PhD

THESIS SERIES

POON SHEK WING LOUIS

Designing One-flat Church as Small Scale Community Space in Densely Populated Urban Environment to Perform Both Sacred and Contemporary Functions

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With regard to the context of Hong Kong, churches are restricted to being built in a densely populated urban environment in flat space. This research investigates the relationship between theology and spatial design in Hong Kong Protestant churches and analyses the lack of design concerning sacred identity in the churches of Hong Kong, leading to an unappealing and non-sacred appearance of the Protestant church. This study aims to understand the influence of secularisation on the rationale of church design and generate the church's appropriate identity from a theoretical standpoint to serve the contemporary community effectively. By conducting an empirical study of 171 churches in Hong Kong and interviews with 15 pastors and professors, this study explicates methods to facilitate church design, focusing on the immanence quality instead of transcendence representation, which overcomes the spatial limitations in church design.

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URBAN ENVIRONMENT TO PERFORM BOTH

SACRED AND CONTEMPORARY FUNCTIONS

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SCHOOL OF DESIGN

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POON SHEK WING LOUIS

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

October 2009

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

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———————————— (Signed)

<u>Poon Shek Wing Louis</u> (Name of student)

Abstract

This research is based on the scenario in the context of Hong Kong, in which church has been built in densely populated urban environment restricted in flat space. The research objectives were: 1) firstly to investigate the relationship between theology and spatial design in Hong Kong Protestant church; 2) secondly, to analyse the issue of the lack of design with respect to sacred identity in the church of Hong Kong that leads to an unappealing and non-sacred appearance of Protestant church; 3) and finally, to establish theoretical standpoints on designing sacred space with contemporary quality without surrendering of the *sacred identity*. The aims of the research were to understand the influence of secularisation to the rationale of church design in the context of these research objectives and to generate an *appropriate identity* of church with a theoretical standpoint to serve the contemporary community effectively.

In order to meet these objectives, the study comprised four areas. 1) The first area was the largely qualitative site observations of 171 churches, which provided comparative figures for the study of churches incorporated with design elements or no design elements. 2) The second area was a qualitative approach, centered on semi-structured interviews of 15 pastors and professors. 3) The third area was the conduction of visual simulation workshop with clergy and laymen to understand their expectation on ideal church design. 4) Finally, there was a

case study of a church designed by the researcher taken into the account of the users' perspectives from initial research stage to the completion of design.

This study endeavours to facilitate church design with the focus on the immanence quality instead of the transcendence representation in order to encounter the different spatial limitations in church design. It is expected, consequently, that traditional quality will be treasured by the transformation of traditional elements into contemporary representation, such as the use of symbolic meanings.

In Hong Kong approximately 775 one-flat churches, which are 66% of the total number of Protestant churches, are located in different layers of vertical space within this vertical city; they function as scattered small-scale community spaces. These sites contain both the sacred and the secular activities as they provide social services during weekdays. The practical function has overridden the symbolic expression. This community approach presents an unbalanced representation between the sacred and the secular uses. Even though church leaders from the high-budgeted churches build their new churches by employing professional designers, they have created churches merely releasing contemporary senses but the sacred quality is neglected. When churches provide social services in the same limited space, the identity of church is surrendered to

the need of the social community.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Schema

1.1. Introduction

Historically, church architecture is a spiritual and sacred space people could experience the solemnity and serenity. Due to secularisation, in Hong Kong, the scenario of one-flat churches has been shifted to unappealing and non-sacred appearance. In one incident at Sunday service at church, the researcher finds that the cross, which is the most sacred symbol, is blocked by a projection screen for multi-media purpose. Due to limited space of church and multi-functional requirement in the swapping of study centre and religious centre in weekdays and on the weekends alternatively, the sacred identity of this church is surrendered. With approximately 775 one-flat churches, which are 66 % of the total number of Protestant churches, they are scattered among different buildings that function as small-scale community space. The churches have lost the prominent location like the traditional Western churches which are situated in the town centre with impressive sacred quality acting as the landmark of a place.

The phenomenon has become worse when churches operating social services in the same venue; the domination of the social community towards the *sacred* community has hidden the church identity. Churches simply surrender the *sacred* identity despite there is multi-functional scheme to transform the space from the profane to the sacred uses. Inspite implementation of church design has been adopted progressively, the sacred identity is forfeited because of their focus on attracting newcomers with a contemporary looking church. These two approaches have overlooked the significance of church as the house representing God. In schema one, (see table 1.1) the researcher would like to explain the

relationship of the three levels of representation of church or the three attributes of church as the house of God, as the place for worship, and as the place for the community of believers. Through aesthetic manifestation and human experience from outward to inward layers, this study endeavours to re-affirm the value of sacred identity in spatial design. In this instance, Scripture have frequently been cited to affirm the biblical perspective in this issue. In the literature review, a broaden perspective to investigate about the value of creating sacred identity was presented.

Field research is conducted with parameters generated after the theoretical framework and the findings are categorised according to the theories and concepts coherently. There are some key issues the researcher would like to understand which are the relationship between theology and spatial design; the representation of sacred and contemporary qualities; the transformation of traditional essences (not imitation of styles) to construct the sacred quality; and the sense of belonging and identity of one-flat church especially with social services.

After the literature review and field research, this study opts to generate a design guidelines for the design of church with both theoretical consideration and contextualised applications in Hong Kong one-flat church setting.

From the phenomenon indicated, it is predictable that the academic discussion about church design in Chinese church community is very limited. Based on my literature review in all academic libraries and Christian organisations, there were no reference materials regarding the design of church in Hong Kong. The researcher could only find one book about Asian church. This book was edited by Takenaka, Masao and published in 1995, named *The*

place where God dwell: An introduction to church architecture in Asia. This book was published after the Conference of Asia in Kyoto, Japan by Asian Christian Art Association. One of the aims of the conference was the encouragement of spirituality in areas like architecture, arts, church music and theology. Dr. Takenaka, Masao, professor of theology and social ethics at Doshisha University, Kyoto stated in the introductory article that "We recognise the historical period, the cultural context and the natural environment in which the church lived but we do not wish to imitate the particular style and form." (Takenaka, Masao, 1995, p.9). With the embodiment of this rationale, the author generated some concepts for inspiration, for example he perceived that irregularity is appreciated by Asian concept of beauty. Another concept was that small is beautiful which was generated in consideration of the number of small churches in Asia.

However, the follow up actions in terms of publication is not significant especially in Chinese or Hong Kong circumstances. Needless to say, one could discover in Hong Kong that from 1990's onwards more churches with design could be seen in newly established churches or churches planning to have renovation. But, when one investigates about the rationale behind these churches with design, the theological consideration on church design to represent God is inadequate. When I shared with four professors in two seminaries: Dr. Peter S.C. Chang, Professor in Biblical Studies, China Graduate School of Theology; Dr. Andres S.K. Tang, Professor in Theology, Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary; Dr. Nathan K.K. Ng, Associate Professor in Christian Thought, Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary; and Dr. Desmond C.K. Choi, Assistant Professor in Practical Theology, Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, they

also agreed to my observation findings that the majority of church environments created in Hong Kong seems to be old-fashion and boring. They affirmed my conviction to research on the design of church in flat because most church space exists without professional design consultation and there is a need of a theoretical reflection on this issue. They shared the conviction of this research that spatial design is essential to Christian worship and to the deliverance of sacred identity in a contemporary manner.

When reviewing about church design on books and articles, the researcher has found these literatures mainly focused on Western church context and development, such as architectural perspectives, design concerns and impact of individual church buildings. Whereas, reporting on small churches in densely populated urban environment was rarely seen. One article by Bradford Grant reviewed on churches located in former warehouse which the author named "storefront churches" was the closest case to this thesis. These churches had open interior space with a lack of windows, instead, it was replaced with large display windows. The design principle of this church is "God is not necessarily connected to the physical nature of the place of worship" (Grant Bradford, 2002, p.49). The researcher would like to transform from this submissive attitude into chances for the revelation of God in a limited spatial condition. A theologically valid and aesthetically pleasing sacred church space could be generated under unfavourable conditions.

Another book, "Church Architecture – Building for a Living Faith by Frank Brannach / Walsh, Francis Edward (1932) included a chapter on small church which was dealing with small church building or chapel. He mentioned that flat roof was more cost effective than pointed roof. The focus of this chapter

was about building low-priced church but the atmosphere was still inviting, prayerful and worshipful. This book was published in 1932 and it indicated that sacred church was not necessarily associated with pointed roof or high ceiling. One could discover that a number of modern church buildings which was built at around that period began to use flat ceiling. Loveland & Wheeler concluded that "The horizontality also reflected megachurch people's discovery of an immanent deity" (Loveland & Wheeler, 2003, p.259-260). They indicated that for megachurch which was huge in space did not mean that the design would follow the traditional idea of vertically in church design. In the literature review of this thesis, more analysis will be presented about this issue.

Norman (1990) also concluded that "the emphasis seems to be returning from the large, centralised body to the small, less organised, more intimate group of believers, and above all to the communal experience of those seeking salvation and the knowledge of God." (p.304). One of the reasons for building small churches is to create a better community spirit so that worshippers could experience a better sense of belongings under a smaller congregation size. It meant that the design was representing the immanence of God. This approach is related to the theological idea of whether churches should present the transcendence or the immanence of God spatially.

Among all the topics in literature review, the discussion of representing the transcendence and immanence of God was one of the vital concepts relevant to one-flat church design. When churches are small in space, the representation of the immanence of God is more appropriate. However, it is necessary to clarify here that the decision on representing the immanence of God is not based on physical or social constraints. In the book written by Torgerson, Mark Allen in

2007 named An architecture of immanence: Architecture for worship and ministry today, Torgerson (2007) commented that "the transcendence of God was on decline, and the immanence of God in people was highlighted" (p.12).

As a researcher with background in interior design and pastoral ministry, there is a desire to contribute the knowledge and experience to conduct a research which could generate a deeper reflection in church design related to urban context. This thesis endeavour to fill the gap of church design in urban setting with limited space, especially about the interior design of churches located inside different levels of buildings instead of an architectural project to design an individual church building.

If Christians in the past were continuously searching for contemporary ways to represent God through church designs, what would be the primary concerns for Christians in Hong Kong context nowadays; whether to apply relevant theological standpoint in Church design or simply to adopt design that suits our contemporary situation would remain a query.

If Christian in Western world continues to investigate a relevant representation in church design, how can Chinese Christian react to this phenomenon and escape from this issue? Nikolas Pevsner is credited with the statement that 'the function of the church building is to convert visitors into worshippers' (Fiddes, 1961, p69). This is a very striking statement which is once observed by majority of church builders.

Pastors and church leaders are the ones who have appointed the leadership role. They have the supremacy to educate and influence church members about church design. Through creating dialogue theologically,

pastorally and culturally with pastors or church leaders, this research aims at cultivating church design as one of the essential elements. When Richard Vosko wrote the introduction for the book Architecture for the Gods by Michael Crosbie (2000), he sharply affirmed that "Religious building is a metaphor, extension of religious experience… To serve as a firm foundation of faith and platform for courage and creativity" (p.9) Then, the establishment of a relevant church design for densely populated urban environment is the necessary next step afterwards.

The rationale behind is that in a secular world, one has to use medium secular people familiar with; whereas design is one of the media. However, one is not simply designing for something they are familiar. It is desirable to see one also adopts design elements incorporating religious sense in a contemporary fashion for the creation of sacred identity. Instead, the design is a contemporary approach to create a sacred identity.

In the Chinese Christian community, a re-think about spatial design to deliver the message is noteworthy. Apart from theological discussion, the social issue about contemporary approach will also be discussed. The message to contemporary people is based on ideas they are accustomed to and this thesis is focusing on spatial experience with relevant mood and ambience. It is understood that theologically, some theories interpreted space as secondary in church ministry. A place is sacred because of the presence of the deity and Christians can worship in every place. However, in our contemporary world, spatial representation is significant and people can experience the deity through different senses. Through this research, reflection question for pastors who did not focus on design is whether their approach is a contemporary method to represent the deity or not. It is revealed that in different historical periods, church

builders applied relevant methods to reveal the deity. It is believed that church builders must discover a contemporary way to express their faith and contemporary church design is a kind of creativity granted by the deity. Loveland & Wheeler quoted from McCormick who has delivered a striking statement which was: "Religion is not a thing apart from everyday life and that the church was not a refuge from the world – it was not only in the world but of the world" (McCormick, Designing Worship Centers, cited by Loveland & Wheeler, 2003, p.260).

Through this research, a theological consideration is the most vital concept to be recovered in the design of Hong Kong churches. Theology and church design required more in-depth discussion (Fiddes, 1961**;** Bruggink & Droppers, 1965; Brock, 1985, Torgerson, 2007).

Fiddes (1961) reinforced the investigation between theology and church design and reminded church leaders that Christian education on this topic was required. Bruggink & Droppers (1965) further pinpointed the seriousness of this issue by stating that it was "ashamed when we claim that we are 'reformed according to the Word of God,' but without concern about architecture" (p.4). When church design is theologically based and functionally efficient, it will be a powerful tool to introduce the deity to people and to experience the spiritual message. From the book, "A place of encounter – renewing worship space" by Christopherson (2004), a church space should be planned so that it can build up relationship, represent the Lord, nurture the church community and transform people's life.

1.1.1 Academic Value

The contributions of this research to the academic circle were: firstly, the set-

up of a theoretical foundation to establish the framework of church design in order to search for the representation of church in densely populated urban environment with sacred and contemporary qualities simultaneously; secondly, the presentation of a first-hand database about church design in Hong Kong to understand and analyse from the scenario for further development; thirdly, establishing the design guidelines for church design in limited space with a theoretical standpoint to balance between practical function and symbolic expression; contemporary representation and sacred representation.

Table 1.1: Schema 1: Three Levels of Church Representation
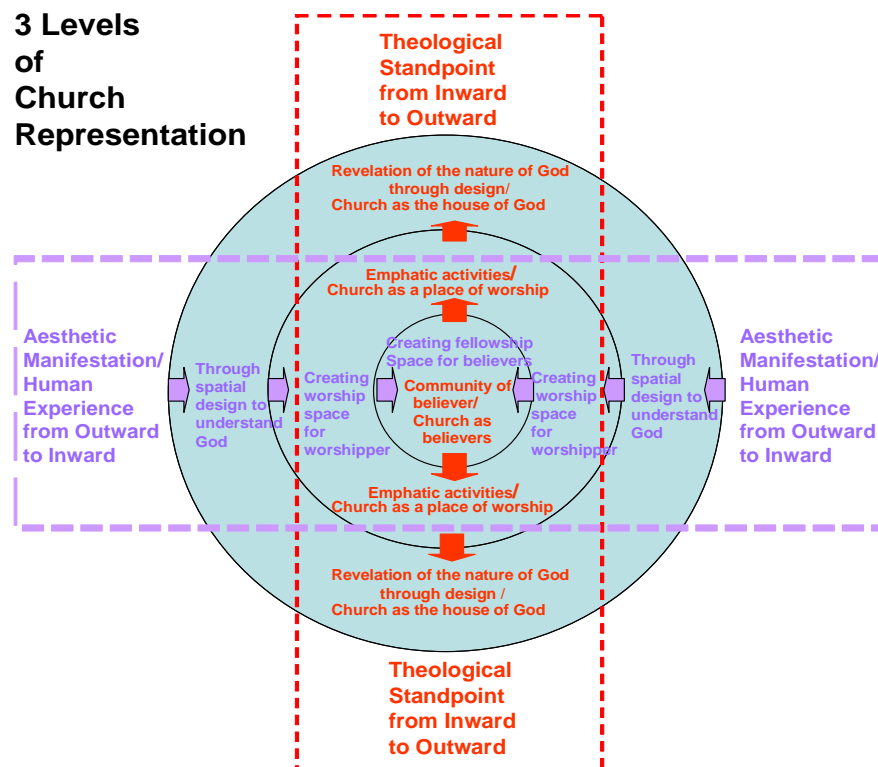
1.2. Schema 1: Significance of Churches as the House to Represent the

Sacred

1.2.1. Schema 1: Three Levels of Church Representation – Church as the House of God; Church as the Place of Worship; and Church as the Community of Believers

Aesthetic manifestation / Human experience from outward to inward layers. When church representation is mentioned, the aesthetic manifestation human could experience usually starts from outward to inward layers. One could experience God firstly through entering the space; by experiencing the mood and atmosphere created, an impression of the kind of a church representing would be given. The spatial setting often inspires people with a first impression; whether such gives the representation of an inviting and cheerful place or a solemn and tranquil place, the users almost always could state the differences immediately. And the users would have disposition about the characteristics of this church and their believers worshipping in this church.

Afterwards, one could participate in an activity and through the acts to understand the church deeper. The understanding process would become more dynamic with human participation and activities such as participating in Sunday service; in which different songs and preaching will be sung and delivered. Through the participation, a person could learn from the verbal mean and have spiritual experience with programme or guidance. However, in order to make the success of the activity, the selected worshipping style needs to create a space with appropriate aesthetic manifestation. In Hong Kong, the style of worship may often contradict with the representation of its spatial setting. For instance, one-flat church in Hong Kong without a liturgical setting such as longitudinal

layout with pews and pointed high ceiling may conduct a liturgical worship. The spatial setting does not facilitate the expression of the worship style. Regarding the spatial setting, the aim is to house maximum capacity of worshippers instead of the appropriate ambience to enhance the worship.

The most inner core is for human contact or the fellowship with believers. Ones would have dialogues and interactive ways to get information and provide a channel for deeper understanding of one another. The value and belief of the church are presented by the community of believers in an intimate manner. This layer of representation usually focuses on spiritual formation and human interaction instead of spatial representation. Hence, the function of a church environment has been limited to the provision of the space suitable for fellowship; the need to create the ambience to facilitate the sharing is then forgotten. It is when space is limited that the provision of lingering space to facilitate more human interaction is of low priority.

A church building with appropriate aesthetic manifestation then becomes a spatial design for people to have spiritual experience, a worship space for worshippers, and a fellowship space for believers. Kilde (2008) clearly pointed out that "…religious buildings of all sorts can provide students of religion a wealth of information about the beliefs and practices of a religious group as well as the relationships among individuals or groups within a particular religious community" (pp.200-201). In this study, the religious building as mentioned is referring to the Protestant church.

Theological standpoint from inward to outward layers. To begin with, when one considers the theological standpoint of the existence of church, it is the innermost quality, which is the church as community of believers, is of high

significance. (From the bible, the book of 1 Corinthians 6:19," Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.") It is certain that the presence of a church is about worshippers gather or unit together. Believers are the body of Christ or temple of the Holy Spirit (From the Bible, the book of 1 Corinthians 3:16, "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?") The building up of the quality of believers is the most vital mission of church (From the Bible, the book of 1 Peter 2:5, "you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.") Every church mission begins with the communion of the saints (see Bonhoeffer's Book (1930/1963) *The communion of saints / a dogmatic inquiry into the sociology of the church* and from the Bible, the book of 1 Corinthians 12:12, "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:11, "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.") A Church has to build up a community of mature and committed believers; consequently, all activities are following this direction.

By and large, the primary aim of Sunday service is arranged for believers to serve God and God demands believers to gather together to worship Him (From the Bible, the Gospel of Luke 4:8, "Jesus answered, 'It is written: Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" John 4:24, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." Psalm 95:6, "Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.") Hence, church is also regarded as a place of worship as indicated in the second layer in the sphere. It is

a vital activity for worshippers to worship God for the sake of God and to edify the community. One could not conduct services by his own (From the Bible, the book of Micah 4:2, "Many nations will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.' The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." Hebrews 10:25, "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.") Worshippers are the community of believers who must gather together to worship God.

Theologically, church as the sacred building to house the presence of God is a superficial interpretation in New Testament time. In New Testament, Christians transcended from the physical boundary to spiritual boundary; hence, God is with every believer and Christians can worship in anywhere. The key of worship is the heart and spirit but not in any specific holy place (From the Bible, the Gospel of John 4:24, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.") However, we could not ignore the significance of a house of God as a building to reveal the nature of God through spatial design. The value in Old Testament to have a holy place to gather people together to worship is still essential. Christians are not limited to places but it does not mean that this kind of places is insignificant. The authenticity in spatial design of church has its origin following directly from the Old Testament time when King Solomon built a temple for God to live (From the Bible, the book of 2 Samuel 7:13, "He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." 1 Kings 6:1, "In the four hundred and eightieth year after the

Israelites had come out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, the second month, he began to build the temple of the Lord." 1 Kings 6:38, "In the eleventh year in the month of Bul, the eighth month, the temple was finished in all its details according to its specifications. He had spent seven years building it.") Architecturally, church as a house of God is a common description to symbolise the sacred quality of church.

> Norman (1990) stated clearly that: Churches have been raised upon sites particularly associated with the miraculous works of saints; they have been placed upon hills and mountains in honour of the heavenly hosts; and they have enclosed the earthly remains of revered men and women… Church buildings have thus acquired symbolical significance. (p.6)

In 2000 years of church history, Church as the house of God has been significant for people to have spiritual experience. The nature of God has been revealed through the design of the church which had been named as the house of God. (see Chirone, 1961; Norman, 1990)

Summary

When theology starts from inward layer, the outermost layer would easily be overlooked and the lack of investigation is prevalent in Chinese Protestant community. This study aims at provoking a platform for the affirmation of the search for a sacred representation in spatial design of the House of God. In search of a sacred representation in our contemporary culture is a vital task of church design today. When human experiences churches from outward to inward layers, the urban context and contemporary representation under secularisation would affect the perception of spatial design of church. Schema two indicates the

relationship between the sacred and the profane or the secular in different levels

with different associated representations (see table 1.2).

