ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: "GOD IS IN THE DETAILS:"
                                                ARCHITECTURAL EVANGELISM IN
                                                SOUTH BALTIMORE

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Thesis Directed By: Assistant Professor Deborah Oakley, School of
                                                Architecture

How can a religious institution communicate its mission and values to an increasingly

secular society? This thesis attempts to address how the Christian church can

proclaim its faith to 21st century American society using architecture. It will focus

on, but is not limited to, three specific questions of architectural communication:

- How are the *liturgical* requirements of contemporary worship reinforced and

  supported by the architecture?

- How do the *aesthetics* of the building, via structural expression, light, space,

  etc., communicate the worldview of the church?

- How can the *ethical* dimension of a building, in the form of responsible site

  usage, sustainability, energy efficiency, community benefits, etc., be made

  visible?

As a means to explore this topic, the thesis is focused on the phenomenon of urban

provisional and storefront-type churches in South Baltimore and the question of what

happens when these grass-roots efforts desire a more permanent church building.

"GOD IS IN THE DETAILS:" ARCHITECTURAL EVANGELISM IN SOUTH BALTIMORE

By

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"In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit."

--Ephesians 2:21-22

Table of Contents

List of Figures

(all figures not referenced are property of the author)

DESIGN GOALS & ISSUES

The goal of this thesis is, in its broadest sense, to explore the effects of non-architectural ideals and values on the form of architecture. In other words, it concerns how all aspects of architecture, from diagram to detail, can act as a tool of expression. This somewhat vague desire to learn more about the communicative power of architecture is also prompted by the rapid growth of provisional and storefront-type churches in cities: a phenomenon that is linked to increased gentrification and the resultant desire for more contemporary, practical worship and teaching of the Christian faith in cities. It is disappointing to see the missed opportunity of current architecture as a tool for visibility and edification of the Christian faith. This lack of architectural communication is certainly linked to the transient nature of these places of worship, but because few of these churches consider these homes permanent, the question of how to perpetuate their relevance when the time comes for a more permanent home is important. This transition is a chance to provide one of these congregations with a building that communicates and encourages the enthusiasm and relevance of their values more permanently through architecture. One of these congregations would benefit from exploring the possibilities of architectural evangelism. Today's churches spend plenty of money on outreach and local missions as well as activities to stimulate congregational unity and mutual edification. While it is understood that literal and verbal methods of communication may be the most important tool of accomplishing these goals, it seems that it is not beneficial to

exclude visual and experiential methods, which may prove more effective to some people. Therefore, this thesis is concerned not only with designing a church that appropriately reflects the values and traditions of the Christian church, but with discovering the best ways to reflect those values to the unique social context of gentrification in urban areas and the resultant growth of churches with marginal recognition by the built environment.

The communication of values obviously requires a good understanding of the values being communicated. While I have significant knowledge of my own interpretation of Christian worship, it will be a unique challenge to clarify and interpret the specific values of this congregation. Though the church will not be directly involved in the design process, upholding the church's views and mission will be integral to the design process, as will drawing out how the pastor believes sacred space should communicate and serve the particular needs of his congregation and the community. The transition from provisional urban church to permanent architectural presence in the community is a difficult one because many people are attracted to these provisional churches for the very grass-roots attitude and straightforwardness that comes with being provisional. A successful solution will depend on enhancing and edifying that character without losing it. I can foresee instances where I may disagree with their preferences for worship and preconceptions about church architecture, and it will probably be a delicate balance in maintaining and upholding their values without injecting too much of my own. The issue of balance pervades this thesis: between tradition and novelty in its execution, between intimacy and awe, and between effective architectural evangelism and overemphasis

2

to the point of architectural cliché. This is particularly a problem one can find with many typical suburban churches built today that rely on vapid, overly literal symbolic gestures such as churches resembling hands folded in prayer or the underside of a boat, or the little white steeple (fig. 1).

Figure 2: Cartoonish symbolism of a contemporary church (Crosbie, 60).

The site of this thesis also presents some unique challenges that come as a trade-off to its highly visible location. How will this church address its predominantly retail context? How will it relate to the Cross Street Market? How can it continue to serve the middle- and upper-class Federal Hill neighborhood and also reach out to the more working-class neighborhoods of South Baltimore? This thesis will probably therefore become not of a solution to a problem, but as an exploration of questions that are potentially unanswerable.

Figure 3: Storefront churches in South Baltimore

Most of us have seen a "storefront" church, be it an actual store converted into a church or some other building previously used as something else such as a gas station, warehouse or decommissioned public building. Wherever they are located, these generic buildings provide opportunities for congregations that do not have the money or resources to build their own building, which leaves them few choices other than renting space like "tenants" in a retail environment or owning an undesirable or abandoned property. These churches usually do not last more than a few years, at which point one of two things tends to happen, according to Ira Harrison: "some…pass out of existence, while others become organized churches.[1]" Nevertheless, the storefront church as a strong social and spiritual force in the city should not be discounted simply because the building itself doesn't last as meeting

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[1] Harrison, 163.

place. In fact, it is often the very provisional nature of these churches and their willingness to focus their efforts in the most neglected environments that makes them attractive to the community they serve. This grass-roots approach to Christianity is in sympathy with many of the more independently governed evangelical denominations such as Baptists, Pentecostals and the Church of God, which explains why the large majority of storefront churches are affiliated with these denominations, if not totally self-governing.

As mentioned, most storefront churches either close or move to a permanent location after a few years. This thesis focuses on those that make that transition from provisional to permanent. Seen in this light, then, storefront churches are typically short-lived because they are the first step in a process of church-building and developing a church community in a particular area. Gerald Smith describes this process succinctly: "the store or other structure is most often used as a temporary meeting place in order to organize a congregation, raise funds, and build a permanent structure.[2]" Harrison describes this process as a revitalization movement, in the sense that they are "deliberate, conscious, organized efforts…to create a more satisfying mode of existence by refurbishing…religious behavior to an urban environment.[3]" To call it a provisional church, therefore, is to refer only to the building itself, for the "church" as body of believers and social and spiritual force is by no means provisional or temporary. It is therefore important to realize the relationship of one of these congregations to the structure in which they meet as one of necessity and provision rather than identity or permanent home. For this reason the synonym

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[2] http://smith2.sewanee.edu.
[3] Harrison, 162.

"provisional" church is used interchangeably with "storefront" church in this thesis to make clear this disconnected relationship of congregation and building.

One storefront church minister makes this relationship very clear: "We moved from our first location, the living room of my home, to 1055 East Fayette Street. There our membership increased to nine. We were next located at 808 South McBride Street. We took in 100 members there and entered the Baptist Convention. Our church was moved next to 912 South Townsend Street. We owned the property there and our membership increased to over 800. When that location became too small, we moved to the old Alacasar Theatre on Raynor and Oakwood Avenues. We stayed there until our present church was renovated. This church was completely demolished and rebuilt. We have taken in approximately 1800 members here.[4]" Unfortunately, there is also an undercurrent of moving "up and out" implied in this minister's statement, though the specific locations of each move are not known. This is a common phenomenon of storefront churches that begin in depressed urban areas, but move further out of the city as their parishioners do the same. This thesis will attempt to suggest an alternative to this process of urban flight of churches by simply fulfilling the latter steps of this process of transition from provision to permanence within the city and neighborhood in which a church began. In the past, the church followed the congregation as it moved out of the city, but now as more people are moving back into the city through gentrification, storefront churches are presented with the opportunity to expand and build permanence within a physical urban place and community.

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[4] Harrison, 163 (statements taken from field notes).

STREETLITE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Figure 4: Streetlite Christian Fellowship's current home

One such provisional church that this thesis will focus on is Streetlite Christian

Fellowship, located on Riverside Avenue in south Baltimore. Streetlite is a self-

governing evangelical church of around 200 people theologically affiliated with the

Southern Baptists. Approximately 60% of its congregation lives in South Baltimore,

though only about 20% currently walk to church on Sunday. The remaining 40%

drive in from other parts of Baltimore and its suburbs. It was formed in 1994, when

they met in the old Southern High School near Federal Hill Park, but they have since

moved into a former barrel-warehouse building in the middle of a residential block on Riverside Avenue. The demographics are diverse, but a large number of parishioners are former Catholics and new Christians that connect with Streetlite's contemporary style of worship involving participatory praise music, relaxed, informal liturgy and practical, relevant sermons. It is unique in the sense that it draws its members mainly from a middle-class, urban gentry of relatively recent residency in Federal Hill, as opposed to most storefront churches that appeal to the urban poor and disenfranchised. Perhaps this constitutes a new dimension of storefront church vitality that has crossed over into the disaffected middle class as well as the poor.

As mentioned, the liturgy and worship is relaxed and contemporary in the tradition of Baptist or other modern evangelical churches. Communion is celebrated only four times a year, when a special service is designed entirely around this

Figure 5: Current location of Streetlite

sacrament. Sunday school (called Children's Church) is held each week during the worship service. In addition to Sunday services, the church offers several small bible-study groups that meet during the week as well as "relevant and practical" groups aiding in addiction, weight loss and the like. As stated on their website, "our goal and strategy at Streetlite is to grow both larger and smaller at the same time. We will grow larger through celebration (corporate worship on Sundays) and grow

smaller through cells (small groups meeting throughout the week)[5]." This seems to

be a vital strategy they have adopted to retain the energy and intimacy they have

developed from being a start-up provisional church while gaining the benefits of a

larger congregation.

The success of Streetlite is due to many of the same reasons most of these

provisional churches have become successful: what Pastor Brian Zimmerman

repeatedly refers to as "practical" and "relevant" worship and learning. He also

related this mission to church architecture in saying that traditional church

architecture brings certain preconceptions about the type of worship and teaching that

is contained therein, and gives the impression of a church that is "out of touch" with

the practical needs of its community. This is of course a statement that does not

apply to everyone; some people resonate with the message of tradition and

conservatism that older church buildings communicate. But in the particular context

of a gentrifying urban area, Pastor Zimmerman has identified a cultural interpretation

that is valid and is interested in responding to it, which is why Streetlite has grown

quickly to its current position, which is that of overcrowding and the desire for a more

permanent, visible home in the community.

The question, therefore becomes what kind of church does Streetlite want and

need to communicate their position in the community and their beliefs? By speaking

with pastor Zimmerman, some qualitative answers were at least determined. As

already mentioned, he desires a church that is visible and legible, but without the

negative associations to traditional church architecture. He and his church view the

church as the body of Christ, and as such, the focus of attention should be on each

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[5] http://www.streetlite.org

other and on the cross. Their current space consists of little else than a large wooden cross at the front of a large industrial-looking hall. He frequently used the adjectives "warm," "inviting," "welcoming but not overbearing," and even "neutral" to describe what he thought would suit his congregation. He seems skeptical of overt religious iconography and symbolism aside from the cross, stemming probably from his Catholic background and practical, no-frills approach to Christianity. This skepticism is certainly part of why his church seems relevant to people in the area, but may also inhibit learning from the more formally powerful traditions of Christian architecture and how they might inform new and relevant interpretations of traditions. The challenge for a church in this state of transition is to stake out a more permanent, viable social and spiritual position in the community without losing the dynamic, "relevant and practical" evangelical drive that makes these types of provisional churches so attractive in the first place. Therefore, it will be a challenge architecturally to respect these simple values and at the same time to encourage and suggest greater possibilities for architectural evangelism that this church has yet to entertain.

THEORIES OF ARCHITECTURAL COMMUNICATION

How does a building "talk" about its purpose and meaning? A long history of this aspect of architecture is available for our interpretation, as well as recent theoretical concepts of the phenomenon. In this section I will discuss two general theories of architectural communication, followed by the next three sections, which will address specific aspects of the history of communication through church architecture and their implications for this thesis.

"Meaningful Action" as Communication

Possibly the most convincing way architecture can communicate meaning is not by its own qualities *a priori*, but by reinforcing or giving visual recognition to already meaningful action. There is a multitude of research on the subject of the relationship of action and meaning suggesting that action has more resonance as a symbol of meaning than static realities like architecture. Social psychologist Paul Ricoeur makes the analogy of "meaningful action considered as text," explaining that "action itself, action as meaningful, may become an object of science, without losing its character or meaningfulness, through a kind of objectification similar to the fixation that occurs in writing.[6]" Thus, he claims, there is a similarity to the human interpretation of "meaningful action" as there is to interpretation of language. Lindsay Jones clarifies this in architectural terms by questioning a building's role in

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[6] Ricoeur, 151.

this method of communication: "simply imagining *buildings* as texts, even if one

appreciates the malleability and character of possibility that can reside within a text,

is a kind of objectification that forestalls our consideration of the *occasionality* or

eventfulness of the experience of architecture.[7]" Jones encourages us, then, to think

more broadly about the experience of ritual and action within architecture as a means

of communication, as a "ritual-architectural event.[8]"

The conclusion I draw from this assertion is that architecture's role then becomes that

of "stage set" or enhancing agent of the action already present therein. Fortunately, a

church offers perhaps the most clear and meaningful sets of active experiences and

rituals of any function in a building. One of the tasks of this thesis therefore, is to

give legitimacy to that palpable action and to visually correspond to the place of

hierarchical parts of that action, the dynamics and movement, and the qualities of

space and light required for such activities.

Semiotics

The theory of semiotics, or theory of signs, had its basis in linguistics. The linguistic

theory hypothesizes that there is no direct relation between a word and the thing it

describes, and therefore reality is perceivable only through signs and symbols that

give legibility to concepts. Charles Jencks illustrates this phenomenon with his

"semiological triangle:" reality, or "things" are interpreted and abstracted by

"concepts" which are then re-concretized as "forms" that serve as symbols for reality.

The important lesson here is that a conceptual context (or *schemata* in Jencks' terms),

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[7] Jones, 126.
[8] Jones, 127.

must always be present to give an understanding of reality.
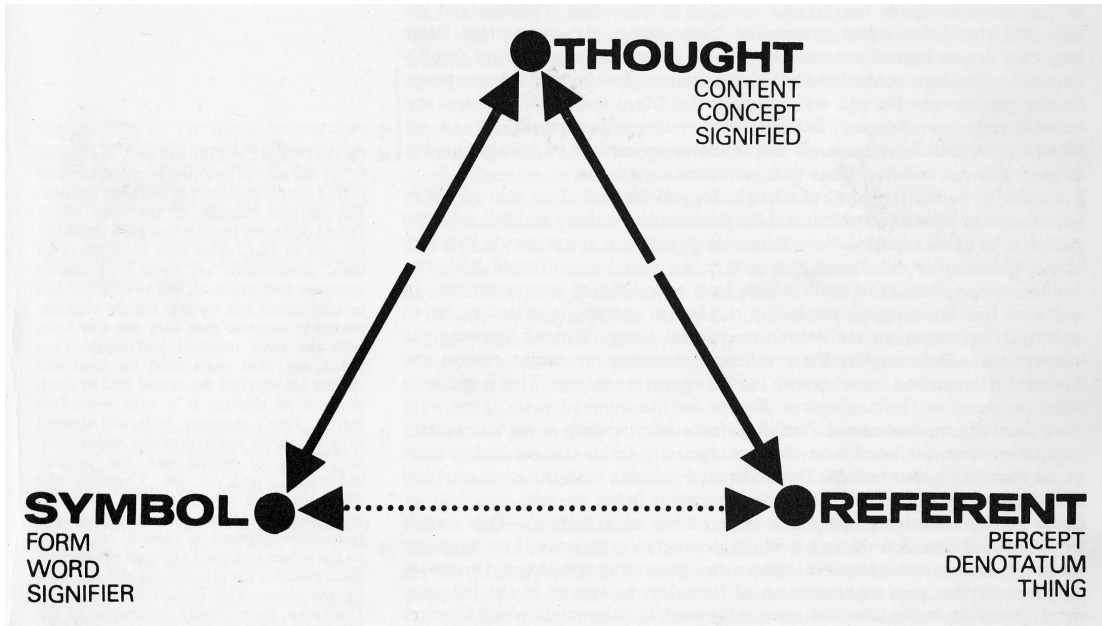
Figure 5: The Semiological Triangle, showing indirect relationship between "forms" and "things" (Jencks, 15).

Jencks' translation of this idea into more understandable terms is that "man has certain inborn dispositions to expect recurrent patterns, or to be more exact, he is always asking the environment questions.[9]" Thus, we acquire knowledge of "reality" through comparison to our expectations.
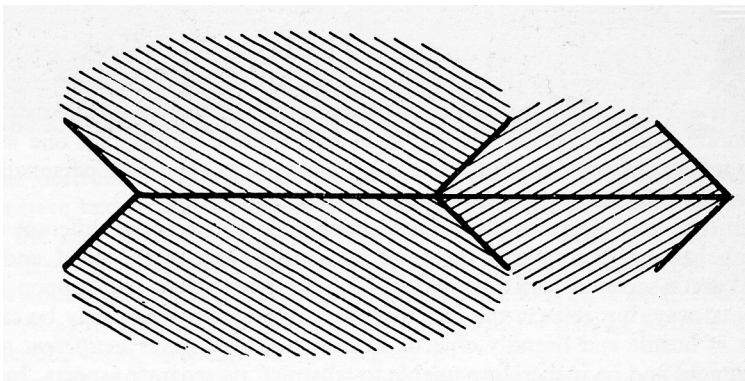
Figure 6: The horizontal segments are actually of equal length, but the context of the diagonals affects that perception (Jencks, 219).

