



A Building of Living Stones

A Community Service Centre for Mamelodi East

Imaginative architecture always lifts a man's soul to new heights and interesting public buildings give constant pleasure to thousands of people. (Fassler 1955:32)

My kindness is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak.

2 Corinthians 12:9

This document is dedicated with a grateful heart to:

God, without whom nothing is possible

My family, for their endless kindness and support

All the family and friends that so generously contributed their time and assistance

Jarred Kidgell and my friends for their patience

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Abstract

This thesis aims to, from the perspective of architecture and urban place making, examine the potential of a church as a catalytic nodal public building and its corresponding potential to serve and uplift its community through both secular and religious functions.

The church itself is nothing other than 'the gathered congregation' in a particular place at a particular time. (Moltman 1999:201)

It is following this statement that the validity of merely embracing the typology of a building designed for given liturgy is questioned. This thesis hypothesises that all spaces that foster community meeting and ritual have the potential to become 'church', additionally that: in a Christian based spatial configuration, spaces that facilitate this 'church' to occur are also sacred spaces.

Proposed Site Address Road Reserve R/63 &
Franspoort 332-Jr, erf 33033

Main Function Non-denomonal Christian Church

Research Field Heritage & Cultural Landscapes

Definitions

The Church:

The body of Christian Believers.

The church itself is nothing other than 'the gathered congregation' in a particular place at a particular time. (Moltman 1999:201)

The church:

A structure to house the Church.

RDP:

Reconstruction and Development Programme. housing built under the capital subsidy scheme, either individual or project-linked subsidies. RDP is characterised by large scale housing delivery, typically of a free-standing nature on individual erven. Typical RDP settlements are located on the periphery of town due to lower land costs.

Social Housing Foundation (2009)

SBAT

The Sustainable Building Assessment Tool.

CSIR (2008)

Service Centre:

A community facility, which provides a variety of special services to citizens. It is intended especially to help solve some of the problems of low income communities.

(Alexander et al., 1968:1)

ZCC:

Zion Christian Church.

Zozo Shack:

Informal dwelling often constructed from found materials.

Delimitations

This thesis is dealing with understanding the religious and secular needs of a specific underprivileged, predominantly Christian community in a Township of Tshwane. The intervention that results from the design and insertion of a public building that responds to a component of that local community's religious and secular needs.

Although the intervention departs from the tenants and values of a Christian epistemology world view; it will not be aimed at any specific denomination.

If you are going to build a Church
You are going to create a thing which speaks.
It will speak of meanings, and of values,
And it will go on speaking.
And if it speaks of the wrong values
It will go on destroying.
There is responsibility here.

[MAGUIRE 1962: 33]