Table 1.2: Schema 2: Schematic Diagram of Concepts

1
Ontological separation

2
Theological standpoints

Schematic
Diagram
Of Concepts

3a
Counter representation

3b
Sacred representation

4
Contextualisation of
relationship

Sacred World (Sanctification)

Profane World (Contemporary urban environment & human desire:

Earthy practical issues—beauty, individualism,
mutual support, social network, family, etc.)
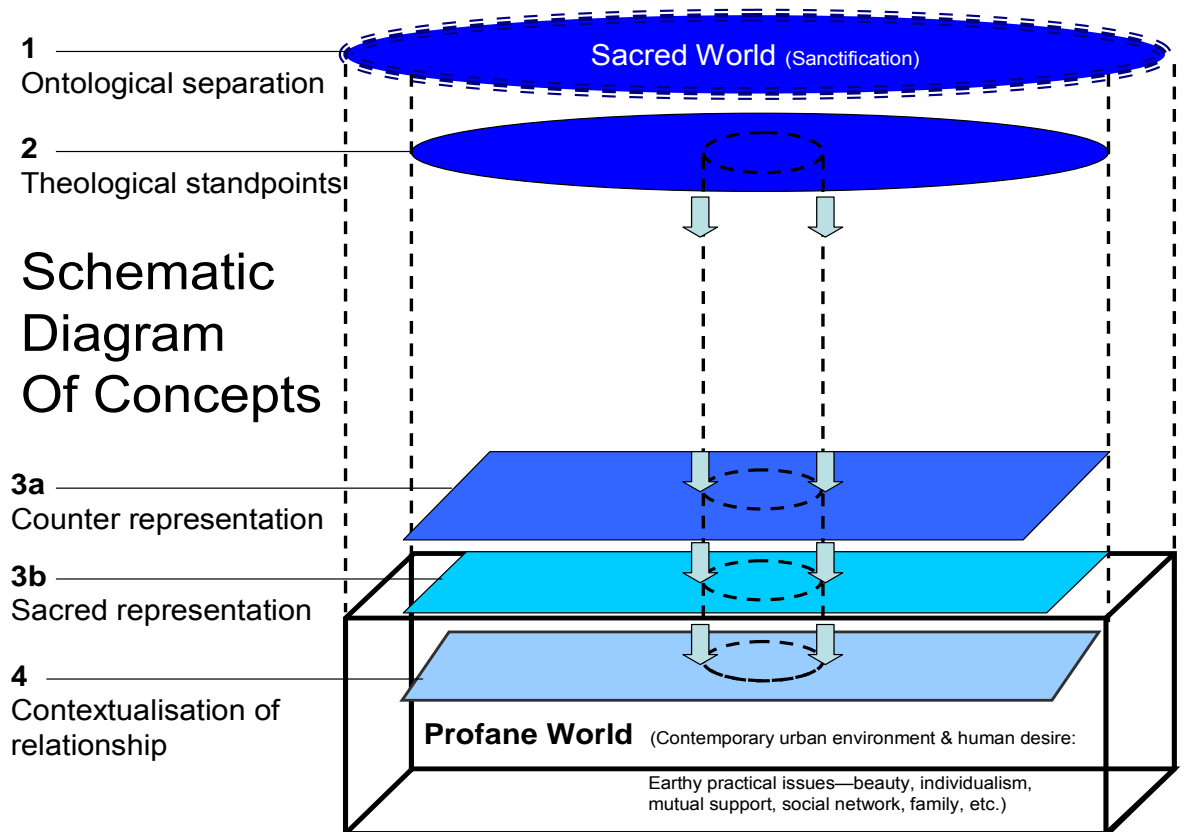
1.3 Schema 2: Church Design with Contemporary and Sacred

Representation to Encounter the Impact of Secularisation

1.3.1. Schema 2: Schematic Diagram of Concepts

1) Ontological separation

(The sacred and the secular)

2) Theological standpoints to represent and proclaim Christ in a secular world

(Reconsider the three attributes related to church as a theological base to church design; theology of church is related to contemporary church design; Western church historical development; modern church design)

3a) Counter representation of the sacred

(Lack of design influenced by secularisation and inherited theology)

3b) Sacred representation

(Merge the separation between the sacred and the profane in a continuum; semiotic; transformation of traditional essence into contemporary implication and quality of symbolic meaning)

4) Contextualisation of relationship

(Contemporary approach with a balance-view between sacred and contemporary representations in densely populated urban environment; theology of worship in dialogue with contextualisation; Convergence style of worship by younger evangelicals)

The schema has shown some related topics under the title of this study and attempts to link them together and conduct the literature review accordingly.

Ontologically, the concept of the sacred and the profane belongs to two separated poles. Historically, the world of the sacred is in a superior position as compared to the world of the profane. In a sacred culture, especially Christianity, believers are advised to sanctify themselves and call apart from secular world (From the Bible, the book of Psalm 84:10, "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.") One could find the qualities of the

profane world contradict with the sacred world such as impurity, chaos and materialism; sacredness is purity, order and spiritualism. The concept of sanctification is the life goal of believers to think spiritually and act in a Godly way (From the Bible, the book of Acts 26:18, "to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me." 1 Corinthians 6:11, "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.") Christians are guided to apply biblical teachings in their everyday life in order to resist profane value and to live a holy life.

This study intends to investigate the possibilities to merge the separation of the sacred and the profane in a continuum through spatial design. When one reviews about the profane world in contemporary urban environment and human desires, it consists of earthy practical issues which could be bridged to the sacred value such as aesthetic concern, mutual support, social network and family value. In terms of design, the practices of applying the contemporary design languages from the profane cultures occur in each period of Western church design history.

Theological Standpoints – Relationship between the Sacred and the Secular

The existence of church is for both believers and non believers. When the issue of proclaiming Christ is launched in a profane culture, Christians need to reconsider the theological standpoint of the separation between the sacred and the profane. Even though the values between the sacred and the profane are completely different, churches in the past also encompassed profane cultures in

their representations. Profane culture is still searching for some inner qualities which could align with spiritual transformation.

Christians need to find a way for non-believers to understand the message and the holiness; hence, different variations in styles and methods in the past appeared. In this study, one puts forward the study of using spatial design elements to communicate with both believers and non-believers and analyse the likeliness of merging the separation between the sacred and the profane world in a continuum through church design. The transformation of historical styles, such as from Romanesque to Gothic style, was closely related to the cultures and technology in that period. Although one could argue that the culture of that time was under the influence of Christianity; the secular development, however, was still significant. In other words, the aesthetic movement, political changes and technology were not solely Christian oriented; churches in the past had been observing the movements and creating relevant expressions to represent the attributes of the Divine. Thus, the concept of the sacred and the profane must be re-evaluated.

Ideally, a sacred place is built for worshippers to celebrate and have spiritual experience, it is a physical structure built in the world (From the Bible, the book of Psalm 5:7, "But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house; in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple." Psalm 42:4, "These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go with the multitude, leading the procession to the house of God, with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng." Psalm 107:32, "Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the council of the elders.") No matter with the use of technology and materials, these places must apply secular ways on their

construction. It must have some resemblance with secular buildings, so that people in the world could understand it, such as the existence of windows; but in secular and sacred buildings, they may have different shapes and details. Profoundly, the importance of symbolic meanings must be introduced before one is able to perceive the differences successfully.

With great concern, most church designs in Hong Kong simply break through the expression of sacredness in order to reduce the threshold fear; hence, some churches only present a very contemporary outlook without incorporating the sacred quality. Sacred representation does not purely follow traditional or contemporary elements. Thus, it is not a matter of rejection of either element but assimilation or contextualisation of both. As the presence of church is for worship, a worshipping space should reflect and meet its purpose at its first glance. This study is dedicated to the finding for a contemporary representation in church spatial design without surrendering its sacred quality. As a result, this study needs to investigate on non-religious subjects, such as the concept of community, urban environment, and contemporary culture to provide an in-depth understanding of our contemporary context.

Issues on Counter-representation of the Scared – Reinforced by Secularisation

The lack of design elements in church design is often considered as old-fashioned whereas adopting merely contemporary design elements is said to be non-sacred. Undeniably, secularisation is the key to this counter-representation. Church leaders want to dilute the differences in order to break the threshold fear. Hence, they would not focus on creating sacred places. Church leaders conduct worships in all sorts of places and they think that attracting newcomers is the

most crucial. As a result, if they apply design, they only create contemporary space, which may however lack sacred identity. In Hong Kong, some churches even build a church without thinking about design. Hong Kong Christians promote the concept of humility and live a simple lifestyle. Some church leaders avoid using budget on superficial things and they regard design as a fashion which is not durable act. Some pastors focus on the preaching of the Word and a place suitable for housing more worshippers is already sufficient. Any other thing could be regarded as ornaments and is a waste of money. When Protestant reinforces the Word of the Holy Bible instead of the liturgy, increased focus was put on listening then seeing. Christians could worship in any place and anywhere available. Symbols or icons are considered leading to idolatry or as luxury. The message from the Word or preaching has overpowered liturgy this phenomenon is reinforced under the influence of secularisation.

Sacred Representation – Transformation of Traditional Essence to Contemporary Representation

When one mentions about sacred representation, churches might only focus on the quality of sacredness which imitates any one traditional style of church design in the past. Apparently, it stands out from profane culture. It has its own sacred identity but is lack of contemporary touch. In other words, it fits with the nature of a church but lacks sensitivity of contemporary cultures. Hence, a lot of historical churches or the tourist attracted to these kinds of famous churches have touched the soul of worshippers or non-believers.

This study proposes to merge the separation of the sacred and the profane into a continuum. The theoretical perspective is based on one leading

contemporary church theory which is formulated by Robert Webber (2002). From historical experiences to contemporary community theory, creating sacred identity in church design relevant to the cultures is necessary. However, transformation of traditional essence is believed to be a vital mean. And the transformation of traditional essence to contemporary representation such as the use of symbols is one of the foci in this study.

Contextualisation of Relationship – Community Approach with Balance Sacred and Contemporary Representation

Contextualisation in both spatial characteristics and contemporary human desires are vital. It is understood that church leaders are acquainted with the everyday problems and struggles in contemporary society to search for relevant messages. However, contextualisation in design approach is neglected. To contextualise in the design of one-flat churches, the sacred representation is challenging with limited space and low ceiling height. This study opts to initiate more discussions and investigations on the design of small churches in a densely populated urban environment and a style of church design relates to our contemporary representation but still with sacred quality. An appropriate sacred representation needs to target human needs and work within limited space. Through literature reviews, firstly, we have to establish the relationship between theology and spatial design. Secondly, we need to search for the quality of sacred church space.

1.4 Chapters Overview

In chapter one, as an introduction, the background, objectives and

academic value of this research were presented. Through the explanation of the two schemas, the theoretical frameworks of this thesis are illustrated especially in a biblical perspective.

In chapter 2, the literature review was presented with the elaboration from the theoretical framework. Through the establishment of the theological position and the review of literature, the academic discussion on church design and related topics are revealed. Firstly, the relationship between theology and spatial design was illustrated with the explanation of the three essential attributes of church and a historical review of Western church design, related theology and spatial design and the representation of the Sacred. This section of the literature review responded to schema one in the introduction in order to affirm the contribution of church design to the worship community and the theological standpoint in schema two.

With the establishment of theology and church design, the following section was the discussion of modern church design as a design project. Church design was analysed in terms of the functional and sacred concerns. Different approaches reflected ways in sacred representation in schema two in the theoretical framework. Schema three was introduced to elaborate on the approaches under the influence of secularization. The aim of this section is to understand the contemporary approaches to express sacred identity. Selected contemporary churches were analysed.

In this regard, the definitions of selected terms were explained.

As indicated in scheme 2, the movement of counter-representation which is one of the results under secularisation. Another significant topic is the trend

related to the cultural and the social perspectives of secularisation. The ontological differences as presented in schema 2 between the sacred and the secular were presented and this research aimed to merge the differences ontologically. In this irreversible scenario under secularisation, the role of church in a secular society was investigated. At this stage, the understanding of Hong Kong church design historically was presented to reflect on the development in Hong Kong churches under secularisation which went to another extreme as compared to the investigation in Western church design.

In order to represent the Sacred under the theme of sacred representation in scheme 2, the application of symbolic meaning was explored. Hence, the application of semiotics and the quality of symbolic meaning was investigated. Even though contemporary representation was the solution, application of traditional essence in a contemporary manner could link the continuity historically in church design.

Ultimately, when one applied the contextualisation of relationship in schema 2 after the clarification of the above topics such as the affirmation of a contemporary approach in church design to create the sacred identity, it was essential to present the nature of worship. From the disappearance of worship space to the influence of worship towards church design was revealed. The theoretical proposition in church design was granted from the theory of younger evangelicals' attitude in the ideas of worship and church. The term 'convergence style of worship' was introduced under younger evangelicals to articulate the contextualised approach to church design. Theology of creation was investigated which was the key concept to apply a contextualised attitude in church design. Ultimately, a sacred and contemporary church design guidelines representing the

deity in the context of a densely populated urban environment was summarised.

In chapter 3, the qualitative research methods applied are presented and explained: with definitions of users and the explanation of qualitative research methods to description of different research methods applied. Other topics discussed in this chapter were the method applied to derive the design guidelines and the procedures in the church design project in the case study.

In chapter 4, the field research report and analysis were presented to systematically test the hypotheses and the research questions. The two research methods: observation and interview were presented independently under a structured content analysis. In schema one, the three attributes of church were applied to categorise the data. The theoretical framework in schema two was developed further to visualise the ideas and to analyse the data such as: the data related to counter-representation and sacred representation; after that the extent in which churches in Hong Kong has contextualised church design in a densely populated urban environment, the discovery of the levels of contemporary and sacred identity, and the establishment of the impression of users have been studied. Through the process, insights have been gained and through the field research, data have been deduced to formulate the guidelines of church design. Ultimately, implications for the hypothesis and research questions have been reflected upon.

In chapter 5, the design guidelines were generated. There were two sections: Theoretical and conceptual considerations; and Practical and functional considerations.

In chapter 6, the case study from research to design is presented. The

researcher applied the design guidelines in the design as a demonstration of the application of the guidelines generated. Different levels of church participants were participated in the research and design process. The field research report; analysis of the field research findings; the design concepts and design reflection were presented accordingly.

In chapter 7, the conclusion addressed the hypothesis and research questions with insights on church design.

1.5 Conclusion:

In this research, it is revealed that when church leaders built new church venues, they generally inclined to apply church design. However, the theological discussion was not vivid. They mainly focused on pastoral consideration and the design brief was to create a pleasant and contemporary image to attract newcomers. The sacred identity was usually neglected; especially when churches operated social services at the same limited space. Through this research, design guidelines have been deducted to facilitate church builders to conduct in-depth analysis before making any decision.

This research has concluded the importance of church design with theological, social and cultural supports. Church environment must be aesthetically oriented and differentiated from secular characters. The approach is to create contemporary sacred church design instead of traditional imitation like the revival styles. However, the sacred identity could not be ignored. Hence, design must follow a contemporary approach to create the sacred identity.

Through this conviction, the searching for sacred identity in densely populated urban environment would be the goal in future scenario: that is under the constraint of limited space, low ceiling height, multi-functional and transformable needs, sacred identity could still be aesthetically and spiritually presented.

In view of all these constraints, deliverance of the immanent side of God is more appropriate in urban church. Church builders were also required to investigate the transformation of traditional essence into a contemporary representation such as the application of symbolic meaning.

Nonetheless, education is essential to convey the symbolic meanings and the spiritual implication of a sacred church space.

In terms of the design process, one must have a theological consideration first so as to lay down the primal direction to govern all other discussions such as the aesthetic and functional considerations.

1.6 Hypothesis:

It was hypothesised that designing church as a small scale community space in densely populated urban environment requires to put a balance between community need and sacred identity with the application of contemporary design.

1.7 Research questions:

Main research question: How to design one-flat churches with physical constraints and multi-functional needs while preserving sacred and contemporary qualities simultaneously?

Six Research Questions:

Theoretical investigation:

1. Is there still a relationship between theology and church design in contemporary setting?

2. What is the role of design in creating a relevant sacred identity of contemporary church?

3. Why is it essential to create a church design with contemporary vocabulary?

Application investigation:

4. What are the considerations for the deliverance of sacred quality through the transformation of traditional essence without literal imitation of traditional elements, into contemporary representation?

5. How to express the immanent nature of God in church design?

6. For churches in densely populated urban environment with spatial limitations, how to deal with functional requirements such as multi-functional scheme and transformable space from sacred to secular usage and vice versa but without surrendering the sacred quality?

1.8 Theoretical Standpoints:

Four theoretical standpoints have been generated in order to summarise from the schemas, hypothesis and research questions:

- Theology and sacred space are inter-related

- Search for the contemporary representation of Christ in Church spatial design without surrendering the sacred identity

- Search for the sacred identity of one-flat church in densely populated urban environment

- Transform from traditional experience to contemporary sacred representation

Chapter 2: Literature Review – Secularisation and Church Design

It is vital that, in Western church history, church design was always associated with theology and aesthetic manifestation for the representation of the Deity. Within nearly 1600 years of church design from Byzantium to Baroque period, the sacred identity was differentiated from the profane culture. Sacred quality was present in every church. The scenario after secularisation with the merge of the separation of the sacred and the profane into a continuum which resulted in the loss of sacred identity. And churches rather put their focus on contemporary quality indeed. When churches were further challenged by secularisation to try new ways to express their faith, they surrendered the sacred identity in order to break the threshold fear. In Western church design, there are three broad outcomes to merge the separation between the sacred and the profane into a continuum, such as churches oriented in a functional approach which were large in scale to house large congregation; churches in simple style named as meetinghouse were reinforced by non-conformist or Puritan to withdraw from contemporary representation and ornamentation; and contemporary communal church to provide ample space for mingling. Within contemporary church design, some churches focus on contemporary quality only and some others create church design with both contemporary and sacred qualities.

This literature review is divided into two sections. The first section is the review of some key topics and the second section is the elaboration of the theoretical position. In the first section, secularisation is the central social factor which influenced church design and the role of church in secular society was one of the key factors which affected church design. Modern church design in a secular society is presented in order to understanding the development and the

different factors, such as multi-purpose church and liturgical movement, which affected church design. Selected modern and contemporary churches were analysed to understand deeper the design elements which contribute to the sacred representation. In this section, the definitions of two key concepts: contemporary and sacred were presented.

2.1 Secularisation

Max Weber was the pioneer who described secularisation of society as "the world is disenchanted" (Gerth & Mills (Eds.), 1998, p.139). It meant that there would be no mysterious circumstances for everything could be understood by calculation and rational thinking.

Dutch theologian C.A. van Peursen stated that the term secularisation referred to "the deliverance of man 'first from religious and then from metaphysical control over his reason and his language'… Secularisation occurs when man turns his attention away from worlds beyond and towards this world and this time" (as cited in Cox, 1966, p.15-16). The term secularisation implies that the sacred is no longer a dominant ideology. Each individual is responsible for his own fate. Bruce (2002) also projected similar comment: "This is a particular instance of the general claim that secularisation entails people becoming self-concious atheists." (p.79). The idea of worlds after death or eternal life is not an ultimate concern. More focuses are put on controlling everyday life opportunities. Pragmatic issues are the key of life, such as career, property, leisure, health and beauty are vital concerns. The term secularisation is closely related to urbanisation and industrialisation. The rise of urbanisation brought the decline of traditional belief or religion. Under urbanisation, dwellers

could reach diversified ideas and information. Cox (1966) highlighted that "Pluralism and tolerance are the children of secularisation" (p.16). It means that the authority of Christianity is no longer a dominate voice. More choices are opened for selection and more diversified messages are circulating.

As a result of the diversified ideas and possibilities of all kinds, provision of choices is a human right to contemporary culture. It is highlighted that there is no rule but only choice. Everyone has the freedom to choose his or her lifestyle and way of life. In the market, variety of commodity under consumerism gives city dwellers the choices of selections. However, the selection of products is deviated from functional purpose to symbolic goods. Products are advertised to address the symbolic value instead of the practical importance. The symbolic value to represent the kind of lifestyle and taste is the key to city dwellers. Every consumer is an individual who can build his or her own desire. Gene Edward Veith (1994) in his book Guide to Contemporary Culture stated that "When we think like consumers, we put ourselves first, picking and choosing what best corresponds to our desires" (p.119). Veith reminded contemporary Christians that we cannot treat the church as what we practise in shopping culture. The church is not to fulfill our needs and to serve members. It is the members who should commit in service to God. People nowadays consume for the surfaces instead of the substance. City dwellers are in search of beauty and fashion. The lifespan of each product is short and always looking for fashionable symbolic products.

Berger and Luckman (1996) pointed to the declining social power of religion in their definition of secularisation as 'the progressive autonomization of societal sectors from the domination of religious meaning and institutions'(as

cited in Bruce, 2002, p.74). Bruce also quoted from Wilson (2002) about the definition of secularisation. When referring to this definition, a list of implications could be deducted: 1) skeptical thinking on religious authority; 2) lesser resources, energy and time on religious matters; 3) question about supernatural experience; and 4) stress on empirical truth. Cox (1966) pointed out that "The rise of urban civilisation and the collapse of traditional religion are the two main hallmarks of our era and are closely related movements" (p.1).

When we come to Post-modern world, the scenario was inter-changed. People tended to search for a spiritual attachment even though their prime goal was not for the chasing of an ultimate truth. Rationality under modern movement was being questioned persistently. Hanna and Wozniak (2001) predicted the emerging trends in contemporary society in the book *Consumer behaviour – An applied approach*, about the changing perceptions of religion. Apart from individual pursuits, such as health, fitness, beauty, gender, personal safety, personalised economy and leisure, the authors claimed the acceptance of religion under Post-modern culture. Under its influence, people had broadened their minds to accept different opportunities. The idea of spirituality was also a fashionable choice and supernatural topics once regarded as irrational are being accepted again. Bruce (2002) stated that "Declining social significance of religion causes a decline in the number of religious people and the extent to which people are religious" (p.3). People were not necessary to surrender under peer pressure or heritage. Individualistic decision making was widely respected and people felt more at ease to try out different experiences. People chose to explore the contemporary world instead of engaging in a commitment, such as Christianity. Taylor (2007) in his book, A Secular Age: … indicated that religion

today was featured by: "its subjectivism, its focus on the self and its wholeness, its emphasis on feeling, has led many to see the new forms of spiritual quest which arise on our society as intrinsically trivial or privatized" (p.508). Taylor also commented that in western culture, people have become spiritual but not religious. People were more individualistic and the approach to spirituality is described as "towards immanent self-concern" by Taylor. The individualistic phenomenon is continuing from Modern to Post-modern period. However, people have become less rational and more spiritual as well as highly feeling driven. Secularisation developed to Post-modern period could be both an advantage and a disadvantage that positively, people were less skeptical towards religion. It was an advantage for people who were not hostile to Christianity and were willing to understand and participate. However, negatively, there arises the diminishing commitment and competition elevated between different ideologies. People may find it harder to devote to Christianity.

Under secularisation, our society has to face different problems. Poplin (1979) summarised succinctly the issues we need to deal with in our modern society: In short, although modern society can offer people the miracles of mass government, mass education, mass production and mass communications, it cannot offer them the security and belongingness that seem to accompany a sense of well-being. Hence the only alternative to the continued spread of alienation in the twentieth century is 'communities small in scale but solid in structure'. (p. 7)

The problem of our mass society is massive and it contrasts with community which is intimate and small in scale. Poplin further explained the limitation of modern society by phrasing Nisbet's expression in *Moral values*

and community that "Our mass society can only perform as a functional boundary to provide the hardware for mankind. Modern society can only satisfy fundamental human desires: living together, working together, experiencing together, being together" (as cited in Poplin, 1979, p. 82). Thus, there is a lack of concern to the in-depth human desires towards physical well-being, social well-being and cultural direction.

