, and grant im-
mortality to his followers. He is considered the model of a virtuous life, and both the reveller and physical incarnation of God. Christians call the message of Jesus Christ the Gospel (“good news”) and hence refer to the earliest written accounts of his ministry as gospels.

Christianity began as a Jewish sect and is classified as an Abrahamic religion. Originating in the eastern Mediterranean, it quickly grew in size and influence over a few decades, and by the 4th century had become the dominant religion within the Roman Empire. During the Middle Ages, most of the remainder of Europe was Christianized, with Christians also being a religious minority in the Middle East, North Africa, and parts of India. Following the Age of Discovery, through missionary work and colonization, Christianity spread to the Americas and the rest of the world.
As of the early 21st century, Christianity has between 1.5 billion and 2.1 billion adherents, representing about a quarter to a third of the world’s population and is the world’s largest religion. In addition, Christianity, is the state religion of several countries.

**Christian foundation**

The Bible is the central religious text of Christianity. The Christian Bible includes both the Old Testament and a collection of newer canonical books known as the New Testament. The word bible is from Latin biblia, traced from the same word through Medieval Latin and Late Latin, as used in the phrase biblia sacra (“holy book”). The bible is the “holy book” for Christianity and narrates the story of men and God from the beginning to the end of times and it is where the foundation for Christianity lays.
What is the church?

The word church comes from the greek ekklesia which means assembly, for Christianity it means to all that believe in Jesus.

Matthew 16:18 “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church”
Acts 8:3 “But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison”
Acts 16:5 “So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers”
Romans 16:5 “Greet also the church that meets at their house”
1 Corinthians 11:18 “In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church”
Ephesians 5:23 “For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior”

Colossians 4:15 “Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house”

Philemon 1:2 To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home

By looking at the biblical basis and definition of the word church it can be concluded that a church is not a building but a group of people that believe in Jesus, meet or congregate and make a whole unity. It is also understood that the church exists in two levels Local and universal. The local church is the group of believers that are
located in a close proximity and congregate locally; The universal church is the group of believers around the world.

Why is the church necessary?

Hebrews 10:25 “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching”
Romans 12:10 “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves”
Romans 15:7 “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God”
1 Corinthians 12:25 “so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other”
Colossians 3:13 “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you”
Ephesians 4:32 “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you”
1 Corinthians 12:4-7 “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good”

The need for a church is very important, a church will give its members a sense of belonging, of being involved with other believers, spiritual safety, it can teach its members things that they would not learn alone.
A church united is a church. When their members do not congregate there is simply no church, that is why is so important to have a place where people can come together as one and become a church. A place for meeting will facilitate the church to be, and it will make easier for its members to follow what is commanded as a whole.

Members need each other. God has given different abilities to different believers, and he wants us to work together “for the common good”. As mentioned different members have different gifts from God, if these people do not interact with each other the church will not work. It is very important that this space facilitate unity so the church can act as one.
Description of the church

1 Corinthians 3:9 “For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building”
Ephesians 2:22 “And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit”
1 Corinthians 3:17 “If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple”
1 Corinthians 6:19 “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own”

In these scriptures it is clear that the people are the building in which God Dwells, The church is the temple of
God. And even though he can be worshiped anywhere it is necessary for the church to worship as one

Church as a body

1 Corinthians 12:27 “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it”
Colossians 1:18 “And he is the head of the body, the church”
1 Corinthians 12:21 “The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!”
John 17:21 “that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you”

The Church is supposed to be united. Is an entity that depends on each other. It is understandable that not
all the members of a church are the same but they have to have a common purpose.

By understanding that in church all people are not the same but they need each other and depend on each other it can be said that this congregation needs a space in which they feel as a whole and can bring unity and understand that they need each other.

Purpose of the Church:

1 Corinthians 10:31 “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God”

As seen in the previous verses the purpose of the church is to bring glory to God through everything is done in by the church. The church brings glory to God by every-
thing they do and a large part of it is worship as mentioned in the verses.

What is worship?

1 Peter 2:9 “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light”
John 4:23 “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks”
Hebrews 13:15 “Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name”
Psalm 95: “come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let
us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song..... Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker”

John 4:20 “Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”
Worship is a the way the church bring glory to God, Worship is manifested in various levels, Spiritually and physically. God is spirit so the church needs to worship in spirit, once spiritual worship happens physical manifestations start to occur as mentioned. Praying, singing, dancing, kneeling, bowing down, gather in his name, listen and learn his word are those physical manifestations of worshiping these passages it also talks about when, where, who or what and how to worship. The church is supposed to worship always, wherever they are, they are to worship God Thru Jesus in spirit and truth since God is spirit he expects his church to do it in spirit.

