

# PART A

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## SETTING THE SCENE

# INTRODUCTION

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A brief introduction and overview of the  
investigation to follow

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## INTRODUCTION

Architecture in the urban environment mediates between the city as a collective entity and parts within the city that fulfill specific purposes.

Opportunities for meaningful interventions are often presented when we critically explore this interaction between function and context, between building and placement, or as proposed within this investigation: between church and the inner-city.

The study explores a symbiotic interaction between envisioned church form and existing urban conditions, aligning the research theme (church) with context specific analysis.

The study proposes an evolution of established typology within a changing urban environment by **A)** Generating new definitions, and **B)** Exploring alternative placement.

**A)** A systemic definition of church proposes integration of church with urban processes and leads to the development of a programme involved with urban renewal, social needs provision and community development in the North-West quadrant of Pretoria's inner city.

**B)** An alternative positioning of church proposes the concept of reclaiming space and leads the architectural application towards re-claiming and re-developing space within the Schubart Park building complex.

## AIMS

- 1) To explore spatial and programmatic models that address the need for meaningful, usable and integrated urban spaces in the inner-city of Pretoria.
- 2) To explore the potential that church as client and building type hold in terms of urban renewal and community development.
- 3) To interpret, within the urban context of Pretoria, new directions in the evolution of church as building type.
- 4) To develop a model for church infrastructure in the urban environment that addresses a current lack of precedent and formal architectural investigation.
- 5) To contribute, through research and interpretation, to the debate and understanding of 1) Church in South-Africa's urban environments, and 2) The status and potential of the Schubart Park complex

## SITE AND PROGRAMME

### Site

The project is positioned within a proposed development precinct in the north-west quadrant of Pretoria's inner-city where the focus is on the existing Schubart Park housing complex. As part of a broader site development proposal, a detailed intervention is generated for the eastern portion of the Schubart Park structure. (figure 1.1 to 1.4)

### Programme

The project proposes a development partnership for the renewal of the Schubart Park complex. Space will be provided for various inner-city organizations to be based within Schubart Park and to interact within a managed infrastructural development.

A broader programme proposal attempts to balance church related organizations, urban development role players and the needs of the Schubart Park complex. Components include: Church gathering, housing development, social services, urban research, commercial enterprise, facilities management and partnership forums.

The design proposal will focus the core of this system consisting of serviced public and private gathering spaces, a management partnership and space for various tenant organizations.

## METHODOLOGY

The research process, as structured within this document, is composed as follows:

**Part A** Attempts to define the concept of church, investigate selected theories of church within the urban environment and introduce church as building typology

**Part B** Contextualizes the study within the inner-city of Pretoria and investigates a) Existing church models, b) Urban conditions within the study area, and c) Schubart Park as site for intervention, and d) Potential programme and client partnerships.

**Part C** Investigates precedent, explains conceptual approach and applies programme and architectural intentions within the design development.

# 1.2 LOCATION



Fig. 1.1 Inner-city of Pretoria, north-west quadrant indicated



Fig. 1.2 North-west quadrant, precinct indicated



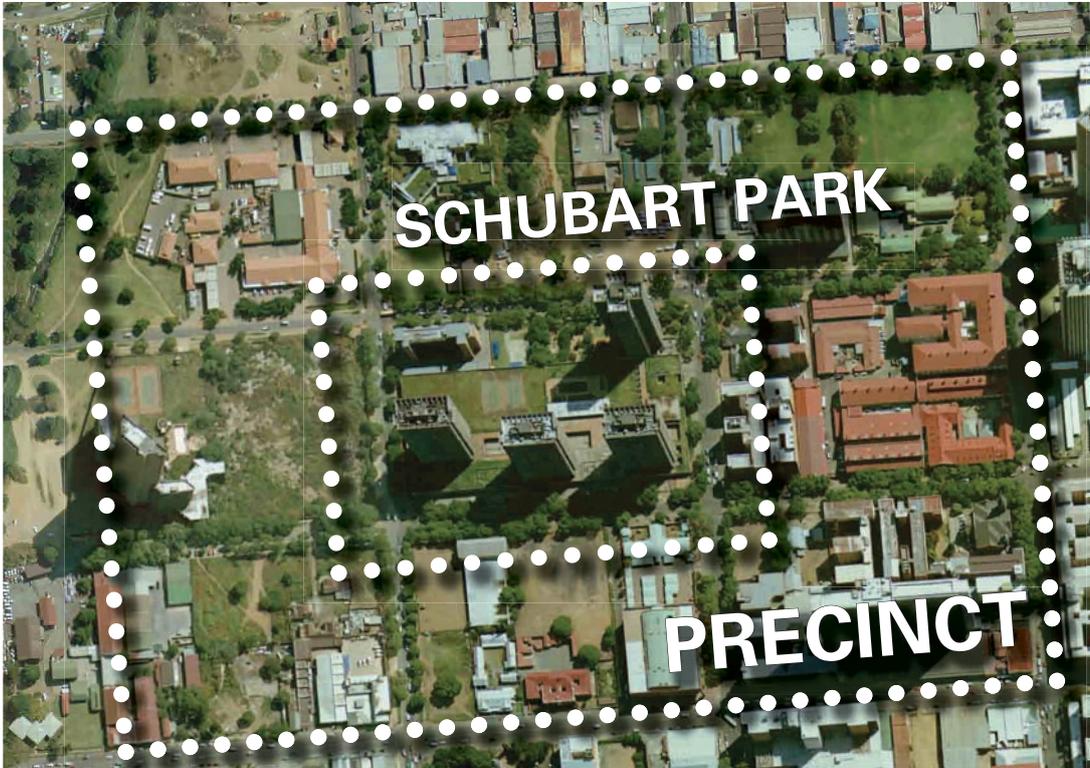


Fig. 1.3 Development Precinct, Schubart Park (site) indicated

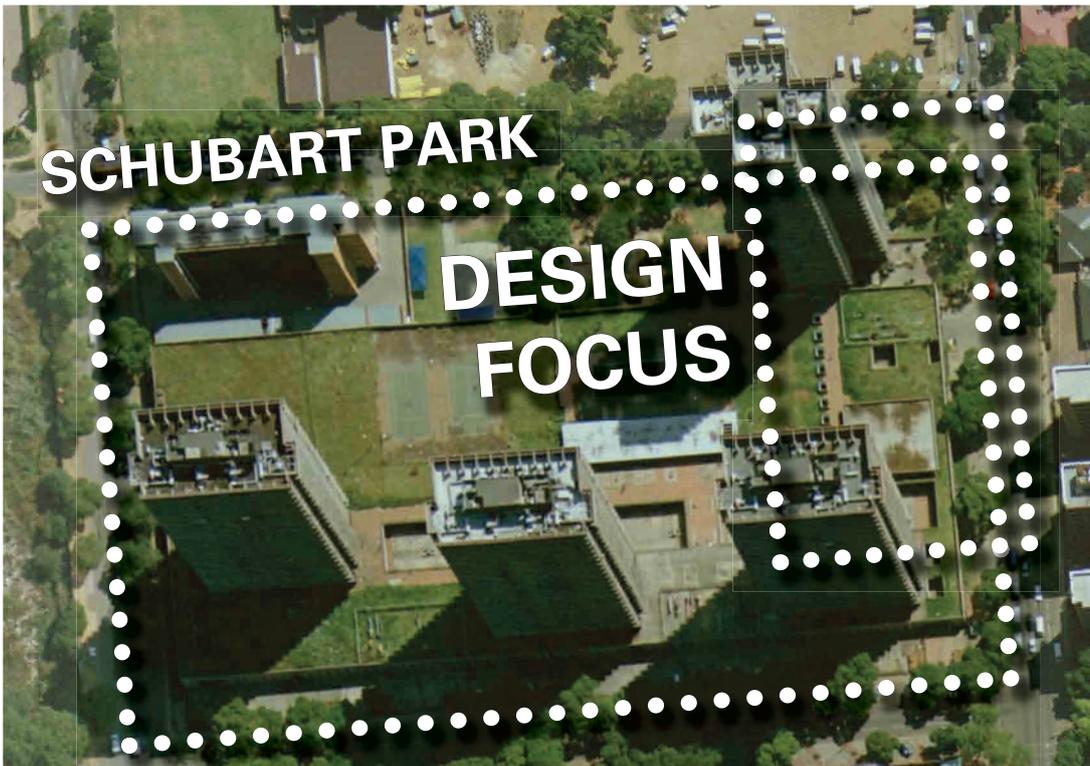


Fig. 1.4 Schubart Park (site), design focus indicated



# BACKGROUND

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Introducing selected concepts as background to  
the investigation

## INDEX:

- 2.1 Definitions - introductory
- 2.2 Definitions - associative
- 2.3 Alternative positioning of church
- 2.4 Theological concepts
- 2.5 Church as building type

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets the theme (church) within an architectural and urban "frame of mind". Theological concepts and church as building type is discussed, suggesting opportunities and forming a background to the study

# 2

# 2.1 BASE DEFINITIONS

## CLARIFYING AND EXPANDING DEFINITIONS AS BACKGROUND TO FURTHER DISCUSSION

### 2.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Investigating “church” as a concept requires navigation through a complex set of meanings, implications and perceptions. Definitions that serve as point of departure require a balance between 1) Rigidity that gives structure to the investigation, and 2) Flexibility that allows potential results to remain open-ended.

Used within this study, the word “church” implies connection to the Christian religion and arguments are based on this interpretation. It is accepted within this study that limitations and exclusions could be implied by specific religious reference, however the tone followed will be that of critical investigation aiming to transcend current associated limitations and move towards redefinition of concepts.

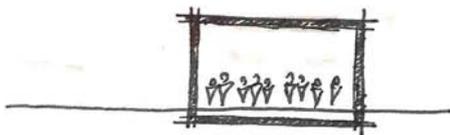
As background, existing semantic definitions are interpreted and expanded (2.1.2), and new definitions are proposed (2.1.3) to illustrate the intentions of this study.

### 2.1.2 SEMANTIC DEFINITION

The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (Hornby et al. 2001:193) provides an expanded definition of “church” that can be summarised as 4 interrelated concepts:

Church as “event” (a) is practiced within church as “place” (b) by church as “group” (c) as part of the “institution” (d) of church. The term “church” often refers collectively to most or all of these four meanings.

#### a) Church as event:

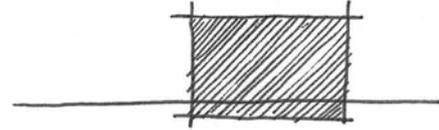


“a service or services in a church...” (Hornby et al. 2001:193)

**Interpretation:** Church as “event” is a planned or unplanned action, gathering or process. As event, church implies the programming of space and the manifestation of ideas or principles (figure 2.1).