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[9] Jencks, 18.

How does this theory relate to architecture? Christian Norberg-Schultz contends that

meaning in architecture is communicated through "schematizations of architectural

space,[10]" that is to say a framework of visual expectations. This framework can either

be the historically and socially built-up architectural expectations (i. e., a church has a

white steeple), or expectations created through relationship or repetition of forms

within the building itself (i. e., this column means the same thing as that one because

they are identical). But Norberg-Schultz also maintains that meaningful architecture

also simultaneously challenges the schematization, or expectation, it creates in order

to produce a reaction of the participant to the expectations. He asserts that in order to

communicate intentions, architecture must have both a "stabilizing function to

reinforce known life situations" and a "stimulating function to delineate

alternatives.[11]" Thus, the exception to the rule is what communicates meaning. A

building that adheres to all its rules means as little as a building that has no rules.

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[10] Norberg-Schultz, 34, 41.
[11] Norberg-Schultz, 127

METHODS OF ARCHITECTURAL EVANGELISM: LITURGICAL

From the preceding theories of architectural communication, I determined the three methods of architectural evangelism on which this thesis will concentrate. The theory of meaningful action as communication suggests the first tool: designing architecture that reflects and edifies the liturgy, or ceremonial activity of worship. The theory of semiology suggests a more purely aesthetic and tectonic dimension of communication, namely, that structure, space and light can respond to natural schemata of modern society and set up affirmations of and/or challenges to those preconceptions as a means of communication. Finally, a third tool is one I have found little theoretical basis for, but I wish to explore: the "ethics" of a building, in terms of how the physical building can be designed responsibly with regard to the natural environment and what it can contribute to the community.

In his book *Theology in Stone,* Richard Kieckhefer relates the Christian architectural tradition to three distinct concepts of Christian liturgy, and thus gives an elegant summary of three types of architectural evangelism with relation to liturgy: the classic sacramental church, the classic evangelical church and the modern communal church.

The Classic Sacramental Church
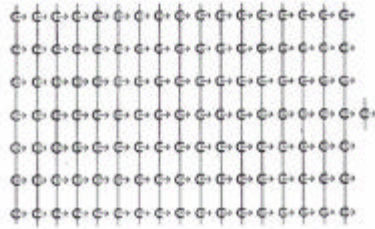
Figure 7: Rudolf Schwarz, the "Holy Journey" (Stock, 20).

The first architectural tradition specifically designed for worship in the earliest days of legalized Christianity in the Roman Empire was what Kieckhefer calls the "classic sacramental church." The sacraments, and particularly the Eucharist, are the focus of this type, and as a result the architecture in a classic sacramental church is choreographed to heighten the experience of the sacraments. Its most familiar form is the Basilican plan with long, central nave, side aisles and an altar at the far Eastern end. This longitudinal arrangement relates to the sacraments not only by focusing the attention to the altar (where the Eucharist is distributes), but to heighten the resonance of procession to the altar to receive the sacraments and the procession of the clergy to and from the altar. As Kieckhefer observes, the classic sacramental church was "meant for movement and dynamism going far beyond that of most modern churches[12]." He argues that every architectural move in this tradition is meant to strengthen this sense of journey and progression, from the articulation of structure as a series of repetitive colonnades leading the eye forward, to the manipulation of light focused on the altar, to the division of nave into segments through screens and visual markers that "heighten the sense of sacrality [involving]

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[12] Kieckhefer, 25.

transition from one type of space to another.[13]" Rudolf Schwarz, a modern theorist of

church architecture, describes this liturgical type as the "holy journey," where each

member of the congregation is focused on the goal, and while everyone else is also

focused on the same goal, there is not a direct relationship between parishioners.

Figure 8: Processional nave of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome (Kieckhefer, 12).

An example of this type is Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome (fig. 8), an Early

Christian basilica-type church with a long central nave flanked by repetitive

colonnades that intensify the sharp perspective towards the altar. The idea of

procession is clearly visible in this rhythm, as is the sense of "holy journey" towards

the altar and the liturgy of the Eucharist.

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[13] Kieckhefer, 25.

The Classic Evangelical Church

Figure 9: Rudolf Schwarz, "Holy Intimacy" (Stock, 20).

The shift in focus from sacraments to sermon was probably the most direct liturgical legacy of the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. With that shift came a new tradition of church architecture reflecting the primacy of sermon. Here, as in the classic sacramental church, the architectural character of the space was meant to enhance this direct relationship of congregation to pastor. While the classic sacramental church presents the priest and sacraments as happening "up there" or "beyond" at the far end of a processional space, the classic evangelical church presents the pastor in close proximity, both visually and acoustically, to the congregation. Hence, most classic evangelical churches resemble an auditorium, with a seated congregation in a centralized plan focused on a pulpit. It may seem a more static worship space than the classic sacramental church, but Kieckhefer cautions us that here it is a "verbal dynamism" rather than a "kinetic dynamism[14]" that pervades the liturgy. The classic evangelical church is meant to promote *intimacy* through the proximity of pastor to congregation and of congregation to itself. This intimacy is thought to promote more spontaneous worship and thus a more *verbally* dynamic liturgy. Schwarz likewise conceives this liturgy more abstractly as the "holy intimacy" type, where each

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[14] Kieckhefer, 44.

18

member of the congregation is placed in a relationship where they are simultaneously

focused on the pulpit as well as on each other. This concept of "holy intimacy"

usually predicates a relatively small congregation because the feeling of intimacy

reaches a breaking point when too many people are involved.
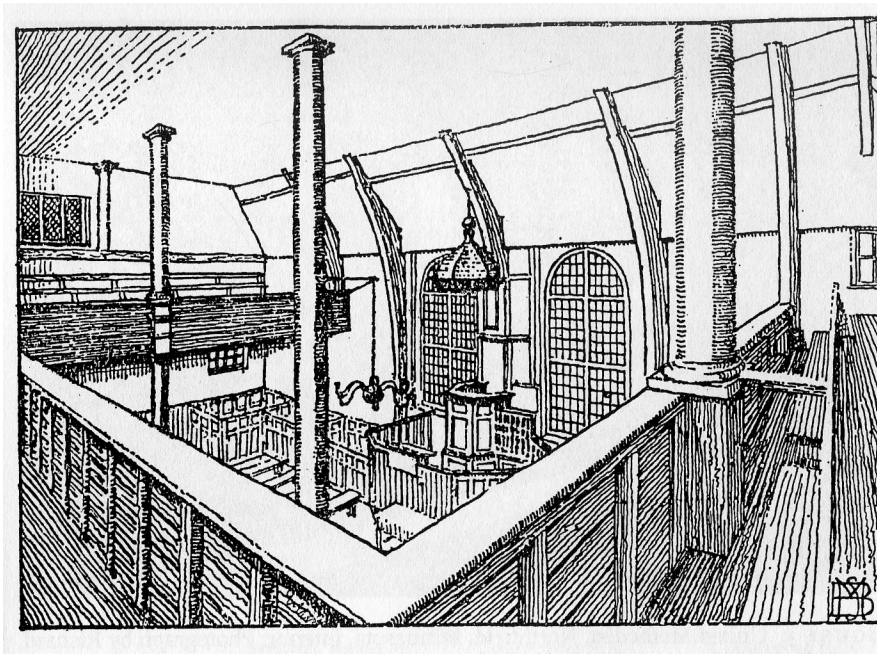
Figure 10: Intimacy and community in the Congregational Chapel, Walpole, England
(Kieckhefer, 13).

An example of this type is the Congregational Chapel in Walpole, England.

Here, the small, verbal intimacy of the space is made possible through the use of

galleries on three sides so that a larger congregation can fit into a smaller space than

would be possible on a single level. Again, all attention focused on the pulpit where

the sermon is preached, as well as on the other members of the congregation seated

across the room.

The Modern Communal Church

While Schwarz would consider this type a variant of the "holy intimacy" or classic evangelical type, Kieckhefer treats it separately, and is worth mention here also. This recent liturgical manifestation is certainly related to the classic evangelical model, but its emphasis is more clearly the act of gathering people together in community, and the liturgy itself becomes secondary. As Kieckhefer says, "the assembly itself may become the main focus of attention.[15]" The liturgy is thus viewed in a modern communal church as a celebration by the congregation, and pastor is subservient to congregation. This type is similar in organization to the classic evangelical church: centralized, intimate, with close proximity of all the elements. But the association here is not auditorium, for everyone is gathered not to hear and respond, but to communally celebrate and participate in liturgy. Instead, the common analogy of the modern communal church is the "living room." Here, the architectural recognition of the liturgical pattern usually assumes the role of spatial character and qualitative aspects such as "inviting," "warm," "flexible," "familial."

In practice, modern communal churches are almost always built for a congregation with no existing sense of community. They are therefore quite popular in suburban areas where members of the church commute from far reaches and engage this community only on Sundays. Because of this, most churches based on this model also make great provisions for gathering spaces outside the worship area that encourage social interaction and building community before and after the

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[15] Kieckhefer, 12.

worship, as well as extensive meeting rooms, activity halls, and other programmatic elements necessary to promote community where none exists.
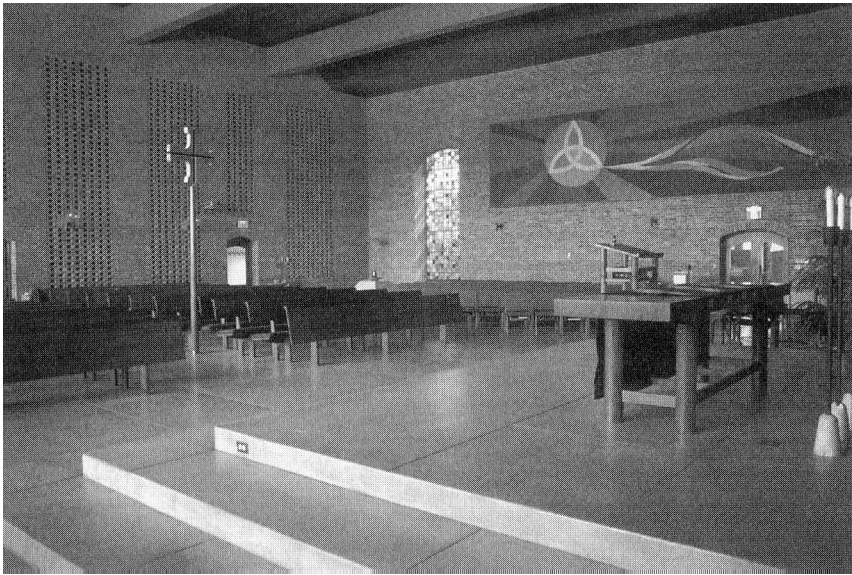
Figure 11: The modern communal United Methodist Church, Northfield, Minnesota (Kieckhefer, 14).

An example of this type is the Northfield, Minnesota United Methodist church designed by Edward Sovik (fig. 11). Sovik has referred to his buildings as "non-churches," expressing his alignment with the modern communal ideal of congregation as focus. At Northfield, the congregation is gathered around three sides of a square room, much like the Walpole Chapel, but here the focus is not so concentrated on the pulpit. The altar, pulpit and other furnishings are loosely dispersed on a low platform in the midst of the congregation. But most importantly, the worship space is but a small quadrant of the plan; the largest space being occupied by the broad, north-south corridor that serves as a communal gathering and social space.

TABLE I. Basic Patterns in Church Design

	Classic Sacramental	Classic Evangelical	Modern Communal
Liturgical use			
Spatial dynamism	Longitudinal space for procession and return (kinetic dynamism)	Auditorium space for proclamation and response (verbal dynamism)	Transitional space for movement from gathering to worship areas
Centering focus	Altar for sacrifice	Pulpit for preaching	Multiple and movable
Response elicited			
Aesthetic impact (immediate)	Dramatic setting for interplay of transcendence and immanence	Dignified setting for edification	Hospitable setting for celebration
Symbolic resonance (cumulative)	High	Low	Moderate
Relationship of factors			
	Multiple functions, none of which governs the others	Converging functions, governed largely by centering focus	Converging functions, governed largely by spatial dynamic

Figure 12: Comparative qualities of three major liturgical types. (Kieckhefer, 15).

Precedent Study: St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, San Francisco
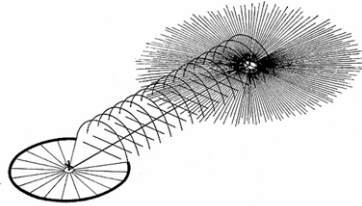
Figure 13: Rudolf Schwarz, the "Church of All Time" (Stock, 21).

Schwarz also hypothesized a hybrid model of "holy communion" and "holy intimacy" which he called the "Church of All Time." While this model could not physically exist in reality, he hypothesized that the building should take shape with the progression of liturgy in time. "After all, the service adheres to a temporal structure and its 'form' which emerges over the course of time is roughly that of 'the entirety'.[16]" The Church of All Time suggests possibilities of hybridization among these three basic types using the temporal aspects of liturgy.
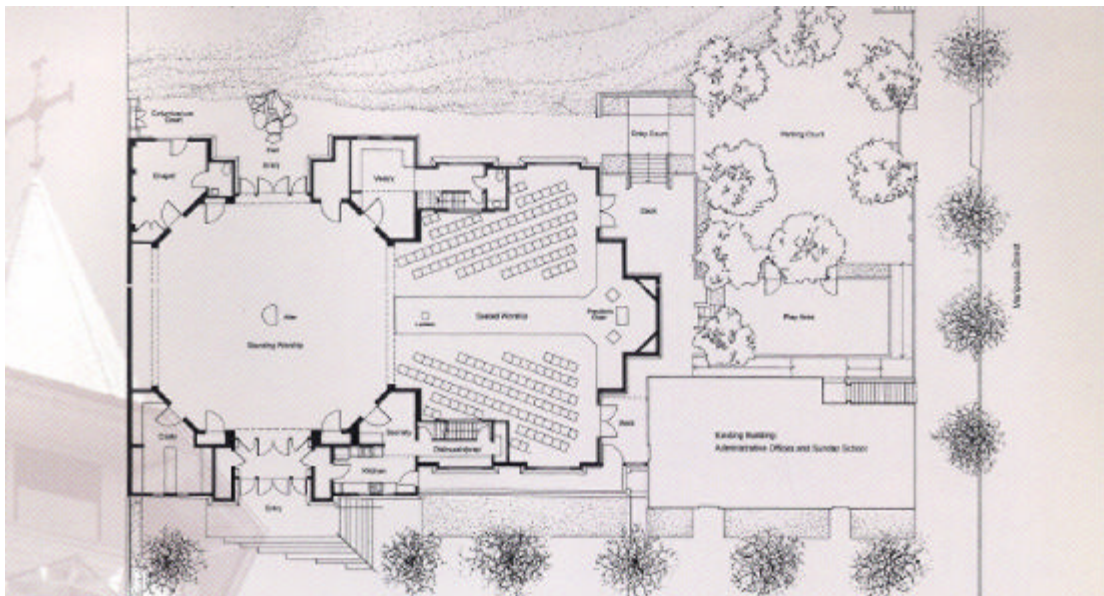
Figure 14: St. Gregory, plan (Crosbie, 129).

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[16] Schwarz, 132.

A remarkable example of the combination can be found at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church in San Francisco, designed by Goldman Architects. Here a minister open to new ideas of liturgical expression helped shape the design of a church which gives recognition to the classic sacramental tradition, the classic evangelical tradition and the modern communal tradition. The building is basically a centralized space for the "liturgy of Eucharist" connected to a longitudinal space for the "liturgy of the word." The worship begins in a Protestant manner of verbal sermon and hymns which takes place in the longitudinal space with the congregation facing the pastor, who preaches from the junction of the two spaces.

Figure 15: St. Gregory, view from Eucharist space into sermon space (Crosbie, 133).

During the sermon, there is a palpable anticipation of the imminent sacrament due to the longitudinal space's focus toward the centralized space. Once the sermon has ended, the congregation physically moves to the centralized space to stand around the altar in the center and participate in the Eucharist. When the Eucharist is finished, the liturgy ends and the centralized space becomes a gathering place encouraging community and interaction. Thus we have the verbal dynamic of the evangelical tradition in the space for the sermon, the intimate gathering and community focus in the space for the Eucharist, and the classic sacramental tradition's kinetic procession from the former to the latter.
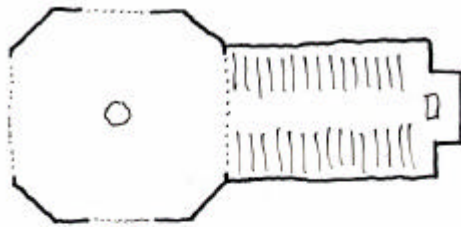
1. liturgy of the Word
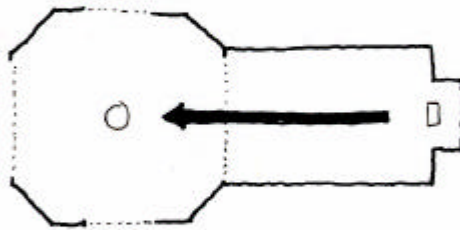
2. congregation moves

3. liturgy of the Eucharist

Figure 16: Congregational movement from sermon hall to Eucharist Hall at St. Gregory

Because of its grass-roots spirituality and largely former Catholic background,

Streetlite Christian Fellowship certainly leans in the direction of the classic

evangelical or modern communal models. I admit to my own prejudice towards these

types, as most Protestants do who have suspicions of the frequent "overindulgence"

of symbolism, imagery and iconography that is usually present in classic sacramental

churches. But as a result of this research, I have developed greater respect for the

classic sacramental type, and hope to help Streetlite appreciate its merits as well

through this thesis, if only in its principles and not its specific historical application.