The church Temple

This is what the LORD says: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house
you will build for me? Where will my resting place be? Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?"

1 Kings 8:26 “But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built”

Acts 7:48 “However, the Most High does not live in houses made by men”

Revelation 21:3 “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them, they will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God”

Temple is used to describe the place where God dwells, Does God Need a temple? It is said that He does not inhabit temples of buildings made by men and even if we were to build one for him it says that not even the uni-
verse can contain him. It can be concluded that God does not need a temple. However, if God does need a temple why do we even build buildings in the name of God?

As it can be seen the purpose of the church is to bring glory to God, be united and act as a whole. Therefore, it is not God who needs a temple but it is men who need it. The Church is the temple of God and he dwells in them and the physical building is the one that houses the church so it can be united and act as one.

God and Architecture:

Job 38: “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings
set, or who laid its cornerstone... When I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place”
Hebrews 11:10 “For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God”

Architecture is an spiritual art that is close to God, there is a relationship mentioned in the bible. How important is architecture for God? And what role does it play in Gods realm? Are questions to ask before designing a facility for him.

Conclusion

As a conclusion it can be said that the church is the people who believe in God Through Christ whose “philosophical” base is the bible. It is necessary for this group
of people to congregate and be united as one with the purpose of giving glory to God and growing in their belief through spiritual and physical manifestations of worship in a spatial temple.

Architecture in a sacred sense

At this point definitions and criteria have been set so this masters thesis project can be designed with a “philosophical” foundation. By defining this words one is able to understand what you are to design.

This Masters Thesis project attempts to design a temple or place for the church “people of God” that can facilitate all the activities that God wants for their people to do when they come together as one. This place or temple will acknowledge and understand the function in its con-
text.

This “temple” to be designed will attempt to remedy today’s misunderstanding and erroneous preconceptions of the “church” architecture on a large scale. It will focus on God as the driver of the church and through architectural structure, symbolism, spaces, moments and poetics will inform the church that it is not about the individual but about the body of Christ.

This masters Thesis project intends to use a biblical base for all its architectural approaches in all levels. Architectural design will play a key role in all this. If a place of for God and his people is to be designed the architecture must understand and acknowledge its role within the context. Architecture is the building and space that will house the church so they can be united and facilitate its religious purpose.
A Sacred Pattern

A diagram was developed after researching all topics and words related to sacred in a biblical sense in order to find a relationship between the word of God, the church and its purpose and architecture. A possible pattern is found and can be applied to architecture as seen in the figure.
Figure 7 A path to sacred architecture.

Figure 8 A path to sacred architecture.
5. CASE STUDIES

Crystal Cathedral

Focusing on the religious function of the building, architect Phillip Johnson (1906-2005) with the collaboration of partner John Burgee were appointed to design the Crystal cathedral (Garden drove community church in Garden Grove, California) (figure 2). In this vast two hundred and seven feet by four hundred and fifteen feet space frame structure with seating capacity of two thousand nine hundreds users. “The religious function of the building is signaled by a stalagmite like spire” (Rybczynski. 2005). Johnson and his partner, John Burgee, included several religious cues; Instead of finding religious icons and symbols the user finds only water and behind the pulpit swings
theatrically open to reveal the sky, the transparency and vast scale of the glass and space frame structure evokes the feeling of awe, the design of seating with users facing each other side by side “attempts to remind the worshipers of the human manifestation of the body of Christ and connect with the idea of “God in our midst” (turgeson 2007) and finally its form and unique appearance in a contextual sense reminds the user of the idea of that the church reflects God being among us but “quite” other than us.