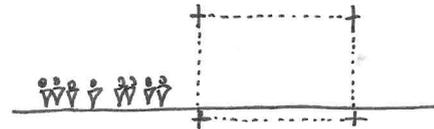
#### b) Church as place:

“a building where Christians go to worship...” (Hornby et al. 2001:193)



**Interpretation:** A space where activity related to church takes place. Church as “place” could imply both formal church architecture (in current use or as artefact) and the appropriation of neutral space (figure 2.2).

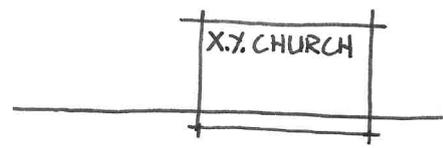
#### c) Church as group:



“a particular group of Christians...” (Hornby et al. 2001:193)

**Interpretation:** Church as “Group” relates to shared values and interaction amongst people. “Group” in this sense could mean “community”, which implies togetherness and sense of belonging (figure 2.3).

#### d) Church as institution:



“...the institution of the Christian religion...” (Hornby et al. 2001:193)

**Interpretation:** “Institution” as a broader explanation of church can refer to 1) a global spiritual body that implies a connection between all who associate with it, and 2) Official organizational structures that represents and govern parts of church or groups within church (figure 2.4).



Fig. 1.1 Church as “event”

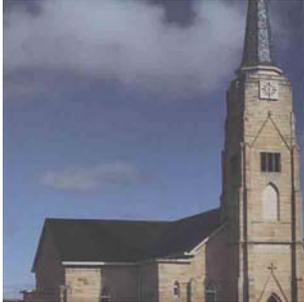


Fig. 2.2 Church as "place"



Fig. 2.3 Church as "group"



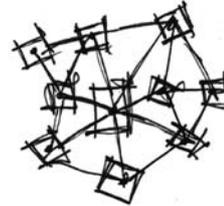
Fig. 2.4 Church as "institution"

### 2.1.3 PROPOSED DEFINITIONS

A proposed definition views church, specifically in the urban environment, as a system of interacting components (figure 2.5a). Components within this system occupy various positions on a spectrum (figure 2.5b) that varies from liturgy and ritual to social and public involvement. Church can interact on various levels with urban inhabitants (figure 2.5c) depending on circumstance, preference and chance.

This system has the potential to manifest as a place of meaning within the city (for all its inhabitants) in spiritual, spatial, social and urban terms. Investigating a systemic definition increases the complexity of the study and expands the possibilities of spatial interpretation.

Spatial solutions can develop from the convergence point (figure 2.5d) between city, community and church, and the resulting architecture can become a dynamic system in an open landscape (figure 2.5e) as opposed to the predominant current model of a static object within a closed box.



SYSTEM

Fig. 2.5a

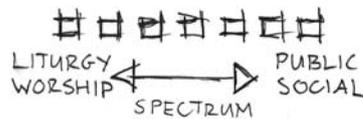
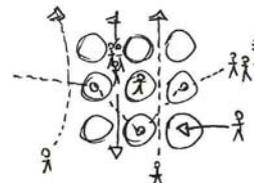


Fig. 2.5b



VARIOUS USER INTERACTIONS

Fig. 2.5c

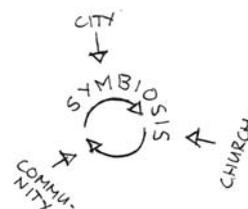


Fig. 2.5d

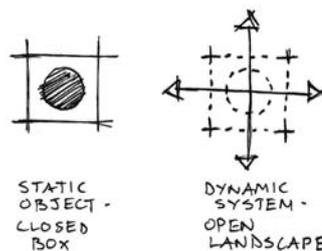


Fig. 2.5e

Fig. 2.5a-e Concepts related to proposed definitions of church

# 2.2 ASSOCIATIVE DEFINITIONS

## DEFINITION THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS: SPIRITUAL, URBAN, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

### 2.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Current and potential meanings of church is further defined by its relationship with concepts external to it, **figure 2.6** indicates examples of relationships through which definitions are formed.

On a **spiritual, urban, social, and cultural** level church integrates with its surroundings and although the levels and types of integration vary greatly amongst the endless number of contextual settings for church, exploring some examples can introduce important themes and suggest potential opportunities.

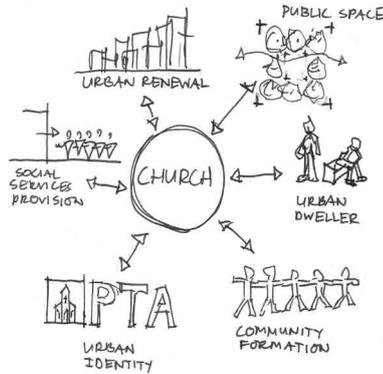


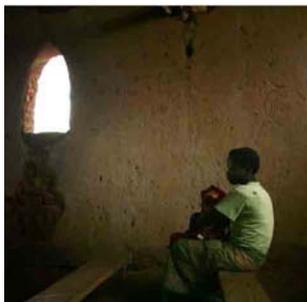
Fig. 2.6 Relationships between church and external concepts

### 2.2.2 EXAMPLES



spiritual

Fig. 2.7 Church and spiritual expression in a post-modern environment



spiritual

Fig. 2.8 Church and the need for refuge and contemplation



spiritual

Fig. 2.9 Church and the moral consciousness of a community



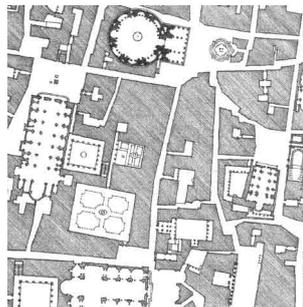
spiritual

Fig. 2.10 Church and spiritual needs related to death and burial



urban

Fig. 2.11 Church as traditional focus-point town layouts



urban

Fig. 2.12 Integration of church and urban fabric



urban

Fig. 2.13 Church and the provision of public/civic spaces



social

Fig. 2.14 Church and poverty/social ills



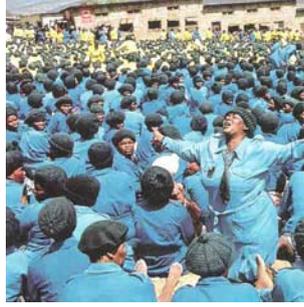
cultural

Fig. 2.19 Church and historic cultural identity



social

Fig. 2.15 Church and education



cultural

Fig. 2.20 Pilgrimage as part of cultural identity



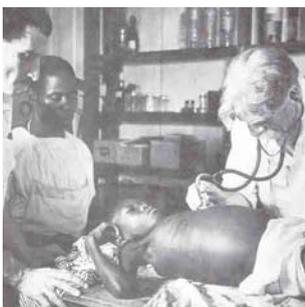
social

Fig. 2.16 Church and community interaction



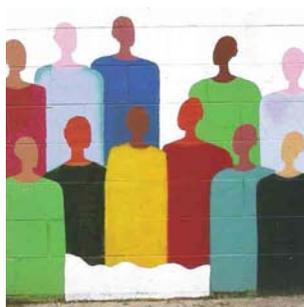
cultural

Fig. 2.21 Church and activism/societal reform



social

Fig. 2.17 Church and healthcare



cultural

Fig. 2.22 Church and identity of urban communities



cultural

Fig. 2.18 Church, tourism and urban identity



cultural

Fig. 2.23 Church and state/politics

## 2.3 ALTERNATIVE POSITIONING

### CHALLENGING PRE-CONCEIVED NOTIONS REGARDING PLACEMENT AND SPATIAL INTERPRETATION OF CHURCH

#### 2.3.1 INTRODUCTION

The following examples are selected to suggest the broad variety of potential spatial positionings for church (figure 2.24). This serves as background to the assumption that the placement of church can challenge existing norms and that architectural interpretations can find alternative and creative means of using space and responding to context.

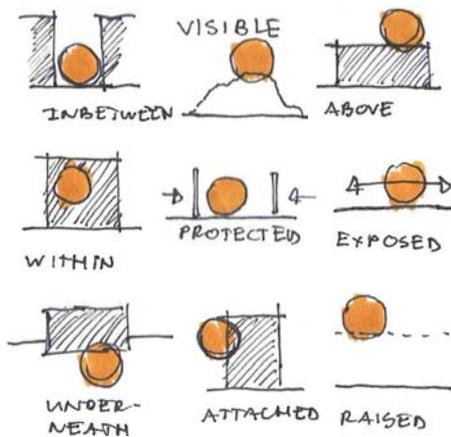


Fig. 2.24 Various positionings of church

#### 2.3.2 EXAMPLES



Fig. 2.25 Church placed on the roof of an existing structure



Fig. 2.26 Church within an airport prayer room

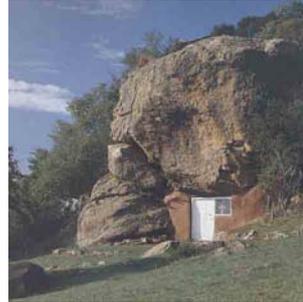


Fig. 2.27 Church utilising the natural landscape



Fig. 2.28 Building adapted for use as a church



Fig. 2.29 Church part of a system of interrelated structures



Fig. 2.30 Church as an event on the sidewalk



Fig. 2.31 Church gathering temporarily using open, unprogrammed space

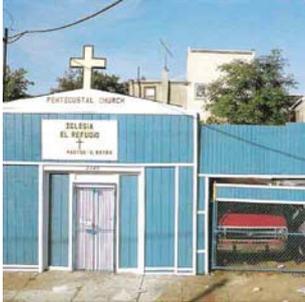


Fig. 2.32 Church integrated with residential urban fabric



Fig. 2.37 Church placed on an elevated and visible position

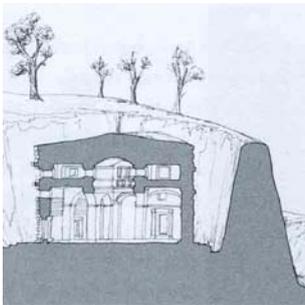


Fig. 2.33 Sunken church spaces



Fig. 2.38 Mobile church

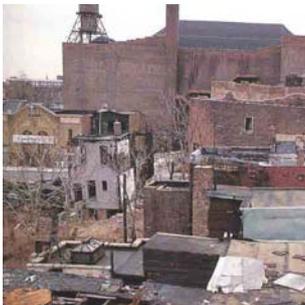


Fig. 2.34 Church within a run-down urban precinct

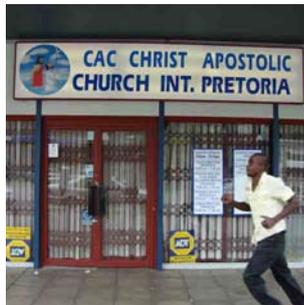


Fig. 2.39 Church within rented commercial space



Fig. 2.35 Church gathering in a slum area underneath a temporary shelter

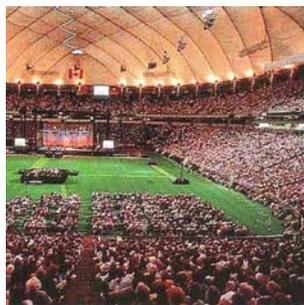


Fig. 2.40 Mass church gathering in a sport stadium



Fig. 2.36 Church in an outdoor environment

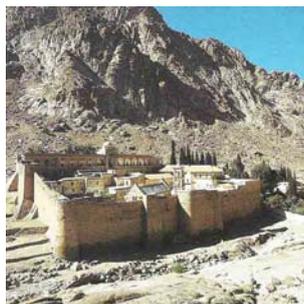


Fig. 2.41 Secluded church within the landscape

# 2.4 THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

## SELECTED OVERVIEW OF THE THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS UNDERPINNING THIS INVESTIGATION OF CHURCH