METHODS OF ARCHITECTURAL EVANGELISM: AESTHETIC

The aesthetic qualities of a form or space are perhaps the most difficult, or at least variously interpreted methods of architectural evangelism. Certainly some people agree when spaces are "holy" or "beautiful" or "sacred." But relating these concepts more rigorously to the previously mentioned theory of semiotics will hopefully give a (slightly) clearer idea of how to communicate sacrality through aesthetics. By aesthetics is meant the purely aesthetic qualities that do not necessarily reinforce the liturgy. There is certainly overlap between both aesthetics and liturgy and aesthetics and ethics, but this section will attempt to outline a few key general strategies for aesthetic communication in church architecture.

<u>Order and Variation</u>

"Order and variation belong together, as a 'variation' which does not refer to an order is an arbitrary and meaningless fancy which tends to destroy the existing architectural system. An order which does not allow for variation, on the other hand, leads to known banal clichés.[17]" This expansion of Norberg-Schultz's theories into more pragmatically architectural terms points to a semiological view of aesthetic communication for church architecture. Jones corroborates this view in his description of the "jolt" of aesthetic meaning: "first, a requisite element of familiarity that allures and instigates the human involvement…and, second, an element of

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[17] Norberg-Schultz, 187.

strangeness, or the evocative presentation of unfamiliar alternatives.[18]" This suggests

that an effective architectural evangelism is always *comparative*, that it must always

relate to a normative condition in a mutually reinforcing relationship. Surprisingly,

one of the most succinct interpretations of the role of order and variation in

architectural evangelism comes from Leon Battista Alberti. He urges that "the most

perfect forms (the circle and the elementary polygons) should be reserved for the

church, and that public buildings in general should be carried out in the strictest

conformity with formal principles. Deviations from these rules, however, may be

recommendable in private houses.[19]" It could be argued that this particular

interpretation is based on a Renaissance conception of *geometric* order which may not

necessarily apply to all times and cultures, but Alberti's clear application of the

principle is noteworthy, whatever the terms. A modern example of the meaningful

use of order and variation can be found in Tadao Ando's Church of the Light. Here,

Ando effectively juxtaposes darkness and light in this way, where the narrow,

restricted cross-shaped light source bursts into the normative condition of almost total

darkness he sets up in the sanctuary.
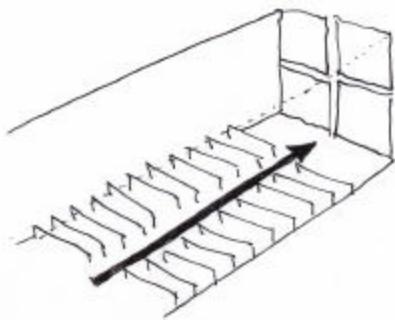
Figure 17: Church of the Light: light source as meaningful focus

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[18] Jones, 66.
[19] From *De Re Aedificatoria, IX, VIII,* translated in Norberg-Schultz, 89.

Figure 18: Interior, Church of the Light (Marcos, 35).

Intrinsic Order in Architecture: Tectonics

If meaning is communicated, as Norberg-Schultz contends, through variation from an

established order, what is the order to which church architecture can vary to create

meaning? Any number of ordering systems contrived by the architect are of course

possible, but a church should require a less arbitrary and more universally

comprehensible order to be challenged. Fortunately for architecture, there are several

systems of *intrinsic* order occurring from its grounding in physical reality. By

intrinsic is meant natural laws and principles that are, so far as our experiential

understanding is concerned, fixed (such as gravity, light, physics, etc). As an

example, the role of tectonics in architecture will be discussed as an ordering system.

Structure and methods of construction must conform to the natural laws of gravity

and the economy of means that are perceptible because of their ubiquity. Therefore,

they naturally tend towards a "schematization." Once again, Norberg-Schultz proves

an ally here: "The technical dimension…exhibits *immanent* tendency toward order. It

is *difficult* to build a house with dissimilar pieces of material.[20]" A repetitive

structure is more economical because of standardization of parts and the greater ease

of erection and assembly through repetition. So it could be imagined that a

meaningful act might constitute a "rebellion" or deviation from this repetition which

would prove inherently uneconomical, but qualitatively valuable. As mentioned,

gravity also lends credence to order and similarity within structural systems because

the ultimate goal of any structure is static *equilibrium.* Taking this more abstractly,

another possibility of inducing meaning through tectonics might be the apparent

denial of gravity at certain instances within an obviously gravitational structural

system. Perhaps the foremost structural expressionist of our time is Santiago

Calatrava, architect-engineer whose career is marked by exploration into the visually

dynamic potential of the static forces at work in a building. The auditorium for his

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[20] Norberg-Schultz, 162.

high school in Wohlen, Switzerland, for example, uses prefabricated concrete vaults that trace the parabolic curve of the gravitational forces at work in the structure as well as thin pine battens to articulate the distributed loads of the roof coming down onto the parabolic vaults. The result is a visually dynamic structure that is recognizably ordered according to principles of nature, even if not totally comprehensible to the layperson.

Figure 19: Calatrava's structures articulate the natural tectonic forces at work (Tzonis, 57).

Precedent Study: Jubilee Church, Rome

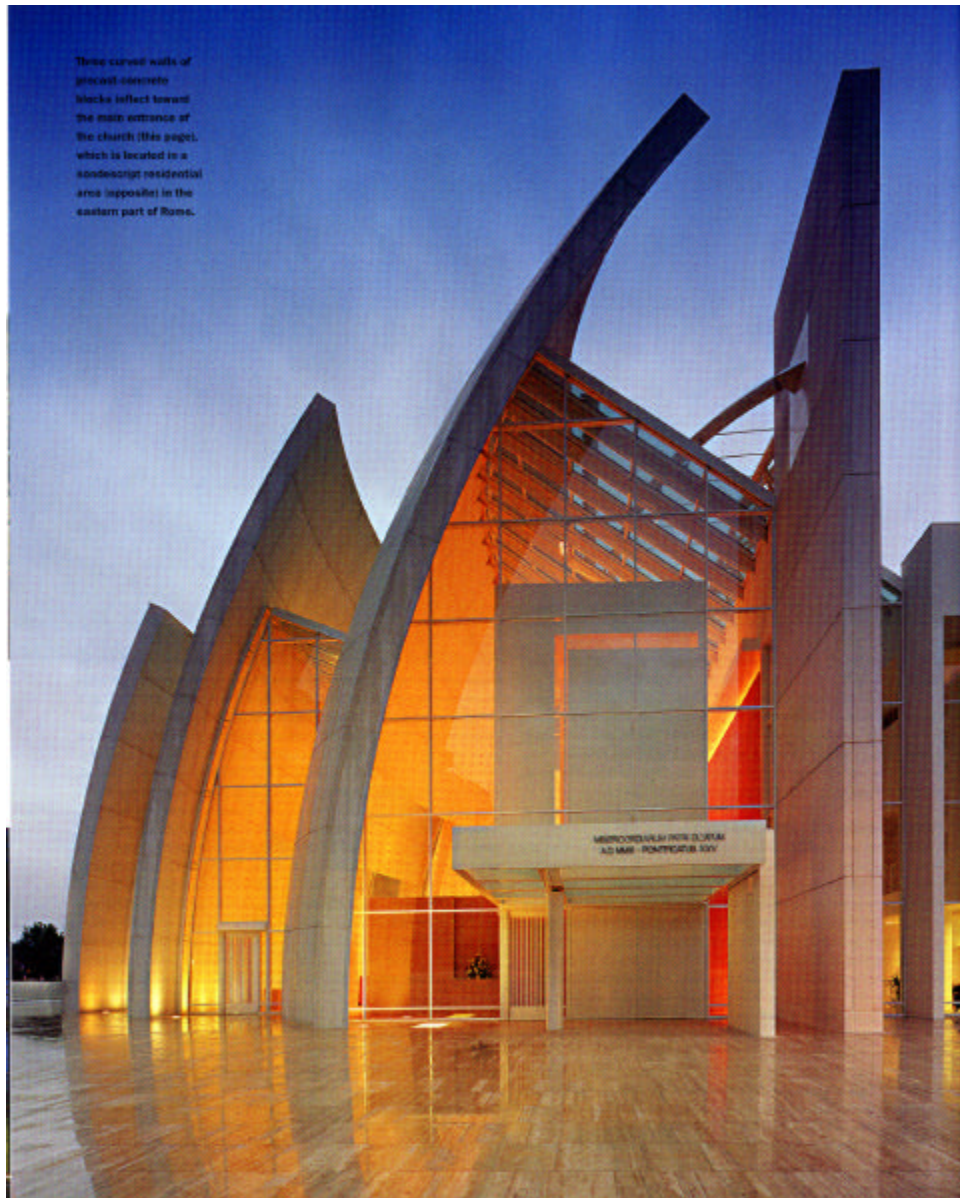**Figure 20: Jubilee Church, Rome: exterior** (Popham, 100).

Richard Meier's new Jubilee Church in Rome exhibits many of these principles of

natural order as a backdrop for meaningful variation. Its most conspicuous features

are the three curving, vertically cantilevered concrete shells that form the enclosure of

the sanctuary.   The three shells visibly share a common geometry: they are all
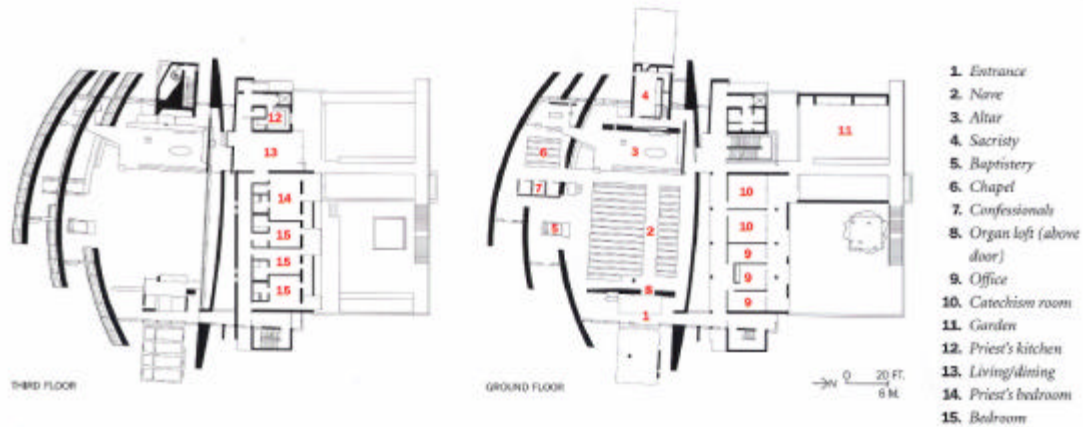
Figure 21: Jubilee Church, plans (Popham, 105).

sections of a sphere with equal radii. Thus, there is a natural order inherent in the

geometric similarity as well as the simple repetition of similar forms. But before any

clear variation in the pattern, there is a stretch of our natural expectations in the forms

themselves because of their gently leaning geometry that is supported only at the

ground in subtle defiance of gravity. Intuitively, we interpret that the shells are

precariously balanced in place because the form is carefully designed to be both

legible to tectonic expectations as well as to challenge them. In addition to this more

conceptual level of order and variation, the three shells progressively increase in

height to be then complemented by a gravitationally forceful and static "upright" shell

that forms the north wall of the sanctuary. Therefore, the space between the repetitive

order of the shells and the new upright form is the sanctuary of the church, where

natural light streams in as yet another variation or the darker, more sheltered ancillary

spaces between the shells. Hierarchy and a sense of spiritual space is created through

the tension of these intertwined systems of order and variation: geometry, tectonics

and light. The significance and awe communicated by the suspension of natural order

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in Meier's church comes across very well, but it is noteworthy that these purely

aesthetic considerations communicate little *specific* meaning about the values of this

church. The conclusion is that purely aesthetic tools of architectural evangelism work

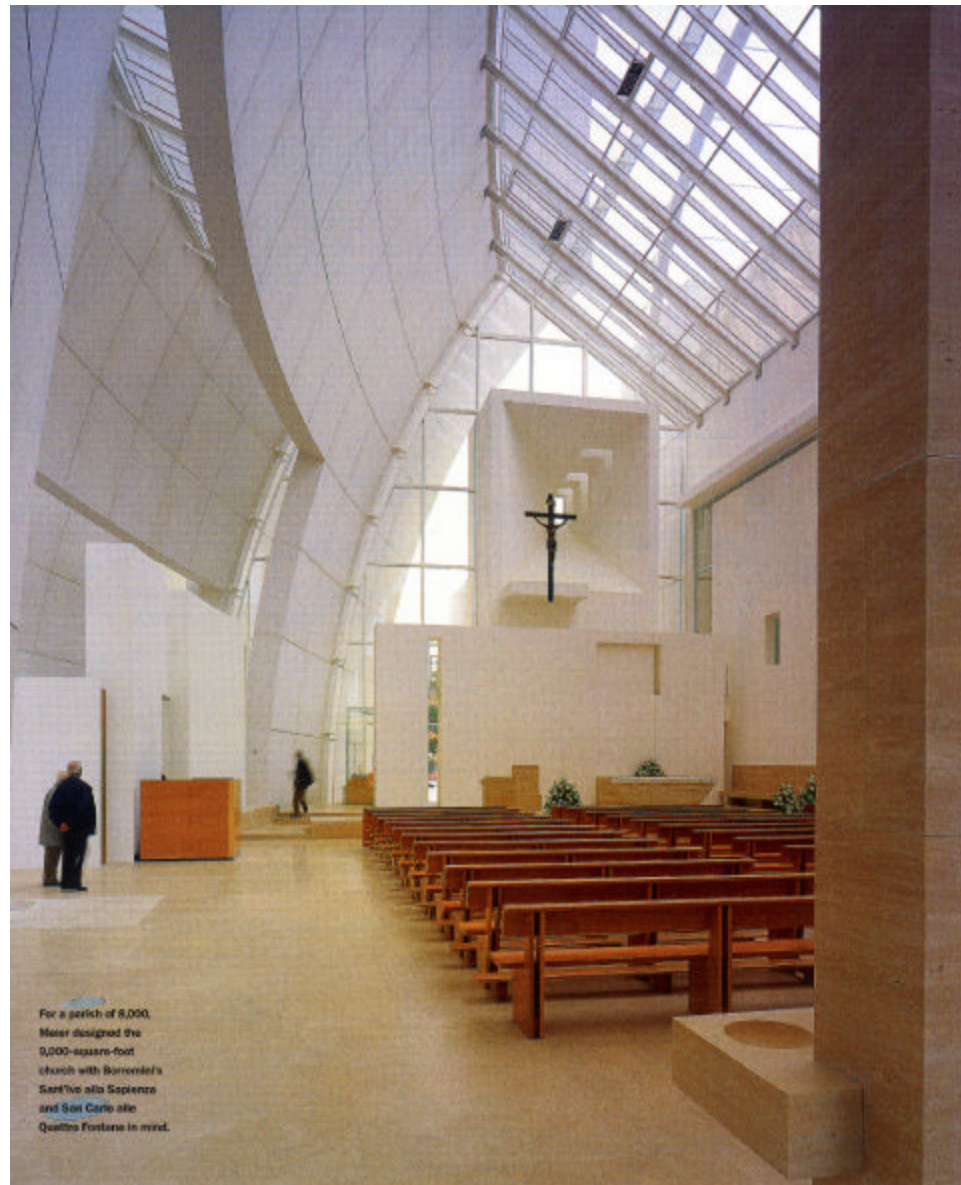best in concert with liturgy or ethics.

Figure 22: The sanctuary is a confluence of the order and variation of form, tectonics and light (Popham, 107).

METHODS OF ARCHITECTURAL EVANGELISM: ETHICAL

A relatively recent concept of architectural communication has been brought on by a recognition of architecture's tangible effect on society and the natural environment. The idea that a building can promote "ethics" in the form of social responsibility goes back at least to the early modernist movement, when crisp, clean white architecture of natural light and fresh air was built to reinforce a reaction to the unsanitary health conditions to which many buildings of the nineteenth century contributed. Indeed, some theorists of twentieth-century high modernism claim that this social agenda was its main reason for taking shape in the 1920s. A more recent phenomenon of environmental sustainability in architecture dates back to the oil crisis of the 1970s and reacts to the greenhouse effects of fossil fuel use and hazardous synthetic materials in buildings, but has since broadened to a more holistic concept of how a building can be a part of the ecological cycle and minimally impact the natural environment in various ways. By making these two concepts, social and environmental responsibility, relevant and visible in the architecture, this thesis will participate in a third, more specifically timely method of architectural evangelism.