The conceptual ideas from Crystal cathedral will serve as a guide to motivate this thesis to resolve some of the critical aspects that the Megachurch congregations are facing today such as focusing in religious instead entertainment by: utilizing religious cues which will drive the design scheme; understanding of human scale in context to a church setting, and struc-
Church on the water

Another approach concerning the idea of sacred space is employed by the Japanese architect Tadao Ando and his Church on the water (figure 3). Designed between 1985 and 1988, the church faces a large pond that steps down in towards the small river. At the high end of the pond is the building, the shape of which is a pair of overlapping cubes. The larger one faces the pond directly serving as the chapel which is connected to the smaller cube entrance by a semi-circular, spiral stairway. At last, an L-shaped wall runs alongside the south and east of the pond-building, the guests enters the church by rounding the wall at the northern end. As the user enters, four large, concrete crosses set inside the glass cube direct the view upwards. Going
up and around the brightly lit crosses, the path then leads down the dark spiral stairway the chapel below. Once visitors enter the chapel space, they are confronted with a view of the pond. A steel cross placed in the middle of the water, and the entire view is framed by the open face of the chapel has only three concrete walls. The fourth wall is made out of glass which can slide open (Drew, 1996).

In this project, Ando succeeds in defining sacred space by making the entry a religious experience; in addition, an L-shaped wall, defines the church as a protected, secluded area, finally after passing through the wall one can immediately see a full view of the church, which is not visible at any other point along the outside path. The conceptual ideas from church on the water such as Metaphorical spatial techniques, proper use of natural light, and understanding of relationship between building and user are
some of the conceptual design approaches taken in consideration for the development of this thesis project.

Lakewood Church and Willow Creek Church

A different approach considering the idea of programmatic function and technological requirements are found on Lakewood church located in Texas and Willow Creek church located on South Barrington Illinois.

Lakewood church in Houston Texas designed by Morris Architects of Houston, formally the Compact center a converted sports arena is a 16,000 seat sanctuary and it is the largest nondenominational church. “It has padded theater seats instead of wooden pews, a stage instead of an altar, and video projection screens instead
of stained-glass windows. Hardly a classic place of worship, although the expansive expression of religious community in this vast space is as impressive, in its way, as any soaring medieval nave” (Rybczynski. 2005).

Social issue “The desire of congregations to make their place of worship a part of everyday life rather than a place apart is admirable” (Rybczynski. 2005). However, according to critics “Megachurches need to find appropriate architectural alternatives. Just putting up a sign and a fountain is not enough”. Within the process of developing a new Megachurch solution, this thesis project would employ the Understanding of programmatic and technological needs of the project; Also, will deal with social understanding of the users in a contextual manner; As well as the architectural gestures that will deal with today’s issues of Megachurch design.

Simultaneously, Willow Creek Church in the Chi-
Chicago suburb of South Barrington demonstrates the programmatic functions needed by a congregation.

“The sprawling complex, on an attractively landscaped 155 acre site, includes not only two sanctuaries but also a gymnasium that serves as an activity center, a bookstore, a food court, and a cappuccino bar” (Rybczynski. 2005). It also pays attention to technological infrastructures needed in today’s worship space “a fingerprint scanner, which quickly checks them into Willow Creek for Sunday school. Nearby, parents swipe ID cards through digital card-readers to check in the younger kids…. Beyond the high-tech check-in lies a church that is as wired as any business in the country… large video screens….. They still pass the collection plate but they also accept automatic bank drafts…. worshippers use the in-house Wi-Fi network to call up Bible verses on their laptops” (Rybczynski. 2005).
However it brings a critical design issue “Willow Creek appears to have good sightliness, excellent audio-visual facilities, and comfortably wide aisles for moving around in. But inspiring it’s not.” (Rybczynski. 2005). This thesis project will pay strict attention to how to incorporate technology and programmatic functions without losing focus on sacred space.

Padre Pio Pilgrimage Church
Renzo Piano

Located in San Giovanni Rotondo (Foggia), Italy and owned by (Provincia dei Frati Minori Cappuccini di Foggia) designed between 1991 and 2004. This case study was analyzed in various levels.
Light: in the main worship space light is treated with a clearstory approach. The roof is “floating on top of the main structure and light filters from above. Mimicking a heavenly scenario. Light drama occurs as the sectional level changes and the pilgrim descends to a lower level, materiality is used to defuse light, at the entrance diffused light is used. By having a change of light so drastic the user understands that there is a different space. Sacred space according to the architect is a combination of dark and bright spacial experiences. The more intimate the space the darker it needs to be, reflection chapels and prayer rooms are more intimate and darker.

Materiality: stone from a local source resembles the sacredness of the structure by focusing on the beauty of the plan material. A paved piazza with local stone, wood roof resembles lightness and gives humanity to building, steel
struts are used lightly and carefully to not overpower the roof, stained glass evokes an archaic feeling and related to old or traditional church style, water elements and nature is incorporated and used as fabric for the building

Structure: arches are used as a symbol of basic construction techniques used in the past with new construction methods and technology.