### 2.4.1 CONCEPTS OF URBAN THEOLOGY

#### Church and the city : Positioning

Linthicum (1991:21) describes 3 typologies (figure 2.42) regarding the interaction of church with the city: 1) The church **in** the city 2) The church **to** the city and 3) The church **with** the city.

1) **Church in the city** is explained by De Beer (1998:40) as a church being located in the city, but not having an urban mindset and not allowing the inner-city community surrounding it to influence its agenda.

2) **Church to the city**, according to De Beer (1998:49), identifies needs and develops projects to minister to these needs but has a paternalistic approach, providing answers but not addressing the root problems/ issues of the inner city.

3) **Church with the city** implies, according to De Beer (1998:49), taking the inner-city and its issues seriously and allowing voices from within the community to determine the agenda and priorities of the church.

This study assumes the third typology - "Church **with** the city" - as basis for investigation.

#### POSITIONING WITHIN CITY

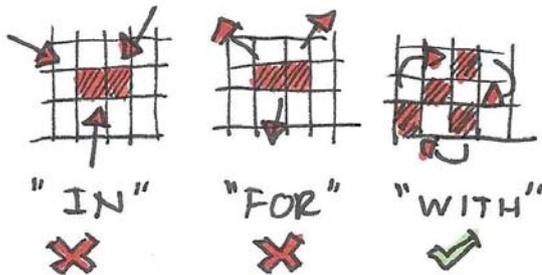


Fig. 2.42 Church positioning in the city: 3 Typologies

#### A new paradigm for urban theology

##### A new development paradigm

De Beer (1998:29) describes a new paradigm for church based development activity (figure 2.43) as a reaction against an elitist western-style theology

conducted from above. This new paradigm can be explained as a grass-roots approach, where activity happens alongside communities in a process of shared learning and where "Knowledge is not set in static dogma but discovered through engagement with context..."

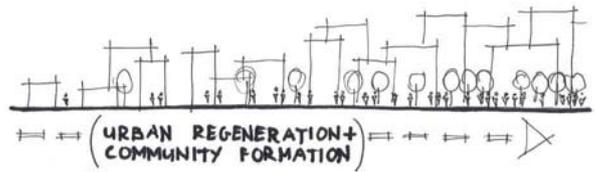


Fig. 2.43 Development, urban regeneration and community formation

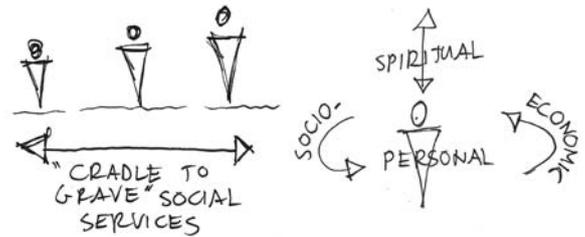


Fig. 2.44 Provision of social services

Fig. 2.45 Integral transformation

#### Integral transformation

The concept of integral transformation (figure 2.45) is about the liberation of people on a personal, socio-economical and spiritual sense. De Beer (1998:53) states that integral transformation manifests itself in integrated development processes and goes beyond the dichotomies of sacred and secular, of public and private affairs and of prayer and politics.

#### Urban communities

Church can play a vital role in the development of urban communities in both qualitative and quantitative terms (De Beer 2008:60). Qualitative refers to issues such as quality of life, access to opportunities and safety. Quantitative in turn refers to facilities, housing and infrastructure.

#### The latent capacity of church

Discussing the latent institutional capacity of the church can help to clarify the potential relationship between church and issues of urban development. Attributes that might qualify a church to play an important role within the inner-city, De Beer (1998:48) discuss some examples:

- 1) Inner-city churches are **community based organizations** by definition, and in the case of Pretoria's inner city represents a large percentage of residents.
- 2) The church's identity as servant community provides a **theological basis** for public involvement and service outside of the ecclesial realm.
- 3) Churches are **value based organizations**, rooted in the values of "Justice, caring, stewardship and community."
- 4) Most churches have under-utilised **infrastructure**, a variety of **skills** amongst its members and have functioning administrative systems in place (1998:489).
- 5) The church is uniquely positioned to facilitate **partnerships** that could impact on urban communities.

## Connection with the public realm

Kritzinger (2010) explains a perspective that views church as being part of the world and its whole reality as opposed to "being content with itself, looking inwards and excluding the rest of the world." Buildings can enforce either of these views and must be open to provide opportunity for mutual engagement (figure 2.46) between the church and the city.

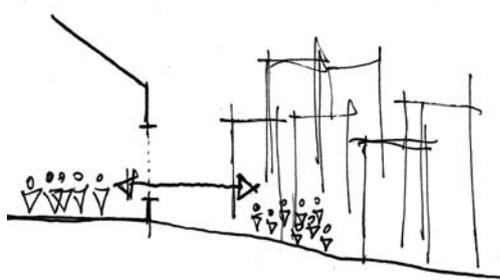


Fig. 2.46 Connection and mutual engagement between church and the city

## 2.4.2 ECUMENICAL NOTIONS

### Definition

This study aims to investigate the potential of developing inter-denominational church infrastructure, underlying this potential is the principle of ecumenism. Barraclough (1981:288) defines ecumenism as "the ideal of unity between all Christian churches" (figure 2.47).

Barraclough (1981:288) explains that ecumenism - as a response to the pressures of modernization - requires a careful balance between "what is achieved with greater communication of people on the large scale" and "the wiping out of important small-scale differences, which help to form identity". He adds (1981:299) that the most important notion of ecumenism is "a recognition of and respect for different styles of thought and practice within as well as between the Christian churches."

### Ecumenism applied



Fig. 2.47 The ideal of unity between all Christian churches



Fig. 2.48 World Council of Churches (WCC) founding assembly in Amsterdam in 1948

Ecumenism exists at many levels and Barraclough (1981:299) explains that on the one hand ecumenism is applied from above: "arrangements between leaders and administrators" and on the other hand in a more informal way from below: "in shared use of buildings, occasional joint services and joint ventures in social/political action".

At its most international, Barraclough (1981:288) states that "ecumenism is represented by the World Council of Churches (WCC)" inaugurated in Amsterdam in 1948 (figure 2.48) which "brings together almost all Christian churches with the exception of the Catholic, although close relations with the latter have developed since the 1960's." Collins and Price (1999:214) explains that ecumenical movements such as the World Council of Churches encourages joint activity on issues such as poverty, justice, liturgy and politics.

In Pretoria's inner city, signs of ecumenical movements are also visible. In 1992 the Inner City Churches Forum (ICCF) was established by a variety of active denominations within the inner-city. De Beer (1998:266) explains that although there is room for relationships between churches to grow, a sense of cooperation and joint action is developing.

### Relevance to study

The study will attempt to explore the idea of ecumenism in spatial terms and attempt to develop infrastructure that could be shared (through partnerships and management systems) by multiple church and church related organizations

## 2.4.3 PERCEPTIONS OF CHURCH

### History and perceptions

Over time the role, meaning, function and manifestation of church have evolved and increased in complexity. The history of church is interrelated with many other aspects of society (politics, culture, community) and historic roles contribute strongly towards current perceptions of church.

Contributing factors towards **negative perceptions** of church can include:

- The relationship between church and state/politics
- The historic role of church in issues such as conflict and colonial expansion
- The role of church in the practice of intolerance and cultural oppression
- Existing and perceived power relationships and social hierarchy
- Attitudes of exclusion towards non religious members of society, and
- Scandals such as financial corruption or child abuse.

Contributing factors towards **positive perceptions** of church could include:

- The role of church in providing social amenities
- Outreach to the poor and marginalized
- The role of church in activism and justice
- The practice of moral values

-The role of church in community formation

-Church as part of culture, tradition or heritage, and

-Church as form of spiritual expression in a post-modern society.

### Architecture and symbolism

Church, often through means of architecture, communicates symbolical meaning. This could be purposeful or unintended, but in either case affects the perception held towards it. Examples (figure 2.49) could include:

- 1) Church structures built as symbols of might and achievement, Stancliffe (2008:147) refers to churches whose size had nothing to do with the needs of a worshipping community, but everything to do with the demonstration of power..."
- 2) "Mega-churches" in our suburban environments, are often isolated buildings of imposing mass and expensive construction, these buildings could be seen to symbolize prosperity and exclusivity.
- 3) Joubert (2010) refers to a symbolism of service, as illustrated perhaps by the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg, where, as stated by Smith (2010), the church has an "open-door policy to thousands of homeless people, mostly desperate Zimbabweans."

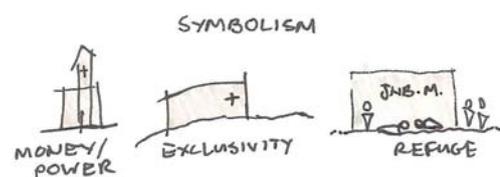


Fig. 2.49 Perceptions of church symbolism

### Delimitation

There are many difficult topics to discuss regarding meaning, perception and symbolism within the theme of church. This investigation aims to engage with these topics but does not see an extensive discussion as absolute prerequisite for design: the goal is to contribute arguments towards these topics by engagement through the architectural process.