On the other hand, Delanty (2003) summarised the significance and nature of community with great insights: "The modern world has not been only the age of liberty, individualism and reason but has also been marked by a penchant for cosy world of community, belonging and solidarity where the individual could feel at home in an otherwise homeless and increasingly insecure world" (p 186).

When Carroll (2007) wrote about secularisation, he quoted from Friedrich Gogarten that "secularisation is a legitimate consequence of Christianity" (p.25). Gogarten suggested three responses to secularisation. Firstly, the rejection of the process of secularisation represented by Kierkegaard, they believed that secularisation destructed Christianity; secondly, the embracement of secularisation which meant the destruction of Christianity as supported by Nietzsche; and thirdly, the reaction supported by Gogarten himself which was the interaction of Christianity and secularisation. Gogarten's work has influenced theological discussion on the reflection on secularisation and Harvey Cox was one of those who elaborate on top of it.

Theologian Harvey Cox has written a book called, "*The secular city: Secularization and urbanization in theological perspective*", which was a seminal publication. Author such as Torgerson (2007) also elaborated the idea of

secularisation from Cox (p18). Harvey Cox (1966) based his discussion on theology to support the affirmative reaction to secularisation. This approach has generated alternative voices and debates by other scholars. However, the rejection to secularisation led to the set back of Christianity to accommodate contemporary culture. The theory of this research is to employ a positive manner towards secular culture in order to merge the separation. Cox (1966) stated that "Far from being something Christians should be against, secularisation represents an authentic consequence of biblical faith. Rather than oppose it, the task of Christians should be to support and nourish it" (p.15). For Cox, secularisation and urbanisation are the phenomenon under historical development. Christian must embrace this as a process and discover secular and contemporary ways to speak about God. When Cox concluded in his book, he drew the inference from Amos Wilder's saying: "If we are to have any transcendence today, even Christian, it must be in and through the secular" (cited in Cox, 1966, p.228).

Bruce (2002) shared similar approach with Cox. He quoted from Fallding (1967) the saying that: "What modern man would need, if he chose to hold on to religion, is not to turn away from secularisation but to baptise its fruits, grafting each innovation back onto the tree of his life and consecrating them all to the service of the whole" (cited in Bruce, 2002, p.359). Theologian Tillich and Bonhoeffer also acknowledged this attitude and their writings contributed in-depth discussion on this theme.

Renowned theologians, such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1930/1963) and Paul Tillich (1987) expressed the need to find a contemporary approach to reach out to the world. As Bonhoeffer contested, churches were encouraged to develop

a secular manner to deliver the message. Hence, a contextualised attitude was essential and Bonhoeffer stated that "we can now let go and immerse ourselves in the new world of the secular city" (as cited in Cox, 1966, p.18). In their modern context under all the challenges, their perspective was that secularisation did not necessarily pose a negative impact to Christianity.

Summary

From Modernism to Post-modernism, evangelical churches went through different transformations under different challenges from secularisation. Robert Webber (2002) succinctly summarised evangelicals into three board streams which are the traditionalist, the pragmatist and the younger evangelical. The traditionists were shaped by the Enlightenment emphasis on reason and science facing post-depression and post-World War II in rebuilding society. It was hoped to build a stable society and opted for security; hence, when changes came after the sixties, they resisted the change and kept up with their traditional ways. The pragmatists revolted against the past which is its institutions and traditions. They were affected by civil rights revolution that they wanted a new world. From late sixties to seventies, people were emotionally driven to reject religions and churches strived for reducing the threshold fear. Evangelical pragmatists searched for new ministries to attract seekers and applied business models. Mega church with market-driven strategy and church growth movement were internationally spread. Younger evangelicals under the influence of Post-modern culture attempted to integrate both traditional and contemporary essence to find a balance. By and large, the separation and the merging of the separation will be

investigated to establish the foundation of the hypothesis about close relationship between church design and contemporary quality.

2.2 Role of Church in a Secular Society

Even though some church leaders decided to counter secularisation by creating sacred buildings following traditional style and continue to focus on religious activities, voices to embrace the challenges under secular culture were influential as well. In a secular city, the message proclaimed by church is usually an alternative one. The most recognisable role of church is to voice out ethnical standard to the trend in secularised society. When considering the church buildings, spiritual experience could be encountered so that one could calm the soul in busy and insecure environment.

Church as a community is to encounter the alienation created by society. After industrialisation, the concept of society was challenging the traditional community spirit. People in cities are often lack of intimate relationships and they are alienated. Relationship of neighbours is alienated and public spaces are replaced by shopping malls. The traditional function of a group of people who own the same identity to gather and live together was diminishing. The community spirit was taken away. In the past, a European village was formulated by a public square for villagers to gather and share ideas. All the essential buildings were located around, such as public hall, cathedral and markets. They were proud of their public square as their landmark; for some rich community, they raised money to build magnificent cathedral to express their wealth and dedication to God. When Christianity became popular in Hong Kong, churches

built their own individual building in a prominent location to identity their existence and to provide both religious activities and daily necessities to the community. Due to limited land and the expansion of Christianity, churches moved to flats inside different levels of buildings and moved in to public housing estates. When churches were established in public housing estates, provision of social services became the prime goal of church to serve the neighbourhood.

2.2.1 Social and Cultural need contributed by Church in Urban Environment

Urban environment provides all kinds of physical well-beings abundantly. Chapman (1996) asserted that, "The built environment plays an important role in enabling people's needs to be met in physical terms"(p. 88) and "the form of the built environment as we experience it exerts important influences upon our enjoyment, range of experiences and, importantly, our opportunities" (p 89). The creation of built environment facilitates the development of the quality of life in an urban environment. Chapman further developed that "The built environment is a manifestation of the culture of the society which creates it. Creativity, innovation and cultural development are vital components of a lively and healthy society" (Chapman, 1996, p 242). Ultimately, urban society as a built environment gives people the convenience in choice and pace and even to an extreme of establishing a 24 – hour society in terms of time. Urban environment also benefits inhabitants in physical comfort, such as providing high technology, variety of services and adequate facilities. Urban environment delivers the physical needs in its full strength; however, different social problems have been evolved, such as alienation and lack of security. Apart from the positive side of built environment on the contribution of physical well-beings, the sociological

concept needs to be investigated in order to reveal the problem and ascertain the contribution of churches in small scale community space.

The call for a feel at home in an insecure world is a desire of human beings. There are different kinds of environment one can engage in, such as working environment, home environment and recreational environment. Obviously, home environment is the most intimate space to feel at home; however, one could not insolate oneself at home without solidarity in a community. Community is also regarded as a source of feeling at home. Hence, community with common ties is indispensable. This is the reason why Delanty (2003) raised numerous possibilities for a sense of belonging, based on religion, nationalism, ethnicity and lifestyle. Our society has to be transformed through a sociological perspective in constructing communities.

In Hong Kong, each community of residence in each public housing estate co-operates with different social services providers to form different small scale communities such as mutual aid committees, kindergarten, child care centre, children and youth integrated services centre, elderly centre, self-studying centre, tutorial centre, family service centre, community service centre, centres providing medical service, counselling service as well as churches. (*Every local organisation under a physical site with services providing to the community are classified as small scale community space*) The existence of each small scale community space would serve as important media to network different groups of people and to enrich their physical well-being, social well-being and cultural direction. Churches place effort to serve the social community. This scenario has also happened to different districts in Hong Kong. The researcher agrees with Delanty (2003) that modern world is not only reinforcing individualism and

liberty but "cosy world of community, belonging and solidarity where the individual could feel at home in an otherwise homeless and increasingly insecure world" (p.186). In other words, mass societies do not give people a sense of belonging, whereas churches as communities always targeting this problem. Davies (1993) clearly presented this idea by stating that **"**Far more people in the western world seek communities of more intimate relationships through membership in a church, some shared spiritual experience based on belief in some other world and shared moral ideals" (p. 2). Situations in Hong Kong churches correspond to Delanty's idea in achieving the sense of belonging. When the significance of church as small scale community space is fortified, the necessity to enriching its function is elevated.

Summary

Traditionally, the role of church was to educate people about spiritual and ethnical needs. In a secular society under secularisation, churches performed diversified functions such as providing social services and establishing community spirit. This shift of function influences the design of church as well. Church as a place for meditation and the awesome atmosphere are optional needs in secular world.

2.3 Classification of Different Modern Church Design

The classification method is following the reactions of church design to modern design in a secular society. From schema two, there are three types of

church representation in relation to contemporary design, sacred design and no design:

A type: Counter-sacred representation (no design or merely contemporary design);

B type: Sacred representation;

C type: Contextualisation of relationship (Balance between sacred and contemporary quality).

Church which mainly operates church activity

1. C type: Contemporary technology but traditional setting – sacred and contemporary technologically, lack of investigation of new style and aesthetic breakthrough.

2. A type: Functionalism – also named as banal architecture, non-sacred, contemporary, mainly aim at housing more people.

3. B type: Non-conformist / meeting place – minimum concern of contemporary elements, sacred in simple style, not traditional.

4. B and C types: Liturgical revival church – sacred, contemporary approach is varying according to different church leaders.

5. A type: Mega church – mainly contemporary, sacred representation is minimum.

6. B type: Traditional revival – sacred but not contemporary

7. C type: Contemporary churches with sacred identity – not too huge, immanence, welcoming, contextualise.

Church which operates both church and communal activities

8. A type: Communal church – break the threshold fear, mainly contemporary, sacred representation is not prominent architecturally.

9. A type: Communal church with multi-purpose hall – break the threshold fear, create a multi-functional hall instead of a sanctuary, lack of sacred representation, contemporary.

The scenario in Hong Kong has become serious when churches relocated to densely flats. A large number of churches surrendered both the sacred and the contemporary qualities. The influence by secularisation brings to two distinctive streams. On the one hand, some churches simply create a monotonous environment with minimum symbolic meanings in order to be differentiated from contemporary representation; on the other hand, churches are designed in a contemporary appearance that appeals to newcomers and the idea of social community is reinforced whereas the sacred identity is downplayed.

Table: 2.1 The Relationship of the Three Types of church Representation with the Research Questions:

Church representation	Reaction in Church Design	Direction of Investigation	Research Question
Counter-sacred representation	No design, not contemporary	Establish the importance of design; relationship between theology and design	1. Is there still a relationship between theology and church design in contemporary setting? 2. What is the role of design in creating a relevant sacred identity of contemporary church?
Counter-sacred representation	Mainly contemporary	Establish the relationship between theology and design	1. Is there still a relationship between theology and church design in contemporary setting? 3. Why is it essential to create a church design with contemporary vocabulary?
Sacred representation	Mainly sacred but not contemporary	Establish the importance of contemporary representation	4. What are the considerations for the deliverance of sacred quality through the transformation of traditional essence without literal

			imitation of traditional elements, into contemporary representation?
Sacred and contemporary representation	Balance between sacred and contemporary quality	Establish the contextualisation of relationship	5. How to express the immanent nature of God in church design? 6. For churches in densely populated urban environment with spatial limitations, how to deal with functional requirements such as multi-functional scheme and transformable space from sacred to secular usage and vice versa but without surrendering the sacred quality?

2.4 Modern Church Design

After reviewing a collection of books related to modern church design, the researcher is going to evaluate them in the following aspects.

1) In classification of the publication years to understand the development of church design

2) Social need and multi-purpose church

3) Immanence and house of the people of God

4) Liturgical movement

5) Modern and contemporary church design analysis including design elements, functional and spiritual concerns

6) Summary: Standards and directions indicated for the design of modern churches

2.4.1 In classification of the publication years to understand the development of church design

Earliest books about modern church design which the researcher could access were published in the 1932. Walsh, Francis Edward (1932) named the book, *Church architecture: Building for a living faith*. As stated in the introduction, the purpose of this book was to borrow traditional essence into the needs and opportunities of contemporary church design. When church design faced modern approach with geometric forms and simple lines, the author would like to remind designers that symbolism was significant and the application of art could resolve the streamline and manmade effect with a touch of natural elements. The author believed that away from nature was away from God. Walsh (1932) stated that "To make certain of the suggestion of the worship of God there must be added references, in symbolic design and pictures, that will call to mind the presence of God and the history and tradition of His Church" (p193). The author aimed at promoting a respect of tradition but the effect was still modern. He would like to influence church builders to search for appropriate designs to represent the present instead of turning back to the historical styles to establish the identity. By doing this, churches could demonstrate to the people that the message of Christianity was up-to-date and responsive to modern life.

From 1950's onwards, more books on church design were published. When church design encountered modern movement, the application of modern technology into building churches was practised constantly. Churches were built by cast iron and concrete such as Notre Dame du Raincy by August Perret (interior space is still following a traditional approach). In terms of the space and form, a significant outburst was implied which was from traditional ornamental expression to simple geometric forms. Some architects started to breakthrough

from pointed ceiling to flat roof such as Unity Temple by Frank Lloyd Wright and IIT Chapel by Mies Van Der Rohe.

2.4.2 Social need and multi-purpose church

The key function of a church is to house worshippers to worship the deity (Victor Fiddes, 1961; Bie´ler, Andre´.,1965; Debuyst, F., 1968; White, James 1988; D. Foy Christopherson, 2004, p.20). In modern church design, one could discover that a number of churches were designed to house as many people as possible. As described in the book, *Sacred power sacred space*, church looked like a theatre than a church; not approaching the liturgical or theological requirements (Kilde, 2008, p.155). The functional task was satisfied but the space lacked sacred quality. Actually, when churches became dual-purposes, the sacred identity faced great challenges. When more and more satellite towns or new communities were built, dual-purposes churches were the trend to solve the diversified needs in the community. 1950's and 1960's were the peak periods of the so-called "multi-purpose" space. In relation with massive urban development, named as "satellite towns", the Church decided to build buildings not solely dedicated for religious activities but for variable use (Schwebel, 1994). Under secularisation, religious activities were not the prime need and they were replaced by different individualistic and social concerns.

When the role of church had been changed from the provision of sacred activity to different social activities, the spatial usage was changed drastically. Church needed to hold social activities such as sports activities and dinner parties. The practical function of church needed to fulfill diversified activities. A dual-purpose hall was implied and a transformation from sacred to secular nature and

vice versa was happened weekly. Educational, social and recreational requirement are significant concerns (Fiddes, 1961; Sixty-post war churches,1956; Hayes, B.,1983; Smith, 1972). Sixty-post war churches illustrated the difficulties in combining sacred and secular activities in one building. Architect Sovik promoted the design of a "centrum" for the hall of church in order to serve for different functions with transformable setting. Sovik perceived that church design could not simply searching for the sacred quality for it might hinder non-believers to use the space. Whereas, church building must be able to serve the community and the space was opened for other non-religious usages. In this circumstance, churches were reinforced to contribute to the society through social services. The sense of community in local neighborhood was developed through participation of social activities. Secularisation is the key to this shift of ministry and it will be reviewed in the coming section.

In terms of developing ambience, hospitality became the key. A welcoming entrance with minimum sacred denotation could break the threshold fear of entering a sacred church. Some church leaders decided to build church buildings with subtle sacred appearance. It meant that architecturally, the symbolic elements were not outstanding and the differences of church buildings between other secular buildings were not significantly profound.

Church builders gave up the sacred identity so that the church space itself did not suggest any religious atmosphere with no fixed sacred symbols and liturgical furniture. The space was designed so that it was flexible enough to hold all kinds of activities from dance functions to dinner gathering or meetings. Their rationale behind was to deliver "the whole multiplicity of the forms of 'communication of the Gospel'" (Schwebel,1994, p13). It meant that the church

building as a vessel for the communication of the Gospel was not merely providing worship activity but all kinds of community-oriented functions could be held. The mentality of inviting different non-religious activities to be held in church building was equally gospel-oriented as compared to religious activities. As stated by Schwebel, "the concept of 'church existing for others,' as advocated by Bonhoeffer and others" (Schwebel, 1994, p13) was a theological rationale to motivate this kind of non-sacred representation of church building.

At the Bad Boll conference on church architecture, Eduard Schweizer and Werner Simpfendorfer, two keynote speakers from the theological perspective to illustrate the theoretical principle to support non-sacred representation of church building. The message was elaborated from the book of Roman 12:1ff. and the book of first Peter 2:8-3:9 that "worship" and "every-day" are closely connected. By this fundamental principle, everything is considered holy and the inherited dichotomy of the sacred and the secular should be eliminated. Werner Simpfendorfer stated that "In our secularised world, the life of worship as profane opens up a new perspective on the unity between the congregation's everyday life and its meeting for worship" (Werner, 1994, minutes in Bad Boll conference, cited by Schwebel, 1994, p.14). This approach was mission-oriented and it was termed also as "sanctification of the world". Hence, worship was interpreted as a deepening relationship to the world and the implication architecturally was to build church buildings for multiple usages. Church was described as "being a church for others".

However, the theological position could not gain the support of worshippers. A research project conducted by the Institute for Contemporary Church Architecture and Art reviewed that 17 parish centres with multi-purpose

buildings had conducted different alterations to establish the sacred identity instead. In an anthropological point of view, the congregations of different multi-purpose churches preferred a church space with a sense of identity. Schwebel (1994) stated that the congregations preferred "the liturgical room must be more precious, more valued, than the rest of the rooms"(p.18). As a result, Schwebel deduced three functions in anthropological terms to guide the design of church. The three headings are: "the guarantee of protection; the structuring and ordering of life-process; the statement of values" (p.21). The second point about the structuring and ordering of life-process indicated that different spaces must have different characters in order to fit with the diversity of life-events. Hence, a church with sacred quality is undeniable and the concept of multi-purpose church with design ignoring the sacred representation could not fulfill the need of humankind.

This approach was supported by a theologian John G. Davis (1968) who wrote the book "The Secular Use of Church Buildings". He was seeking to build relationship between secular culture and church design; in which a multipurpose approach to church design is the appropriate direction. The book "Sixty Post-war Churches" also described the dual-purpose architecture as "warm, comfortable, easily maintained and 'not too churchy'" (p.7). The researcher would like to break through from the non-sacred representation and reinforce the sacred representation of church building in whatever circumstances.

The concept of multipurpose church was also related to the concept of immanence and to build a house of the people of God as compared to the concept of the house of God. The house of God denoted a transcendent approach and the house of the people of God pictured an immanent atmosphere.

2.4.3 Immanence and house of the people of God

When Torgerson (2007) discussed about nourishing the context for immanence, he borrowed from different scholars about their supports toward multi-purpose church based on the theology of breaking the dichotomy of the sacred and the secular. In the sub-section 'The effort to relate faith to the secular world', Torgerson illustrated that Liberal theology intentionally or unintentionally influenced church design on the immanence of God. Torgerson elaborated primarily on theologian Dietrich Bonheffer (1906-1945) who developed his theology from the person of Christ to searching for language relevant to secular humanity. Then, he introduced Bishop John A.T. Robinson (1919-1983) who believed that "the Christian faith had the potential to break down the artificial distinction between 'sacred' and 'secular'" (Torgerson, 2007, p.17). Roberson was inspired by famous theologians, such as Dietrich Bonheffer, Paul Tillich (1886-1965) and Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976). The researcher would explain further in later chapter about the community spirit delivered by Dietrich Bonheffer and the church design direction reinforced by Paul Tillich.

Another scholar who has focused on the topic of church as the house of the people of God was Gibbons, Robin (2006) in his book, *House of God: House of the people of God: A study of Christian liturgical space.* The reason for describing church as the house of the people of God is based on the activities of the people of God in worship. The emergence of this theme is also related to the ecumenical movement and liturgical movement (Torgerson, 2007; Doorly, 2007; Seasoltz, 1963; White, 1964; and Victor Fiddes, 1961). Victor Fiddes pointed out that a church should develop "a close relationship between minister and people

and the intimacy between the people and the liturgy and not just between people and people" (p.72). It echoed with theologian Rahner who reinforced "engagement by all participants. No one in the room is a spectator. The altar belongs to everyone and is not located at one end of the building" (Vosko, 2006, p.43). This approach aimed at creating a church as the living room of the family of God so that worshippers could feel at home and no one was a stranger at home. Norman (1990) also mentioned the emphasis on community and he stated that "They are halls for the assembly of the 'People of God'" (p.291). It is revealed that the immanent quality is more favourable for contemporary church design.

2.4.4 Liturgical movement

Liturgical movement is another key milestone in modern church design (Hammond, 1961; Maguire & Murray, 1965; Turner, 1979; Debuyst, 1968). Through this movement at around 1960's, church leaders started to concern about the participation of all worshippers and the eye contact of clergy and layman. It implies that the pulpit has been moved closer to the congregation and the nave of the newly built church was not necessarily longitudinal in shape, like the traditional ones, with one end as the altar. Church building with a circular layout plan became popular. Fiddes (1961) delivered an insightful comment: "The design should be such that the congregation is caught in the matrix of the liturgy and cannot easily think of themselves as merely audience. This is the priesthood of all believers" (p.78). This kind of proclamation with a statement to indicate "the priesthood of all believers" was implying that theology is the corner stone of this kind of church design transformation. When church leaders realise

the priesthood of all believers as the core theological message, they transform the liturgy accordingly and evolve the church design scheme as well.

The fundamental purpose of church is to perform liturgy (Hammond,1961; Bruggink & Droppers, 1965; Heathcote, 2007). When Bruggink & Droppers (1965) commented that "liturgy is theology in action, so architecture is theology in material structure" (p.23), they would like to deliver a message that both liturgy and church design were theologically oriented. When liturgy influenced church design, it meant that theology was taken into consideration. Church design was governed by theology and then liturgy. Hence, the prime discussion before any functional consideration is theological reflection.

2.4.5 Contemporary Church Design Analysis

Selected modern and contemporary churches

1) Notre Dame du Haut, Ronchamp Church by Le Corbusier (Modernism pioneer, majority of books about modern church design described the design of this church)

2) Unity Temple by Frank Lloyd Wright (Modernism pioneer, breakthrough in church design)

3) IIT Chapel by Mies Van Der Rohe (Modernism pioneer, International style, small size, majority of books about modern church design described the design of this church)

4) Evry Church by Mario Botta (Contemporary church building, renowned architect in church design)

5) Church of the Light by Tadao Ando (Asian, smaller size)

6) Tokyo Church of Christ by Fumihiko Maki (small church)

Field visits of small churches in Hotel with contemporary design (representation of the sacred in hotel should be remarkable for outsiders as well; a semiotic representation following strong convention in order to be recognised by all people the quality of church ambience)

7) Chapel in Setre Hotel, Kobe by Ryuichi Ashizawa (Contemporary church in Asian, award winner)

8) Chapel in Grand Hyatt Hotel, Kyoto by Super Tomato

9) Chapel in Grand Hyatt Hotel, Ronpoggi, Tokyo by Super Tomato

10) Chapel on the Water in Hotel, Hokkaido by Tadao Ando

11) Chapel in Mount Rokko Hotel, Kobe by Tadao Ando

Selection criteria:

Three of the selected churches are recognised as the representatives of modern churches. Two churches are designed by contemporary world renowned architects. From churches designed by pioneers of modern architecture to churches designed by contemporary Asian architects, these chosen examples had been built with breakthrough from traditional styles. They searched for new forms and expressions to represent the deity. In terms of the interior space, a breakthrough from traditional liturgical churches was vital; such as, the ceilings were not pointed and the layout floor plans were not longitudinal as well. The researcher would like to understand how some designs transformed from traditional essence to contemporary representation.