The plan: a central plan is used as a method of having people as closed to the altar as possible. The central parti gives importance and hierarchy to the spaces. The approach is as important as the inside spaces, it is a procession in which one can utilize to tell a story.
Our Lady Of The Angels
Rafael Moneo

Located in Los Angeles and designed by Rafael Moneo architect the new church is home to the nation’s largest, most ethnically diverse diocese and is the first cathedral to be built in America in three decades.

Light: the light of the church can be analyzed with a photo filter, as a result the light that comes from the outside its filtered from above. Also as a clerestory situation, this evokes a sacred feeling that light is coming from the sky and captured inside the space.

Materiality: poured and polished concrete is vastly used in this project, its gives the feeling of power and emptiness, also note that the construction methods are revealed.
in the concrete work. Light landscape is introduced, the water element is not introduced, steel and glass is vastly used, it gives a cold feeling, the materials used combined with the scale tells the user something sacred or special about this place. Minimum detail in the materials used, no symbols or banners are used, the scale is more vertical than horizontal emphasizing the light through materiality.

Structure: a heavy poured monolithic concrete structure is used. The facade is broken down by separation of poured phases to celebrate the methods of construction. As seen in the analysis of the image the building fenestrations are minimal. However, they are carefully developed, and oriented to capture the majority of the light and use it to evoke dramatic moments.

Figure 19 Our lady of Los Angeles Public space.
The plan: a linear plan is used. The hierarchy is stabilized by the length of the path and the focal point in the nave. This approach is more traditional as seen in the Gothic or romanesque church period. However the approach is different, it is a procession, the user has to travel throughout the majority of the spaces to come to the final space being the altar where the majority of the light drama occurs.

Figure 20 Our lady of Los Angeles Floor plan.
6. Program

The building program is based in the idea of a sacred path into architecture as explained in the hypothesis chapter. It is broken down into three parts. The “approach” area it is where the parking facility, a bridge and a public plaza link and welcome all the members or users into the facility. Then there is the main worship space which seats 5000. People and provides an entrance hall, room for dancing; in a choir area, a pulpit or altar where the preacher delivers the word of God and an empty space which symbolizes the presence of God.

Further into the complex there is the “transformation” area where the church will find prayer rooms, meditation areas, praying gardens and a baptism area.
Next to the “transformation” area is the “teaching area. In this part of the program seminar rooms, lecture halls, a small school, offices and administrations will be found.

Another part of the program is the “interactive” area which is where the church gives back to the community, one part of it is placed facing the river walk and it is where a coffee shop and a bookstore is placed. Also there is the park setting placed around the complex which is where the community can enjoy a natural park setting with walking trails where nature and landscape is the main focus.

The last part of the program is the “support area” where mechanical areas are located and also rest rooms and storage. As seen in the early sketches bubble diagrams were created to create relationships between spaces.
Even though the project is not designed yet at this point it is important that this masters thesis projects crates direct relationship between the spaces or programs with the notion of a sacred path into architecture, Facilitating the church the path towards an encounter with God.

Square footages are based upon Building codes and standard tables to calculate the best possible fit for all the functions as seen in the square footage allowance table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Area</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Ideal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sanctuary/Ministering Center and related rooms</td>
<td>10 sf.</td>
<td>15 f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foyer, Toilets, Ushers’ Room, Storage</td>
<td>3 sf.</td>
<td>5 sf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir Practice (per person in choir)</td>
<td>7 sf.</td>
<td>10 sf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir/Robe/Store/Music/Toilets/Office</td>
<td>6 sf.</td>
<td>12 sf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (see Education Section):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult (if in sanctuary) (other areas)</td>
<td>10 sf.</td>
<td>15 sf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children: infant to school age</td>
<td>30 sf.</td>
<td>35 sf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School age</td>
<td>25 sf.</td>
<td>30 sf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teens</td>
<td>20 sf.</td>
<td>25 sf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corridors/storage/toilets for education space</td>
<td>6 sf.</td>
<td>12 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Total Sq. Ft.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>150-300 each</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial/workroom</td>
<td>100-250 each</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Office</td>
<td>80-150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library and Board Room</td>
<td>150-300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Storage, corridors, toilets are additional-allow approximately 10 to 15 percent of the above total.