## 2.4.4 EXISTING ARCHITECTURAL LIMITATIONS TO COUNTER

This investigation aims to react to limitations found in the dominant majority of existing church infrastructure, these **limitations** include the following:

- Mono-functional and underutilised church space
- A limited interaction of church buildings with surrounding context
- Static infrastructure that is unable to adapt to changes in programme and usage
- A limited relationship between church buildings and the social involvement of church congregation
- A lack of contribution to public spaces within the city
- A limited integration between church buildings, housing provision and community facilities
- A lack of usable green spaces as part of church facilities
- A limited urban qualities of church architecture in the inner-city
- The design of church facilities often does not add creatively to the commercial viability of church systems, and
- The prevalence of church buildings as static objects in the landscape.

## 2.5

# CHURCH AS BUILDING TYPE

## INVESTIGATING THEORY, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERPRETATIONS OF CHURCH AS BUILDING TYPE

### 2.5.1 TYPE, TYPOLOGY AND ARCHITECTURE

In reference to the concept of “typology” (as it relates to the field of architecture), Porter (2004:191) states the following: “The adage that suggests: ‘There is nothing new under the sun’ underscores the notion that no new architecture is created without reference to a pre-existing source.” Porter (2004:191) adds that: “Derived from the Greek word *typos*, type refers to ‘model’, ‘matrix’ or ‘mould’, the body of antecedents provides types against which new design concepts can be modified or evolved”

Thus the need for a discussion of “type” or “typology” within the architectural process is based firstly on the premise that all architecture refer to pre-existing sources, and secondly on the premise that new design concepts can be modified or evolved against these existing types.

#### Architecture and the pressures of change

“Type,” according to Porter (2004:191) “is capable of change... and can be fundamentally modified and evolved.” This notion of evolution suggests a response to environmental pressures. Related to church as building type, this pressure could stem from:

- 1) Changes **internal** to church, including: Programme, symbolism, organizational structure, demographics, ritual, liturgy and social function
- 2) Changes **external** to church, including: Culture, politics, infrastructure, economics, and philosophy, or
- 3) Changes within the realm of **architecture**, including: Technology, craftsmanship, urban planning, academic discourse, stylistic precedent and cultural expression.

#### Definition through architecture

Definitions of church (or other building types) can be analysed, read, enforced, expressed or challenged through architectural form. Architecture can be seen as a vehicle to express definitions and the architect, understanding this role (figure 2.50), can:

- 1) Apply existing definitions and create expected form
- 2) Interpret existing definitions and mutate form, or
- 3) Challenge existing definitions and develop new form.

The goal of this investigation is to contribute to new definitions of church by defining a future vision in spatial terms. Such a spatial definition must crystallise from a process of critical argument that engages with current limitations, context, evolving processes and latent opportunities.

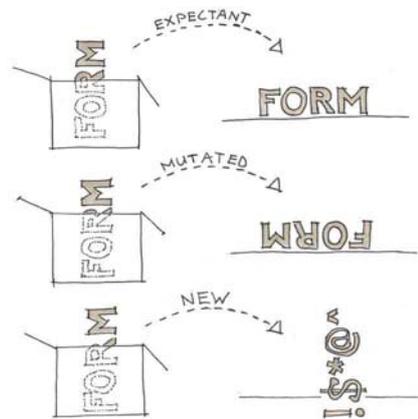


Fig. 2.50 Definition through form

#### Reinterpretation of knowledge

Architectural knowledge forms patterns: principles are lost and regained over time and value can be extracted from precedent (figure 2.51). Thus, it is accepted that many interpretations made are pre-existing, to be found in various forms of precedent

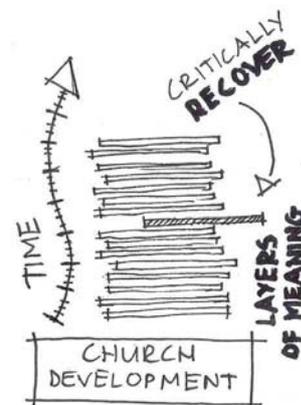


Fig. 2.51 Recovering layers of meaning through study of precedent

## 2.5.2 CHURCH AS TYPE: MODERNIST EXPLORATIONS

Many pioneering modernist architects, although not necessarily religious themselves, intensively explored architectural forms through church building commissions. The relationship with church as building type of Alvar Aalto (a) and Le Corbusier (b) is briefly discussed and the limited impact of modern church interpretations on church as free-standing object (c) is explained as an important factor in this investigation.

### a) Alvar Aalto

Alvar Aalto designed a number of church buildings for the Lutheran Church in Finland; many of these commissions went through a competition system which, as Weston (1995:200) explains, offered Finnish architects the opportunity for experimentation.

Regarding the evolution of church as building type, Weston (1995:200) explains the dilemma that confronted these architects: "...as an institution the church has generally been perceived as inherently conservative, and innovation has been more at the level of formal variations on familiar type-forms than on a fundamental re-evaluation of the nature of the type itself".

Aalto himself observed: "We cannot create new form where there is no new content... we cannot create modern architecture in the true sense of the word since the content (the divine service) for which the form was created is an old tradition with no connection to the pressing problems of our time" (Weston, 1995:200).



Fig. 2.52 Wolfsburg church in Germany, designed by Aalto and completed in 1960

Weston (1995:200) states that with the onset of functionalism, the tension between "a would-be radical, innovative architecture" and an "inherently conservative institution" was inevitably heightened. However, Aalto and other modernists found functional starting points in problems such as the requirement for good acoustics, visible in projects such as the Wolfsburg church (figure 2.52) in Germany,

designed by Aalto and completed in 1960.

Although Aalto felt the conservative nature of the Lutheran Church limited church designs, he developed specific ideas on church form, stating that a church "needs pure and devout forms, whatever these forms may be" and that "Purity of form can only arise from careful and highly developed artistic work, which calls for a highly developed artist" (Weston, 1995:198).

Aalto, through exploring church typology and designing the Church of the three crosses in Vuokkseniska, Imatra, a building (figure 2.53-55) which, as described by Weston (2005:203) became one of Aalto's most highly regarded works: "This highly articulated plan combined with a section based on three asymmetrically curved vaults to generate the most complex and sophisticated spatial form in Aalto's entire oeuvre, and ideas explored throughout his career brought together in a masterly synthesis".

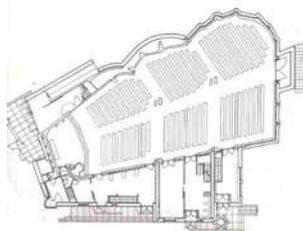


Fig. 2.53 Plan of the Church of the three crosses, Vuokkseniska, Imatra, designed by Aalto and completed in 1957



Fig. 2.54 Exterior of the Church of the three crosses, Vuokkseniska, Imatra, designed by Aalto and completed in 1957



Fig. 2.55 Interior of the Church of the three crosses, Vuokkseniska, Imatra, designed by Aalto and completed in 1957

## b) Le Corbusier

Le Corbusier (1981:6) discusses his religious projects and describes his designs at Firminy (figure 2.57), Ronchamp (figure 2.58-59) and La Tourette (figure 2.56) as each respectively representing a “new type of church”.

Le Corbusier undertook commissions for church buildings under select circumstance only, he explains his reasons for building Ronchamp and La Tourette: “I built the chapel of Ronchamp (a chapel of pilgrimage) and the convent of La Tourette (for the inner life of meditation and religious activity) because the programme (ritual, human scale, space, silence...) was favourable, as also were the landscape conditions exceptional.” (Le Corbusier, 1981:11).

Otherwise, Le Corbusier expressed his unwillingness to be involved in the design of church buildings. He states: “A am not a builder of churches, I am continually obliged to decline the offers made to me...” (Le Corbusier, 1981:11). This seems ironic when considering the influence of church commissions on both his career and on wider architectural discourse.

His design of the Chapel of Notre-Dame-du-Haut (figure 2.58 and 2.59) at Ronchamp, according to Tzonis (2001:174), caused shock amongst architects and artist who saw him as a progressive man of the modern times and reacted against the “purely religious program... devoid of any practical use” and the “inexplicability of the form.” Nikolaus Pevsner identifies Ronchamp as “the most discussed monument of new irrationalism that has a moving and mysterious effect” (Tzonis, 2001:174).



Fig. 2.56 The Dominican Monastery of Sainte-Marie-de-la-Tourette, designed by Le Corbusier

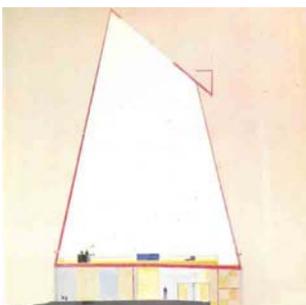


Fig. 2.57 Section through Saint-Pierre Firminy-Vert, designed by Le Corbusier



Fig. 2.58 Exterior view of Le Corbusier's Chapel of Notre-Dame-du-Haut at Ronchamp

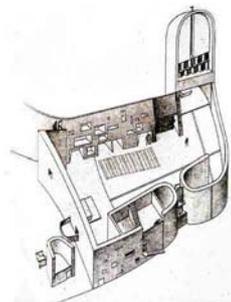


Fig. 2.59 Axonometric drawing of Le Corbusier's Chapel of Notre-Dame-du-Haut at Ronchamp

The metaphors used to explain Ronchamp such as the building being “in conformity with the horizons” and being “an acoustic response - acoustics in the realm of forms” are stated by Tzonis (2001:178) to be the most obscure, yet the most stimulating ever used by Le Corbusier.

## c) Modern forms and church as free-standing object building

Langmaack (1971:9) discusses the development of church building during the 19th and 20th centuries and illustrates with a drawing (figure 2.60) the dramatic changes in architectural expression during this period.

Although the design of many church buildings still fall back on the familiarity of historic tradition, this investigation is based on the assumption that church as a building type have already been through a process modernization: an extensive variety of forms (figure 2.61) has been developed for church buildings and the influence of modern architectural principles is widely visible.

These changes in church architecture have however not broadly challenged the model of church as a free-standing object building. This study aims to investigate the possibilities of a church building developed as integral to the existing urban fabric as opposed to the free-standing church, while exploring connections, adaptive re-use and the continuous urban surfaces as informants.