Responsibilities to Creation: "Green" Architecture

The imageability of environmentally sustainable, or "green" architecture has been widely documented and exploited, from Foster's DG Bank Headquarters in Frankfurt to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation Building in Annapolis. However, the current

popularity of green architecture has rarely been addressed by religious architecture. There is certainly biblical basis for the respect of the natural environment, which is viewed as God's holy creation. This thesis will attempt to address this missed opportunity for architectural evangelism through the implementation of imageble sustainable design. The walkable, urban aspect of the site already contributes a major sustainable component in reducing automobile pollution. This relationship to the urban pedestrian environment should therefore be celebrated with a building that welcomes the pedestrian and addresses the public realm of the street. But the thesis can also make visible any number of green building methods, the most common of which are outlined here, based on Dominique Gauzin-Muller's succinct summary of the topic in his book *Sustainable Architecture and Urbanism*[21]:

Bioclimatic

Energy consumption is the most obvious and most commonly addressed problem of creating a sustainable, environmentally friendly built environment. Simple measures like thermal breaks, insulation, and efficient HVAC systems are widespread and effective means of reducing energy waste in buildings, but unfortunately are practically invisible to the architecture. Therefore, the easiest and most cost-effective methods of sustainable visibility are *bioclimatic* methods. These are generally systems that capitalize on the climatic advantages of the natural environment, such as

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[21] Gauzin-Muller, 92-121.

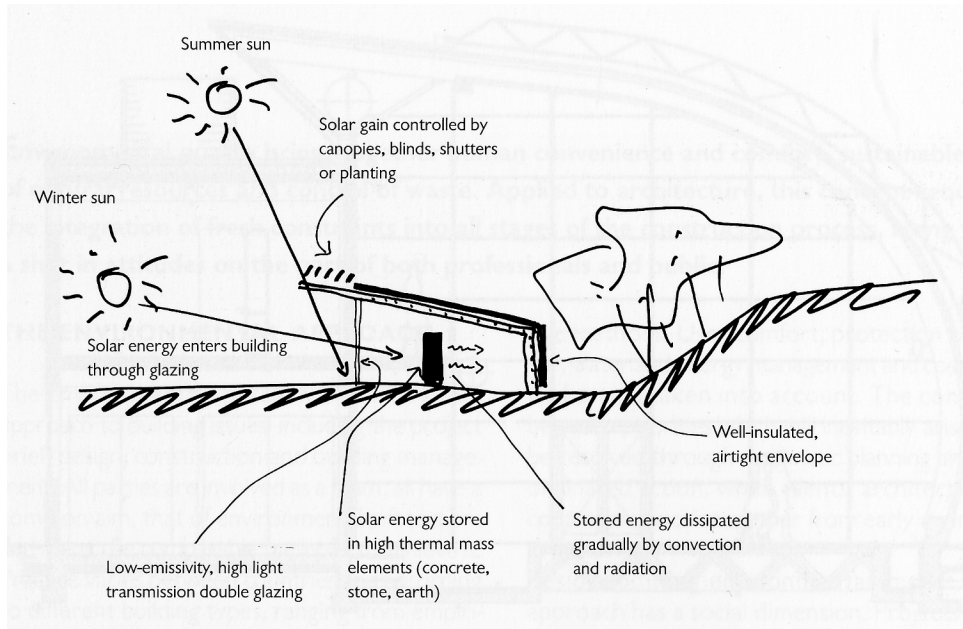passive solar heating, natural ventilation and natural daylighting.

Figure 23: Bioclimatic design strategies (Gauzin-Muller, 95).

Passive solar heating attempts to optimize the intake and retention of solar radiation in the winter with extensive southerly glazing and massive floors and walls to absorb the heat, while blocking it in the summer with shading devices that are either retractable or strategically placed to admit the low winter sun but block the high summer sun. These shading devices and large areas of southern glazing can become conspicuous architectural elements that communicate a responsibility to and effective use of God's creation. Natural ventilation is another passive bioclimatic device that reduces air conditioning costs in the summer and can be a noticeable quality in both the interior and exterior of the building. And though most buildings have some form of daylighting, effective use of natural light is still the most visible and simplest expression of God and nature, as well as energy efficiency.

Renewable Energy

As a reaction to polluting fossil-fuels, active systems such as solar hot water tubes, photovoltaic panels and wind turbines can present even more conspicuous additions to a building that can communicate a message of environmental responsibility, though significantly more cost-prohibitive. Those expensive active systems that have no architectural visibility, such as thermodynamic heating, will therefore not be considered for this thesis, though their sustainable relevance is hardly disputed.

Controlling the Water Cycle

A more recent development in sustainable design is the management of rainwater that would ordinarily be retained or drained by natural systems, but that a building disrupts. Some new buildings in more rural areas can minimize their impact on the land by raising the building above the ground, preserving the natural drainage of the land, or by putting the building more directly into the earth so that its enclosure or roof is part of the land. In this thesis' urban site, however, I will propose two common methods of rainwater management: collection and retention. Collection involves draining rainwater from the roof into a cistern to be used for non-potable water in the building such as toilets, washing machines, or heating water if applicable. This can be particularly visible depending on the architectural treatment of the roof and drainage system. Another more noticeable method is retention of rainwater by a "green roof," which is a roof with soil and plantings that can absorb excessive rainwater and reduce runoff by up to 90% in heavy rains. This is a particularly visible method of sustainable communication that also challenges the expectations of a typical flat or sloped roof with something indisputably natural.

<u>Responsibilities to Fellow Men (and buildings?)</u>

If the bible calls us to be stewards of the earth, how much more, then, are we stewards of our fellow man? While green architecture can provide conspicuous representations of the first, the second is less easily communicated by visual imagery and must rely more on functional amenities as well as a building's character and disposition to its surroundings. Streetlite is already actively involved in community outreach programs, such as their addiction groups, but perhaps this new building could offer new spaces for new programmatic elements relevant to its urban context. Such amenities as recreational facilities for children, soup kitchens or a Christian bookstore or library immediately come to mind as additions to a church that could be located accessibly to the street and/or public realm.

Figure 24: An inviting, sociable lobby space at St. Mark, Beckton (Purdy, 79).

But besides new programs, it seems that a church building can also foster a welcoming street presence and sociable spaces that are inviting to visitors and parishioners alike. Such a strategy was successfully implemented at St. Mark, Beckton in Great Britain, where the lobby space was programmed as an active space of socialization for before and after church services. The space is visually quite open to the exterior, inviting passers-by to casually walk in without an overbearing presence, and is located such that all of the major functions of the church open off of it, making it an active circulation space encouraging casual interaction. Also important is the programming of a coffee bar area for refreshments after services, which also encourages a social atmosphere. Simple programming and design techniques such as these can clearly go a long way in promoting evangelical encounter.

A building can also naturally convey a message about its relation to its surrounding community through its relation to the surrounding buildings. This is an interesting dilemma of this thesis since most of the other methods of architectural evangelism involve the church standing out with a conspicuous presence among its context (remember semiotics). But it is an important consideration to remember in the design process that a building can be too overbearing and inhospitable towards its neighbors. Perhaps it's a stretch to apply biblical teaching to buildings in terms of "loving thy neighbor," but few could argue that there are certainly buildings that are inappropriate to their context, which can imply a certain arrogance and unconcern with the neighboring urban fabric. So architectural humility is perhaps as effective a means of communication as any of those mentioned thus far.

Precedent Study: Chesapeake Bay Foundation Building, Annapolis

Figure 25: Chesapeake Bay Foundation, from east (McKee, 47).

Often called the "greenest building in America," the Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Headquarters outside Annapolis, Maryland offers telling lessons in the exhibitionism

of sustainable architecture. Designed by Smith Group, the building is loaded with

sustainable imageability in its energy efficiency, low site impact, and most of all its

materiality. The sensitive bayside site was carefully preserved to the extent possible

by raising the building off the ground on concrete piers and providing parking

underneath. The building is constructed almost entirely of engineered lumber and

other renewable wood sources that are exposed as framing element for sunshades and

photovoltaic panels on the south sides of the building. On the more sheltered north

Figure 26: South façade, with sunshades and PV panels (McKee, 48).

facades, recycled corrugated aluminum siding provides a tighter envelope. This interplay of warm, highly articulated wood frame on the south and tight aluminum skin with controlled openings on the north is practically a visual diagram of bioclimatic design principles. But the most conspicuous "green" design elements are the three huge rainwater collection cisterns placed immediately adjacent to the main entrance on the north side of the building. The industrial character of the cisterns contributes to the image of the building as a working provider of its own needs, the rainwater being used for sinks and washing machines. Interior finished equally contribute to the building's image, using cork floors, OSB wall panels, laminated wood flooring and other natural, environmentally friendly products. The building is a tour-de-force of sustainable design that proudly displays the values of the occupant.

Figure 27: North façade, with rainwater cisterns next to entrance (McKee, 50).

THE SITE

Location and Contextual Analysis

Figure 28: Cross Street Market (Charles Street entrance)

As mentioned, this thesis will involve exploration of architectural evangelism for the same congregation on two site alternative site typologies, one corner and one infill. In order to limit some of the variables in this proposition, both sites chosen are to be located in the same general area of South Baltimore, near the Cross Street Market. The market area forms a positive edge where three major districts/neighborhoods meet and, in a sense, combine their energy into an area of high activity and visibility. Both sites are between a five- and ten-minute walk from each of these districts, maintaining the close link to the neighborhood congregation and opening up new opportunities for evangelism. These three areas are as follows:
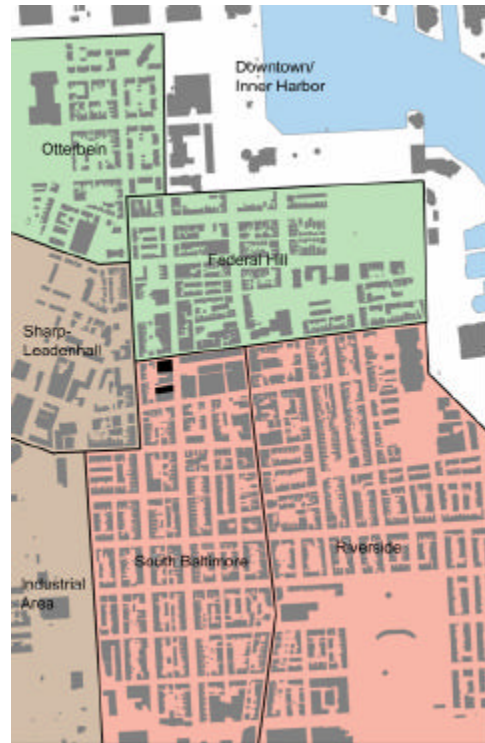
Figure 29: Site location

Figure 30: Three districts/neighborhoods

Figure 31: Neighborhood centers

Figure 32: 5-min & 10-min walk from site

Figure 33: Residential street in Federal Hill

1. Federal Hill: a highly desirable historic neighborhood to the north of the market, filled with middle- to upper-income residents, mostly young white singles, couples and some families. It is an area where gentrification has largely run its course, much like a smaller version of Georgetown or historic Annapolis, with few remaining opportunities to restore or remodel and almost all properties well improved. Federal Hill Park gives some focus to the neighborhood, but is shared by the inner harbor and feels more a part of the city as a whole. Montgomery Street would probably be considered the main neighborhood street, but for retail and business activity, the residents have to go near the Cross Street Market.

Figure 34: Riverside/South Baltimore area

2. Riverside/South Baltimore: The area south of the market remains much the same as it has for the past fifty years, and gives a clue to what Federal Hill looked like twenty or thirty years ago. Mostly white, working-class families and a large elderly population, the area is beginning to feel some effects of gentrification trickling down from the north, but nothing substantial (yet). It is a rare example of a Baltimore neighborhood where many of the working class residents never fled to the suburbs, and retains a strong neighborhood identity and pride because of it. Fort Avenue acts as a main thoroughfare with a few local shops and bars, and Riverside Park gives a focus to the extreme south. But, as in Federal Hill, most of the residents do business around Cross Street Market.

Figure 35: "Western Industrial" area warehouse

3. Western Industrial Area: Scattered old warehouse buildings now occupied

by machine shops, auto mechanics and parts stores, and light manufacturing

and crafts. A potentially up and coming area due to its proximity to

downtown and Federal Hill as well as its stock of old industrial warehouse

buildings ideal for adaptive reuse.

Figure 36: South Charles Street near Cross Street Market: pedestrian-friendly retail

The physical character of the immediate context is that of simple, three-storey brick buildings on narrow city lots. It is a low-rise, high-density environment with little vacant land remaining for development except to the extreme west where industrial uses predominate. Topography is minimal, though most land does gradually slope from the more dramatic slope of Federal Hill to the north down to the Patapsco, whose two major branches make the greater context a peninsula. It is an area of vibrant retail activity, mostly bars and restaurants around the market, but commercial retail picks up along Light Street (east of the market). Light and Charles Streets are the main retail centers, though Charles rather abruptly shifts to solely

residential both a few blocks south and north of the market, making it less active than

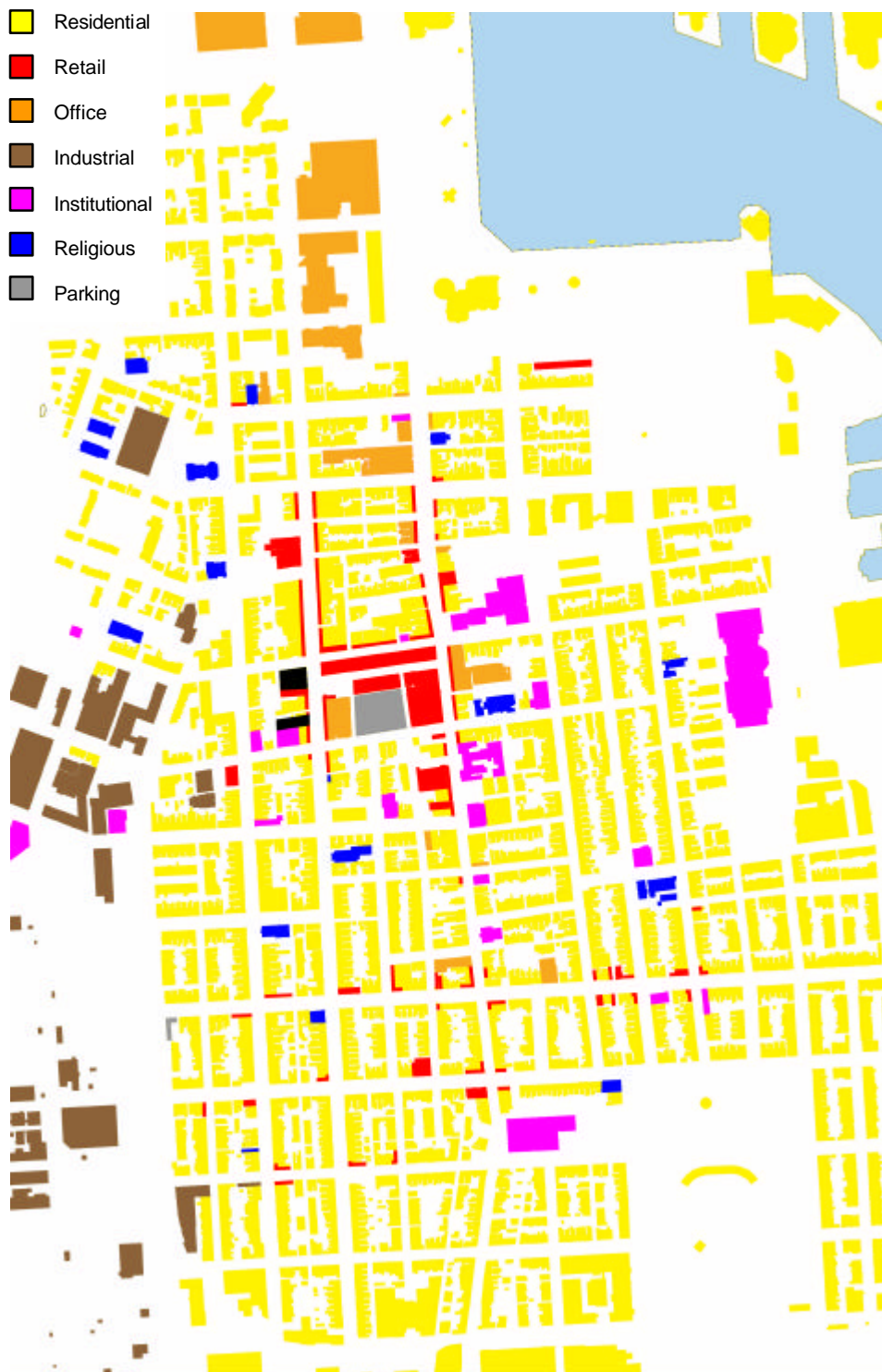Light Street and even the block of Cross Street alongside the market.