Figure 21 Recommended square footage allowances.
7. SITE

Possible Sites

There are three possible sites for the Master’s thesis project. To be able to choose the right location for this project, three major criteria had to be met. First, it had to be on an urban setting; second, the site had to be close to the water; finally, it had to be big enough to accommodate a large program.

An urban setting was chosen as a major criteria to select a site. Since, the majority of Megachurches are located in a suburban context, by choosing to develop this master’s thesis project in an urban area one can see that a project of this magnitude can also be developed in a non
conventional manner.

Proximity to the water was a major part of site selection. The role in symbolism that water plays in religion and in architecture is really important. In Christianity, water symbolizes baptism which is the second birth of a person in mind and soul; It also represents cleansing and purity. In architecture, water is used as an element that represents nature and spirituality. Because of the religious and architectural meaning of water a site that was near water was an important criteria to base site selection.

Finally the size of the site and the capability to contain a large program was another criteria the be ruled by. Since Megachurches are congregations that house from two to fifty thousand attendants it was important to understand the size of the program and its requirements in
order to be able to choose the right site for this Master’s Thesis project.

Ybor City

The first option to consider was Ybor City, located in Tampa, Florida, United States. It is a historic neighborhood in Tampa, Florida located just northeast of downtown. It was founded in the 1880s by cigar manufacturers and was populated by thousands of immigrants, mainly from Spain, Cuba, and Italy. For the next 50 years, workers in Ybor City’s cigar factories would roll millions of cigars annually.

The neighborhood had features unique among contemporary immigrant communities in the southern Unit-
ed States, most notably its multi-ethnic and multi-racial population. A slow exodus out of the area accelerated after World War II, leading to a period of abandonment and decay. After decades of neglect, a portion of the original neighborhood was redeveloped into a popular night club and entertainment district. One of the five campuses of Hillsborough Community College is located there as well, HCC Ybor.

The neighborhood has been designated as a National Historic Landmark District, and several structures in the area are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. In 2008, 7th Avenue, the main commercial thoroughfare in Ybor City, was recognized as one of the “10 Great Streets in America” by the American Planning Association. (Wikipedia).

The advantages of choosing Ybor city as a Site to
utilize for this Master’s Thesis Project are: its urban location, its historical importance within the united states, the recognition and popularity within the Tampa bay area and the proximity to key locations such as downtown Tampa, the Channelside District and highways I275 and I4.

The Disadvantages of this site are: The lack of space for building a large facility such as a Megachurch, The absence of water bodies.

By not meeting two of the three criteria that were established to be able to select a site Ybor city was no longer eligible to develop this master’s Thesis Project.

Channelside District

The character of the Channel District, from its begin-
nings over 75 years ago, was maritime-related; a hard working, industrial and commercial area, developed to serve the Port of Tampa, and the private shipping interests which gave Tampa its earliest reputation. Until the mid-1970’s, when the commercial use of containerized shipping displaced general cargo shipping in Tampa, the District, known over the years as the Estuary, La Draga, and the Ybor Channel area, was home to ships’ chandlers, shipping companies, bonded warehouses and thousands of long-shoremen loading and unloading general cargo ships.

The late 1970’s and 1980’s were a period of decline and transition for the area, lagging behind redevelopment efforts in Downtown and Ybor City. It was a time when property ownership struggled to keep tenants in buildings and property values dropped. During that period, the larger property owners in the area, in-
cluding the Gulf Florida Terminal Company, the Tampa Port Authority, Anthony Distributors, Inc., The Coca Cola Bottling Company, and Bonanni Ship Supply formed the Ybor Channel Redevelopment Association, which promoted and positioned the area for eventual redevelopment.

A key turning point for the area was the decision by the Tampa Port Authority to acquire waterfront property on Garrison and Ybor Channels in the mid-1980’s, and develop an ambitious master plan for the property’s redevelopment. The original master plan was never constructed. However, it was revisited in the early 1990’s, and has evolved today into Garrison Seaport. (City of Tampa)

The advantages of the Channelside district to be utilized as a potential site for this master’s thesis project are: The abundant presence of water bodies, the proximity to
key places in the Tampa bay area, the popularity of the site within the inhabitants of the city of Tampa and its surroundings, the urban setting in which this district is located.

The disadvantages of this site as a possible location for this project are: The lack of space for a large program needed.