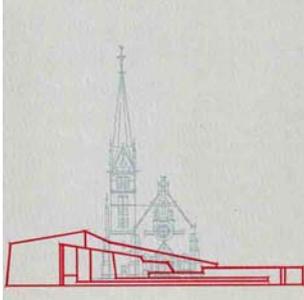


Fig. 2.60 Change in architectural expressions of church during the 19th and 20th centuries

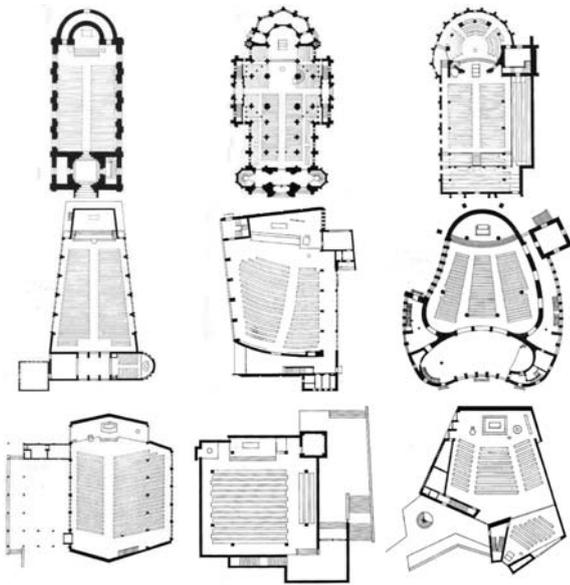


Fig. 2.61 Examples of plan forms for church buildings during the 19th and 20th century

### 2.5.3 CHURCH AS TYPE: SOUTH-AFRICAN EXPLORATIONS

In a study that aims to present new interpretations of type as response to a specific context, reference should be made to past attempts by architects to explore new forms that respond to specific conditions in the South-African context. Three such examples selected here are 1) The churches of Sophia Gray in the mid 19th century (a), 2) The search for architectural identity in the Dutch Reformed church by Gerhard Moerdijk and others (b) and 3) The religious architecture of Jo Noero in the townships during the 1980's (c).

#### b) Sophia Gray

Sophia Gray, along with her husband, bishop Robert Gray, came to South Africa from England in 1847 under the instruction of the Anglican Church.

Sophia Gray, as self taught architect could, according to Martin (2005:13), claim design authorship of 40 churches (figure 2.62-63) in the Cape area and "achieved a consistency of style within each building she designed throughout her 24 years in South Africa.

She had, according to Martin (2005:9), a thorough understanding of the styles of architecture popular among the Victorian architects of her day and brought this knowledge with her to South Africa.

However, her designs were, according to Peters (2009:49), adapted to the South African context in order to meet limitations in labour skill, material scarcity and economic constraints. The buildings, "although attractive" were "utilitarian compared to many churches in her native country" (Peters 2009:49).

Martin (2005:11) explains that Gray had to consider local shortcomings when producing plans: difficulties with local stone types as an example, lead to thicker walls and cruder detailing.



Fig. 2.62 Holy Trinity Church, Caledon, designed by Sophia Gray and completed in 1854



Fig. 2.63 All Saints Chapel - Durbanville, designed by Sophia Gray

#### b) Gerhard Moerdijk and others

Le Roux (2008:20) explains that until the middle of the 20th century there were no clear-cut directives for the form and appearance of Afrikaans Reformed church buildings. He adds that before this matter was considered by Church Commissions in the 1960's, many architects searched to find answers to "the nature of the religious requirements they had to translate into architecture".

This led to a variety of interpretations by architects such as Gerhardt Moerdijk, Wynand Louw, Anthonie Smith and Johan de Ridder. Le Roux (2008:23) explains that these architects led the search for an “own” architecture for the reformed, “Afrikaans” church and expressed new cultural identity by responding to 1) A new consciousness amongst Afrikaners after the South-African war 2) Rapid urbanization until the 1940’s that led to the urgent need for new church buildings and 3) Functionalist directions at the foreground of architectural development.

Examples of this search for architectural forms discussed by Schalk le Roux in his article “Die soeke van 3 argitekte na ’n planvorm vir Afrikaanse Gereformeerde kerkbou” include: 1) Plan forms generated by Gerhardt Moerdijk adapting both the Greek and Latin cross with seating in theatre layout focused towards the “preekstoel” (figure 2.64–65), 2) The singular spaces of Wynand Louw’s designs as in the N.G. Church in Napier (figure 2.66), 3) J. Anthonie Smith’s development of the “rational square” as evident in his design for the Belville N.G Church

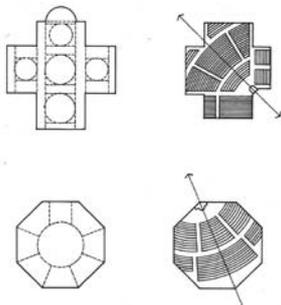


Fig. 2.64 Adapting the greek and latin cross as plan forms to accommodate theatre seating focussed towards the speaker



Fig. 2.65 Plan of the N.G. Church Delmas, designed by Gerhard Moerdijk

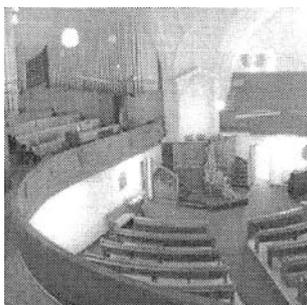


Fig. 2.66 Interior view of the Wynand Louw's N.G. Church in Napier

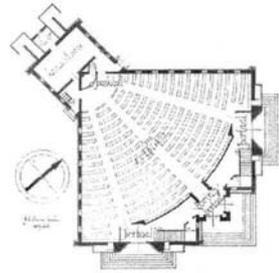


Fig. 2.67 J. Plan of Anthonie Smith's design for the N.G Church in Bellville



Fig. 2.68 The Parys Reformed Church designed by Johan de Ridder

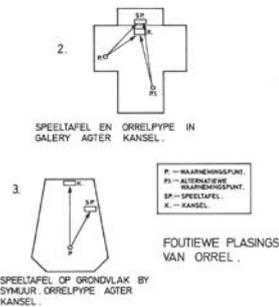


Fig. 2.69 Diagrams explaining different configurations for the position of an organ within a church layout

(figure 2.67) and 4) The Symbolic forms of Johan de Ridder's tent-like structures as in the Parys Reformed church (figure 2.68).

Le Roux (2008:21) states that in 1966, after various authors struggled with the topic, a synodal church commission of the “Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk” published a report dealing with various aspects of church architecture such as plan form, interior layout, symbolism, appearance and acoustics (figure 2.69). He adds that along with other publications such as “Beginsels van Gereformeerde Kerkbou” by J.M.J Koorts (figure 2.70), conclusions regarding the matter included: 1) The importance of the spoken word as focus point, 2) Uninterrupted sight lines and good acoustics, 3) A unity of the congregation and the liturgical areas, and 4) Preference given to the use of Symbolic art (figure 2.71) over the use of representative art.

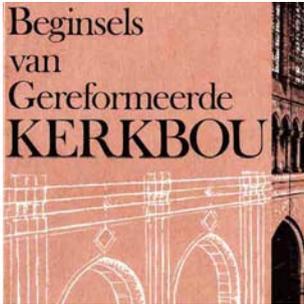


Fig. 2.70 Published text by J.M.J Koorts setting out principles for reformed church design in South Africa

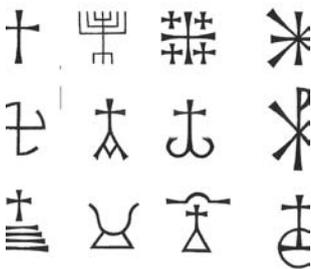


Fig. 2.71 Symbollic art preferred over representational art

### c) Jo Noero

Jo Noero designed many new churches and alterations in townships and black rural areas. Noero's designs, according to Sorrel (2009:21), "dealt with sacred spaces in very different ways in response to place, economy and culture", were "affordable to communities with very little money", gave expression to the "Africanness of the church ritual" and "played an enormous role in keeping hope alive in the hearts and minds of black people, during the dark years in the 1980's".

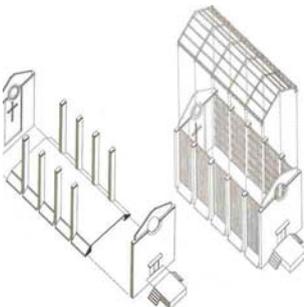


Fig. 2.72 Axonometric drawing of Jo Noero's prototype for a rural church

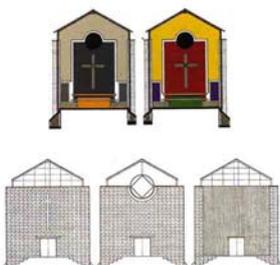


Fig. 2.73 Sections and elevations of Jo Noero's prototype for a rural church

Noero's "3 Prototypical rural churches" (figure 2.72-73) explores new ways of developing church infrastructure. The investigation of prototype was driven by what Sorrel (2009:23) notes as an "attempt to design and build churches that are affordable to communities with very little money".

According to Sorrel (2009:23), the rural context and economic limitations lead to a radical idea of creating a prototype to be duplicated that could be adapted to give identity to each copy. Developed for the rural surroundings of Jouberton, Potchefstroom and Sebokeng, the model is based on the structure and technology of agricultural sheds found in these areas (figure 2.72). The facades of the buildings can be articulated in different ways (figure 2.73) to give identity to the congregation that it is built for.

At the core of this design is the notion of resourcefulness, as explained by Noero: "This work taught me the value of being resourceful, namely to achieve the maximum ends with the minimum means..." (Sorrel, 2009:23).

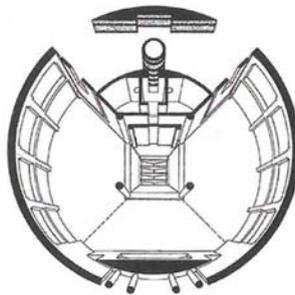


Fig. 2.74 Drawing of St. Paul's Cathedral in Soweto, designed by Jo Noero



Fig. 2.75 St. Paul's Cathedral in Soweto, designed by Jo Noero

The circular form and monumental scale of St. Paul's Church in Soweto (figure 2.74-75) could be ascribed to various factors: 1) The fact that according to Noero (1985:34), the building attempts to lend appropriate scale to an important intersection in an area with high densities but very few urban buildings, 2) A response to the argument made by Noero (1985:34) that churches in Soweto at the time had become symbols of hope to communities, or 3) The argument, after Sorrel (2009:21), that the form was



Fig. 2.76 The Anglican Church in Kliptown, designed by Jo Noero

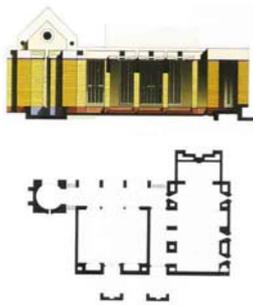


Fig. 2.77 Drawings of Jo Noero's design of a chapel for Archbishop Desmond Tutu

selected to encourage both a sense of intimacy and engagement with the theatrical nature of the church service.