All selected churches have been visited by the researcher. The researcher reviewed them through dialogue with the descriptions from literatures.

Contents in the analysis:

In order to understand the representation of sacredness in church design, the researcher divided the elements into the following items:

In terms of areas, how the design reveals the sacred identity especially through contemporary vocabularies:

1) Architectural features/ Outer appearance

2) Progression of space or the spiritual path (if any)

3) Entrance

4) Interior (layout, mood, ceiling, furniture…)

Practical Function

5) Functions

Symbolic expression / Thematic concepts

6) Theology

7) Three attributes of church (summaries of representation from literatures)

Transformation from traditional essence:

a. Use of lighting (both natural and artificial)

b. Use of symbolic meaning

c. Spiritual path (refer to progression of space in areas section)

Remarks about different functions of a church

Fiddes (1961) stated that "The building is functional also in terms of its witness to the world" (p.114). Brock (1985) indicated that "The chief function of any church building is to speak about God" (p.5). From these two statements, functions of church buildings focused on the revelation of the Deity. The symbolic message from a church building acts as the witness to be shown to every one in the world. One could acknowledge that this is a kind of symbolic

expression. When Susann Vihma (1995) discussed about the functions of products, she differentiated functions into different categories: 1) Practical functions; and 2) Product language functions: 2.1. formal and aesthetic functions; 2.2. sign functions: 2.2a indicating function 2.2b symbol function (p.39). This analysis inspired the researcher to follow this approach to analyse church design into two main categories:1) practical functions; and 2) sacred and symbolic expressions.

Notre Dame du Haut, Ronchamp Church by Le Corbusier
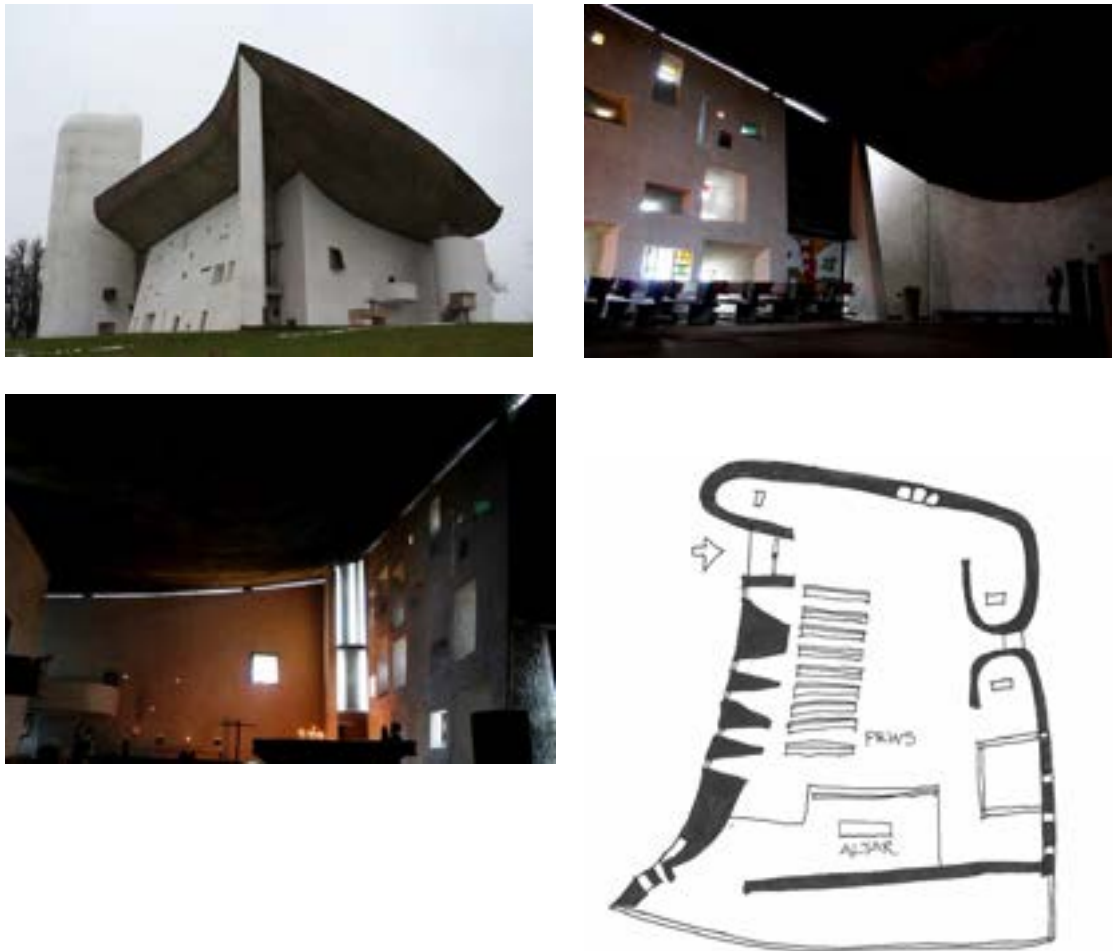
Figure 2.1 Notre Dame du Haut, Ronchamp Church

1) Architectural features/ Outer appearance: Ronchamp chapel is regarded as a one of a kind art piece in modern church design. As it is located in the top of a hill, the unique form is very eye-catching and prominent. Like traditional church, tower is built. White plastering is applied on the walls, contrasts with the dark grey concrete rooftop.

2) Progression of space or the spiritual path (if any): There is a large lawn surrounding the chapel with path leads to the main entrance.

3) Entrance: Main entrance located in the south with modern colourful painting on the door, contrasts with the white plastering wall surfaces and the concrete finishes façade on top of the entrance door.

4) Interior (layout, mood, ceiling, furniture…): As a pilgrimage chapel, the layout satisfies the liturgical requirement. The creation of a meditative atmosphere is essential. Through modern design to create the required sacred quality. A curve and dark ceiling is built with light penetrating from the gap between the south wall. Use of pews to enhance the worship nature instead of stackable chairs.

Practical Function

5) Functions: This is a pilgrimage church and the prime function is a worship space. There is an outdoor altar for gathering of pilgrims in special occasions.

Symbolic expression / Thematic concepts

6) Theology: As a liturgical space, the sacred identity is strong with mystical quality.

7) Three attributes of church (summaries of representation from literatures): Mainly as a house of God and a place for worship.

Transformation from traditional essence:

    a. Use of lighting (both natural and artificial): tactfully manipulate natural lighting to penetrate inside.

    b. Use of symbolic meaning: architectural form symbolises a nun hat; through paintings and stained glass to reveal of symbolic power of light from the Deity.

Unity Temple by Frank Lloyd Wright
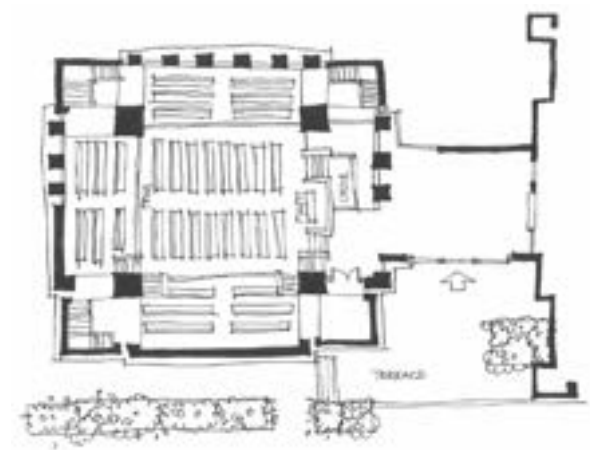
Figure 2.2 Unity Temple

1) Architectural features/ Outer appearance: From exterior, this church is not prominent as a church building. There are some columns in the upper part of the exterior wall to signify the sophisticated nature.

2) Progression of space or the spiritual path (if any): A narrow path leads to a small front yard where the entrance is located. When one enters, there is a hall to separate the worship space in the left with the multi-functional hall in the right. The spiritual path before one enters the worship space is through narrow staircase and corridor.

3) Entrance: The entrance combines with three pairs of double swing doors. The designer applied horizontal treatment instead of the verticality in traditional church design.

4) Interior (layout, mood, ceiling, furniture…): A layout plan is square in shape instead of the traditional rectangular longitudinal plan. Natural Lighting penetrates from the ceiling and the upper windows through geometric pattern stained glass. The lighting effect draws worshippers to lift up their eyes and it is reinforced by the vertical lines in columns and wall pattern behind altar. Light fixtures also hang down from ceiling to add more vertical elements. Gallery is built, which is a style under the influence of Protestant movement, to house more worshippers without surrendering better eye contacts with preachers. Because there is a multi-functional hall, worship space is dedicated solely for worship. Use of pews instead of stackable chairs to enhance the worship nature. With the application of simple geometric patterns in church design.

Practical Function

5) Functions: With ample space for other non-worship activities in a multi-functional hall, the dilemma between practical function and sacred function is eliminated.

Symbolic expression / Thematic concepts

6) Theology: In search of contemporary and sacred representation.

7) Three attributes of church (summaries of representation from literatures): this is a superior example with balanced consideration on the three attributes of church. As a house of God, the sacred effect to represent God is abundant; as a place for worship, the worship hall is well defined and fit for the preaching of the Word; as a community space, there is ample spaces for fellowship and mingling and a multi-functional hall for different activities.

Transformation from traditional essence:

    a. Use of lighting (both natural and artificial): a very tactful use of both natural and artificial lighting.

    b. Use of symbolic meaning: no prominent symbols, the cross is not located in the altar.

IIT Chapel by Mies Van Der Rohe

Figure 2.3 IIT Chapel (Retrieved on 10 March, 2011, http://www.danda.be/gallery/iit_chapel/
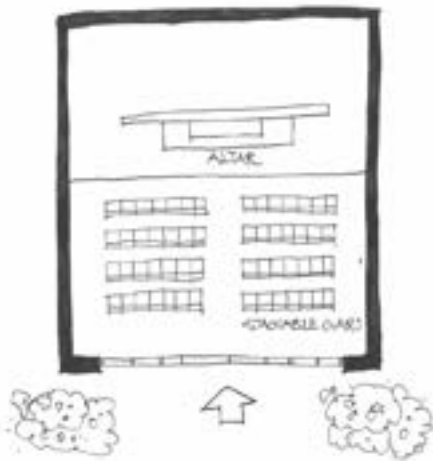
Figure 2.3 IIT Chapel

1) Architectural features/ Outer appearance: A simple box shape building with clear glass panel and glass door as the façade. An international style with form follows function approach.

2) Progression of space or the spiritual path (if any): No spiritual path is designed.

3) Entrance: A welcoming entrance with clear glass

4) Interior (layout, mood, ceiling, furniture…): A very simple layout like a multi-functional hall. As a functional space, no added ornament and the ceiling is flat. The altar is designed with a curtain hanging from ceiling level down to the floor as the backdrop and a cross in front. Liturgical furniture is movable.

Practical Function

5) Functions: As a chapel in university, this worship space is multi-functional for different activities.

Symbolic expression / Thematic concepts

6) Theology: This design is oriented from modern movement to create a form follows function worship space.

7) Three attributes of church (summaries of representation from literatures):

This is a chapel to provide a worship space in university. The quality as a house of God is not outstanding. As a multi-functional hall and enough outdoor spaces for mingling and different activities, the community sense can be developed easily.

Transformation from traditional essence:

    a. Use of lighting (both natural and artificial): General lighting from ceiling and lighting penetrate from the glass façade.

    b. Use of symbolic meaning: Very minimum, simply the cross in the altar area.

Evry Church by Mario Botta

Figure 2.4 Evry Church
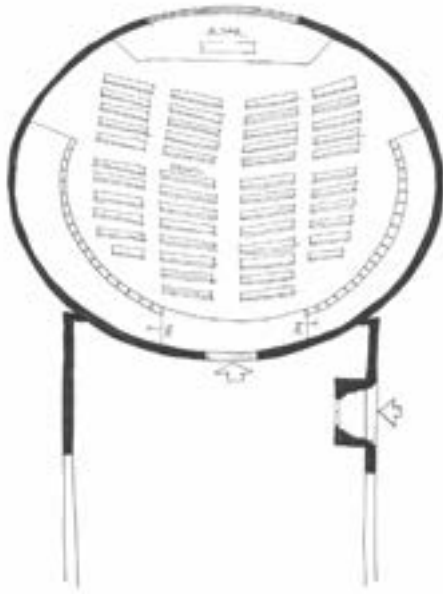
Figure 2.4 Evry Church

1) Architectural features/ Outer appearance: The church is located in the middle of an arcade. The creation of a large cylinder form as the worship building with a cross on top and plants in the rooftop is very prominent. The use of reddish brick is outstanding as compared to the surroundings.

2) Progression of space or the spiritual path (if any): The spiritual path leads you to follow the building perimeter to the façade; when one enters the building, the paths are on the two sides, following the ramp down to the worship hall.

3) Entrance: A grand entrance is designed with a large geometric porch feature.

4) Interior (layout, mood, ceiling, furniture…): The use of lighting is impressive such as the skylight from ceiling and the translucent semi-circular panel in the altar. As a worship space without the need of multi-functional concern, the pews are symbolic elements to enrich the sacred quality. The semi-circular altar creates a welcoming centre of focus.

Practical Function

    5) Functions: This is a church with ample spaces for different activities; worship space is not necessary to be a multi-functional hall.

Symbolic expression / Thematic concepts

    6) Theology: The intention of creating a sacred space with contemporary vocabulary is well presented.

    7) Three attributes of church (summaries of representation from literatures): This is also an example with a well balance in the three attributes.

Transformation from traditional essence:

        a. Use of lighting (both natural and artificial): Lighting becomes the most striking element in this design. No matter the use of natural lighting is impressive, the combination of different artificial lighting effect also contributes to the sacred ambience.

        b. Use of symbolic meaning: There are many symbolic elements one can discover such as, Virgin Mary portrait, the cross, candles, and stations of crucifixion. There are plenty of elements to suggest the build up of this church by the contribution of each individual in the community such as the bricks to create the wall patterns and the grid in the pews.

Church of the Light by Tadao Ando
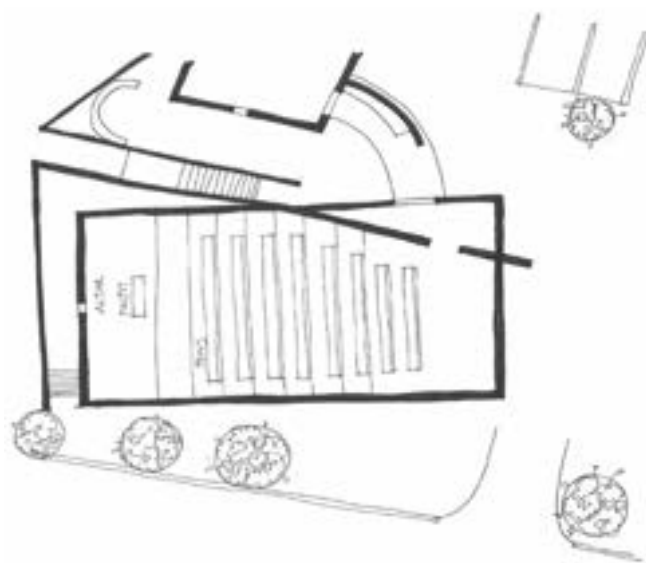
Figure 2.5 Church of the Light

1) Architectural features/ Outer appearance: The building is a rectangular box with a penetrating wall to form the entrance

2) Progression of space or the spiritual path (if any): The spiritual path commences from a small path with greeneries on both sides. There is a diagonal wall which separates the entry hall from the sanctuary, guiding the worshipper to turn 180 degrees upon entering the building to face the altar.

3) Entrance: Entrance formed by the penetrating wall to create a narrow entrance to alert worshippers that they are entering a sacred space.

4) Interior (layout, mood, ceiling, furniture…): There is a change in atmosphere when one enters the sanctuary which is from gloomy to light. A simple geometrical form of cold concrete which contrasts with the warm wooden furniture and the light to create a sacred space of purity and tranquility. By the use of simple form, monotone colour, subtle pattern and raw texture, the use of light penetrating through the cruciform slot becomes very prominent.

   The Sunday School Block on the other side of the enclosed courtyard facing the entrance to the sanctuary. By the use of slots to let light in and to integrate with greenery outside, the interior and the exterior is connected. The architect carefully opened windows to act as picture frames to the exterior.

   The semi-enclosed courtyard is a wonderful place for fellowship after service and for contemplation.

Practical Function

5) Functions: The sanctuary is solely dedicated for worship. The Sunday school block can be served for teaching and small group activities. The

courtyard and outdoor spaces are ideal for chatting before and after activities.

Symbolic expression / Thematic concepts

6) Theology: A symbolic representation of a sacred church is presented.

7) Three attributes of church (summaries of representation from literatures): This is also an example with a well balance in the three attributes.

Transformation from traditional essence:

   a. Use of lighting (both natural and artificial): It is natural light that establishes the Christian icon through a cruciform aperture lit into the end wall of the church

   b. Use of symbolic meaning: A very strong image of the light is presented.

Tokyo Church of Christ by Fumihiko Maki

Figure 2.6 Tokyo Church of Christ
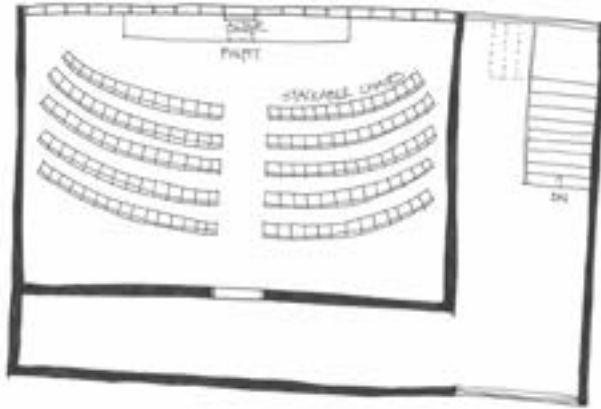
Figure 2.6 Tokyo Church of Christ

1) Architectural features/ Outer appearance: From exterior, the curtain wall façade cannot signify the character of a sacred Christian church. There is a cross located near the rooftop area at one side of the building. However, the tree in front blocks people from seeing the complete cross.

2) Progression of space or the spiritual path (if any): Because the building is located along a busy road with no front yard, the spiritual path begins from the entrance of the building, the walks upstairs and turn 90 degree to the entrance of the worship space.

3) Entrance: Entrance is set back from the building façade and is set in a slight angle. There are two sets of double swing doors from the wooden swing door to the clear glass swing door.

4) Interior (layout, mood, ceiling, furniture…): The most impressive effect is the translucent glass panel behind altar. To match with the contemporary touch, the cross is presented in a fabric panel. There are pendant lamps hanging from the ceiling to symbolise different Christians doing witness in different corners. The worship hall is filled with sacred quality. However, the hall is a multi-functional one; through the use of stackable chairs, the hall can perform different activities.

Practical Function

5) Functions: As a church with ample space, both sacred and social purposes can be balanced. The multi-functional hall can still retain the sacred quality as a worship space.

Symbolic expression / Thematic concepts

6) Theology: As an evangelical church focuses on the cross and the preaching, the square layout with the pulpit in the middle is a perfect arrangement.

7) Three attributes of church (summaries of representation from literatures): a balanced representation is achieved.

Transformation from traditional essence:

a. Use of lighting (both natural and artificial): The translucent glass wall to let worshippers experience the light from God enters the church is a striking effect. In addition with the pendant lamps and the light slot on the two sides of the ceiling, both natural and artificial lightings are carefully articulated.

b. Use of symbolic meaning: The grid pattern in the glass panel symbolise the build up of the church by the community of believers. The large scale cross behind the pulpit symbolise the Word of God to illuminate the preaching.

Exploration of the sacred representation through chapels in hotels

For chapels in hotels, the users may not be church goers; hence, symbolic messages must be commonly recognised. It is interesting that when

they present a contemporary image of church design, what are the prominent symbols or church elements to create the sacred church atmosphere?

Chapel in Setre Hotel, Kobe by Ryuichi Ashizawa
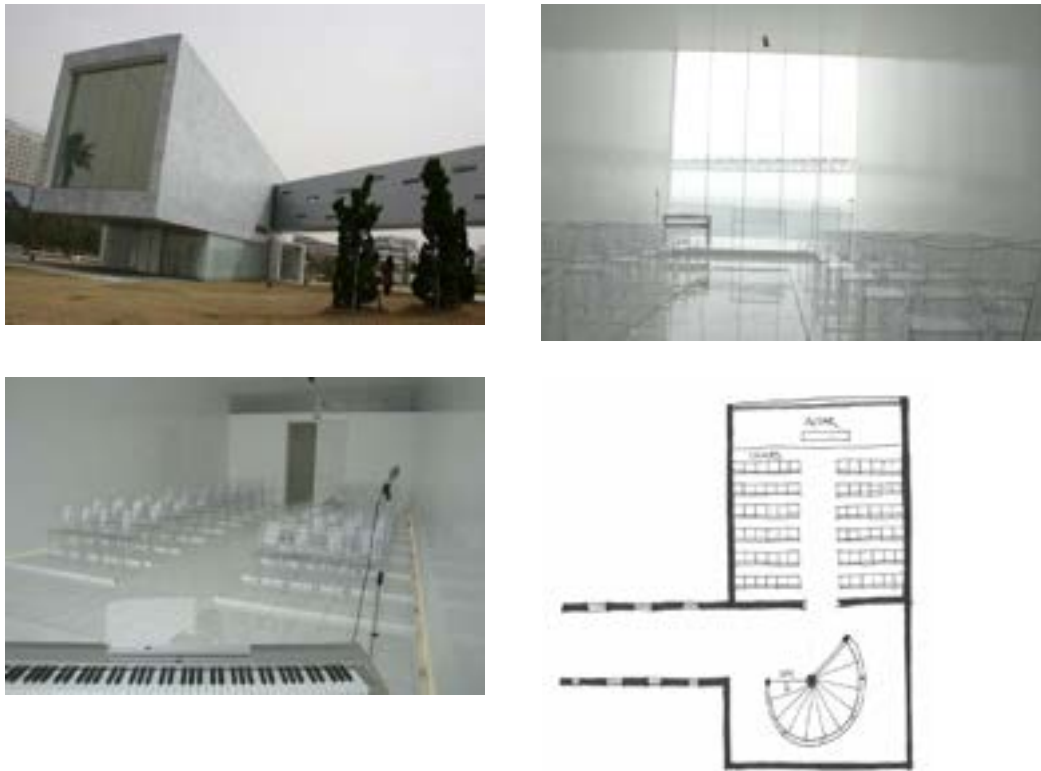
Figure 2.7 Chapel in Setre Hotel

This is a contemporary representation of the sacred. White colour is the dominant symbolic signifier to signify sacred quality. The chapel is in a simple rectangular layout with clear glass panel as the back of the altar. The use of a magnificent outdoor view can suggest a sacred linkage which is the creation of God. Contemporary effect apart from the all white effect is the use of clear acrylic furniture such as the chairs, pulpit and table. The small interior space is immanent but it contrast with the transcendent exterior view in front.