After studying the site and seeing that it does not meet all the criteria earlier established for a possible site it is concluded that it can not be utilized for this Masters Thesis project.

Downtown Tampa

Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon first arrived in the Tampa Bay area in 1513, but the Spaniards focused their
attention on settling eastern Florida and left the western areas alone. In 1824, only two months after the arrival of the first American settler, four companies of the U.S. Army established Fort Brooke to protect the strategic harbor at Tampa Bay.

Development of the Tampa Bay region began after the territory became part of the United States in 1845. In spite of the blockade and Federal occupation during the Civil War, the area grew steadily. Henry B. Plant’s 1884 railroad extension to the Hillsborough River provided access to new areas, and he built lavish hotels along his rail line to attract visitors.

Tampa owes its commercial success to Tampa Bay and the Hillsborough River. When phosphates were discovered nearby in the late 1880s, the resulting mining and
shipping industries prompted a boom of growth and wealth that lasted through the 1890s. Tampa’s port is now the seventh largest in the nation.

The main Tampa downtown business district has grown phenomenally since the 1960s. Major banks and an increasing number of other corporations occupy large glass, steel and concrete buildings that tower high above the bay. The Tampa Convention Center, overlooking the Hillsborough River, offers meeting facilities and features an erupting fire and water sculpture.

Thus Tampa has evolved into a multi-cultural, diverse business center with sustainable communities for its citizens. People of all ages arrive here to escape the worries and winters of wherever they came from, and an increasing number of them stay.
Its locations boundaries are: on the west, the Hillsborough river; on the east Nebraska avenue; on the north, highway I275; and on the south, two blocks down of Kennedy boulevard.

Downtown Tampa seems to be the most convenient choice for a site proposal for this master’s thesis project, because of its rich history, geographical placement on the map, its urban setting, its proximity to a large body of water and its availability of land that can hold a large architectural program.

Now that the thesis has narrowed down to a specific city and district. Final site has to be placed and selected judging by the preestablished criteria (water proximity, urban setting and capacity to hold a large architectural program) in order to be constant and successful.
Selected site

By visiting the downtown Tampa area and analyzing aerial pictures it is three possible locations were identified.

Site three as seen on the aerial picture was located on the south east. Its boundaries are: on the north, John F Kennedy blvd; on the south, west keller st; on the east, S. Plant avenue; on the west; the Hillsborough river. Has direct access to the river and provides an urban setting, however, it is only about a block in size making difficult the accommodation for the program needed for this project.

Site two is located on the northeast of downtown Tampa. Its boundaries are: on the north, west laurel st;
on the south, west fortune st; on the east, north Ashley drive; on the west; Hillsborough river. Site two meets all the preestablished criteria; however, existing infrastructure divides the site and blocks the direct access to the Hillsborough river.

Site three is currently Julian B. lane Riverfront park. The boundaries are: on the north, highway I275; on the south; University of Tampa; on the east, Hillsborough river; on the west, north boulevard. This site meets all the criteria previously preestablished. Because of this reasons this site was selected to be further studied and further develop this Master’s Thesis Project.

After selecting the specific site in which this project is going to be developed, further data gathering and considerations need to be studied. Site analysis has to be...
performed in order to understand and to provide solutions for this thesis.

Site Data.

Zoning: CBD-1

The purpose of the CBD district is to implement the goals of the Tampa Central Business District Land Use Policy Plan, a component of the comprehensive plan for the city. It is also the purpose of the central business district regulations to guide development design to establish the desired character of development for each of the twelve (12) CBD character districts identified in the CBD land use policy plan. The central business district consists of the following two (2) zoning subdistricts:

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CBD-1 This zoning subdistrict is appropriate for CBD projects in areas with low- to mid-rise structures.

1 Property located within the waterfront overlay district shall have a building/structure setback of twenty-three feet from the water’s edge, as measured from the waterside face of the bulkhead.

2 Structures shall be compatible with any significant natural, historic or architectural resources in proximity to the project. Examples of ways to achieve compatibility include design features such as height-to-setback ratios or stepped or graduated building faces.

3 All buildings with a height in excess of one hundred (100) feet shall be equipped with a fire con-

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Group</th>
<th>Accessory use to a permitted principal Group C use</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank, drive-in</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar and lounge</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering shop</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry cleaning plant, small</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heliport/helisop</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office, business and Professional</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office, medical</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-street parking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal use</td>
<td>S1 1</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory use</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking, interim</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking, temporary</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal service</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of assembly</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of Religious Assembly</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing, light</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and publishing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public service facility</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public use facility</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio/TV studio</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 34 Schedule of permitted principal, accessory and special uses.
4 Property zoned CBD-2 with or without a zoning site plan approved by the city council may be developed provided it meets the dimensional regulations of CBD-1.