Figure 37: Uses show retail and mixed-use concentration at Cross Street

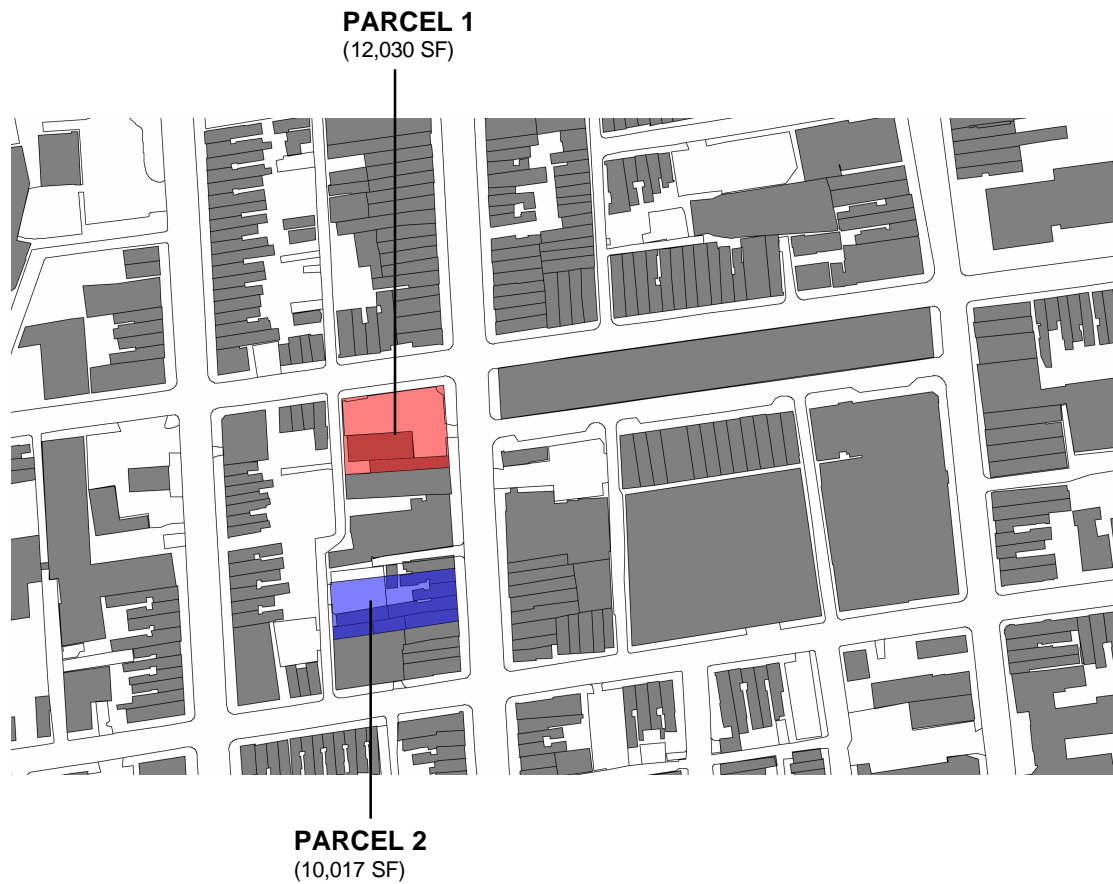<u>Physical Description of Site Alternatives</u>

PARCEL 1
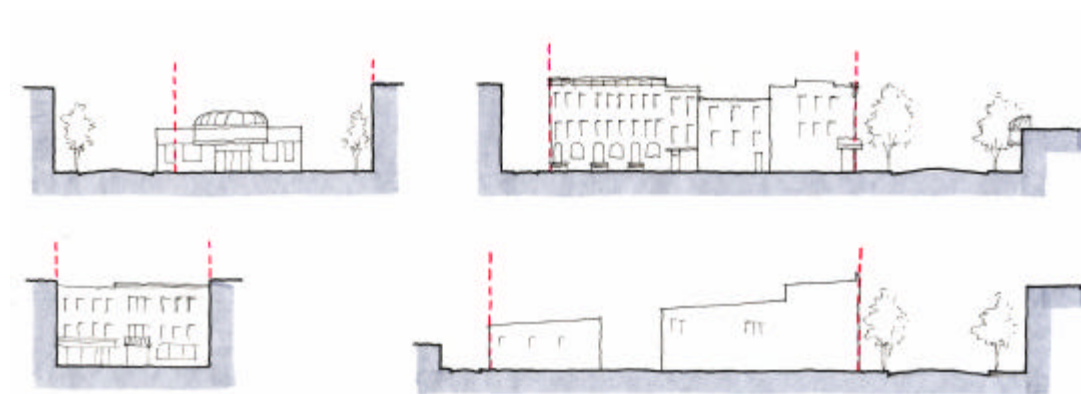(12,030 SF)

PARCEL 2
(10,017 SF)

Figure 38: Site Alternatives

Figure 39: Site Sections: parcel 1 (top), parcel 2 (bottom)

Figure 40: Parcel #1, view across from the market

The corner site (labeled "parcel 1" in fig. 37) chosen for the exploration is an 85' by 125' lot at the intersection of Charles and Cross Streets in South Baltimore, directly across from the Cross Street Market building. Currently, the site is occupied mostly by surface parking for a small auto repair shop. The site boundaries are roughly rectangular, slightly skewed by the non-orthogonal path of Cross Street with relation to north-south Charles. Adjacent to the immediate site are the low, one-storey Cross Street Market building to the east across Charles Street; the side of a three-storey residential-above-retail building across Cross Street to the north; the side of a three-storey rowhouse across the public alley to the west; and the party wall of another three-storey residential-over-retail building facing Charles Street to the south.

Thus it is a typical corner site with a clear back and two public faces. Charles Street, however, prejudices this corner due to the general orientation of lots in the area towards it, its predominantly retail character and by having the market entrance directly across it. The site's two faces and ample space offer opportunities for three-dimensional architectural evangelism and communication with the civic presence of the market building.

Figure 41: Parcel no. 2, view along Charles Street

The infill site (labeled "parcel 2" in fig. 37) is a 62'x 150' lot a few hundred feet south of the corner site on Charles Street. This marks the trailing edge of the retail district on Charles Street, and would so allow an infill church to participate in the active pedestrian street condition of the retail environment. This will, of course,

constitute different means of architectural evangelism since direct sidewalk communication is largely two-dimensional (façade), though physical proximity to the pedestrian passer-by is potentially greater. The same 20' public alley behind the corner site runs behind this one, but there are three-storey party-wall buildings on each side of the site. This site is currently occupied by typical 3-storey mixed-use buildings of nineteenth-century construction which will be considered demolished for the purposes of this exercise. Ironically, a vacant infill site around the market was not to be found, whereas the large corner site across from the market is currently the most promising vacant lot in the area. This is probably an inversion of typical urban building conditions, but for the purposes of this exercise this infill site will be considered to be a typical vacant infill lot in order to offer broader lessons of how architectural evangelism can be tailored to the more common availability of infill lots.

Figure 42: The results of gentrification in Federal Hill (Rehbein, 65).

History

Until the recent phenomenon of gentrification, Federal Hill and South Baltimore have

always been working-class areas of the city. Certainly the harbor was the genesis of

this working class, the neighborhoods filling a peninsula bounded by the Northwest

Branch and the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River. The shipping industries that

lined these shores provided the first working class of the area, namely shipbuilders,

dock workers and laborers from the city's birth in the mid-eighteenth century up

through the early twentieth. The row houses existing today from this period are those

located closest to the Inner Harbor, in Federal Hill and the northern areas of South

Baltimore.

Figure 43: View from Federal Hill Park in the early twentieth century (Rehbein, 66).

The second major influx of workers came as the "work" of Baltimore itself shifted from a predominantly mercantile to an industrial economy. Its proximity to the port caused South Baltimore to be a haven for heavy manufacturing from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. The largest employers were located in Locust Point (east of South Baltimore towards Fort McHenry) and included Proctor and Gamble, Domino Sugar and Coca-Cola. But equally industrialized was the area to the west of the neighborhoods on the Patapsco's Middle Branch. Here smaller warehouses and factories, and later huge oil and gas companies built their economic base in the city. With these new industries also came a new influx of workers: immigrants mostly from Central Europe, including Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Austrians and Germans. These ethnicities mixed harmoniously with the earlier

working class of Britons and the Irish, and have resulted in one of Baltimore's most stable neighborhoods with families going back generations.

During the suburban flight of the fifties and sixties, South Baltimore lost population like most of the city, but it fared better than most neighborhoods despite its declining economy due to the corresponding flight of industries (Coca-Cola and Proctor and Gamble left in the mid-seventies, the Domino refinery still lingers thanks to the necessities of overseas shipping). But in Federal Hill, the influx of young, white middle-class suburbanites back into the city has by now reached its climax, though to the south the situation is little changed.

The neighborhood's commercial heart has been the Cross Street Market since the early nineteenth century, owing its position to Cross Street's direct perpendicular connection to the harbor. Around the market, on Charles and especially Light Street, the fabric is more diverse than the more uniformly dated rowhouses to both the north and south due to the ever-changing commerce there. Therefore, the thesis sites lie not only at the crux of these neighborhoods in today's terms, but also historically.

Design Implications

There is a palpable sense of the importance of immediate context of the sites, but very little recognition of that importance by the built environment. The building for this thesis should recognize and contribute to that sense of importance by giving a civic presence to the area. The fact that Federal Hill Park and Riverside Park are the only public spaces in all of South Baltimore certainly gives identity to those respective neighborhoods, but there is no spatial recognition of the next level of hierarchy where

the neighborhoods meet. One way for the corner church site to contribute to the well-being of this community is to provide that space and recognition for the market and its surroundings, which can also act as a kind of stage-set for the church itself to be recognized and identified by these three neighborhoods. For the infill site, the provision of public space is less probable, but the opportunity to contribute to the pedestrian character of retail Charles Street is even stronger. There is also a fundamental question of a building's disposition to the city on an infill vs. a corner site, in the sense that an infill building carries assumptions of belonging to the more private realm while a corner object building suggest a higher degree of publicity. Though Streetlite is a very community-active and "public" institution, its current disposition on the street is rather inconspicuous. But Pastor Zimmerman's desire for greater visibility is evident in his words and vision, so a question for this thesis is how this can be accomplished in different site conditions and whether one site type affords greater opportunities than another.

THE BUILDING PROGRAM

The program for this thesis was developed from an assessment of Streetlite Christian
Fellowship's current liturgy, activities and programs as well as an interpretation of
more qualitative desires expressed by Pastor Zimmerman. Possibilities of future
expansion are addressed but the program also adheres to the widely held belief that a
church in the evangelical tradition works best with a congregation of 300 or less, and
when the church grows beyond this, members plant new churches to keep the
intimacy and sense of community palpable.[22]

<u>WORSHIP</u>	4000
Sanctuary	4000
<u>FELLOWSHIP</u>	3700
Lobby/Gathering	1500
Fellowship Hall	2200
Multi-Purpose	2000
Kitchen/Storage	200
<u>EDUCATION</u>	3000
Classrooms	1200 (4@300 ea.)
Meeting Rooms	800 (2@400 ea.)
Library	1000
<u>ADMINISTRATION</u>	500
Pastor's Office	200
Administrative Space	300
<u>SERVICE/SUPPORT</u>	2500
Lavatories	400
Circulation	1000 (10%)
Mechanical	1100 (10%)
TOTAL	**13,700 sf**
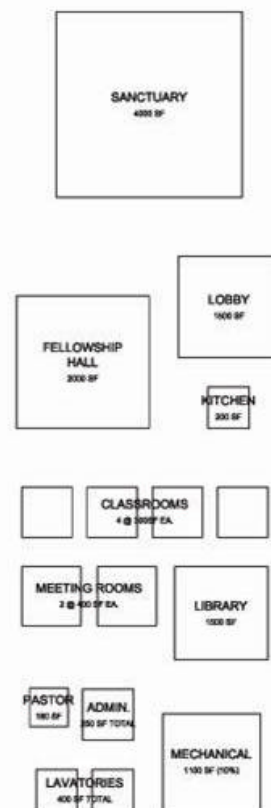
**Figure 44: Program tabulations and graphic
representation**

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[22] See Bruggink, 147.

The sanctuary/worship space is obviously the most important program piece. Using basic calculations of 10 square feet/person advocated in Martin Purdy's *Design Development Guide* for churches, and accounting for a potential congregation of 300, the congregation will require 3000 square feet of seating space, plus stage/chancel and circulation to equal about 4000 total square feet. In addition to worship services, educational spaces for Sunday school classes and weekday bible study, alcoholics anonymous, weight loss programs, and any future community outreach small groups will be accommodated in classrooms and small meeting rooms. A multi-purpose large fellowship space with kitchen is also needed for youth activities, church dinners, events, etc. And as the modern communal church tradition has taught us, a generous lobby/gathering space for informal contact before and after Sunday services is allotted. Purdy provides general guidelines for most of these educational and community spaces as well as lobby, administrative and support spaces. These guidelines were adapted in cases to suit the particular needs of Streetlite (for example, more classrooms and meeting space were allocated due to Streetlite's plethora of weekday small groups and activities). Also, additional spaces particular to Streetlite were added, including a resource library to house the congregation's existing collection. The flexibility of the classrooms, meeting spaces, fellowship hall and gathering space allow for implementation of new weekday programs and community outreach when the need arises. Because Streetlite's mission and vision lie in the weekday small group activities as well as in the worship service, it will be a challenge to give these flexible, unprogrammed spaces legibility and access to the community while not deterring from the hierarchy of the sanctuary itself.

PRE-SCHEMATIC DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

To begin exploring the possibilities for design alternatives, many conceptual designs were developed for each site based first on the liturgical method of communication relating specifically to Streetlite's liturgical needs. Though all three methods of architectural evangelism will be considered in the thesis, the liturgical method is that which seems most appropriate to begin with because of its direct relationship to the program and its more fundamental spatial requirements than the aesthetic and ethical methods. This is not to say these pre-schematic alternatives have no aesthetic or ethical qualities, only that liturgy was considered primary. Therefore, taking Rudolf Schwarz' conceptual church types as a starting point, two pre-schematic alternatives were designed for each site that relate the spatial arrangement of program to various combinations and permutations of "holy intimacy" and "holy journey."

In all orthographic diagrams:

- ▮ Sanctuary
- ▮ Lobby
- ▮ Fellowship
- ▮ Education
- ▮ Administrative/Service

Corner Site Scheme 1: "Flexible Focus"
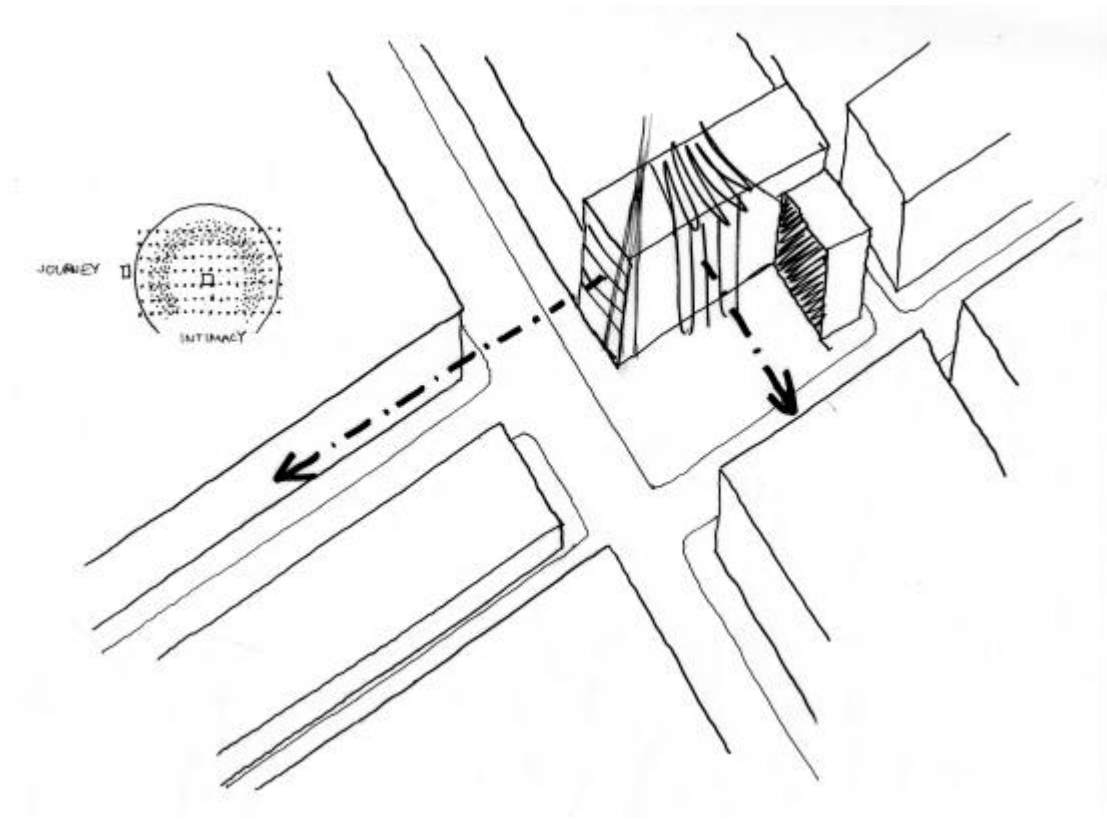
Figure 45: "Flexible Focus" concept diagrams