Chapel in Grand Hyatt Hotel, Kyoto

Figure 2.8 Chapel in Grand Hyatt Hotel

This floor plan of this chapel is a small rectangular plan with the strict forward layout of the cross as the focus point in the middle of the wall behind altar. Through the creation of different linear light effects, together with a recess circular ceiling on top of the altar to enhance the sacred atmosphere. The colour scheme is warm and natural. The pews also suggest the sacred identity. The immanent nature of God is created.

Chapel in Grand Hyatt Hotel, Roppongi, Tokyo by Super Tomato
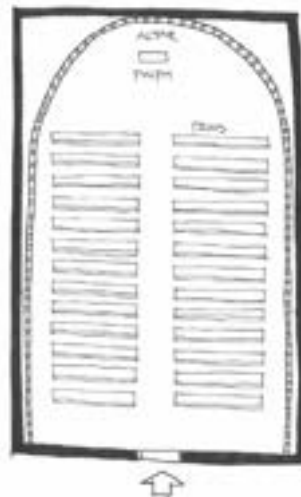
Figure 2.9 Chapel in Grand Hyatt Hotel, Roppongi, Tokyo

The use of vertical wooden rod in a high ceiling height space delivers a transcendent feeling. The mood is quite mystical or meditative through the darker colour and the dim lighting effect. A large cross hanging from the ceiling together with strong lighting from the top to spot on the cross is dominant. This is a contemporary representation of the transcendence.

Chapel on the Water in Hotel, Hokkaido by Tadao Ando

Figure 2.10 Chapel on the Water in Hotel, Hokkaido

A long, L-shaped wall runs alongside the south and east of the pond-building grouping, separating the church from the hotel behind it. It isolates the church as a protected area from the commercial activities in the resort hotel. The church faces a large pond.

By making a winding entry route, a sense of purification could be experienced.

At the high end of the pond is the building, the shape of which is basically a pair of overlapping cubes.

The larger one faces the pond which is the chapel. It is connected to the smaller cube entrance by means of a semi-circular, spiral stairway.

There is a path which leads down the dark spiral stairway to the chapel below. Once visitors enter the chapel space, they will be captured by a view of the pond with a steel cross located in the middle. The chapel has three concrete walls and the fourth side is made by a sliding glass wall.

Chapel in Mount Rokko Hotel, Kobe by Tadao Ando
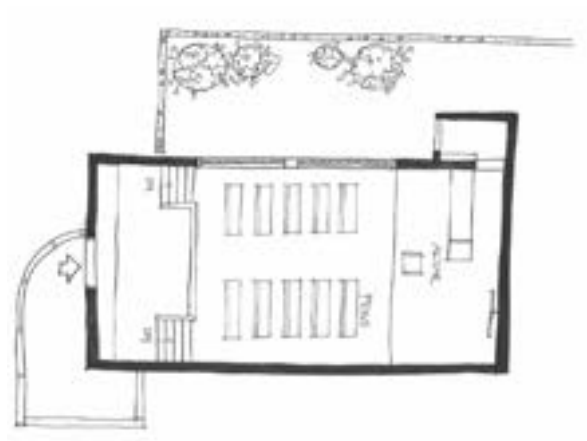
Figure 2.11 Chapel in Mount Rokko Hotel, Kobe

The spiritual path behinds through a staircase down with greenery and sea view on one side. Then, visitors will pass through a corridor which can prepare the hearts before entering the sanctuary.

In representing nature as the ultimate symbol of the divine, Ando divides the focus of the chapel between a steel crucifix suspended at the end of the nave and the tranquility of a garden. The architect also uses an enclosed garden view on one side to define the sacred space from the profane.

With simple details, the slots along edges of walls are the essence of the design to transform the space. There is a playful use of natural light to enhance the spiritual quality.

2.4.6 Summary: Standards and directions indicated for the design of modern churches

Practical function: These churches have enough spaces for different activities, no need to be multi-functional. The worship function is properly planned.

Common practice of symbolic expression: Carefully use of lighting and spiritual path. Symbols were not abundantly used. Spiritual paths were created. There were view of nature and outdoor environment.

Immanent quality is expressed. Without the necessity of creating a transcendent worship space, majority of the ceiling designs is flat instead of the traditional pointed one. Natural lighting is an outstanding symbol in modern church design. Lighting penetrates from roof top, in the front, at the back and on the sides. The different methods to transform traditional essence into

contemporary languages were inspiring. These church designs have created a balance between contemporary and sacred qualities.

About the three attributes of church, church as the house of God was carefully presented. The sacred identity was prominent even in churches with limited space and flat ceiling.

2.5 Contemporary and Sacred Definition

2.5.1 Definition of Contemporary Quality in Design

Under the conviction that church design must be contemporary and responsive to the need of the age, different scholars such as Hammond (1960); Bruggink & Droppers (1965); Smith (1972); and Kilde (2008) delivered insightful ideas about contemporary expression. When scholar like Kilde (2008) wrote about this issue, he tactfully referred to renowned Catholic theologian Thomas Merton that "contemporary faith required a contemporary architecture" (p.162).

The term contemporary in church design indicates that there is the application of contemporary materials and technology in design such as the use of glass panel, metal, acrylic and pre-fabricated materials. An article called Contemporary Catholic architecture written by Rev. Edward J. Sutfin and Maurice Lavanoux, cited in Modern Church Architecture by Albert Christ-Janer and Mary Mix Foley (1962) mentioned that "The presentation of this heritage, however, is dated by the 'new' and the 'now' of the contemporary stage of development of the city of God" (p.1). When they described contemporary

church design, they reinforced that design must be created and addressed for the people of our time. Hence, the use of current materials to fit the time and spirit of people we live in was vital (Pichard, 1960; Hammond, 1960; Bruggink & Droppers, 1965). Contemporary means the use of contemporary vocabulary and one of the methods is to use current materials. Another idea is the application of contemporary design thinking such as geometric design and simplicity. Moreover, the use of materials could be applied in a contemporary manner or style. It means that even though the material is not a contemporary invention, but when applying it with combination of others materials may result in a contemporary touch. For example, the use of sharp edge with metal inlay for wooden cabinet is a contemporary approach as compared to the traditional ones with moldings and round edges. In terms of colour, contemporary touch can suggest the use of sharp colour, such as a red colour feature wall. In pattern wise, geometric pattern such as stripes are recognised as contemporary touch.

Apart from materials, the concept of contemporary is also closely related to styles. Literally, contemporary style means it is not traditional. Some contemporary styles such as deconstructionism and minimalism are commonly acknowledged as contemporary which are contrasted with traditional styles. In the article, Contemporary Protestant Architecture by Dr. Paul Tillich (1987), Professor in Harvard Divinity School, he stated the dilemma of applying tradition in practice: "The polarity of tradition and contemporaneity in all religions… Both Protestant liturgy and Protestant theology retain many elements of the common Christian tradition: Why not church architecture?". To answer this question, he reminded people that symbols used traditionally but change in style continually. It means that contemporary vocabulary can be related to

tradition with a transformation of traditional symbols to contemporary style. In the book, Sixty post-war churches (1956), an inspiring statement was written with similar answer: "The 'Truths' are not contemporary, but that only the means of expressing them are" (p.7).

To be contemporary, it signifiers that church design must associate with secular culture and this is a development under secularization. The idea of contemporary is developed by secular culture instead of the authority of church. Hence, Fiddes (1961) indicated that "Contemporary in the sense that church design must admit the contemporary challenge under secular culture" (p.69) Under the struggle whether church design should follow a traditional revival or not, Fiddes pointed that contemporary church design must be contemporary and to face contemporary secular challenges and found solutions accordingly.

In church design, contemporary ambience is related to hospitality and warmth, which is associated with the immanence instead of transcendence of God (White & White, 1988; Christopherson, 2004; Torgerson, 2007) Of course, it does not mean that every contemporary design must be immanent in nature. However, in the context of densely populated urban environment, the researcher suggests that immanent nature is more appropriate due to limited space. When a church is designed by modernist, flat roof and small in scale were explored and the effect created was immanent. In contemporary theological dialogue, church is described as the house of the people of God instead of the house of God, which is allied with the representation of either immanence or transcendence.

2.5.2 Definition of Sacred Quality in Design

One of the aims of this thesis is to incorporate both contemporary and sacred qualities into church design. Could contemporary quality co-exist with sacred quality? Apart from defining contemporary quality in the precious section, it is necessary to define sacred quality as well. It is essential to clarify that the discussion on sacred quality here is about design elements to achieve the sacred effect. The issue on the nature of sacredness in Christianity is discussed in another section.

Pichard (1960) identified sacred quality as the expression of mystery, magnificence and splendor which are qualities associated with Medieval churches. These qualities let worshippers to experience the transcendence of God. That is the reason why Gothic Revival and Neo-classicism were accepted by some church builders in order to differentiate from secular buildings. Kilde (2008) pointed that, "the desire to project a single, unified image of Christianity in a context of increasing secularisation and denominational fragmentation" (p.165). The rationale of some church leaders was that sacred quality should be different from secular design and because contemporary design was associated with secular design, some church builders rejected contemporary quality and followed Medieval style to present the sacred quality. In Pichard's opinion, he did not reject contemporary approach but his idea was that simplicity as associated with contemporary quality was opted to link with grandeur in order to achieve the transcendent effect. Transcendence as a prominent sacred quality was remained. The linkage of sacred with transcendence is also expressed by Dwyer (1958). He mentioned that sacred church is "the house of God, the gate of heaven, the house of the altar, the place of sacrifice" (as cited in Turner, 1979, p.319).

The discussion between transcendence and immanence as well as the house of God and the house of the people of God will be discussed in other sections.

Another vivid association is the use of symbols. Seasoltz (2005) stated that "sacred building and sacred art are above all symbolic" (p.345). Loveland & Wheeler (2003) also described sacred church as "beautiful, symbol-filled, worship-orientated sanctuaries" (p.239). If contemporary representation wants to integrate with symbols, a transformation of new symbolic form is the key.

Theoretical Position

This study opts to facilitate church design with the combination of contemporary quality and sacred identity. From the hypothesis and theoretical standpoints, the investigation of the theoretical position has been divided into three sections: 1) Relationship between theology and spatial design; 2) Relationship between church design and social community / contemporary representation; and finally 3) Disappearance of worship space.

Hence, in order to establish the close relationship between theology and spatial design, this study has investigated the theological definition of church to build the foundation of theology and spatial design; then, from the historical review of Western church design to learn through the practices of the past two thousand years and the traditional quality of symbolic meanings afterwards; then, from investigation of modern church design to understand the transformation; when Christianity became a more prominent religion in Hong Kong compared to the early 19th Century, the issue of church design in Hong Kong has been

revealed which has led to the search of the quality of sacred space in flat space situated in densely populated urban environment.

2.6 Relationship between Theology and Spatial Design

When establishing the relationship between church and spatial design, the three attributes of church play significant roles in this regard. Historically, 1) church as community of believers, 2) church as a place of worship, and 3) church as a house of God are three commonly recognised attributes of church. Different disciplines had different focus among the three attributes. This section aims to reassure that churches should have balanced concern about the three attributes or different layers of representation of God as indicated in one of the schema in the introduction; hence, theology and spatial design should be inter-related.

2.6.1 Theological Definition of Church

Three essential attributes of church. From an authentic book of Biblical Greek Study, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, the Greek word ecclesia (worship) has three explanations which are: "1) a regularly summoned legislative body, an assembly; 2) a causal gathering of people, an assemblage, gathering; and 3) people shared belief, community, congregation." It means that from the Holy Bible, the term church mainly refers to community of believers. This association of church to edify believers is the key in the development and existence of church throughout history. The explanation of this book also mentions that worship is one of the activities but the idea of church as a place of worship is not indicated in Biblical New Testament time. The term church as physical house of God representing the

Deity is enhanced only after Christianity became the national religion of Roman Empire. Thereafter, Christian searched for architectural design to symbolise the sacredness of Church from the profane world. This research aims to investigate the importance of the three attributes of Church to achieve a holistic representation.

Community of believers. The word "Church" appeared first in the Bible, the Gospel of Matthew 16:18 "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The figurative meaning of build my church upon this rock is affirming Peter as the rock to denote his leadership among the community of believers. The term church is referring to the believers. It is obvious that Christians understand that the spiritual meaning of building the community of believers is most important; in any case, the core nature of Christianity is about the salvation and spiritual life of humankind (from the Bible, the book of 1 Corinthians 3:17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple).

> In the book, *Models of Church*, Dulles (1987) stated clearly about the theological definition of church as "Theologically the term 'church' refers to the mystery of Christ as realized in the community of those who believe in Him and are assembled in His name. To the Christian believer, the Church is not a purely human thing; it is not simply of this creation or of this world; rather, it is the work of God, who is present and operative in the Church through the Holy Spirit, in whom Christ continues his saving presence" (p.123).

It is revealed that the spiritual meaning of church as a community of believers is the key. The edification of the community of believers is the ultimate goal of the Church. Hence, the physical existence of church as a place or building is downplayed in some denominations.

Worship place. However, as places of worship, the church buildings in different periods were planned according to the theology, liturgy or worship activities. White (2000) understood the core meaning of church as people but he elaborated that "[A]fter all, the church is people, not a building. But planning for a building can often help the people discover, or rediscover, what it means to be the community of God's favour…" (p.103). White related the accomplishment of church design with the reflection on Christian worship in order to successfully deliver the message. Debuyst (1968) exhilarated the idea of church as "The house of the assembly, the house of God's family, is the place of Christian celebration" (p.10). From this statement, church is served as a place for the gathering of believers to worship and encounter the Deity. The function of church is tailored primarily as an assembly place of believers to worship. The term 'church' is not pointing at the literal meaning as a building but an assembly and a community to gather with an ultimate goal – worship the deity. Community of believers is the spiritual representation of church and worship is the ultimate aspiration of the regular gathering of believers.

House of God. From the scenario of Hong Kong churches, church as a house to represent God is not properly revealed. When looking at the literal meaning of the word "Church" in Greek "kuriakon", it means "the Lord's house".

This term is also denoted in the Bible as referred in the book of Ecclesiastes 5:1 "Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong." And in 1 Timothy 3:15 "if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth." In the aspect of the biblical understanding of the Church which equates to building as the Lord's house; the church symbolises the foundation of the truth. The practice of designing church buildings to represent the transcendence of God (such as emphasising the verticality to reveal the power and glory of God) and the miraculous acts through the power of the Diety revealed by the revered Christians were prevalent. Worshippers built their faith through the use of different symbols in the church externally and internally. Ample use of symbolic elements existed. Symbolic meanings were incorporated, such as the symbol of cross to construct the architectural floor plan; and the symbol of eagle with extended wings to represent divine inspiration found in furniture, such as lectern (where the Bible is placed for reading) and so on. Church buildings had become a three-dimensional bible, which inspired not only the illiterate but also the literate and the intellectual for their growth of faith. It was also regarded as the gate to heaven through which worshippers could have spiritual experience and affirm their salvations.

When church is regarded as the representation of the house of God, it is not restricted to create a house only for God to live in but also a place of worship and a place for community. Even in the time King David wanted to build a temple for God and King Solomon eventually built it for God, there was no intention to restrict God's power on earth (from the Bible, the book of 1 Kings

8:27: But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!). The temple is a symbol of God's presence, a place where the Israelites gathered to offer sacrifices to God. It was a place for believers symbolically and practically to express their faith. In order to revitalise the importance of church as the house of God, Norman (1990) highlighted that "The church buildings which Christian believers have provided for themselves are not merely assembly halls for worship. They have always, from the very beginning, expressed, either in their structures or in the choice of their location, transcendent associations and spiritual insight" (p.6). Church buildings have been built on high place or areas which are associated with the miracle work of saints. Churches have thus acquired symbolical significance.

Summary: Holistic representation.

> Schloeder (1998) expressed the criteria of a church in a very sophisticated way: The Church is a complex reality; mankind is a complex reality; so must our churches be. Of all the buildings, the Church should speak most clearly to our senses, our intellect, emotions, memory and imagination, our aesthetic sensibility, and our desire for transcendence or "search for the infinite"…[O]nly when church buildings serve the complete human person, and the social community of persons, will architecture contribute to that enrichment of faith (p.48).

When the idea contributed by Schloeder is explored, church design must be able to perform as a house to represent God, a place of worship, and a place for the community of believers. His idea of satisfying the complete human

person with several levels of requirements has reinforced the complexity in church design. A church must be able to target on the human senses; it is beautifully designed to allow different individuals to gain spiritual experience. It also performs as a worship space to unit worshippers together. Moreover, it must reveal to the society that the church is here to serve them both spiritually and practically. Hence, it exists both for insiders and outsiders. The design should not only imply religious arbitrary meanings or symbols to make it remote to contemporary culture or shall it merely satisfy societal needs which hinds the sacred nature. The new challenge of church design is a transformable space for both believers and non-believers. Architect, Mario Botta was relevant in his interpretation that the church as "a place for the faithful, but for the non-believer, too, it's a presence, a place of silence, a place for meditation that is available to everybody" (as cited in Dupre, 2001, p.14). It is reflected that in our busy urban environment that non-believers could also treasure the serenity of the church space; church design is valid from past to present even under secularisation.

2.6.2 Historical Review of Western Church Design: Theology and Spatial Design

In order to understand the development of Western church design and the relationship between theology and spatial design, this study aims to analyse the development of the representation on the three attributes of church namely: 1) Church as the physical house of God to reveal the nature of God; 2) Church as a place of worship; and 3) Church as a community of believers.

Church Design to Represent the Sacred

Through the design of the building, people would understand the theology which the believers abide to. The ontological natures are revealed through the design so that descendents could understand their doctrines and how they encountered the Deity. If Christians in the past were continuously searching for ways to represent God through church designs, what would be the primary concerns for Christians in Hong Kong context nowadays; whether to put behind relevant theological standpoint in Church design or simply to adopt design that suits our contemporary situation would remain a query.

Moreover, this issue does not simply deal with the term "Church" but also about "Architecture and design". However, the scenario of church design in Hong Kong is different. By and large, a significant number of churches is being built without professional design consultation and these churches only serve mere basic functional needs. Schloder (1998) asserted that "Architecture is intended to serve the whole man, body and soul. Its 'function' is not only to accommodate the physical, material and utilitarian requirements of the program but also to nourish the intellect and the aesthetic appetite with meaning and beauty" (p.168). Schloeder reinforced this concept in a Christian context by quoting a statement from General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 4th ed. (Mar. 27, 1975), no.253 that: "The iconic program that the Church gives the architect is simply this: The places and requisites for worship should be truly worthy and beautiful, signs and symbols of heavenly realities" (as cited in Schloeder, 1998, p.169). Even though Schloeder protested against contemporary church design and targeted for the use of traditional styles which was different from the rationale of this study, his concepts about the attitude of church design was inspiring. Peter Hammond (1960) who has laid down the foundation in

investigating modern church design in the sixties also reinforced the value of quality in design (p.155). The quality of a church is symbolic in nature in order to incarnate the related sacred identity.

Historical Review

Regarding Western church design, each period of style transformation is going to be presented to reveal the relationship between theology and design through the representation of the three attributes of church.

Pre-Constantine: Period without Explicate Church Architecture. In the first century, Christians apart from worshipping in temple and synagogues, they gathered together to worship in their private house which is called upper room.

Chirone (1961) indicated that: In fact, in 164, Justinian the Martyr wrote to the Prefect Rusticum that Christians in Rome had to meet in each others homes 'wherever they could or would'. Such places of worship were known as ecclesiae domesticate and at first they were simply an atrium or small room. Later bigger rooms in the houses of the wealthier Christians were placed at their disposal. (p.5)

At that period under the oppression, they worshipped secretly in limited space, such as catacombs with simple worship activity. For instance, observing the Last Supper as a remembrance of Jesus Christ and reading of the Hebrew Bible to build up their faith. Under such a simple liturgical need together with the oppression by Jews and Roman government, buildings to represent their faith were not an essential consideration in their agenda. However, after the confession of the Roman emperor Constantine who believed in God in the fourth

century, Christian started to consider worship space as a means to represent God and to expound their liturgy in worship. As a result, they had to search for appropriate architecture as their church buildings.

Byzantium (around 330 – 1400) – Basilica Style. The requirements of a church building at that period could be understood in different levels. Theologically, it was the sacred house of God to set apart from the profane world. It was essential to let worshippers experience the sacredness and put aside the profane burdens to come close to God. Liturgically, it must fit with the worship procedure and activities. It should be huge enough to house large congregations. Basilica was the choice because it was large enough for a big congregation to gather and the design of basilica has incorporated an apse at the end of the longitudinal space which becomes the centre of focus for clergy to conduct the worship ceremony. Both politically and symbolically, the design should be distinguished from other religions or pagan temples in order to establish the uniqueness and the solemn position as the state religion.

> Norberg-Schulz (1980) further elaborated the symbolic expressions of the church design by stating that: The longitudinal building in a shoe box shape symbolise the path to salvation. Christian existential space, therefore, is not derived from man's concrete environment, but symbolises a promise and a process of redemption, which are concretised as a centre and a path. By building the centre and the path as a church, the new meaning of existence was made visible. (p.58)

We could understand that both practical and spiritual needs were satisfied. When Christian recalled back to the public position to confess their faith, the

symbolic representation through the building was reconsidered. It is understood that the building is not only a shelter but a symbol of the presence of God and the gathering of the people of God. It must stand out from the secular buildings and establish its sacred identity. Seasoltz (2005) highlighted the spiritual representation that "Apart from the liturgical requirement, as a house of God, the church building represented the heavenly Jerusalem" (p.99). It was at that period that the cross was incorporated into the church building as a symbol. We could imagine that crucifixion was a cruel punishment in Roman time and not until after Constantine's confession in 312 AD, Christians had the courage to transform the cross from punishment to resurrection and salvation. The image of Christ has been changed from the suffering servant to the majestic Christ. Trachtenberg and Hyman (2002) accentuated that "Christ, originally the humble shepherd-like preacher, now tended to appear as an enthroned, majestic and distant personage, like the Emperor" (p.162).