These examples, along with others such as the Anglican Church in Kliptown (figure 2.76) and a chapel for Archbishop Desmond Tutu (figure 2.77), show a variety of forms developed by Noero as a response to contextual influences.

## 2.5.4 CONCLUSIONS AND APPLICATION TO STUDY

Porter (2004:191) states that "The study of typology can provide a platform on which to base possible design decisions, and depending on the situation, generate new design types."

However, a typological investigation (especially one focused on form) could be limiting. Various and contradicting examples of church architecture exist and the contextual informants embedded in buildings such as programme, history, culture, theoretical premise and needs of the user might not be apparent.

The most appropriate answers might not derive from an assumed next step within an identified series of types. Applying an approach that focus on typological

modulating as separate from context can limit the potential value of the design.

The goal of the study is not to identify a fixed architectural type and re-model it by applying contemporary design principles, extensive precedent exists in this regard. The idea that type should contextually evolve or mutate (figure 2.78) is proposed. Reference to typology must be set within contextual analysis, in the case of this investigation: Questioning established typology in a changing urban environment.

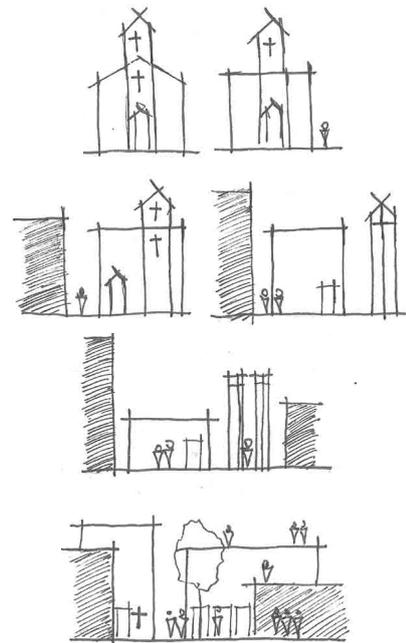


Fig. 2.78 Evolution of a building type in response to context

# PART B

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# ANALYSIS

# CONCEPTS OF CHURCH IN PRETORIA'S INNER-CITY

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Selected case studies indicating the  
current status and future potential of church in  
Pretoria's inner city

## INDEX:

- 3.1 Transforming history:  
Bosman street N.G. Church
- 3.2 Urban development:  
Tshwane Leadership  
Foundation
- 3.3 Inner-city appropriation:  
Christ Embassy Pretoria
- 3.4 Adapt and expand:  
Methodist City Mission

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter investigates changing concepts of church and contextualizes related theories within the the inner-city of Pretoria. Case studies become indicators of possible directions regarding spatial usage, programmatic development and urban impact

# 3

# 3.1 TRANSFORMING HISTORY

## CASE STUDY 1: INVESTIGATING CHANGE AT THE BOSMAN STREET NG CHURCH

### 3.1.1 INTRODUCTION: CHANGE IN THE INNER CITY

For the first 150 years of its history, the politics and development of Pretoria has been closely tied with matters of church. During the last 2 decades, the city of Pretoria has undergone dramatic change: decentralization, urban decay and demographic shifts have greatly impacted inner-city churches.

The Dutch Reformed Churches located in the inner-city have arguably been influenced the most by change. Some Dutch Reformed congregations have closed, consolidated, or now struggles to survive, others have proven to be examples of transformation: adapting to a city in flux. This case study explores change at the Dutch Reformed Church in Bosman Street, also referred to as the "Grootekerk".

### 3.1.2 HISTORY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN PRETORIA

#### Historic settlement of Pretoria

Allen (1971:5) states that the first recorded white visitors to the area of modern-day Pretoria were two Scottish traders who visited Mzilikazi's Matabele stronghold in the Magaliesberg in 1829. She adds that the missionary reverent James Archbell followed a few years after and the Trekkers, lead by Louis Trichardt, crossed the Vaal early in 1936.

Various Trekkers settled on farms in the vicinity and after the Boers beyond the Transvaal gained independence in 1852, the community of Elandspoot petitioned for the establishment of a "kerkplaas" for the central Transvaal (Allen, 1971:8). This meant that the area would now periodically receive a traveling pastor for communion, baptism and weddings. In 1852 this "kerkplaas" became the town of Pretoria.

#### Pretoria's development around the idea of church

Figure 3.1 shows Pretoria's development from natural landscape to city around the point where its first church gatherings were held. This centre-point of Pretoria became known as Church square, described by Jordaan (1989:26) as the symbolic centre of Pretoria and by Allen (1971:22) as the heart of Pretoria, the focal point from which it all grew.

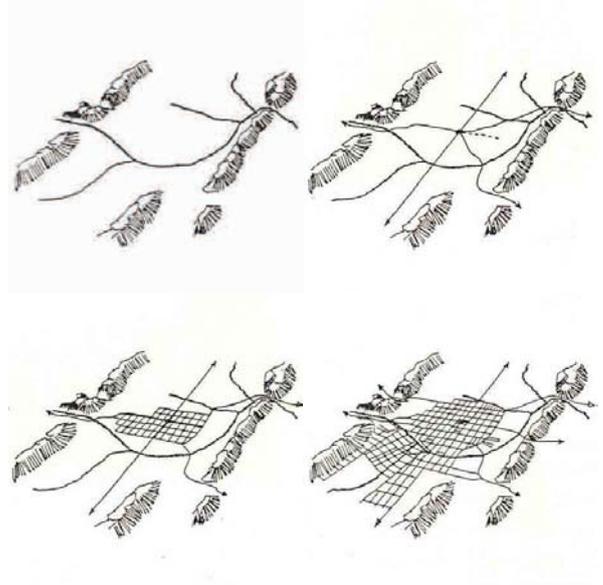


Fig. 3.1 Pretoria's development from natural landscape to city around the point where its first church gatherings were held

#### Succession of church buildings on Church Square

The first church building on Church Square (figure 3.2) was, according to Allen (1971:22), put to hand in 1854. The fact that this church was built even before the town was laid out is seen by Jordaan (1989:28), as a reflection of the religious community of Pretoria's origins.

The original church building was expanded shortly after its initial construction but, as stated by Allen (1971:22), burnt down in 1882 and was soon replaced with a new Victorian Gothic structure (figure 3.3). However, within twenty years the tower of this church became unsafe and the building was demolished (figure 3.4). An added argument for this action was that "the church impeded the increasing traffic in Pretoria's centre, for it stood at the crossing of 2 main streets" (Allen, 1971:22).

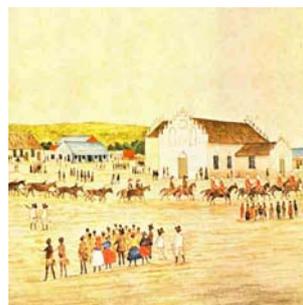


Fig. 3.2 The first church building on Church Square, completed in 1854



Fig. 3.3 The Victorian Gothic structure that replaced the original church on Church Square after it burnt down in 1882



Fig. 3.4 Within twenty years after construction, the second church on church square was demolished after its tower was declared unsafe



Fig. 3.5 Bosman Street Church, completed in 1905 on the corner of Bosman and Vermeulen streets. Declared a national monument.



Fig. 3.6 Inauguration of C.R. Swart, the first State President of the Republic of South-Africa



Fig. 3.7 Aerial photo of Grootekerk and surrounding buildings

The city bought the site of the original church just before the second Anglo-Boer War and with the proceeds the Dutch Reformed Church was able to erect 2 new buildings: One at the corner of Bosman and Vermeulen Streets (figure 3.5), the other in Du Toit Street (Allen, 1971:22).

### 3.1.3 THE BOSMAN STREET N.G. CHURCH

#### History

On a site to north-west of church square, the Bosman Street Church was completed in 1905 when it replaced its predecessor on church square (Le Roux & Botes, 1991:69). The church was designed in a "Dutch Renaissance" style by the architects Klaas van Rijssen and Kraan en Weijers. The cost of construction was R52 000 (N.G. Kerk:3). The building (figure 3.7 and 3.8) was declared a national monument (Grade 2 listed heritage site in current terms) and according to Le Roux & Botes (1991:69) relates visually and historically with Church square.

#### Political connotations

For most of the 20th century, the relationship between church, politics and state has been apparent in Pretoria as the capital city of South Africa. The Bosman Street church has been host to politically significant events including: attendance of a church service by the British royal family in 1947, the funeral of general J C Smuts and the inauguration (figure 3.6) of the first State President of the Republic of South-Africa (Ned. Geref. Kerk, 4).

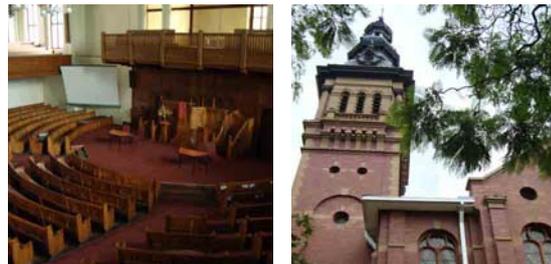


Fig. 3.8 Collage: Photos of the Bosman Street N.G. Church

Throughout apartheid the N.G. Church was said to be the official church of government and excluded non-white members of society.

### 3.1.4 TRANSFORMATION

The Bosman Street complex is currently shared by a variety of organizations and users represent a variety of cultures and languages. Francois Smit (2010) explains that due to the specific circumstances in the inner-city, many boundaries and prejudices have fallen away. It is perhaps ironic that currently, in a building of political significance to government during apartheid, Sunday church services (figure 3.9 and 3.10) are now held in various African languages and a 50% ownership of this national monument is held by a black church congregation.

#### Current use, management and partnerships

The church is managed by four organizations known as the Inner-City Faith Partnership (ICFC).

1) The N.G. Church (figure 3.11) has a 50% stake in the building but no longer uses the building for church gatherings. Due to dwindling numbers of N.G. Church members in the inner city, the Bosman Street congregation - along with other N.G. congregations - was, according to Smit (2010), consolidated into 1 single inner-city congregation in 2000. The last Afrikaans service at Bosman Street was held in 2007.



Fig. 3.9 Eucumenial service within the Bosman Street N.G.Church building.



Fig. 3.10 Eucumenial service within the Bosman Street N.G.Church building.