This scheme attempts to reconcile Streetlite's unique liturgy of quarterly communion-focused service vs. weekly sermon-focused service by overlaying the "holy journey" model on the "holy intimacy" model. The result is an oblong space in which the center of focus can shift depending on the service: on the long edge for sermons and the short wall for communion. This allows the liturgy to relate to the most appropriate spatial disposition for each, giving the sense of auditory intimacy associated with classic evangelical models to the weekday services while allowing for the processional kinesthetics of classic sacramental models in communion services. All four of the schemes attempt to address this difference in weekly and quarterly

liturgy in different ways; here the space itself is flexible and overlays architectural

emphasis in two directions. These directions relate to the site by aligning with the

long axis of Cross Street Market as well as opening broadly towards a new public

space to the north.
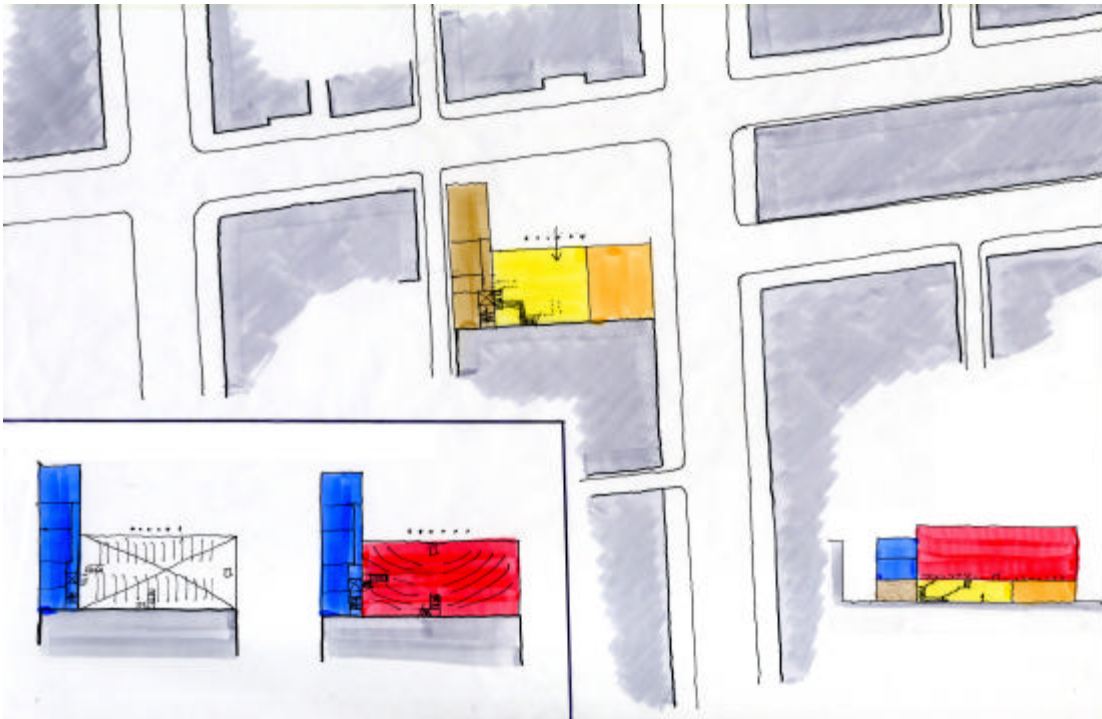
Figure 46: Ground floor with upper floors (bottom left) and section (bottom right)

The remaining programs elements are contained in a three-storey bar building used to

shape this space and close off the ill-defined western edge. Lobby and fellowship

hall, however, are placed below the elevated sanctuary and are readily accessible

from the street, allowing for porosity of these social spaces. In basic terms, therefore,

this scheme is a low plinth and a bar building that engage the oblong, flexible

sanctuary space.

Corner Site Scheme 2: "Sacred Object"
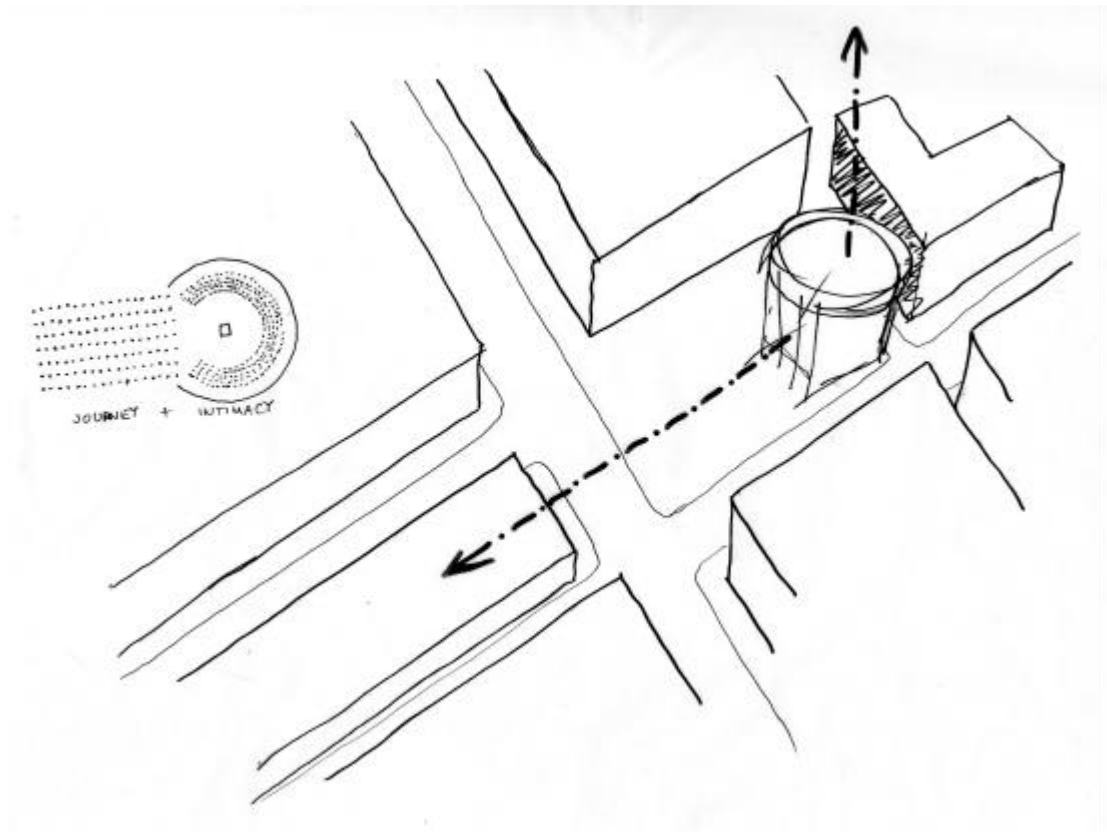
Figure 47: "Sacred Object" concept diagrams

Like the "flexible focus" scheme, this one attempts to reconcile the sacramental

"journey" and the auditory "intimacy" of the two Schwarz models. But here, the

sanctuary itself is essentially a centralized "intimacy" model that uses its axial

placement in the space contained by Cross Street and the Market to convey a sense of

the "holy journey" without actually organizing the space in such a manner. Where

the first scheme provided a space that can change character to reflect journey and

intimacy, this scheme declares itself an intimate space to support the more frequent

use and incorporates the existing linearity of site to convey the sense of sacramental

journey. Since the centralized form must be on axis in the market space, it logically

becomes a "sacred object" contained within that greater space, with all supporting

spaces in an two-storey L-shaped building behind it, completing the space.
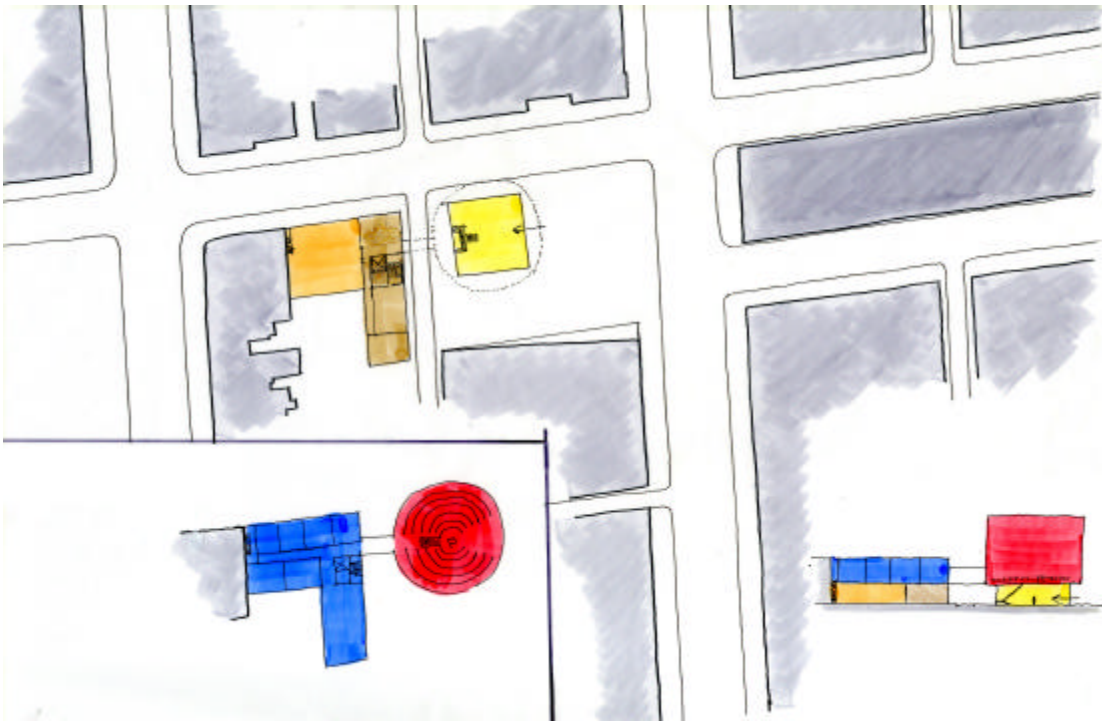
Figure 48: Ground floor with second floor (bottom left) and section (bottom right)

The circular form is merely iconographic of an object in the round, it need not be

circular at all. Like the "flexible focus" scheme, this one provides public space as

civic amenity shared by both church and market, in this case setting up a direct

dialogue with the market building. The support building is actually a separate

building in the tradition of the old parish house, with a bridge over the alley clearly

separating the "sacred object" and the day-to-day functions of fellowship,

administration and education and meeting. Potentially a site-dependent version of a

typical head-and-tail parti.

Infill Site Scheme 1: "Threshold of Sacred and Profane"
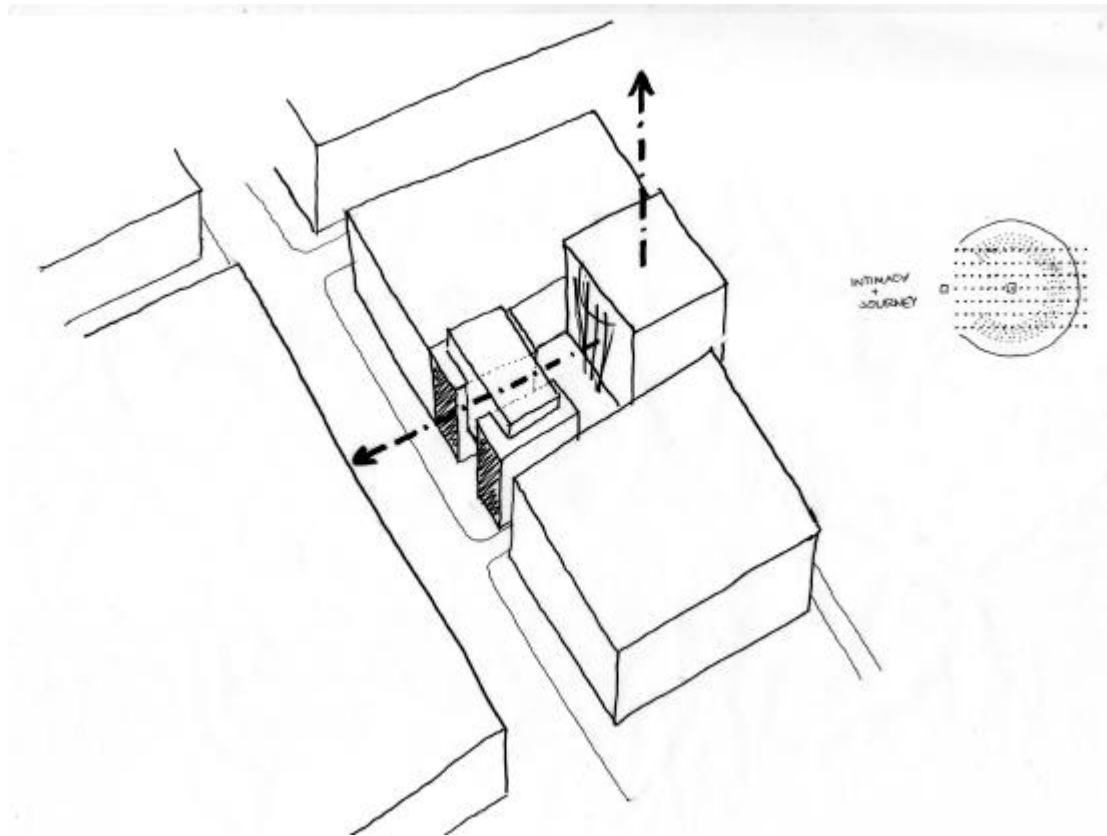
Figure 49: "Threshold of Sacred and Profane" concept diagrams

This first infill scheme reconciles sacramental journey and auditory intimacy in a

similar manner as the "sacred object" scheme, but here the narrow enclosure of the

infill site itself provides the opportunity to communicate the sense of journey,

enforced by a transparent "gate" building that holds the street edge while at the same

time giving a glimpse through to the sacred precinct of outdoor courtyard and

sanctuary contained within. The sanctuary is made sacred not by elevation as in the

first two examples, but through spatial separation from the public activity of the

street. The sanctuary itself is organized similarly as the "sacred object" scheme,

centrally, with its open face towards the courtyard. The "gate" building consists of

two solid three-storey volumes containing educational and administrative spaces that encase an elevated glazed fellowship hall under which is created the "threshold" to the sacred precinct. This transparent fellowship hall acts as visual interface between the "sacred" and the "profane," which supports its programmatic function of community outreach and fellowship.
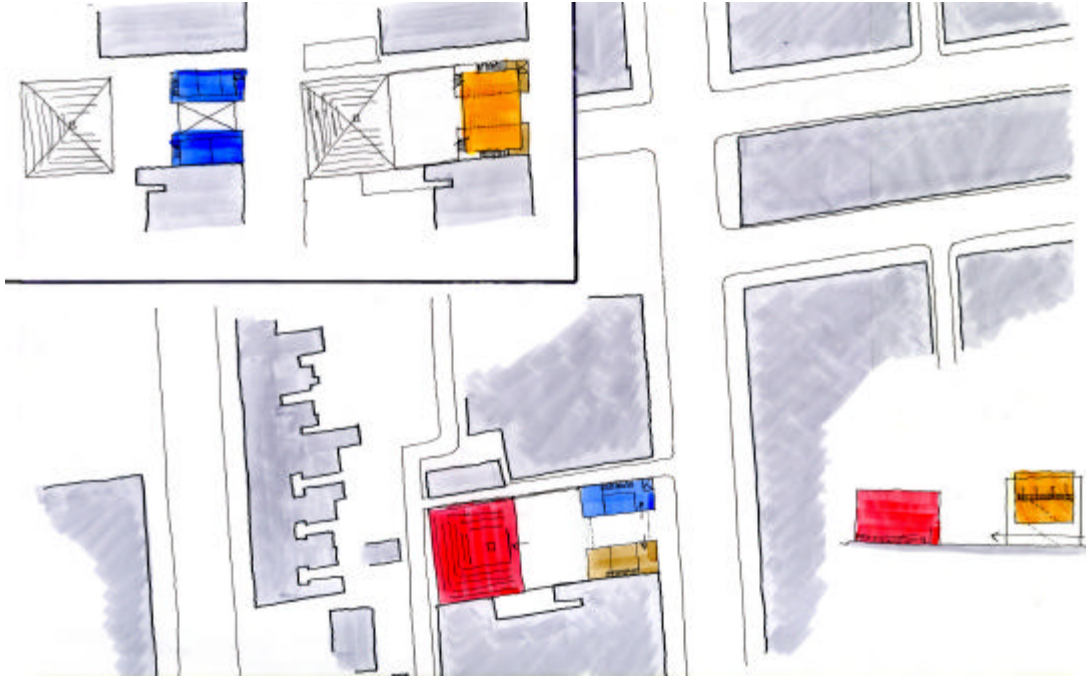

Figure 50: Ground floor with upper floors (top left) and section (bottom right)

The concept of this scheme, similar to the sacred object, is therefore one of congregational intimacy and enclosure in worship, but with a gesture to proceeding outward into the world with the good news as the parishioner leaves the sacred realm.