5 Development is either CBD district that propose redevelopment of an entire city block (excluding waterfront developments) under one unified plan shall provide a minimum 5’ average building setback on all sides. The purpose of the averaged setback is to accommodate widened, pedestrian-oriented sidewalks and more functional public open space. The area created by the required building setback, may be counted towards the public open space requirement as required and defined by the article.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHEDULE OF PERMITTED PRINCIPAL, ACCESSORY AND SPECIAL USES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private or commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail sales, specialty:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopper’s and commercial Goods, distilled beverages and gasoline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special event parking, Temporary Film Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary special events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary waterfront</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface parking lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle repair, minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 35 Schedule of permitted principal, accessory and special uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHEDULE OF DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBD-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBD-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 36 Schedule of dimensional regulations.
After analyzing the zoning aspects of the site, a variety of GIS data layers were used to further study the location for the project. By doing this one can see how to approach the project from a macro to a micro scale. First by taking into consideration the contextual situation and further by seeing the relationship of the project to its surroundings.

Figure 37 Site Location.

Figure 38 Figure ground.
Figure 39 Parcel Boundaries.

Figure 40 Roads.

Figure 41 Land use types.

Figure 42 Land use.
Figure 43 School locations.

Figure 44 Hydrology.

Figure 45 Green spaces.

Figure 46 Commercial locations.
As part of the initial site analysis a 3-D model of the downtown area was created in order to: understand the scale of the project, study light scenarios at different times of the day, create possible perspectives and understand how the project will be viewed from different parts of downtown Tampa.
When visiting the site panoramic pictures were taken. The first panoramic shows the view towards the Hillsborough river, as seen in the picture the site frames the downtown skyline. The second panoramic shows the current condition of the site itself.
8. CONCEPTUAL PROJECT DESIGN

As part of the preliminary project design a series of sketches were drawn in order to understand how can the project be placed on the site responding to all surrounding conditions and also to the concept of a sacred pattern into the presence of God.

Also Bug models were developed in order to understand in a large scale how the project is responding in the urban scale and its immediate surroundings.

Bubble diagrams were created in order to understand and link the conceptual approach and the possible architectural response to the problem. Possible perspectives were created in order to understand scale.
Figure 53 Conceptual diagramming.
In the conceptual Diagraming phase, the relationship between the program, concept, and form starts to be evolved. Sectional qualities and plan coordination start to be analyzed by overlaying the concept of sacred architectural pattern with the design elements. Parti studies are done in a sketch format in order to look for the best possible solution taking into consideration all the design aspects.
In this more developed schematic sketch a clear parti is show responding to the river angle. A clear separation between public and private space is shown. The placement of the program starts to be analyzed as more clear as scale is applied to the sketch and proportions by also looking at it in section. The programmatic functions start to relate and respond to the site a sacred path to architecture is starting to be overlaid with program spaces and site context.
9. FINAL DESIGN

Diagrams

After the conceptual design phase, the concept became more clear. As a result of that a series of diagrams were developed in order to understand the sacred pattern of coming into the presence of God and to better understand the project.

The approach diagram includes three major parts of the architectural program The Bridge, The River walk and The parking. The bridge connects the east side of Downtown Tampa to the west side; The River walk includes a small marina, a coffee shop and a bookstore and the grand massive stairs that connects the river walk level to the

Figure 57 Approach Diagram.
main public plaza level and finally The parking acknowledges that the majority of users will be using their automobiles to approach the temple.

The Unity diagram responds to the necessity of having a public plaza to facilitate the interaction of church members before coming into the main temple. This plaza includes the use of a circular trellis accompanied by water and hardscape.

The cleansing diagram shows that when the church passes through the public plaza and enters the temple they are being cleansed metaphorically speaking by the use of water that surrounds the temple. The use of water in this part of the project represents the baptism in which the church goes through when they enter the temple and are submerged in a change of level.
The living sacrifice diagram talks about the church “people” this is where the church is seated and receive the word of God. When the church enters the temple, they go through a level change by going doing in a ramp that takes them from the entrance and circles all the way down to the central space in which the presence of God is represented by light, water and an empty space.