Romanesque Style (around 1000-1200). After the collapse of Roman Empire and the rise of Islam together with the attack by barbarians, Christian community used stone to build large churches to symbolise the protection from God. The fact that after a millennium the world did not end initiated different church community to build huge churches to represent the power. In this era, the political situation was unsettled and counties fought for power establishment. People felt insecure and they prayed for the protection from God. Church which was a symbol of protection from the evil world had established the assurance for the believers. Architecturally, the massive walls perform both physical and spiritual needs. Due to the massive stone structure with thick walls, light

penetration was limited. Romanesque architecture was dark in mood with the windows on the upper level along the nave to lead worshippers to look upon the utmost. With the restriction, light was still an important and impressive symbol to represent the power of God in penetrating through darkness. Another symbolic feature was the incorporation of tower as suggested that "Towers have become a distinguish feature symbolizing both an adoration to God with the verticality and also as a symbol of watch over by God in times of instability" (Norberg-Schulz, 1975, p.75). Norberg-Schulz also described Romanesque church as both "stronghold and gate to heaven" (Norberg-Schulz, 1975, p.77).

When one entered the interior, one could discover that a lot of symbols were used to deliver the triumphant vision. Romanesque style had been compared with early Christian architecture by contrasting the inward and outward approaches that Early Christian churches drawn people in to have spiritual experience whereas Romanesque style was a means to bring God to the world (Seasoltz, 2005, p.121). God was watching over the world even in time of turmoil. Apart from church buildings, monasteries were built to protect Christian properties and they protected a lot of important documents at the time of warfare. Seasoltz (2005) commented that "They symbolised security and protection. These pilgrimage centers gave a visible expression to the history of Christianity and provided Christians themselves with a sense of psychological security and identity in a world that was in many ways both dangerous and frightening" (p.120). The architecture was responding to the social and political situation. The church building served as a platform for communication and delivering of relevant messages.

Relating to the worship activities and the community of believers, there was a hierarchical structure to label the superior level of the clergy. In terms of sacrament, such as Holy Communion, only the clergy could participate and the laity could only hear and pray silently for the clergy are partitioned by the rood screen creating two layers or compartments in the church. It is at this stage that the church was named as the house of God instead of the house of the people of God; the mystical image and the majestic quality were the themes of this house of God. It has been emphasised by Seasoltz (2005) that:

> … the church was no longer thought of as a communion of the redeemed people of God united to the risen Christ, the head of his body the church, all gathered together by the power of the Holy Spirit. Instead, great emphasis was placed on the hierarchical structures of the church, symbolized by a pyramid, with the clergy at the top representing Christ as head, ruler, sanctifier and teacher of the lay folk. (p.122)

Nonetheless, when we put this phenomenon into context, this practice could be appreciated. With the great percentage of illiterate among laity, authority could govern them effectively to stay close to the faith. In time of disturbance, a majestic figure could also strengthen believers that church was the stronghold and assurance.

Gothic Style (around 1140 – 1500).

It has been proclaimed by Dupre (2002) that after year 1000, the peaceful situation inspired Christians to build a multiple number of churches to glorify the Deity:

It seems as though each Christian community were aiming to surpass all others in the splendour of construction. It was as if the whole world were shaking itself free, shrugging off the burden of the past cladding itself everywhere in a white mantle of churches,' is how Ralph Glaber, an eleventh-century monk, described the Romanesque building frenzy that would launch the Gothic age. (p.32)

Gothic church was a breakthrough technologically. Through the lightness of materials with diagonal ribs, pointed arches and flying buttresses; and the lightness in illumination through stained glass letting more light into the church, the power and glory of God were revealed. However, the differences between Romanesque styles and Gothic styles were not simply a matter of engineering skills; we must understand the theological theme behind the screen. Seasoltz (2005) added a very insightful description about the symbolic nature of Gothic architecture: "Gothic architecture symbolised Western culture in a period that has been described as the great age of Christian faith, for it expressed the human understanding of divine revelation and God's relation to everyday life." (p.138) Seasoltz furthered compared Gothic with Romanesque that Romanesque emphasised on the protection from God whereas Gothic style brought people closer to God. Each Gothic church was symbolising the womb with the use of a dark interior. It resembled a baby who was essential to be nurtured inside a womb and when believers entered the church, they were entering from darkness to light. Inside Gothic church, the light through stained glass with biblical stories illuminating our hearts like nutrient. The presence of God was symbolised in the penetrating light. When someone entered a church, the architectural design

reminded people that they were leaving the profane and sinful world in order to search for the truth through the experience of the light. Worshippers were born again with the encounter of God. That was why Gothic Cathedrals usually named Notre Dame.

In terms of a worshipping community, Gothic style also introduced the use of screens in between choir and nave in order to reinforce the mysterious and holiness expression. The symbolic meaning of using the term nave meant ship to reinforce the protection from God in danger. Laity was all united together in the same ship under the guidance of God. Seasoltz (2005) stated the significance of integrating visual elements with symbolic meanings by stating that "Visual experience was especially important throughout the Middle Ages" (p.141). Apart from the use of objects, such as stained glass, the layout used the shape of a Latin cross to symbolise that Jesus Christ was the foundation of the church. As a worship space, by forming a longitudinal space as the nave for liturgical purpose, a processional worship was delivered with the altar at the centre and stained glass at the back for light penetration to enhance the transcendent ambience.

Renaissance Style (around 1450-1650). In each outbreak, apart from technological discovery, there must have some significant cultural and social factors influencing the development. It was commented that Renaissance represented the age of humanism with a concise consideration on proportion whereas Middle Age was the age of faith with the reinforcement of height to symbolise God's majesty. Seasoltz (2005) affirmed the differences by stating that "In stark but simplistic terms, the Gothic period has been contrasted with the

Renaissance as the idealistic versus the naturalistic, the religious versus the secular, the authoritarian versus the empirical, the institutional versus the individualistic, and the feudal versus the bourgeois" (p149). The manifestation of the Renaissance architects to present the transcendence of God was not targeting on the verticality but the harmony through proportion and circular form. Geometry and anthropomorphism were two fundamental elements in articulation. The use of elementary geometric forms with basic mathematical calculation and the recovery of Classical orders were commonly seen. However, the portrayals of Christ began to stress his human nature. Artists became highly regarded from Renaissance onwards.

Professor Christian Norberg-Schulz justified that:

The Renaissance vision was based on new concepts of the spiritual and intellectual autonomy of the individual, on the power of human reason, and on freedom from dependence on the supernatural…This view was in conflict with medieval theological system, which taught that ultimate truth was found in the authority of the Bible, other Christian texts and the Church, and that temporal life was less significant than life in the afterworld. (cited in Trachtenberg & Hyman, 2002, p.277)

From the above descriptions, it is apparent that the theology of church has gone through a complete revolution. Some implications are the humanity of Jesus Christ was highlighted instead of the majestic power; God was the creator of the world in perfect balance; and the use of Greek cross with the introduction of dome in a central plan was to symbolise the universe under the control of God. Worshippers were educated to appreciate the beauty of proportion and geometry. The interior church design was more colourful than the mystical Gothic style by

the application of skillfully painted drawings in the interior and the scale of the building was built in human proportion. In terms of worship, the emphasis on individual prayers in small chapels was then introduced. Churches began to concern more about the worldly life of believers. More paintings of the earthy life of Jesus Christ were produced as well.

Reformation or Protestantism Approach (from around 1500 onwards). Because of the focus of preaching in service, the classic evangelical church design has been emerged. Pulpit as the focus; pew was used for worshippers to sit down to listen to the Word. Seasoltz (2005) mentioned that "Since preaching was the central activity of the service, the church buildings were usually designed in such a way that the people could be brought quite close to the preacher" (p.182). Seasoltz also introduced the use of gallery in Protestant churches to reduce the distance of worshippers and preacher. Generally, the floor plan was in a layout which is square in shape instead of the longitudinal plan. The space was relatively small so that interaction between pastors and worshippers could be easily conducted. In the beginning of reformation, in search of a completely new church design was not the key. Protestant churches continued to use the existing church. Basically, they were looking for a gathering place without the distraction from the abundant of visual elements, such as the story telling stained glass and the statues and icons. They were afraid of the worshipping of icons instead of God. The focus was on the understanding of the bible by reading and preaching instead of looking at the visual representations. Seasoltz (2005) summarised that "As a matter of fact, scholars like to picture Protestantism as a movement which killed artistic creation. However, John

Calvin, who disapproved of religious images, recognised that the ability to paint and sculpt were gifts of God" (p.170). The voices under reformation are diversified towards the worship space requirement. For non-confirmists, ornamentation was conflicting with the simplicity and spirituality of evangelical worship. Seasoltz (2005) quoted from Davies in the book *Worship and Theology in England* that "Dissenters felt that worship was most fitting when it was freed from all earthly associations, and so considered any Anglican appeals to beauty, mystery, or symbolism as unworthy attempts to reintroduce the sensuous aspects of Christianity" (as cited in Seasoltz, 2005, p.186), which aligns with Nonconformist, Puritan and Shakers movement also search for simple worship spaces. Later on, the transformation of Protestant churches evolved from meeting house to auditorium and then to the construction of mega-churches. When Christianity expanded in different community, some churches decided to build churches large in scale to house more worshippers. Loveland and Wheeler (2003) mentioned that a number of these mega-churches even though large in scale but they were not creating a transcendent experience like the liturgical churches but rather immanence in terms of the comparatively flat ceilings (p.260).

In terms of the formation of Christian community, the concept of "priesthood of all believers" was commonly recognised. Bible was translated into everyday practicing languages instead of Latin version. In medieval time, Latin could only be read by clergy and scholar; whereas, in Protestant movement, laity could read bible on their own.

Baroque Style (around 1600 – 1900). As a counter-reformation movement, the focus of Baroque architecture went to the other extremes.

Baroque churches urged for more emotional experience or mystical religious feelings and fostered spiritual vision through a sense of drama and the love of sculptural illusion. Metaphoric presentations were rich, such as painting the ceiling in heavenly scene to suggest the church buildings as the gates of heaven. When worshippers entered a Baroque church, a vision of splendour and glory were lavishly presented through the use of gold colour for the scriptures and the paintings.

> Norman (1990) highlighted that: They were not intended as expressions of an essential harmony between the virtues of the ancients and the calm Christianity of the later European world, but as triumphalist assertions of spiritual transcendence…They became, instead, anticipations of eternity, their sculptural forms and sometimes even joyous exuberance straining to pierce the existing realities and to allow the seen and the unseen worlds to intermingle. (p.211)

The splendourous design of the church interior reinforces the dramatic change from the profane to the sacred. Worshippers were encouraged to imagine the heavenly glory. Artworks were enormous in size and complex in details. Baroque philosophy targeted an open and dynamic expression in contrast with the close and static appearance represented by the Renaissance era.

Regarding the formation of the spiritual community, Baroque idea went further in the hierarchical practice but affirming the position and importance of each individual. Regarding the difference of Renaissance and Baroque in this human order, Norberg-Schulz (1979) stated that "Rather than pursue the ideal of "universal man," the Baroque Age therefore assigned the individual a fixed place within the social hierarchy" (p.8).

Neo-classicism and Gothic Revival Approach (around 1800 – 1945).
Norman (1990) stated that "Church building since the Renaissance had occurred in a social context in which architectural and decorative styles were increasingly set by the requirements of secular taste and use" (p.239). This conclusive statement has indicated the influences of secular world on church design. When the world progressed into the nineteenth century, there were drastic changes, such as industrialisation and revolution of freedom to release control from feudal system and monarchy. In architecture, the influence by secular flavour is further reinforced. When the authority of Church was being challenged, the value standard of Church was not the dominant thought in the society. In church architecture, the revival of classical ideals through new technology was a dominant approach to encounter the challenges and to differentiate the sacred from the profane. The movement of revival style was influenced by the context of secularisation as to stablilise the church with association of the national glorious past (Kilde, 2008).

After industrial revolution, some churches in Western countries used new concept and technology to build churches in revival styles. In revival style, apart from the implication of Renaissance style and Romanesque style, it was claimed that the Gothic style was the most sacred representation among all styles of church architecture. Some renowned architects of the nineteenth century, such as Auguste Welby Pugin (1812-1852) associated Gothic Revival as the most sacred representation of God in church design history and reinforced the revival of Gothic architecture, example, such as House of Parliament in London. Architects, such as Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1812-1879) began to use cast iron to build

Gothic church which created effects impossible by stone, example such as Sainte Chapelle in Paris. Apart from Pugin, another famous architect John Ruskin (1819-1900) thought that Gothic style was an ideal representation of creativity. He explained that "Gothic architecture was the result of free, intelligent and creative workers, the kind of people whose creative powers were enslaved by industrialists in the nineteenth century" (as cited in Seasoltz, 2005, p.189). Ruskin envisioned the revival of Gothic style. At that period, the revival spirit was spread from United Kingdom to Continental Europe and further influenced North America as well. Under the development of Colonies elsewhere around the world, this kind of revival style became a trend for new believers in different cultures to experience the sacred and solemn atmosphere in church.

Modern Style to Contemporary Style (from around 1900 onwards). When architecture began to concern about the functional purpose with concept like "form follows function", decorative details were eliminated. Churches which were big and plain with simple form were named as functionalism approach to architecture (Seasoltz, 2005; Torgerson, 2007). The factory like churches was effective, economic and functional. With the simple details and plain walls, some worship spaces looked like community hall or theatre. Clowney and Clowney (1993) reasoned that "Part of the problem stems from a conception of worship which makes going to church like going to the theatre or lecture hall" (p.86). Protestant churches with the focus of preaching could easily adapt this kind of building which could accommodate bigger congregation and the cost of construction is cheaper than the revival styles. Loveland and Wheeler (2003) wrote the book *From Meetinghouse to Megachurch: A Material and Cultural*

History which illustrated the development of evangelical churches in America from meeting house to auditorium style and then to mega church in order to unit more worshippers. It illustrated the development of evangelical churches to reach another limit from the focus on preaching to performing arts, such as music which they commented as "performance-oriented worship service". They presented the relationship between theology with the implication of modern technology. This practice was termed as "fundamentalist aesthetic" approach. Another author, Kilde (2002) described these developments as "audience-centered nature of evangelical worship" (p.220). The development of this style of representation stressed on stage performance, such as Willow Creek Community Church, South Barrington which has no permanent religious decoration but movable settings to match with the themes of the performance. Hence, the search for sacred spatial quality was eliminated.

Another feature of modern church was the emphasis on community. Through the provision of large mingling space near the entrance and the use of stackable chairs instead of pew with a flexible usage of sanctuary, modern churches become multi-functional. At this stage, churches prefer to be named as house of the people of God instead of house of God. In order to uplift the community spirit, semi-circular seating plan were used as well. Norman (1990) indicated that "One feature of modern Christian worship has, above all others, helped to dictate the plan of churches: the emphasis on community…Churches are no longer the place where mysteries are celebrated, or where the Word is dispensed. They are halls for the assembly of the 'People of God'" (p.291). In modern era, churches understood that reaching out to the world requires a breakthrough. They started to run social services as bridges to make contact with

non-believers. The concern of church design was not merely about sacred activities but secular social services as well.

Nevertheless, more small churches were built with small congregation size of less than two hundred. Intimacy had dominated the mystical effect from classical styles. Churches wanted to break the threshold fear of entering a church for under secularisation, people hesitated about the sacred representation under revival styles, such as Gothic Revival. Norman (1990) stated that "And so the emphasis seems to be returning from the large, centralised body to the small, less organised, more intimate group of believers, and above all to the communal experience of those seeking salvation and the knowledge of God" (p.304). It has been found that a variety of design approaches on contemporary church design have been explored in the modern period (Crosbie, 2002; Crosbie, 2006, Richardson, 2004; and Heathcote & Moffatt, 2007). In this period, no prominent style of church architecture was found which would however override the others. All approaches could co-exist under different cultural, social and economical concerns. With voices of neo-classicism and Gothic Revival that challenged the functionalist approach of modern church design and claimed that the sacred was only associated with the sophisticated traditional representation; contemporary church architecture looked for refreshing ways to represent God. This exploration of church architecture had reached a more dynamic level when design started to set off for post-modern aesthetic which is "form follows fun" instead of "form follows function". In the investigation of church architecture, authors seldom dedicated a chapter on post-modern era in church design, they used contemporary church design, such as Heathcote & Moffatt (2007). Church design did not align closely with design movements but the contemporary

practices had influenced church designers. It has been recalled that while attending a conference about church design in the States, it was found that church design was very post-modern with a lot of dynamic pledges of colours and decorations. (see figure2.12)

Figure 2.12 Post-modern church design in the States

Summary

One could experience the richness in church design through the understanding of the symbolic meaning behind every design element. In-depth theological considerations were incorporated into the church building to allow worshippers to have spiritual experience and to reveal the house of God as an identity of their faith. To summarise, it is worthy to introduce the categorisation method of church design as claimed by Professor Richard Kieckhefer (2004) in his book *Theology in Stone: Church Architecture from Byzantium to Berkeley* who has presented three board traditions: 1) The classic sacramental church – longitudinal layout of the nave with rich liturgy, such as Basilica, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque; 2) The classic evangelical church – a square room layout with pulpit as the focus to emphasise the importance of preaching and with gallery which were found in Protestant churches after Reformation; and 3) The modern communal church – providing sufficient space for mingling and
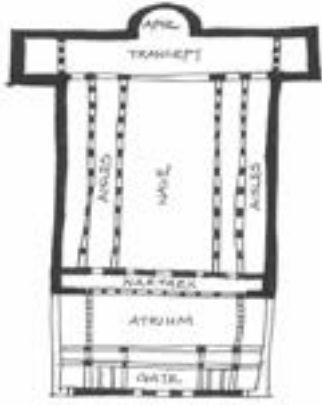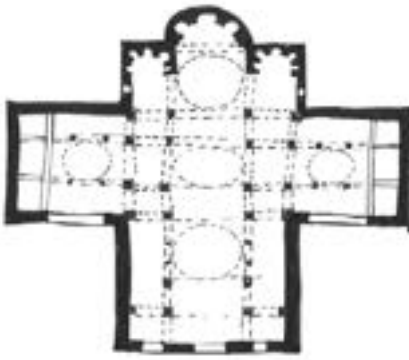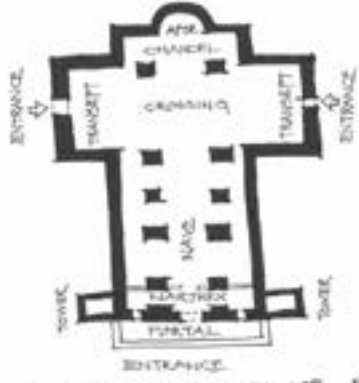
emphasis on the significance of gathering people to worship, such as some churches in Modern styles. It is revealed that no matter there is change in worship practices, from sacramental oriented to preaching oriented which influence the spatial design or there is change in church mission to outreach through social services, these changes also transform the style of church design. The relationship between theology and spatial design is significant. Below is a table of summary of the themes in Western church design history (see table 2.2).