Infill Site Scheme 2: "Transparent Liturgy"
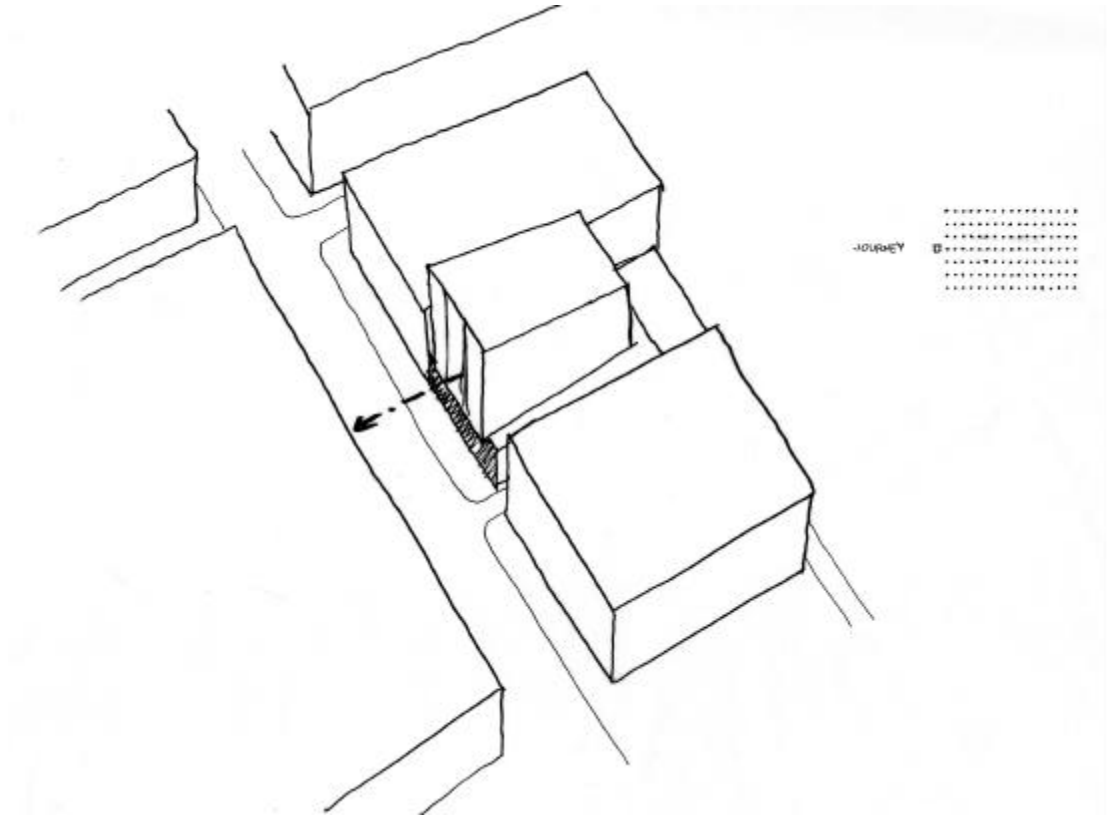
Figure 51: "Transparent Liturgy" concept diagrams

The final infill scheme, unlike the rest, does not focus on sanctuary organization but rather attempts to involve the lobby and sanctuary spaces in the pedestrian storefront environment of Charles Street, a legitimate concern when considering an infill site like this one. This means treating the lobby/gathering space as a porous, transparent entrance and gathering space, welcoming the casual passer-by into the sacred realm with little pretension, while also giving the sanctuary its prominence by elevating it above the lobby and putting it on display to the pedestrian, much like a store window. The idea of "congregation on display" is potentially unnerving, so the elevation attempts to give the privacy necessary for feeling comfortable in worship.
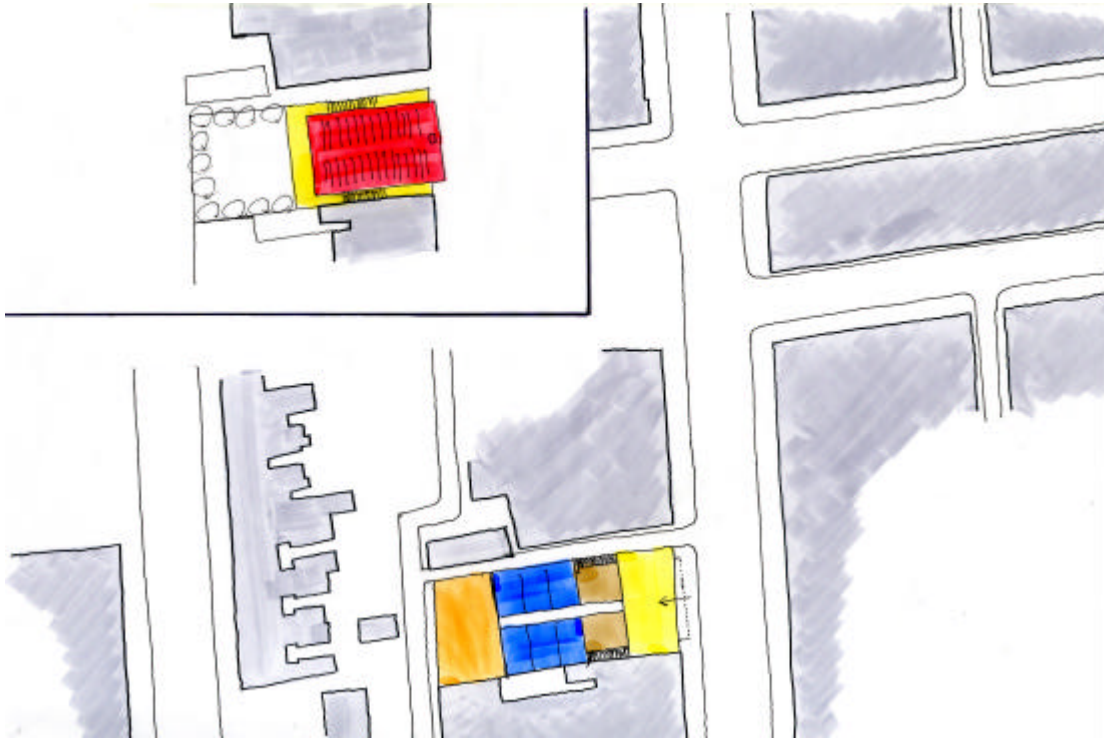
Figure 52: Ground floor with second floor (top left)

This scheme is therefore an effort to begin design with an ethical method of architectural evangelism rather than a liturgical. Consequently, it lacks spatial clarity at this point because its virtues lie in its disposition of activity relative to the street. As far as liturgical spatial properties, this scheme assumes as simple "sacred journey" model for the upper sanctuary, but the sanctuary model could be developed as needed, such that the ground floor spaces and relationship to street life are the hallmarks of the scheme.

DESIGN CONCLUSIONS

After about two weeks of attempting to design for both site choices, the decision was made to focus on a single site in order to complete one well-developed solution instead of two half-cooked ones. "Parcel 1" (across from the market) was chosen because of its greater size and potential for visibility and architectural opportunity due to its corner setting and more unique contextual pressures of the market and terminating axes.

The design process is summarized by the four diagrams on the next page (figs. 53-56) that expand on the "flexible focus" pre-schematic parti developed in the preceding chapter (see figs. 45 & 46), whereby an oblong space is equipped with movable seats to be able to change the direction of focus from a "holy intimacy" arrangement that faces the long wall for normal services to a "holy journey" that faces the short end of the space for communion services (fig. 53). The formal communication of this liturgical model was achieved with a language of folding planes of a simple rectangular box: a center section lifted up to call attention to the centralized focus and an end wall folded out to emphasize the longitudinal focus (fig. 54). These "folds" let in natural light appropriate to the character and meaning of each arrangement: even, diffuse north light for the predominantly verbal and literal communication of the normal service, and dramatic rays of south light streaming over the end wall for the ritual of communion service. This sanctuary design is then placed within a framework of simple Baltimore brick walls that relate to the

neighborhood context and set off the specialty and sacredness of the sanctuary that reads as an object within these walls (fig. 55). The contextual walls also relate to the strategy of ethical communication in the design as their perforation and direct relationship to the pedestrian realm gives direct public access to the community outreach functions of the church (fellowship hall, classrooms, meeting rooms) that are all located on the ground level, supporting (literally and metaphorically) the jewel-like object of the sacred space above them (fig. 56). Finally, the architectonic aesthetics of the design convey a sense of grass-roots simplicity through an off-the-shelf look of exposed steel connections, humble brick and industrial Kalwall cladding appropriate to the ethos of the storefront church.

The accommodation of two foci in a single space and the quest for balance between monumental civic presence and comfortable, community-friendly disposition of the building became the two central design problems of this thesis. The other questions of more purely aesthetic and ethical communication such as programmatic disposition, aesthetics of construction, and architectural promenade seemed more easily resolved than these two potentially unanswerable dilemmas, perhaps because there was more freedom to interpret what was best in these cases. Nevertheless, the concerns of this thesis were addressed precisely at such unanswerable questions of the role of architecture in the pursuit of evangelism, therefore it seems plausible that the design conclusions raise more questions than answers.
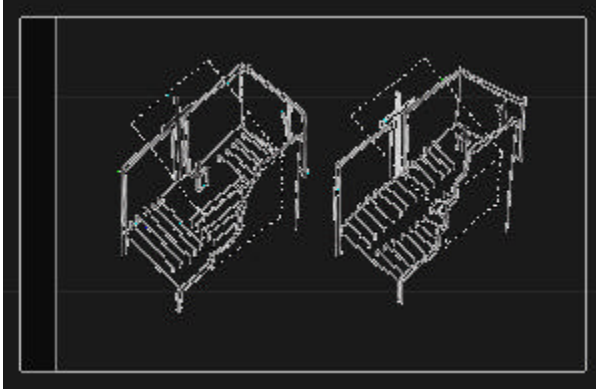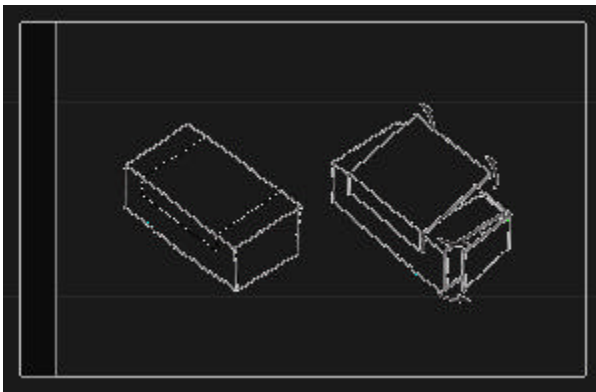
Figure 53: focal flexibility

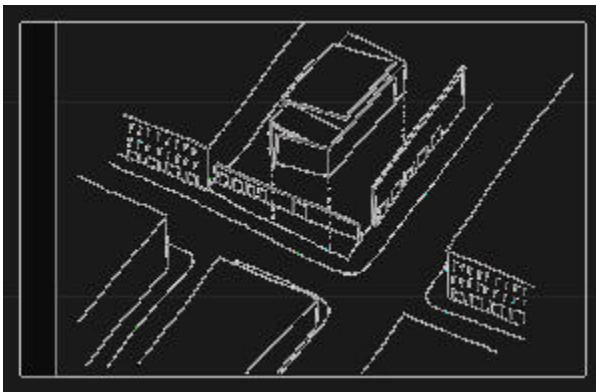

Figure 54: formal inflection of two foci

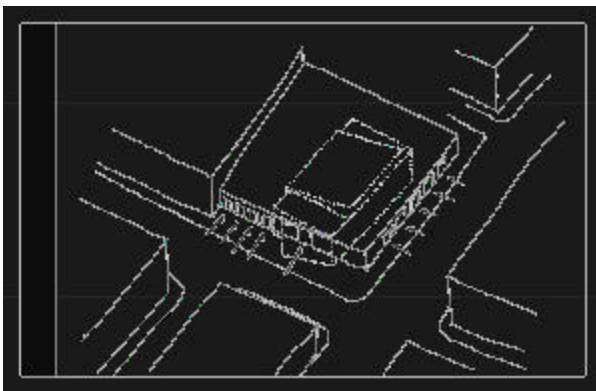
Figure 55: ideal form contextualized
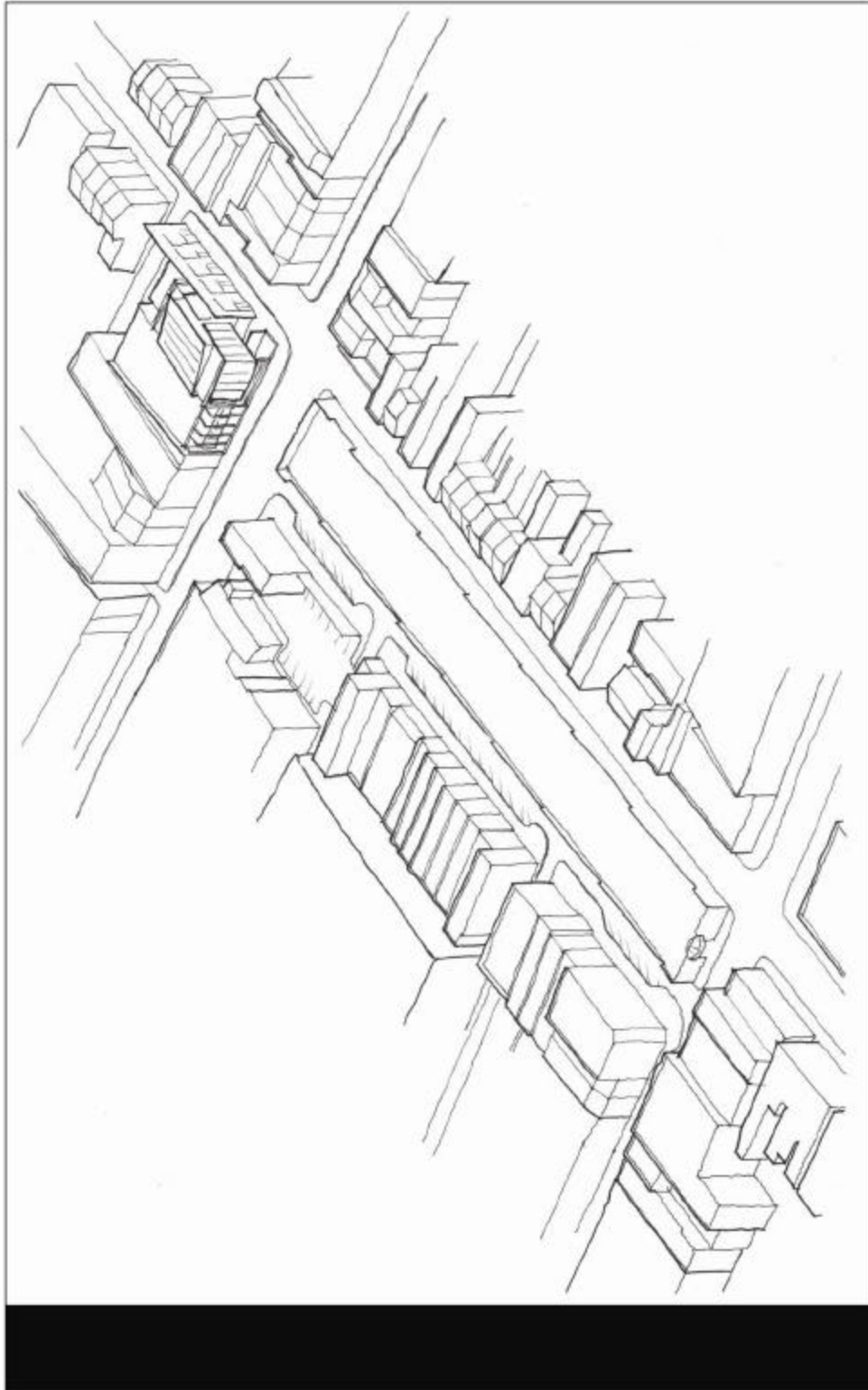

Figure 56: community access

Figure 57: Aerial view of site

Figure 58: Site plan

Figure 59: Ground floor plan

Figure 60: Second floor plan

Figure 61: Transverse section

Figure 62: Longitudinal sections

Figure 63: Elevations

Figure 64: Sectional perspective

Figure 65: View of northeast corner

Figure 66: View from Cross Street

Figure 67: View from South Charles Street

Figure 68:
Sanctuary:
communion
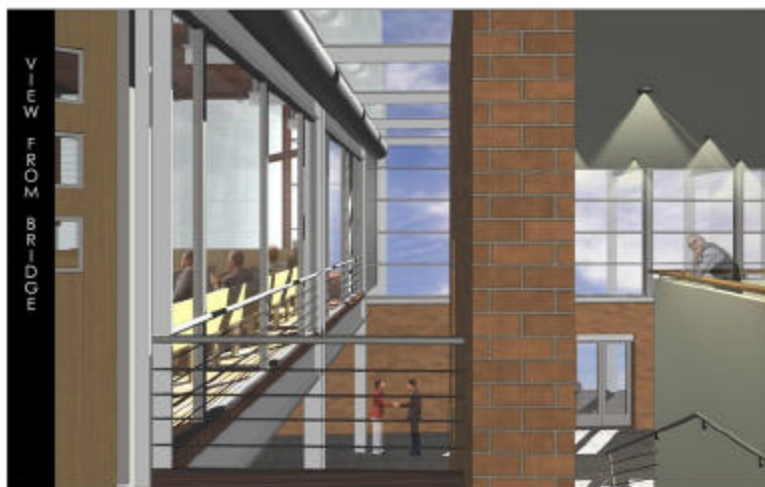arrangement