The presence of God diagram show that it is the central space in which all the project moves around, The entire project is focused in this area. The presence of God is represented by a void empty space in which the user can only find a water feature inside the temple that is directly lined up with a light port on top which is the main source of light for the entire temple; As in the bible God is said to be the light of the wold, the fountain of living water and the invisible but omnipresent one.
The praying diagram shows the location of the praying gardens which are a contoured landscape, full of foliage and water space in which people can go to pray and be baptized. This area is heavily landscape with the purpose of creating a boundary from the street noise and views and to isolate this space to have a closer relationship to nature since according to the bible God’s presence and existence in undeniable in his works being all nature.

The equipping the saints diagram shows the location of the school and chapels. To the top of the diagram one finds the school and offices where Sunday school and the administration offices are located. To the bottom of the diagrams the chapels are found which function as multi-purpose rooms where members go to be equipped, meaning go to learn in depth about the word of God also smaller activities can be accommodated.
The reaching out diagram shows the location of the river walk development. This is how the church interacts with people by providing a bookstore, a coffee shop and a marina that faces the Hillsborough river. The river walk is developed by having water features, stone paved walkways and shaded areas. In this level is where the interaction of the church and the world occurs.

Plans

The architectural plans show the relationship between spaces and spatial organization. The site plan shows the context in which the project is situated. The ground and plaza plans show explain the level change between spaces; And the sanctuary plans illustrate the organization and seating arrangement for the users.
Figure 65 Site plan.
Figure 66 Ground Plan.
Figure 67 Plaza Plan.
Figure 68 Sanctuary Plan.
Figure 69 Sanctuary Plan.
Sections

Three sections were developed (one longitudinal and two cross sections) in order to understand relationship between spaces, programmatic functions and height changes.

Figure 70 Longitudinal section.
Figure 71 Cross section.

Figure 72 Cross section.
Elevations

Three sections were developed (east, west and south) in order to understand how the facade is articulated and how the scale of the project affect the surrounding structures.

Figure 73 East elevation.
Figure 74 West elevation.

Figure 75 South elevation.
Figure 76 Approach from river rendering.
Figure 77 View from river rendering.
Figure 78 River walk rendering.
Figure 79 Main plaza rendering.
Figure 80 Main plaza rendering.
Figure 81 View from parking rendering.
Figure 82 School rendering.
Figure 83 Praying rooms rendering.
Figure 84 Chapels rendering.
Figure 85 Temple rendering.
Figure 86 Temple entrance rendering.
Figure 87 Temple inside rendering.
Figure 88 Temple inside rendering.
Figure 89 Temple inside rendering.
Final Model

Figure 90 Final model picture.
Figure 91 Final model picture.
Figure 92 Final model picture.
Final Section Model

Figure 93 Final section model picture.
Figure 94 Final section model picture.
Figure 95 Final section model picture.
10. CONCLUSION

In conclusion a year of research and designing for large non denominational Christian place of worship has been brought to a point of not termination; yet, rather a point of transition. A transition that will hopefully teach me how to explore architecture in new levels concerning the idea of God and architecture.

By attempting to design this temple I made various discoveries when it comes to architecture and its relationship to God and his church.

It is a very crucial part of the project to know what are you designing, who are you designing for and what are the parameters to be design-
ing from or what is its measuring standard.

In this case a large Christian non denominational temple was designed for The church to worship God and to personally learn from him. Along my research I came to the realization that if one is to design for God one needs to understand his purpose for the church and be able to find them.

The bible was where all the design tools came from, as I started to further research and read specific parts of the bible that can be translated into architectural terms, I came upon the discovery of a processional pattern of coming into the presence of God. When one comes into the presence of God there are pattern that the believer follows and as a designer it is critical to embed or include this pattern into the design of a place of worship for God.
These called sacred pattern of coming into the presence of God translated into architecture that I discovered along my research journey are: Coming towards God (approach), Gathering in His name (public space), Thank him (approach experience), Exalt Him (Large open space to sing, dance Learn), Because He is Great (frame nature), Admire God (awe feeling in architecture), Corporal and individual worship (common and personal space for worship).

When this sacred pattern of coming into the presence of God is included it does not mean that the church will be able to worship God, It only means that as a designer one will facilitate the actions or activities that the church needs in order to worship and bring glory to His name.
WORKS CITED


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