Fig. 3.11 Plate erected by the Dutch Reformed Church to mark the start of construction of the Bosman Street N.G. Church 1903



Fig. 3.12 Congregations currently using Grootekerk for Sunday church services: United Re-forming Church's Melodi ya Tshane congregation and the International Church of Pretoria



Fig. 3.13. Collage: Activities on the Grootekerk site managed by Pretoria Evangelism and Nurture (PEN) including housing, small enterprises and healthcare

2) The Uniting Reformed Church (URC) (figure 3.12), an African sister church of the N.G Church and as Kritzinger (2010) explains, owns the other 50% stake in the church building and gathers there in increasing numbers.

3) The International Church of Pretoria, a congregation of French speaking African immigrants, uses the building on Sundays for church gatherings.

4) Pretoria Evangelism and Nurture (PEN), a social development agency initiated by the N.G. Church,

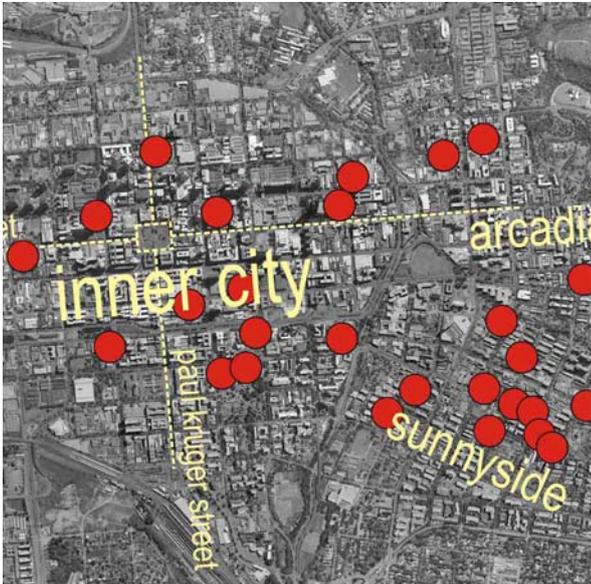


Fig. 3.14 Map indicating religious structures with architectural or historic significance

who manages other buildings and activities (figure 3.13) on the premises which include housing, rentable commercial spaces and social services in partnership with other inner-city role-players

### 3.1.5 HERITAGE

#### Religious heritage in Pretoria's inner-city

Pretoria has an abundance of religious buildings of both architectural merit and historic significance (figure 3.14 and 3.15). The Christian component of this building stock is spread throughout the inner-city with dense groupings in the Sunnyside, Burgers' park and Arcadia residential areas. Many of these buildings have come under threat due to a context of inner-city decay and financial constraints.

#### Bosman Street N.G. Church

The Bosman Street church, as part of Pretoria's religious heritage, is situated in the problematic context of urban and social decay in the north-west quadrant of the inner-city. The involvement of multiple stakeholders adds difficulty to the management of the site and the church building is not sufficiently serviced by ablutions, kitchen facilities and secondary spaces.

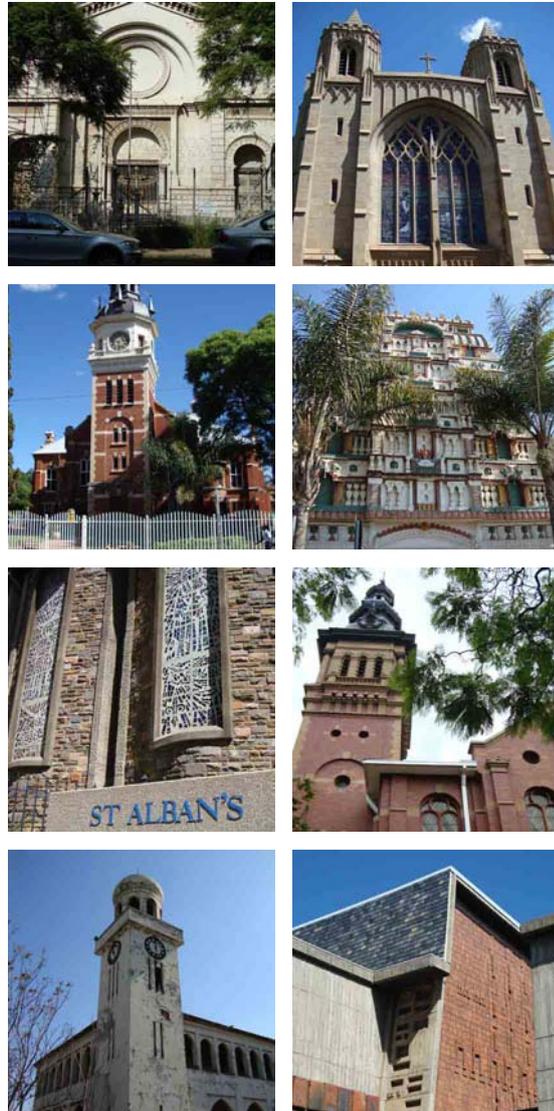


Fig. 3.15 Photo-collage: Religious structures with architectural or historic significance

Currently a new project is being launched by stakeholders to manage and improve the building. This project will include exhibitions in the foyer spaces, a pilgrimage route in the church-tower and development of green spaces around the building (Groottekerk project, 2010).

## 3.2 URBAN DEVELOPMENT

### CASE STUDY 2: TSHWANE LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION AND THE FORMATION OF AN ALTERNATIVE CHRISTIAN SPATIAL PRAXIS

#### 3.2.1 INTRODUCTION AND ORIGINS

This case study investigates the operation of a faith-based organization that is successfully involved in spatially and socially developing Pretoria's inner city. Theories behind- and examples of this development can highlight the opportunities latent in the development of church and church related infrastructure in the inner-city.

The Tshwane Leadership Foundation (TLF) states its commitment to "help build healthy urban communities in places of struggle". TLF was established in 1993 by six inner city churches in response to the changing nature of Pretoria's inner city (Tshwane Leadership Foundation, 2010). TLF have since developed into a complex organization: Its various programmes and institutions (figure 3.16) include amongst others a social housing company (Yeast City Housing), a small economic enterprise incubator (Tshepo Urban Trading), an academic programme in partnership with UNISA (Institute for Urban Ministry), community forums and the management of social services including clinics and shelters (Pretoria Community Ministries).



Fig. 3.16 Some components of TLF

#### 3.2.2 THEORY: AN ALTERNATIVE CHRISTIAN SPATIAL PRAXIS

*"...the battle for space is a spiritual battle... It is a battle for the soul of the city, a battle of values with profound political, socio-economic, cultural and moral considerations"*

(De Beer, 2008:185)

TLF, through its activities and projects, considers new ways in which communities of faith can engage issues of inner-city space. De Beer (2008:181) explains that a theoretical premise governs this approach and refers to the formation of an "alternative Christian spatial praxis". In reference to contested inner city spaces and marginalised communities he discusses (2008:190-199) certain goals of alternative spatial development:

- Going beyond city-church dichotomies: allowing the city in the church, allowing the church in the city
- Challenging a privatized faith and understanding interdependence amongst diverse groups
- Understanding of the processes that shape local urban fabric
- Being in solidarity with oppressed, marginalized and excluded members of the community
- Participating in public meetings, participation processes and offering resistance to that which is harmful to communities
- Being creative about the use of vacant land and buildings
- Model alternative methods of translating the resources of church into spatial relationships
- Creating accessible recreational and cultural spaces
- Creating the opportunity for housing to be imbedded in a supportive community
- Creating models of best-practice to reflect that which is being advocated and developing well informed alternative proposals to current policy

#### 3.2.3 APPLICATION: BUILDING HEALTHY URBAN COMMUNITIES IN PRETORIA'S INNER CITY

##### Redeveloping a "bad building":

Tau Village (Struben Street)

A notorious building - used until recently for sex and drug trafficking - was redeveloped into a social housing development (Yeast City Housing, 2010). The project (figure 3.17a+b) provides: Commercial units, units for elderly and disabled people, care facility for young girls at risk, a pre-school, institutional units, loft apartments, roof top garden and laundry (Yeast City Housing, 2010).

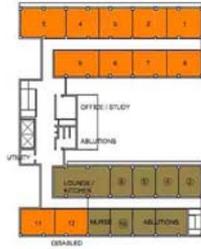


Fig. 3.17a+b. Tau village social housing development

## Social housing:

### Thembelihle Village (North-west quadrant)

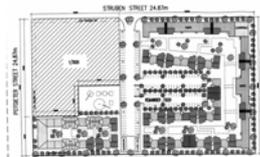
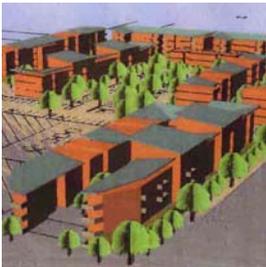


Fig. 3.18a+b. Thembelihle village social housing development

A flagship project in the attempt to regenerate the north-west precinct of the inner city. In partnership with the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Thembelihle (fig. 3.18a+b) will provide 481 units of social housing, ranging from higher income units to transitional housing (Yeast City Housing, 2010). The development will include commercial space, a Preschool, community hall and office space (Yeast City Housing, 2010).

## Community facilities:

### Inkululeko Community Centre (Salvokop)

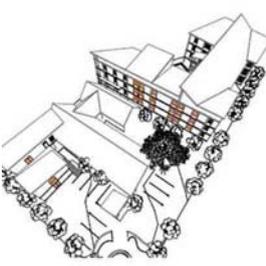


Fig. 3.19a+b. Inkululeko Community Centre

This project (fig. 3.19a+b) achieved the conversion of an old inner city church into a multi-purpose community centre. The range of facilities developed include a preschool, swimming club, community meeting space, staff accommodation, social housing units, internet café, kiosk and offices (Tshwane Leadership Foundation, 2008, 25).

## Social care provision:

### Rivoningo Care Centre (Inner-city)



Fig. 3.20a+b. Rivoningo care centre

The Rivingo Care Centre (figure 3.20a+b) was created by purchasing & redeveloping an old inner city house into a 20-bed care centre for homeless people who are terminally ill (Tshwane Leadership Foundation, 2008, 29). The centre provides palliative and restorative care, access to ARV-treatment and meals. This project is part of a broader inner city HIV/AIDS partnership, called Sediba Hope (Tshwane Leadership Foundation, 2008, 29).