However, there have been issues and major concerns for Hong Kong churches to find an identity for the House of God in their church design resolutions in its densely populated urban environment, Hong Kong churches have lost the sacred representation gradually from individual church building to one-flat church (see table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Historical Account of Church Design Development:

Western historical church design development / Spatial expression of sacredness – theology and space are interrelated

↓

Hong Kong church design development from individual church building to one-flat church – lack of design, lack of reflection on contemporary aesthetic and lack of sacred identity

↓

In search of sacred representation in one-flat church with reflection of contemporary quality

Table 2.3 Floor Plans of Western Church Design History

Period	Floor Plan
Byzantium (around 330 – 1400) – Basilica Style e.g. Italy – **Saint Sabina**, Rome, built between 422 and 432; Italy – **Basilica San Marco**, Venice (1063-94) Turkey – **Hagia Sophia,** Constantinople	 Long spacious nave with apse as focal point (practical liturgical need); Symbol of the Cross was transformed Cross plan
Romanesque Style (around 1000-1200) e.g. Italy – **S. Maria in Cosmedian**, Rome; Italy – **Pisa Cathedral**, Pisa (1063-1118); Italy – **S. Miniato al Monte**, Florence	 Cross plan; Massive walls and towers

Gothic Style (around 1140 – 1500) e.g. France – **Saint Denis Cathedral**, Paris (1140-1144); France – **Notre Dame**, Paris (1163-1250); France – **Sainte-Chapelle**, Paris (1241-48)	 Cross Plan; Pointed arch/ Verticality; Nave of Church symbolise Ship
Renaissance Style (around 1450-1650) e.g. Italy – **Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore**, Florence (1296-1436); Italy – **St. Peter's Cathedral**, Vatican City (1506-1626, 1656-67); Italy – **Sistine Chapel**, Vatican City	 Cross plan; Geometry and proportion; separate Baptistery;
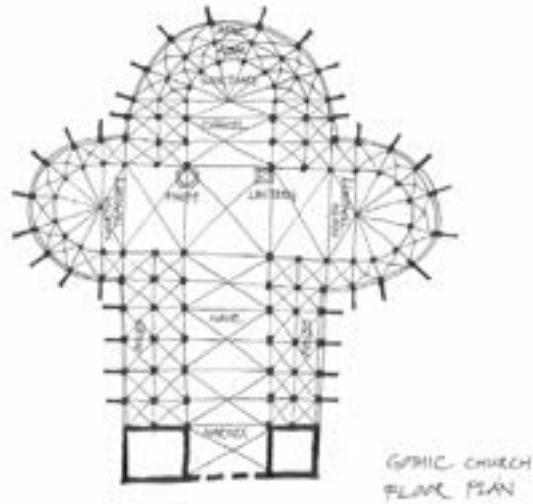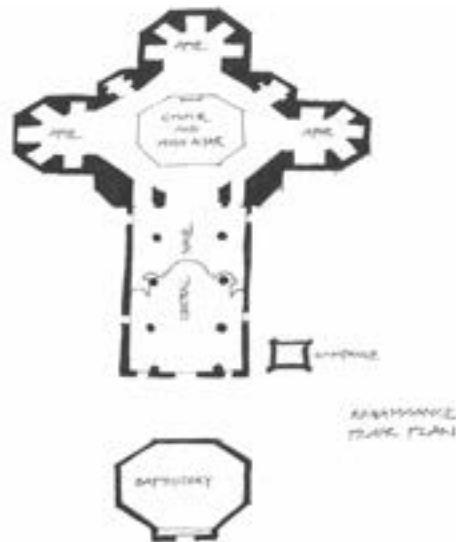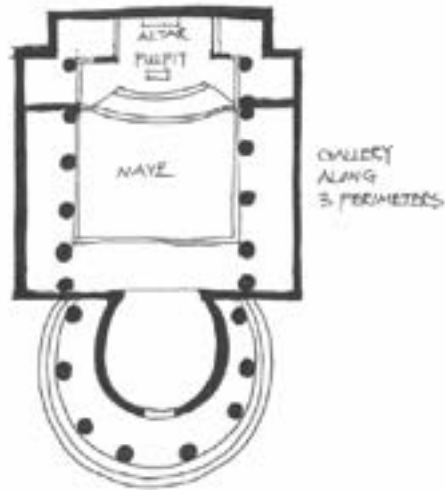
Reformation or Protestantism Approach (from around 1500 onwards) e.g. Switzerland – **Zwingh's Church**, Lucerne; England – **St. Andrew's** and **All Soul Church**, London	 Square-shaped layout plan, use of gallery, size relatively small, pulpit as focus; pew for listening to the Word
Baroque Style (around 1600 – 1900) e.g. Italy – **Gesu**, Rome(1639);	 Small chapels alongside the nave; Painting and sculptural illusion
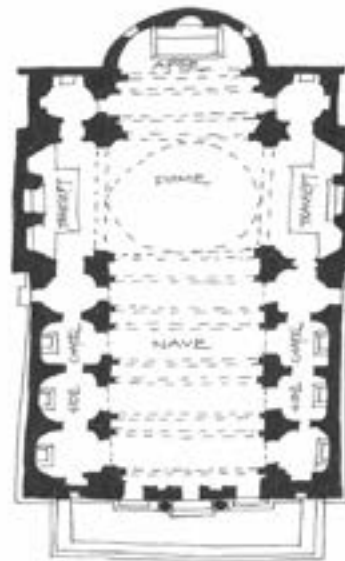
Table 2.4: Summary of the Themes in Western Church Design History

Period	Theological Theme	Aesthetics / Manifestation	Revelation of the nature of God/ Church as the house of God	Emphatic actions/activities in Worship/ Church as place of worship	Community of believers/ Church as believers
Byzantium (around 330 – 1400) – Basilica Style e.g. Italy – **Saint Sabina**, Rome, built between 422 and 432; Italy – **Basilica San Marco**, Venice (1063-94) Turkey – **Hagia Sophia**, Constantinople	Heavenly Jerusalem.	Long spacious nave with apse as focal point (practical liturgical need); Symbol of the Cross was transformed;	Enthroned, majestic Christ	Public veneration began; Path to salvation; process of redemption	Separation of the clergy and the laity but still a communion of the redeemed people of God
Romanesque Style (around 1000-1200) e.g. Italy – **S. Maria in Cosmedian**, Rome; Italy – **Pisa Cathedral**, Pisa (1063-1118); Italy – **S. Miniato al Monte**, Florence	Assurance; Protection, watch over; Mystical	Massive walls and towers	All Mighty God who protect and watch over	Liturgy by the clergy separated from the laity who can only hear and pray	Divine hierarchy and hierarchical structures of the church Pilgrimage
Gothic Style (around 1140 – 1500) e.g. France – **Saint Denis Cathedral**, Paris	Glory / grandeur and majesty Light / the presence of God	Pointed arch/ Verticality Stained glass; Rose window; Church as	Glory / grandeur and majesty but still close to people	Visual experience; viewing the consecrated Host Mystical	Hierarchical structures of the church Pilgrimage

(1140-1144); France – **Notre Dame**, Paris (1163-1250); France – **Sainte-Chapelle**, Paris (1241-48)	Security and peace	Womb Nave of Church symbolise Ship		Contemplation Spirituality	
Renaissance Style (around 1450-1650) e.g. Italy – **Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore**, Florence (1296-1436); Italy – **St. Peter's Cathedral**, Vatican City (1506-1626, 1656-67); Italy – **Sistine Chapel**, Vatican City	Demonstration of absolute truth Living symbol of God's perfection Human nature of Jesus System and cosmic order	Geometry and proportion Dome and circular form Through art to picture worldly life of Christ Classical orders	God's perfection; Human nature of Jesus	Emphasis on worshipping in small chapel for individual parties	Man in search of the Truth
Reformation or Protestantism Approach (from around 1500 onwards) e.g. Switzerland – **Zwingh's Church**, Lucerne; England – **St. Andrew's** and **All Soul Church**, London	Back to basic -Word of God	Square in layout plan, use of gallery, size relatively small, pulpit as focus; pew for listening to the Word	Personal God; Word	Preaching, the Word of God; Understanding bible / bible study Prayer meeting Hymn singing	Priesthood of all believers
Baroque Style (around 1600 – 1900) e.g. Italy – **Gesu**,	Spiritual transcendence / Sense of drama and mystical religious	Painting and sculptural illusion Use of gold colour	Glory, Spiritual transcendence	Mystical religious feelings	Assigned role in a theatre

	feelings Gate of heaven Anticipations of eternity	Arousing imagination			
Neo-classicism and Gothic Revival Approach (around 1800 – 1945) e.g. United Kingdom – **St. Paul's Cathedra**l, London; France – **Sacre Coeur**, Paris (from 1875); America – **Cathedral of St. Patrick**, New York (1858-1888)	Transcendence of God Glory and power	Applying classicism and Gothic elements	Transcendence Glory / grandeur and majesty	Visual experience; Mystical Eucharistic worship Communal nature of the worship; renewed emphasis in worship on the congregation, the body of Christ, not on the altar but in the people	Togetherness Communion of the saints
Modern Style to Contemporary Style (from around 1900 onwards) **Diversified approaches** e.g. France – Chapel of **Notre Dame du Haut,** Ronchamp; Japan – **Church of the Light**; Munich – **Church of Sacred heart**	Personal God Christ as servant Hospitality	Ample space for social mingling; A welcoming hallway for information and stay; Flexible space, such as movable chairs	Personal God Christ as servant	Praise and worship, celebration with worship team Simplified liturgy Convergence worship	Priesthood of all believers Individualism and the intellectual of individual human were reinforced instead of the traditional sense of community.

2.6.3 Quality of Symbolic Meaning: Traditional and Contemporary Reflection

Based on the observations in field trips and the literature review, a list of essential and common practices throughout different periods in church design is produced as a checklist to explore about the implication in our contemporary Hong Kong Church (see Table 2.4). These elements are practised throughout nearly two thousands years but some of them are disappeared in contemporary church design. This is an attempt to synchronise common practices in different styles in church history. It is significant to review whether they are really non-applicable or not in our contemporary context. The researcher does not imply that every element mentioned here should be retained in contemporary church design; this is exclusively a checklist to reflect on how contemporary church responds to and makes selection from these traditional qualities.

Table 2.5: 12 Traditional Church Design Essences – A Synthesis of Essential and Common Practices throughout Different Periods in Church Design

Common practices	Remarks
Search for sacred spatial representation. Prominent sacred architecture as landmark	In biblical times, sacred spatial representations were instructed by God. We can recognise that after apostolic period, throughout history, different believers in different periods were designing new approach in church design to represent God.
Creation of symbolic meaning to the architectural design.	e.g. nave means ship, cross plan, Ceiling and dome to denote heaven; Orientation of altar facing east; Sacred geometry, proportion (Barrie,

	1996, p67).
Use of Christian symbols	God used symbols to communicate with human and through symbols, human can understand God better. Therefore, symbols were introduced to deliver messages in Church.
Use of art, such as painting, stained glass, sculpture and fresco	A powerful means to deliver message especially for those who are illiterates. Art are employed to transform the Church into a three dimensional story book.
Proper entrance and facade	Traditionally, grandiose entrance with porch was designed. The first encounter of sacredness and the separation of sacred and profane.
Progression of space	A sacred path for worshippers to proceed in order to prepare their hearts to worship God. Raised platform as altar for the clergy at the end of the central aisle.
Symmetry in form & geometry	Awesome and Stable
Manipulation of light and shadow, such as rose window, stained glass window	The drama and symbolic meaning generated by light are always associated with the power and glory of God
Reinforcement of the height of the nave with high ceiling, pointed roof, vault, arch or column to reflect the transcendence of God	High ceilings are always associated with Church. High in scale is an essential element to let worshipper to experience the transcendence of God.
Honest use in material, natural materials, such as wood and stone.	Materials, such as stone or timber are exposed without disguise. Honesty is one of the virtues of Church.
Designated activities in different areas	Traditionally, church has enormous space. A cathedral can have many small radiating chapels inside to worship different saints. Different areas are named separately with different functions.
Selection of location	High position, prominent location, such as near the square or remembrance of the saints

However, it is argued that the common understanding of symbols is much reduced in our contemporary world which limited the power of symbols.

Delanty (2003) emphasised that, "It is now more difficult for people in search of community to orientate themselves around symbolically coded meanings, such as those that communities in the past could rely on" (p. 190). The researcher, however, suggests that it is more dynamic to identify the importance of symbolic meaning first before one can comment whether the lack of common perception towards symbols is a reality one has to abide or a problem one has to rectify. The researcher agrees with Schulz (1980), who imposed that, "It is through symbolisation that man becomes able to transcend the individual situation and thereby to live a social and positive life" (p. 222). With this conviction, symbols are important to the social life of mankind. Special attention has to be paid to the close relationship between symbols and church. Subsequently, we could admit that the lack of common understanding of symbols in our contemporary world is a problem we must rectify. Hence, church as a community space could not surrender the use of symbols for the delivering of identity and sense of belonging.

Importance of Symbolic Meaning

Historically, church space and symbols were closely linked. To study the importance of symbolic meaning, contemporary context about the urge for symbolic value by people and the lack of symbolic application in Protestant churches are presented which lead to the investigation of the value of symbols. Philosophically, Cassirer's (1944) proclamation that man is an "animal symbolicum" is the starting point to establish the significance of symbols to human beings. After introducing the use of symbolic meaning in biblical times,

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this section is going to reveal the theological perspective on the use of symbolic meaning. The positive and negative comments of Protestant theologians towards the use of symbols are investigated. Referring to "The Sacred Actions of Christian Worship", volume 6 of *The Complete Library of Christian Worship*, the researcher agrees with Robert Webber (1994) that contemporary churches must revert the importance of the use of symbols in worship and in church design (pp.73-76).

The Value of Symbol in Creating Sacred Identity

In consumer culture, every product has its symbolic meaning. Products are representation of symbols; hence, handbags made by famous brands, such as Gucci and Prada, symbolise the taste and status of a consumer. Product is often not purchased because of its functional value but symbolic value. When people addict to material world, a new system of symbols to deliver the status and identity has been invented. However, some churches think that investing money in design is a waste of money for churches focus on the inner spiritual quality and through design to convey the symbolic representation is superficial. For the use of symbols, it implies that more money has to be spent on decoration. Apart from the application of the standard ones, such as the cross, the pulpit and the floral arrangement, symbols could be seen basically in posters but they are not properly delivered under religious education. In some festivals, churches introduce some related symbols for decoration but because the educational purpose of using symbols is not the main concern, the result is not effective.

Moreover, the use of symbols in Christianity associates with Catholicism. From reformation onwards, Protestant movement rejected the use of icons and symbols in church and diminished a large number of artworks, such as stained glasses in churches. Some Protestant churches prefer to avoid this association and decide to have minimum use of symbols. The researcher believes that it may not be necessary to follow Catholic practice but yet, church leaders should not cast out the significance of using symbols to express sacredness.

Philosophically, Cassirer (1944/1990) established the uniqueness of human beings as compared to animals. He stated that "Man is an 'animal symbolicum'" (p.39). This interpretation has significant value in terms of the invention of art and design by human beings. There is a need as human beings that posses the talent to express something in a symbolic way. As Barrie (1996) has mentioned, "The use of symbols is an activity unique to human beings, and ever since our ancestors first learned to communicate, symbols have played an important role in the distinctly human need to define our place in the world" (p.11). Anthropologists admit the differences between cultures and how people live a social life by the way they agree with a system of symbols. Schulz (1980) highlighted that "It is through symbolisation that man becomes able to transcend the individual situation and thereby to live a social and positive life" (p.222). Through commonly agreed symbols, people unit together. This action of unification would create a new culture. When a culture needs to commit to a religious belief, symbols become vital elements.

Norberg-Schulz (1975) has given a very detail and comprehensive explanation of the vital nature of symbolisation: It is through symbolisation that man becomes able to transcend the individual situation and thereby to live a social and purposive life… Participation in a culture means that one knows how to use its symbols through perception (experience) and representation (expression). (p.222)

In religious context, we have symbolic objects, symbolic places, symbolic times, symbolic figure and symbolic activities. We rely on these to deliver the messages in a unique way. Especially when we need to express the nature of God which is transcendent and abstract to human beings, symbols could help believers to visualise and understand better. When Barrie (1996) needed to reflect on this issue, he echoed that "Because the ordinary range of means of communication was inadequate to explain religious and mythological themes, humans needed to invent symbols for this purpose" (p.12).

Definition

When ones wish to define the term symbols, Barrie (1996) explained it in Jung's psychological perspective: "A symbol, according to Jung, possesses specific connotations in addition to its conventional and obvious meaning. It implies something vague, unknown, or hidden from us... Because there are innumerable things beyond the range of human understanding, we constantly use symbolic terms to represent concepts that we cannot define or fully comprehend. This is one of the

reasons why all religions employ symbolic language or images. (pp.11-12)

It is clear that symbols could convey a deeper meaning especially in religion. When ones mention symbols, ones are not referring to an index or sign which is referring to some codes using graphics to express some signals. Symbols in this sense are more than universal signage system, such as road signs. Understanding a symbol is more than a rational understanding; it requires a cultural system to reveal the hidden meanings. Not only the cross is a symbol representing a religion, but also revealing the love of the Christian God through Jesus Christ who saves sinners and sacrifices Himself to redeem human beings. The simple cross could deliver a school of thinking for meditation. Different variations of the cross by different religious groups enrich the meaning. Barrie (1996) depicted the differences well and he elaborated the uniqueness of symbols by using Paul Tillich's words: "Paul Tillich made the distinction between symbol and sign by stating that the former possesses 'innate power'; it 'has a power inherent within it that distinguishes it from the mere sign which is impotent in itself'" (p.13).

Biblical Perspective of Symbols

It is understood that in the Old Testament, God concerned about the symbolic meaning of sacred architecture dedicated to Him. He sets up all the requirements and rules for His chosen people to follow. From the Bible, the book of Exodus indicates that God gave instruction on the making of the sacred objects, such as the ark, the table, the lampstand, the tabernacle and the

courtyard. The details and specifications were delivered by God. When King Solomon built the temple to dedicate to God, symbolic representation was indicated in every detail. From the Bible, the book of 1 Chronicles 28:12: "He gave him the plans of all that the Spirit had put in his mind for the courts of the temple of the Lord and all the surrounding rooms, for the treasuries of the temple of God and for the treasuries for the dedicated things." However, in the New Testament, because of the suppressive situation, disciples were worshipping in upper rooms to escape from the oppression by the Jews. After the destruction of the Temple, Christians were persecuted by the Romans, consequently, they were forced to worship secretly in catacombs and houses. They could not worship publicly and no significant buildings were built for God. If someone chooses to follow the New Testament time to worship in a simple setting, the context of under oppression was irrelevant to contemporary Hong Kong.

Theological Perspective of Symbols

Protestantism approach towards the use of symbols is quite sceptical, especially based on the attitude of renowned theologian Karl Barth (1959), Protestant church leaders reject the use of symbols.

> For Karl Barth, he put forward that: Images and symbols have no place at all in a building designed for Protestant worship because they dissipate attention and create confusion. More often economy of images and symbols is recommended for greater effect, a single image being more arresting and compelling then multiplicity. (as cited in

Kieckheffer, p.273)

As the researcher mentioned, Protestantism focuses on the listening of the Word instead of the seeing of the visual. Preaching is the key in Protestant worship; consequently, a place good enough for acoustic purpose and with visual contact of preacher and congregation would be an appropriate place. Hence, symbolic meanings, in this regard, were not a primary concern for Protestant churches.

However, another renowned theologian Paul Tillich (1987) pinpointed that "Protestantism is based upon the divine self-manifestation in a personal life, at a definite place… Under the criterion of the manifestation of the transcendent God in Jesus as the Christ, the churches can be filled with symbolic objects of all kinds" (p.217). Tillich strived to see that art and architecture could be revenue to reveal God and the use of symbols in art and architecture is indispensable.

The attitude of this paper is to revitalise the importance of symbols; the contemporary theology correlates with the researcher's viewpoint that is the younger evangelical theology promoted by Robert Webber (2002).

> Webber (1994) emphasised that "Protestants are the weakest in the third area of communication, the language of symbols. We have capitulated to the Enlightenment penchant for scientific objectivity, for observation and proof, for cerebral communication. This has resulted in a loss of our ability to express feelings and intuition symbolically. (pp.88-89)

Webber recognised the difficulties in uplifting the use of symbols. He introduced two layers of symbols which are the dominical and ecclesiastical symbols. By these, he maintained to differentiate the symbols related to Jesus and the symbols practiced by church tradition. However, Webber reminded evangelicals that the symbolic communication is not a problem but the mishandling by the late medieval church has distorted the essence. Hence, Webber (1994) added that "Unfortunately, this led to a loss of the use of the body as well as of other legitimate physical and material signs of worship" (p. 89).

Contemporary Implication of Symbols: Semiotics

Semiotics as defined by John Fiske is "The study of signs and the way they work" (Fiske, 1990, p.40). Some scholars focused on the process of communication, such as Gerbner's model and Westley and MacLean's model. Models directly related to this thesis are the ones which concern about the generation of meaning. This thesis explores about the delivering of message, the application of representations, and the perception of meaning by users in terms of semiotics.

The application of a semiotic system which relates to the implication of symbolic meanings in this thesis is essential. This kind of attitude coincides with philosopher and logician C.S. Peirce, who was one of the founders of semiotic. His model was one of the most influential models of meaning. Regarding his sign system, Peirce generated three categories to differentiate the different layers of representation: they are icon, index and symbol. An icon

is presented with similar appearance as its object, examples are photograph and realistic painting. An index has property directly linked with its object such as footprint is giving a hint of the presence of someone. Whereas a symbol has no connection with its object, the message could be understood because they compromise among each other the meaning behind, example such as dove means peace or Holy Spirit in Christian terms.

In Christians' perspective, symbol is different from sign. Christian symbol has a hidden and spiritual meaning but sign is simply referred to a strict forward indication, no innate power is delivered. For example, when Christian interprets the cross, there will be different symbolic meanings like salvation and hope. Only someone being educated under Christian convention could receive similar meanings for the cross in Christian sense.

When one explored the topic of convention, it led to the understanding of culture. Fiske, (1990) commented that "Convention is the social dimension of signs" (p.56). When people are under the same social group, they share the same recognition of the meaning behind a specific symbol. In this thesis, the concept of convention was diverted to the significance of Christian education about symbols. For it was discovered that Christians did not share common understanding about the meanings of different Christian symbols. Nowadays, only a few of the collection of Christian symbols are applied. In order to enhance more effective communication, church leaders need to ensure that the concept of convention is properly defined.

Peirce's analysis is closely related to the discussion in this thesis. The sacred identity requires the use of symbolic meaning. However, icons are

commonly used in churches with direct imitation in media such as paintings, sculptures or stained glasses. The pictorial method can be understood easily but the power of symbols is to deliver something words could not express.

Symbols like cross and dove are implied which required the insiders under the same convention to understand the meaning behind. The cross can have multi layers of meaning. Susann Vihma (1995) described the "multi-layered sign" (p.75) of a product. One may only refer the cross as the symbol of Christianity. However, the deeper meaning would not be understood such as the connotation of salvation and hope of a new life. For Christians, the cross is the centre point of their faith. Christian could be motivated by meditating on the deeper meaning of the cross. This is the power of symbol when people share the same convention. Convention is essential for people to share the meaning of Christian living effectively.

When the researcher applied this semiotic system into schema one, there was some insightful reflection. Usually, outsiders could not understand the complete meaning from looking at a symbol. The iconic level is the first understanding. In the case of church building, the cross is interpreted as an icon of Christianity. However, the understanding of the symbolic meaning behind would only limited to the one who engages in it. For church building and design to attract newcomers, the iconic level needs to be enriched so that they can understand it. The sacred identity usually requires education under the convention. However, the association of contemporary quality can be applied in church design to associate with outsiders. Even though the outsiders may not understand completely the meaning behind each design details or the

symbols applied, the contemporary representation can still generate association and closeness to the outsiders. It is not necessary to let outsiders to appreciate all symbols; indeed church design is better to arouse a wonder effect with another emotional reaction in order to stand out from secular discipline. It means that a balance between contemporary language and sacred vocabulary is essential. Hence, church design cannot execute with the extreme of contemporary or traditional design style. The three categories: icon, index and symbol need to be applied simultaneously.

When applying semiotic into architectural and interior design, Preziosi (1979) in his book, "Architecture, Language and Meaning" commented that "the built environment is a system of relationships among signs (not among forms and materials per se)" (p.15). It means that designs are symbolic in nature and the symbolic messages are linked with other natures of building types. Hence, the scenario of church with no design must be rectified because a church without contemporary signs to link with other contemporary buildings would convey a wrong message to the outsiders by interpreting Christianity as an old-fashioned one. On the other hand, a traditional design might also indicate that the message of church is remote from contemporary needs and concerns; church is only about ancient faith but without transformation into contemporary situations.

Church building performs a symbolic message is found from books about church designs, such as Liturgy and Architecture by Hammond (1960), Architectural requirement of protestant worship by Fiddes (1961), From temple to meeting house by Turner (1979), and A place of encounter –

renewing worship space by Christopherson (2004). Christopherson (2004) commented that "Great need in this postmodern, visual, and unchurched age to teach church symbolic vocabulary" (p.25). In postmodern culture, visual communication is more powerful than verbal message. Church leaders are invited to carefully manipulate the visual elements through symbolic vocabulary in order to reach people of this age.

Another inspiring concept which is discussed in semiotic study is the idea of syntagms which deals with the whole setting and the combination of items to compose the scenario. This idea is closely related to interior design such as the combination of different furniture in a living room (they act as the signs) has created the atmosphere which is the syntagms. The concept of syntagms is elaborated into the study of environmental psychology. However, the essence of a proper design has been forsaken in churches especially in Hong Kong. Hence, environmental psychology is examined to highlight the importance of environment to human behaviour. Apart from psychological need, the spirit of place as introduced by Norberg-Schulz, Christian (1979 is also vital. This concept recalls the significance of identity and design of a place which is the purpose of understanding semiotic.