Figure 69:
View to stair

**Figure 70:
Sanctuary:
standard
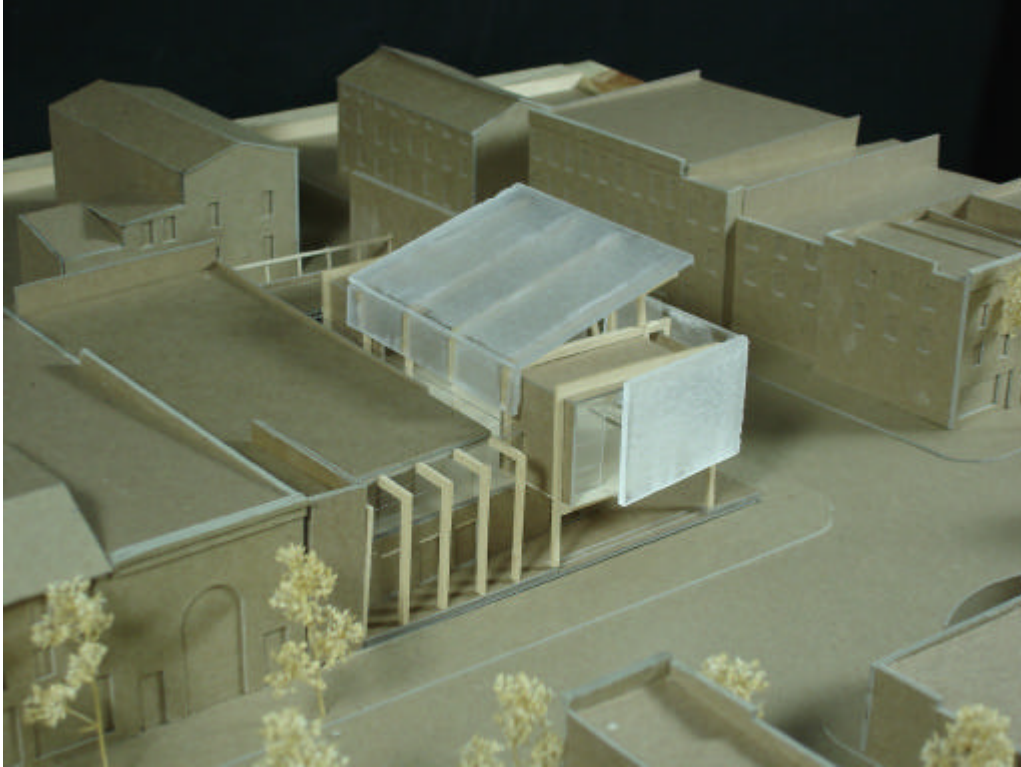arrangement**

**Figure 71:
View from bridge**

Figure 72: Site model from southeast

Figure 73: Site model from northeast
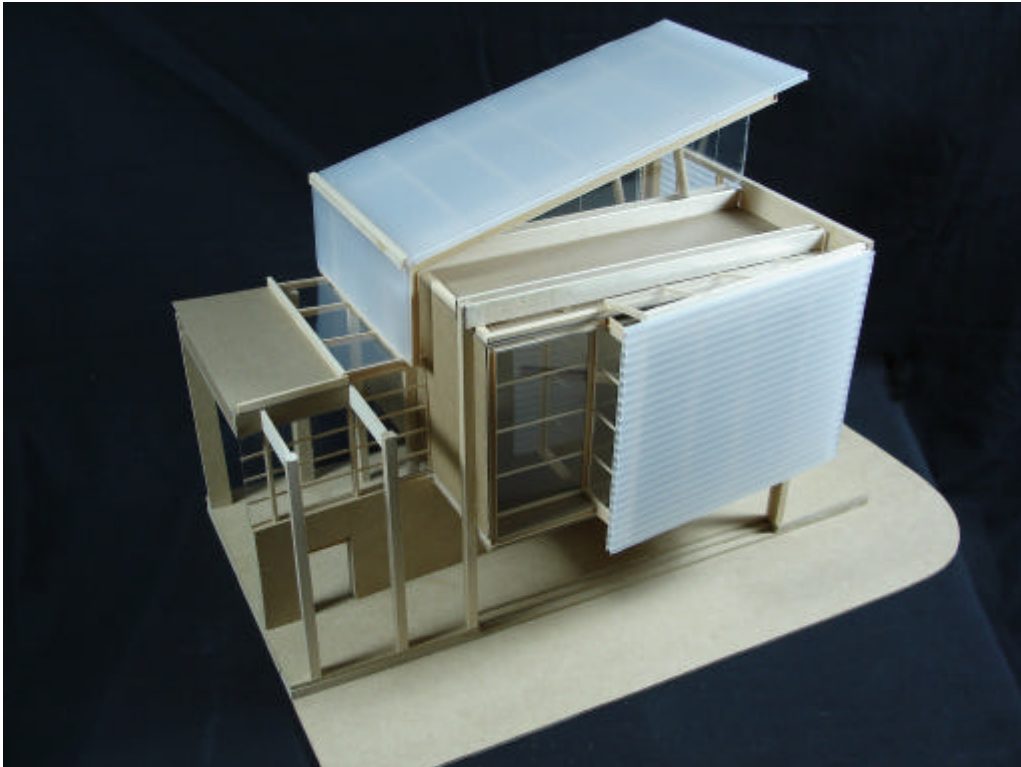
Figure 74: Site model from east

Figure 75: Tectonic model: exterior view from above

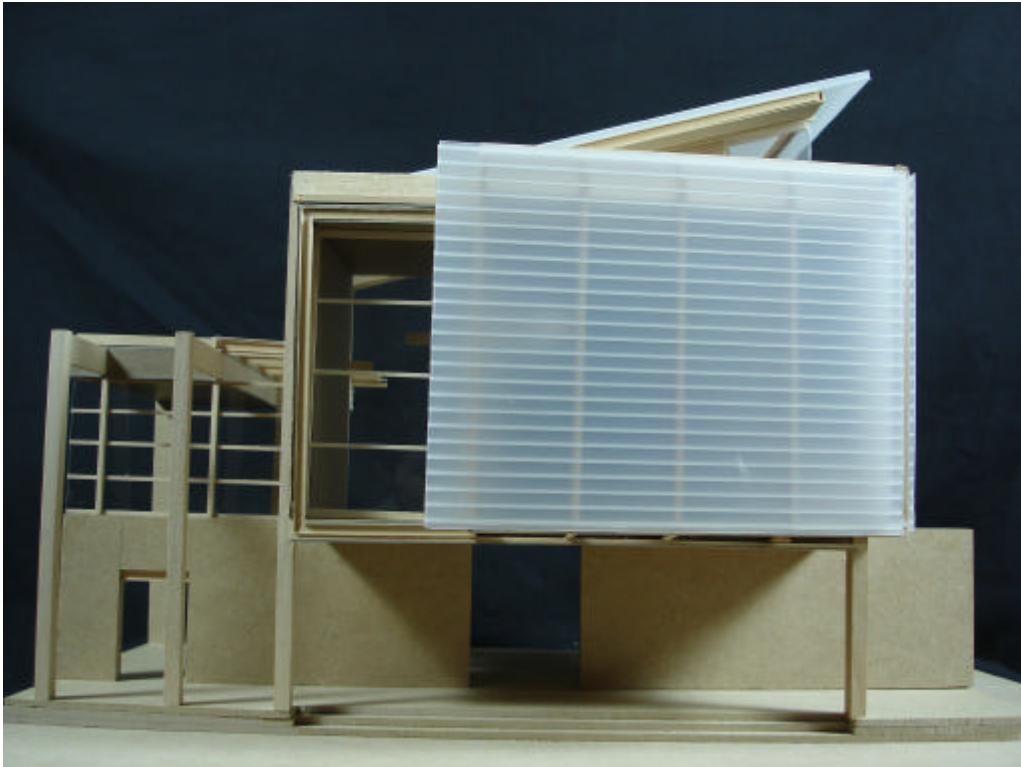**Figure 76: Tectonic model: exterior view from below**
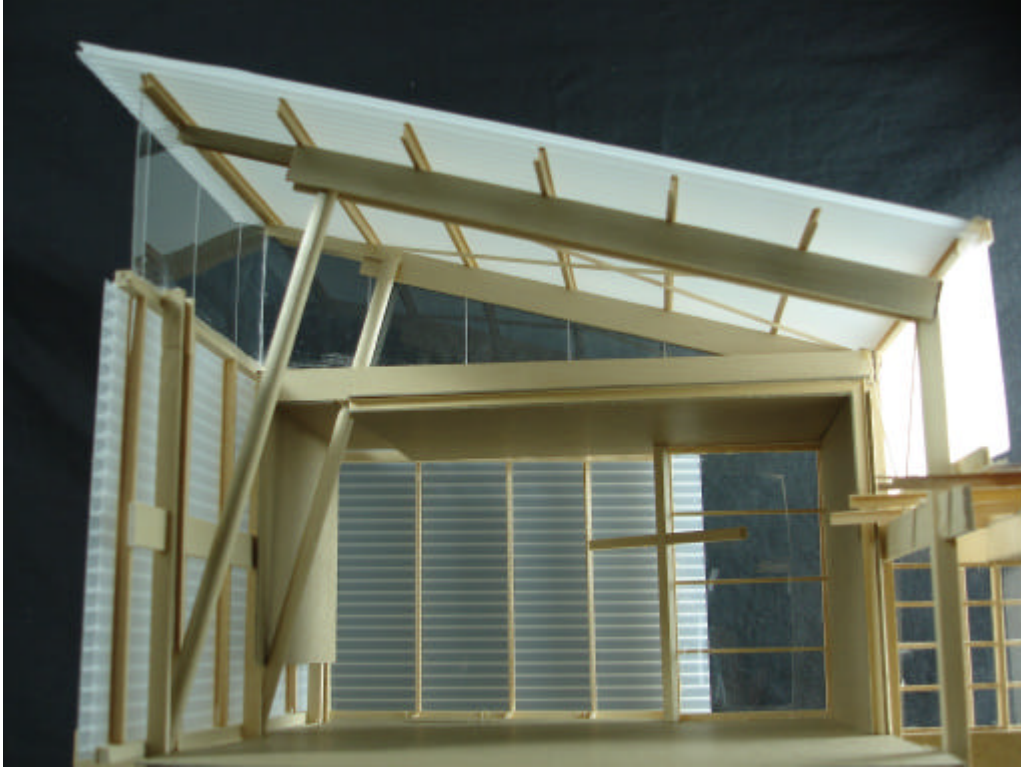

Figure 77: Tectonic model: exterior front view

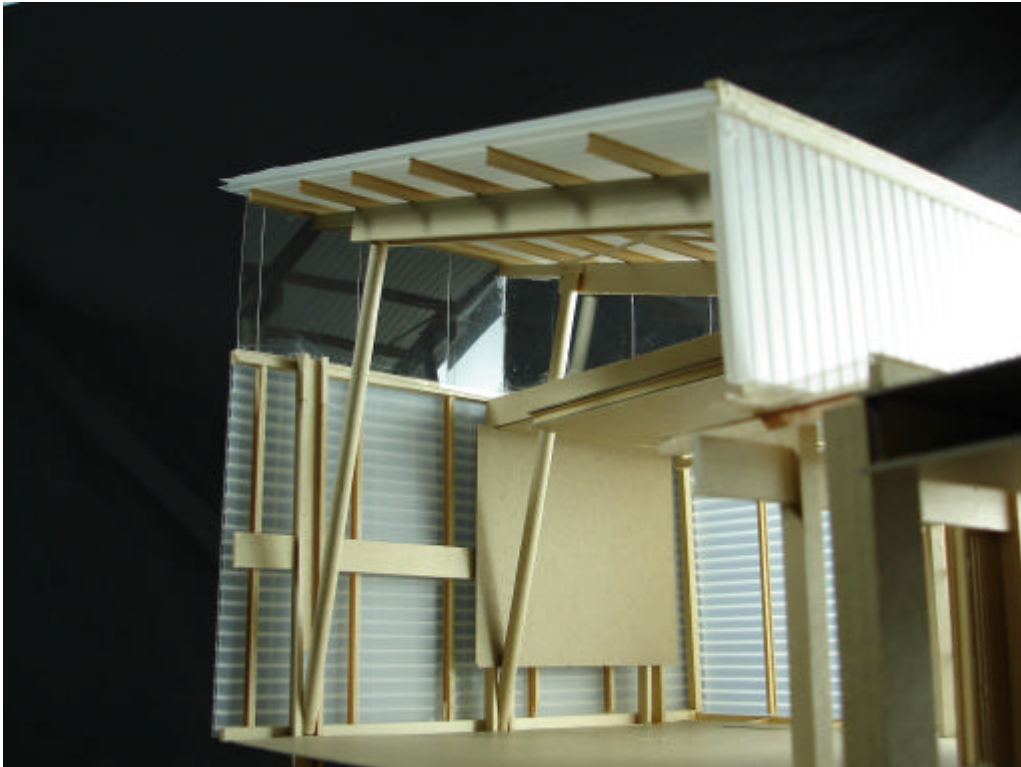**Figure 78: Tectonic model: interior view**

Figure 79: Tectonic model: interior oblique view
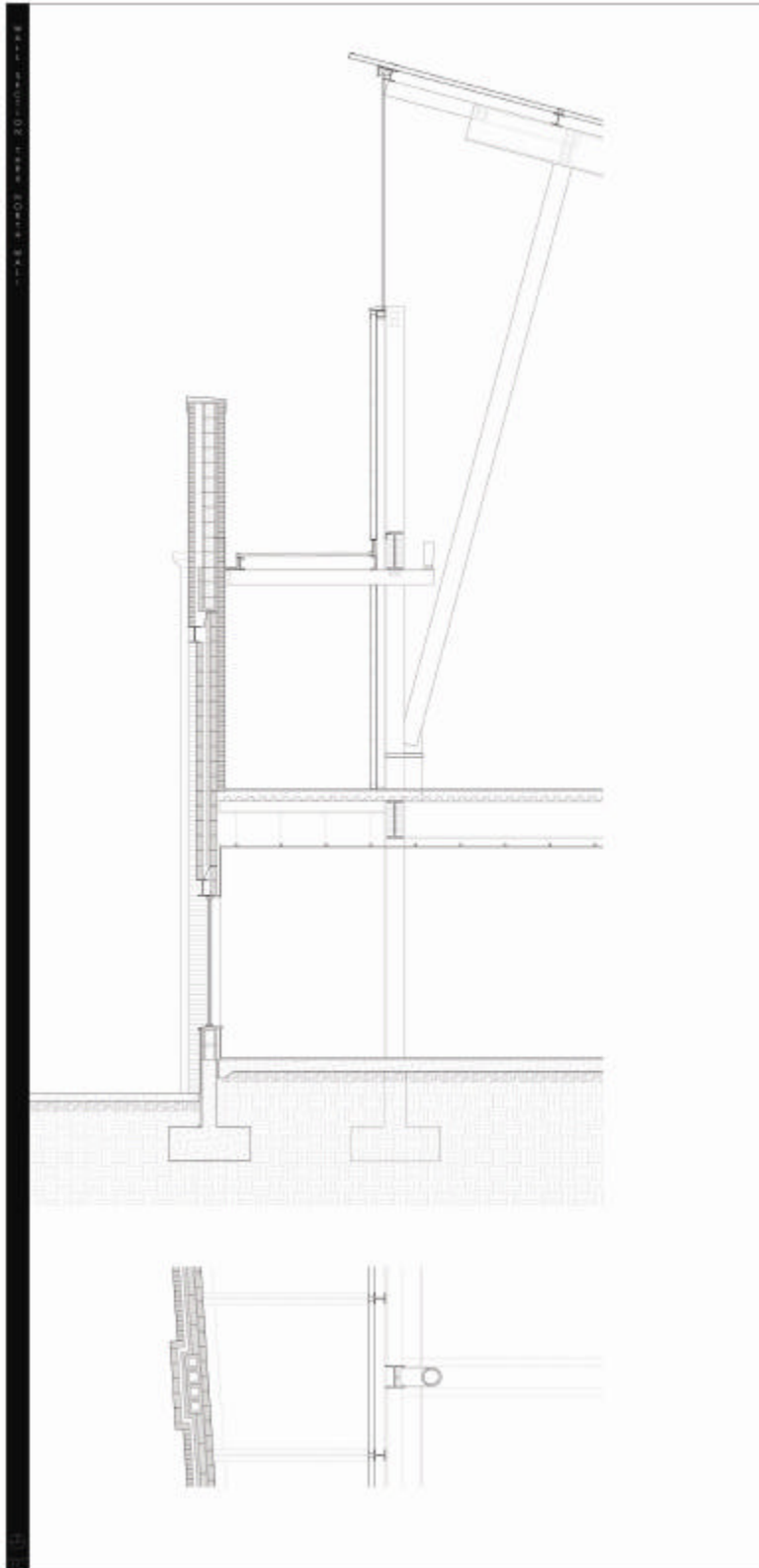
Figure 80: Wall section thru north wall

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