## Arts and social activism:

### Feast of the clowns (inner-city)



Fig. 3.21a+b. Feast of the clowns

"Feast of the clowns" is an annual festival in the inner city combining celebration and social justice (figure 3.21a+b). In 2009 the festival was attended by up to 25,000 people from all walks of life. The Feast celebrates the vibrant diversity of the inner city, develops artistic skills and builds a sense of community

# 3.3 INNER CITY APPROPRIATION

## CASE STUDY 3: CHRIST EMBASSY AND RENTED CHURCH SPACE IN THE INNER CITY

### 3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Appropriation of space for church-related usage occurs in various settings within our cities. The inner city of Pretoria contains amongst other examples a high number of office, warehouse or commercial spaces rented for church usage.

### 3.3.2 RENTED CHURCH SPACE IN PRETORIA

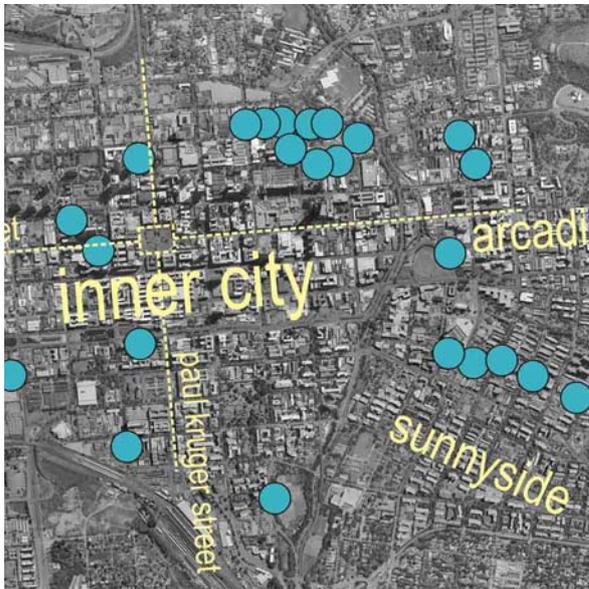


Fig. 3.22 Map indicating the occurrence of churches that are situated in rented shops, warehouses or offices

If Pretoria's historic church buildings are considered on the one hand (static, visible, traditional), then the pattern of spatial appropriation for church purposes investigated here could be considered as opposite (temporary, adapted, non-symbolic).

#### Mapping

Figure 3.22 shows Pretoria's inner-city and roughly maps the occurrence of churches that are situated in shops, warehouses or offices. These spaces (figure 3.23) are in most instances rented and furnished for the use of church gatherings with minimum capital investment. Signage marks usage as church (figure 3.24) and the form, size and usage of these spaces are often illegible to those passing by (figure 3.25). Although the mapping indicates these church spaces throughout the inner-city, denser groupings of these church spaces are visible in two areas: 1) Along Esselen street in Sunnyside and 2) On the north-



Fig. 3.23 Photo collage: Appropriated spaces: Shops, offices and warehouses rented for church usage

eastern edge of the inner-city.



Fig. 3.24 Signage marking a church space in the inner city



Fig. 3.25 Interior usage of a church space illegible to those passing by

The **Sunnyside grouping** consists of mostly smaller commercial spaces rented for the purpose of church gathering, availability of space to rent, proximity to residential density and pedestrian traffic along Esselen Street could be factors considered in placement.

The **north-east** grouping is situated in a “dirtier” part of town and placement here could be driven by the availability of affordable warehouse and office spaces, availability of large spaces for gathering and proximity to transportation especially taxi routes. The occurrence of many churches co-existing in a dense grouping reflects the fact that members of these congregations often come from a large geographical feeding area as well as the fact that the various churches cater for specific preferences or cultural groups.

### 3.3.3 CASE STUDY: CHRIST EMBASSY

The Christ Embassy church (figure 3.26 - 3.29) in Struben Street operates from an empty warehouse, rented and converted for the use as a gathering space. This church is probably the largest church congregation in the inner-city and the building allows in excess of 3000 people to attend services.

#### Spatial positioning for a dynamic congregation

The current warehouse space is the 4th space to be used by the Christ Embassy congregation within a 5 year time-frame. Pastor Taiwo Adenubi (2010) explains that after the congregation was started in Pretoria’s inner-city, it grew rapidly and new spaces that are affordable and suitable for the number of attending members were constantly sought.

In this example, space is rented and seen as temporary within the constant potential for growth. The availability of specific types of space and the opportunities afforded by interior environments governs church positioning as opposed to a specific choice of geographical location or exterior context.

#### Interior nature of appropriation

Although the leasing agreement allowed some permanent alterations, Adenubi (2010) states that investments that can be removed (such as draping, furniture and stage construction) is preferred (figure 3.28). The resulting space is intended specifically for experience of church services which occur twice a week.

The fact that the space is rented and not owned influences the way space develops: exterior environment and the streetscape remains unimproved and a dramatic transition exists between street and interior space (figure 3.26 - 3.28).



Fig. 3.26 Exterior/ap-proach



Fig. 3.27 Entrance/Threshold

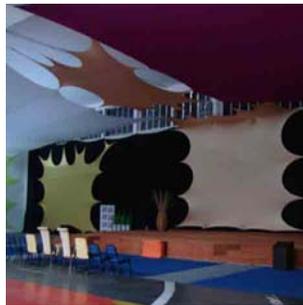


Fig. 3.28 Interior/en-closed space



Fig. 3.29 Aerial photo of the warehouse complex occupied by the Christ Embassy congregation

## 3.4 EXPAND AND ADAPT

### CASE STUDY 4: METHODIST CITY MISSION, EXPANDING PROGRAMME AND ADAPTING INFRASTRUCTURE

#### 3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Methodist City Mission is situated in the inner-city of Pretoria opposite the north-west corner of Burger's Park (see fig. 3.36). This church community has in the recent past transformed facilities and expanded activities to facilitate a variety of community projects including housing, healthcare, small business enterprises and a variety of worship/gathering spaces. De Beer (2008:204) explains as follows:

"In an incredible way, they converted their property to accommodate worship space, a conference centre, a communal housing project, a day-care centre, an AIDS clinic and care centre, as well as employing 30 people in six different small enterprises. There is an amazing example of the recycling of local space in a way that is life-giving, inclusive, and enhances urban beauty, viability, and a strong sense of community."

#### 3.4.2 SITE USAGE AND PROJECTS

The church complex is a collection of spaces including the main church gathering space (figure 3.30), a smaller chapel (figure 3.31), two church halls and various office spaces. This infrastructure (see fig. 3.36) is used and have been further adapted and extended to allow for various gathering/event opportunities and community facilities under the Wesley Community Centre initiative.

The aim of the Wesley Community Centre (WCC) is to develop a range of community-



Fig. 3.30 Main church sanctuary



Fig. 3.31 Interior of secondary chapel

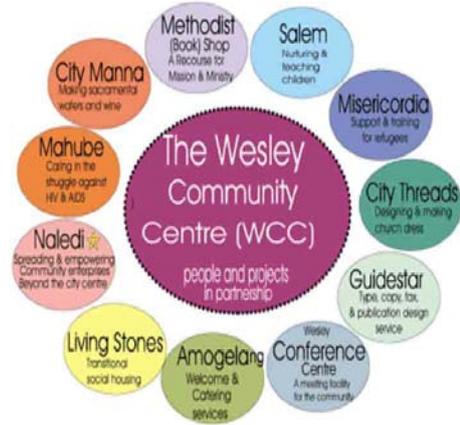


Fig. 3.32 Component diagram of the Wesley Community Centre (WCC)

based projects (figure 3.32) dealing with unemployment, skills development, child care, refugee support, social housing, food relief, social hospitality and HIV/AIDS (Methodist City Mission, 2010).

Thus, the Methodist City Mission now includes, additional to religious gatherings, the following elements:



Fig. 3.33a+b Small enterprise and informal trade

#### Small enterprise projects:

- City Threads: Sewing enterprise
- Guidestar: Printing/Copying service (figure 3.33a)
- Wesley conference centre
- Amogelang: Catering and hospitality
- Christian connexion: Bookshop
- City Manna: Specialist bakery, communion wafers
- Street trading (figure 3.33b)

#### Community services and social care:

- Naledi : Community Development agency
- Salem children's centre (figure 3.34a)
- Wesley English Centre: Language training and refugee support



Fig. 3.34a+b Children's facilities and healthcare

## Social housing partnership: Living Stones

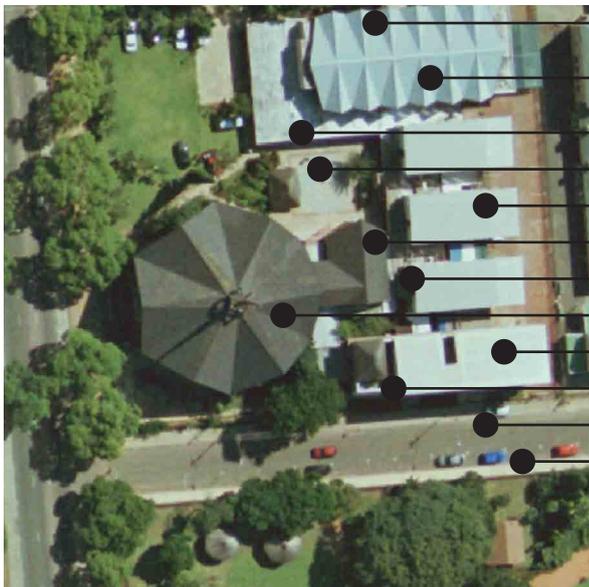
The Living Stones Community Housing project in partnership with Yeast City Housing, converted roof space of an existing structure within the complex into a 27-unit communal housing development (figure 3.35a+b). This housing is embedded in a holistic community centre (TLF, 2008:18) and provides affordable living space for people who are on low incomes and are trying to establish themselves in the city (Methodist City Mission, 2010).



Fig. 3.35a+b Social housing: Living stones project

## Healthcare partnerships: Mahube

The Mahube HIV/AIDS Project (figure 3.34b) offers free testing, counselling and support. A care centre on site provides short-term nursing and an off-site facility provides a permanent home for children (Methodist City Mission, 2010). Further, the Fountain of Hope Clinic in Partnership the Foundation for Professional development (FPD), distributes anti-retroviral treatment and support to AIDS patients.



- On street: Small enterprises
- Hall
- Reception, offices, copy centre
- Courtyard
- Upper floors: Social housing
- Chapel
- Ground floor: Care centre
- Church sanctuary
- Upper levels: Staff housing
- On street: Fountain of hope clinic
- Burgers' Park lane
- Burgers' Park

Fig. 3.36 Aerial photo of the Methodist City Mission complex indicating various components



Fig. 3.37. Courtyard surrounded by: (left to right) Church hall, Social housing project, chapel and main sanctuary