Contemporary Implication: Environmental Psychology

Environmental psychology concerns about how behaviour and mood are affected by the environmental setting. Paul Bell (2001) stated clearly that "Environmental psychology, then, is very concerned with the environment as a determinant or influence on behaviour and mood" (Bell, 2001, p.3). He defined environmental psychology as "the study of the molar relationships between behaviour and experience and the built and natural environments" (Bell, 2001, p.6). Human behaviours adjust under different syntagms or environmental settings.

Environmental psychology opens the opportunity for designers to understand how human reacts towards different environmental settings. To improve human environment, it is the responsibility for designers to provide designs fit for the users. Environment manipulates mood and behaviour of users. It is the task of designer to provide a suitable environment for the affiliated activities in order to generate the appropriate behaviour and response.

When we talk about the pragmatic level of consulting environmental psychology, the scenario of this paper under a both densely populated and urban environment are two very critical issues affecting human behaviour. The chapters on high density and crowding and the city in the book *Environmental psychology* written by Paul Bell (2001) has illustrated the influences of issues such as personal space, health, concentration of strangers, green space and so forth under urban environment. It is obvious that the physical well-beings of a place is highly affected by the densely environment. But one also needs to admit that both social and cultural aspects are in danger as well. In a dense

area, the resources for the cultural expression will be limited, for example, one-flat church needs to be multi-functional and so the identity of church could be hidden. Whereas, when one concerns about social well-beings, one is searching for the sense of belonging and community building.

Spirit of Place. The existence of places does not confer to practical reasons, but also confine to the existential meanings. Norberg-Schulz, Christian (1979), a renowned scholar emphased on the importance of the spirit of a place which he used the Roman term *'Genius loci'* to describe it. "Genius loci is a Roman concept. According to ancient Roman belief every 'independent' being has its genius, its guardian spirit" (Norberg-Schulz, 1979, p.18).

> Norberg-Schelz (1975) stated clearly that: A meaningful environment forms a necessary and essential part of a meaningful existence**.** As meaning is a psychological problem, which cannot be solved through the control of production and economy alone, architecture, in the true sense of the word, ought to be a primary concern for modern man. (p.227)

When a space is better to be understood in terms of its symbolic and meaningful forms, in which cultural meaning could be manifested, symbols which could only be interpreted by insiders are significant for a feeling of identity. In order to deliver the spirit of a place, the use of commonly shared symbols is essential. When we concern about different cultures, it is the symbolic meaning which represents the uniqueness of each culture. Norberg-Schulz (1975) elaborated that "It is through symbolisation that man becomes

able to transcend the individual situation and thereby to live a social and purposeful life… Participation in a culture means that one knows how to use its symbols through perception (experience) and representation (expression)"(p.222).

Hence, when one studys church space especially in Hong Kong, it is hard to believe why church as a unique spiritual space has lost its sacred identity. Church is a place to uplift spiritual needs is remarkable in a society. When the representation of things is interpreted in symbolic manner, they would exhibit beyond practical value. In particular, entrance of a church can share the common accepted value of the separation of the sacred and the profane which may act as a boundary or protection from the outside world to the inside world through the entrance. Our contemporary culture needs this sacred space to balance our lack of security and calmness.

Norberg-Schelz (1975) further elaborated the importance of environment by stating that "A meaningful environment forms a necessary and essential part of a meaningful existence" (Norberg-Schelz, 1975, p.227). From Norberg-Schelz's standpoint, the term "spirit of place" has been established in ancient times. When man feels settled down in a place, he is not simply finding a shelter but a meaningful place with unique quality. When we apply biblical messages to this conviction, we have to affirm that God gives us the duty of managing the world and creating meaningful environment as one of the scopes. (From Bible, Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on

the ground.) If places satisfy physical needs merely, the character it represents would be lost. No matter a city, a community, a housing estate or even a small church, there should be distinctive characters. Norberg-Schelz (1975) stated that "In general we have to emphasize that all places have character, and that character is the basic mode in which the world is 'given'"(Norberg-Schelz, 1975, p14).

Summary. In environmental psychology, consideration of both the practical and existential needs is essential. Hence, the physical, social and cultural wellbeings must be understood. It is disappointed that the spirit of place is loosing its dignified position nowadays especially in Hong Kong. Traditionally, even small details such as ornaments and mouldings in a place are meaningful and contribute to the composition of the multifaceted environment. Meaning in the environment we live in is a way of identification. Norberg-Schelz (1975) stated clearly that "Identification and orientation are primary aspects of man's being-in-the-world. Whereas identification is the basis for man's sense of belonging, orientation is the function which enables him to be that homo viator, which is part of his nature" (p.22). The sense of belonging which is desired by human beings aligns with the sociological aspect of the spirit of community. God gives us the creativity to deliver the meaning of place in a creative way. God urges us to worship together and set apart from the world, church is the sacred place for Christian to come together to worship. As Christians, ones need to protect the consecrated place and try the best to deliver a symbolic representation of the deity.

Summary

From the investigation of church design throughout different periods in church history, the use of symbols are mainly focused on Catholic churches instead on Protestant churches, however, this is not necessarily exclusive from each other.

I have addressed the issue of symbols which is also a powerful way to deliver the message and Protestant church can also apply this on top of their focus on preaching. In this thesis, the theory from younger evangelicals is applied to bring out the balance between the aural and the visual.

When considering the issue of church design , advices to leaders of Protestant church are to teach congregations about sacred representation and how can different representations work together to deliver the message.

The use of symbolic meanings to express the sacred quality of church is a well established practice from biblical time onwards. When ones go through the historical church design development, ones understand the symbolic meanings to reveal the nature of God is fundamental. Under the Protestant movement, avoiding the use of symbols could mean destruction of these meaningful symbols for church goers in a long run. In the above study, the importance of the use of symbolic meaning is asseverated. The task of contemporary churches is to educate the worshippers the attitude and knowledge to appreciate the symbols in order to facilitate a holistic worship experience.

2.6.4 Historical Review of Hong Kong Church Design

From Western to Hong Kong Church Design: Church growth in relationship with the Use of Space from Individual Building to the Unique Scenario of One-flat Church in Hong Kong

From 1842 onwards, Protestant Church of different denominations and missionaries organisations started to establish churches, schools and hospitals in Hong Kong. From the book *Xianggang Jidu jiao hui shi yan jiu (A study of Hong Kong Christian Churches)* by Li (1987), Baptist Missionary Society and London Missionary Society, both from England, were the Protestant pioneers to send missionaries to China and Hong Kong (p.8). In 1807, Rev. Robert Morrison from London Missionary Society was the first missionary went to China and settled down in Macau. From 1842 to 1960, around 230 churches were established. In 1950's, because of the influx of refugees from Mainland China, the number of churches began to grow steadily. (see Table 2.7) Due to church planting movement, Church growing rapidly from 1980's to 2004 (From 1842 to 1979, 538 churches were established; up to 2004, there were 1181 churches — a multiple number of churches was planted within these 24 years). A total of 1,181 Chinese-speaking churches were surveyed in 2004, 30% of them was established after 1989. In 2004, there were a total of around 246,545 church members in Hong Kong (Hu & Huo (Eds.), 2006, p. 13), and they distributed among more than 50 denominations together with more than 200 churches without any denominations. From table 2.6, 80% of churches in Hong Kong with congregation size was less than 200 people. Majority of one-

flat churches was located in limited area with smaller size of congregation.

In church history, it was revealed that not every church in the 19th Century managed to make purchase of land to build their individual church buildings with religious characters. As early as in 1898, The Chinese Rhenish Church Hong Kong Synod bought an existing building in Bonham Road and use flat space to conduct worship. Later in 1901, Tsim Sha Tsui Baptist Church was established in a flat in Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon (Liu, 1996, p.141). Another instance in 1940, Kowloon Tong Church of the C.C. & M.A. rented a garage on 25 Cameron Road to conduct Sunday services. The number of churches used flat space to conduct worship increased steadily. Due to the densely populated urban environment, a large number of church plantings started to use flats in buildings instead of building individual church buildings since 1960's. Until 2004, there were 659 churches (56%) located in residential buildings, commercial buildings, 116 churches in social services centres and 231 churches in schools (Hu & Huo (Eds.), 2006, p.13). A total number of approximately 1000 churches was located in non-individual church buildings. The high proportion of churches without individual church buildings was a very typical and unique phenomenon in Hong Kong because of its scarcity of land which would make individual church buildings costly.

Churches were located in multiple layers of vertical space in a vertical city. Because sites such as ground floor shops in busy areas and multi-level shops with double height spaces are relatively expensive, churches generally occupied flat spaces upstairs in commercial blocks or residential buildings, especially in busy urban areas. (see figure 2.13) In one case, it consisted of

seven churches located in a commercial building in Shatin. However, these churches or centres were usually located on the ground floor level.

Figure 2.13 One-flat churches in different layers of buildings

Social Need Influenced the Secularisation of Hong Kong Church as Small Scale Community Space in One-flat Church

The prominent role of the church was to serve the community, in addition to providing worship space to the public. According to Hu and Huo (Eds.) (2006), around 56.3% of churches provide social services; which was a significant increase as compared to the 1999 survey which was around 41.5%. There were around 710 churches providing social services, such as school, kindergarten, child care centre, children and youth integrated services centre, elderly centre, self-studying centre, tutorial centre, family service centre, community service centre, and centres providing medical service and counselling service (pp. 42-43 & 117).

It is noted that many community services for the elderly, the youth and newly arrived citizens taken place in the churches. The church space was thus multi-functional and multi-purpose: apart from conducting religious activities; it was used as a space for self-study, tutorial class, family gathering, discussion and community gathering, etc. As stated in the book *Zhuan bian*

zhong de cheng zhang : Xianggang jiao hui yan jiu 2006 (Growth amidst Changes – Studies on Hong Kong Church 2006), members of Protestant churches which were only 3.1% of Hong Kong population was operating 60% of social services and 20% of schools in Hong Kong which was a significant contribution to the society. (Hu & Huo (Eds.), 2006, pp.57-58). Participation in social services was a dominant strategy for churches. However, it terms of design, it is discovered that churches surrender the sacred identity to the identity of the social services.

On the other hand, in order to reach public housing residents, church organisations applied for the establishment of the affiliated social services centres. During weekdays, the centres required to fulfil the requirement of the social services as granted by the government. The spaces were then converted into church spaces on the weekends. Apart from subvention, majority of churches ran their social services on self-financed bases; hence, restrictions from government could be reduced; and flexibility in design approach and spatial arrangement could be enhanced.

According to Hu and Huo (Eds.) (2006), 104 churches were planted between 1999 and 2006; and 64 churches would plan to plant a church in the coming five years as surveyed in 2004 (p.11). Most of these churches would plant a new church in newly developed areas to contribute to the community. The fulfilment of the social need reinforced the secularisation of church. And, a significant number of these churches would be located in flat spaces in high-rise buildings (e.g. buildings in public housing estates). Table 2.5 indicates the distribution of churches in different kinds of worship places.

Statistics of Hong Kong Churches Surveyed in 2004

The statistic is extracted from the book *Zhuan bian zhong de cheng zhang : Xianggang jiao hui yan jiu 2006 (Growth amidst Changes: Studies on Hong Kong Church 2006)*《轉變中的成長: 香港教會研究 2006》edited by Hu and Huo (2006)

- A total of 1,181 Chinese-speaking churches in 2004.

- There was a weekly average of 216,739 Christians attending services.

- There were 387,363 registered members (both overseas and local); 246,545 members in Hong Kong.

- 65% of churches were located in flat spaces, such as residential buildings, commercial buildings and church operated social services centres.

Table 2.6: Distribution of Churches in Different Kinds of Worship Places:

Kinds of Worship Places	No. of Churches		
	1994	1999	2004
Individual Church Building	163	147	161
Commercial Building	311	292	338
Residential Building	211	341	321
School	143	179	231
Social Services Centre	132	158	116
Others	96	12	14

Total	1056	1129	1181

There were 775 churches located in different levels of high rise building, such as commercial buildings, residential buildings and public housing complex. There was a rising number of churches situate in school due to the opportunity of evangelising in church operated school which could reduce cost in church planting as well. There was a drop in number for churches in social services centre but there were another 373 churches provide affiliated social services. It means that the number of churches provide social services is 489 which was 41.1 percent.

Table 2.7: Distribution of Churches with Different Sizes of Congregation:

Sizes of Congregation	No. of Churches	Percentage (%)
Below 50	*205*	*17.4%*
51-100	*343*	*29%*
101-200	*357*	*30.2%*
201-500	215	*18.2%*
Above 500	61	*5.2%*
Total	**1181**	**100%**

From Table 2.7, it is found that there was 80% of churches with size of congregation below 200.

Table 2.8: Number of Churches Established in Different Years:

Year	No. of Years (Since Establishment)	No. of Churches	Total No. of Churches in Hong Kong
1954 or before	Over 50 years	165	165
	Between 45-49 years	71	236
1960s	Between 40-44 years	75	311
	Between 35-39 years	68	379
1970s	Between 30-34 years	57	436
	Between 25-29 years	83	519
1980s	Between 20-24 years	104	623
	Between 15-19 years	128	751
1990s	Between 10-14 years	183	934
	Between 5-9 years	159	1093
2000s	Between 0-4 years	88	1181

From 1980s onwards, church planting was rapid; more than 56% of churches in Hong Kong were planted after 1980s.

Church Design: from Revival of Traditional Styles to Counter-Representation of the Sacred (Lack of Cultural Identity)

When performing studies on church design in Hong Kong, it is often found that there is a lack of reference materials. Field research and internet

search on web sites of churches were applied to analyse issues in this situation. Table 2.8 indicates the changes in Hong Kong church design. When missionaries came to Chinese society from 1842 onwards, they purchased lands from government to build individual church buildings. In terms of the style of church design, they followed their practice in Western countries, such as applying neo-classicism or Gothic revival. A representing example would be St. John's Cathedral by Anglican denomination. When missionaries from the United States came to Hong Kong, the design practice at that period applied simplified ornamentations with pointed roof and simple pattern stained glass, example of church they built at that time, such as Kowloon Baptist Church. Some tried to explore using Chinese elements onto church buildings, for example, the chapel of Lutheran Theological Seminary. When the majority of people was not Christians as in Hong Kong (In 2004, there were a total of around 264,242 church members in Hong Kong which was 3.1% of the population of Hong Kong), sacredness of church could be a serious barrier for sacred church was something western (not indigenous), too holy (not approachable) and remote from the world (not practical). Design of church was never an important issue. One-flat churches even gave up the sacred identity. Churches started to concern about design within these ten more years but there had been a lack of research and discussion about the appropriate approach to represent God in our contemporary densely populated urban environment.

In Hong Kong, when churches swung from the sacred to the profane in order to reach the community; gradually, churches did not rely on designing

spiritual spaces. Sacredness of church was not a starting point for the community to have spiritual experience. Secularisation also merged the separation between the sacred and the profane into a continuum. When churches tried to break through the gap between believers and non-believers, they sought for a trendy atmosphere for the non-believers to attend in order to eliminate the threshold fear of entering a solemn church. This kind of rationale is called seeker-sensitive approach. Whereas, some churches tried to differentiate from the contemporary representation by building their church space in a monotonous and old-fashioned approach. This thinking was also related to the development of Chinese church to face the criticism of Communist government. Christians were educated to live a simple lifestyle with humility. Under this stream, it was noticeable that a sophisticated church design was a waste of money. All the above circumstances hindered the search of a sacred representation of Christ in Hong Kong Church. To be honest, Christians could worship in everywhere even in a restaurant, on a lawn, at home or in a poorly designed space. Renowned theologian, Paul Tillich (1987) also affirmed that "Protestantism is a religion of the ear and not of the eye" (p.215). Because of the focus of preaching in service, the classic evangelical church design had been emerged. Pulpit as the central focus in the altar; pew was used for worshippers to sit down and to listen to the Word. However, the use of pew and fixed pulpit were only suitable for individual church buildings with ample spaces. For church in flat with space limitation and the need of multi-functional scheme, folding or stackable chairs were used to replace pew, one of the symbolic furniture of church. Fixed pulpits were sometimes

replaced by movable stands. Eventually, the application of liturgical furniture to deliver the symbolic meaning was further reduced. Undoubtedly, some churches still tried their best to apply traditional church design features, such as pews, arch, pointed ceiling in flat spaces.

Table 2.9: Different Periods in Hong Kong Church History in Relation with Church Design

(The stages are following the structure from the book *History of Hop Yat Church, CCC from her founding year 1843 till the present* 中華基督教會合一堂史 – 從一八四三年建基至現代)

Period	Church development	Individual building to church in flat	Design
1842-1870	Missionaries recruiting believers, building churches, hospitals and schools	Around 87 churches were established and they had their own lands to build individual churches.	Individual church buildings followed western design applying neo-classicism or Gothic revival such as St. John's Cathedral.
1870-1888	Missionaries motivating Chinese Christians independence movement	Flats were sometimes used, such as Tsim Sha Tsui Baptist Church was established in a flat in Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon (Lau, 1996, p.141)	Some churches used meeting house concept with simplified design applying pointed roof and tinted colour glass, such as C.C.C. Wanchai Church. Some tried to explore using Chinese elements onto church buildings, for example, the former Methodist Hong Kong Church building
1888-1910	Chinese Christians independence movement developing steadily		
1910-1949	Chinese Christians independence movement growing in the right track. In 1937 onwards, Church fought against the invasion of Japan		
1949-1980	Chinese church growing steadily; influx of refugees from Mainland China	Till 1999, there were 147 churches in individual church buildings. It means that only around 60 churches built their own buildings from 1949-1999. The total number of church	When churches moved to flat, they gave up the sacred identity and the use of design to represent God. For a long time, design of church in flat was
1980 onwards	Due to Church planting movement, Church growing		

	rapidly (From 1842' to 1979', 538 churches; up to 1999', 1129 churches — a multiple number of churches were planted within these 20 years)	in 1999 was 1129. 70% of churches were located in flat space, such as residential buildings, commercial buildings and church operated social services centres.	neglected. Recently, some churches started to concern about design of church space in order to benefit the worship and community activities.

One-flat Church Design: from the Lack of Design to the Lack of Sacred Identity

One-flat churches did not only surrender their spiritual identity, they also gave up the concern of design. Hence, church spaces were still unattractive to non-believers. On the other hand, images of churches are monotonous and boring. Church space had become a causal gathering place like a room in an ordinary community centre. Nevertheless, the most prominent and representative sacred symbol of the cross was blocked by the projection screen which became invisible to most worshippers. One-flat churches had lost the attraction of an individual church building with a proper facade. Majority of newcomers were invited by Christian friends to attend church activities. The use of prominent sacred architecture to represent God and attract people was not essential in this situation. Thus, they simply used signage, logo or banner on the exterior wall to identify the sacred representation.

For a long time, design of church in flat was neglected even for the churches with good resources of money. For some small churches, because of the limited budget, they could not afford to employ designers; hence, church leaders simply let the contractors to solve the problems and to plan the layout technically. Recently, some churches start to concern about the design of

church space in order to benefit the worship and community activities. However, the sacred quality was still hidden under the theme of creating a contemporary space. From the church visit of 171 one-flat churches, 39 of them have design input, which is over one-fifth (22.8%) of the total number. (*The definitions of churches incorporated with design are: whether there are holistic considerations of the space with designed details and a decent atmosphere is created. However, they are not necessarily considered good or appropriate design*). Table 2.9 demonstrates the development of Hong Kong one-flat church design from 1945 onwards. The common aesthetic representation of churches from 1950s to 1980s was mainly the use of purple velvet curtain, teak wood liturgical furniture and a simple cross in wood finish. There was no significant transformation in church design from 1950s to 1980s. From the 1990s onwards, churches started to have contemporary design and the concept of seeker-sensitive approach was popular. If Webber's (2002) interpretation was used, this kind of approach would be named - pragmatic Evangelicals and they were conscious of the contemporary representation to attract newcomers; hence, the designs were usually contemporary oriented without little concern on the sacred quality, such as the use of symbols. Before 1990s, social services centre operated by churches were also without design concern. It is commented that churches required to keep progress with the society and the urbanisation progress reinforced churches to be more sensitive with the society (Hu & Huo, 2006, p.53). Design had been uplifted into the agenda of new churches from 1990s onwards but church leaders mainly hoped to deliver the contemporary quality through contemporary design languages.

For churches which followed a traditional layout and concern, cross must be placed in the centre because it is the most significant symbol of Christianity. Figure 2.14 and Figure 2.15 are longitudinal layout plans with cross in the centre, choir on the right hand side. Whether the pulpit is placed in the middle or on the left and lectern on the right is a denominational practice. No matter where the entrance is located, a longitudinal layout is preferred.

A very traditional layout of church has pulpit on the left side and lectern on the right side. Choir is also located at the altar area (see figure 2.19). Some churches also placed the pulpit at the centre of the altar because the Word of God is the highlight of a service or worship (see figure 2.16). Examples of such can be found at Sheung Wan Baptist Church and Tai Po Christian & Missionary Alliance Church.

However, for a number churches, the pulpit is only a movable stand which can be placed on the side (see figure2.17). Two examples are Island Evangelical Community Church and Just Church.

For churches which did not observe traditional setting such as Crossroad Community Baptist Church, cross was placed on one side side and the projection screen in the middle (see figure 2.18).

Churches such as E.F.C.C. – Tung Fook Church created a stage-like setting for the altar, a contemporary setting with movable furniture such as choir seats, keyboard, drum set and pulpit was applied.
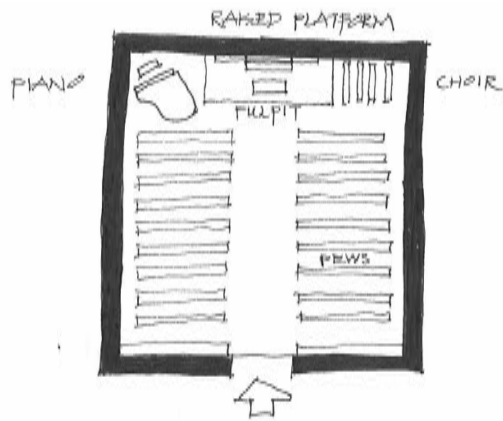
Figure 2.14 Typical Layout of Protestant Church in Hong Kong

This is a longitudinal layout plan with cross in the centre, choir on the right hand side. Whether the pulpit is placed in the middle or on the left and lectern on the right is a denominational practice.
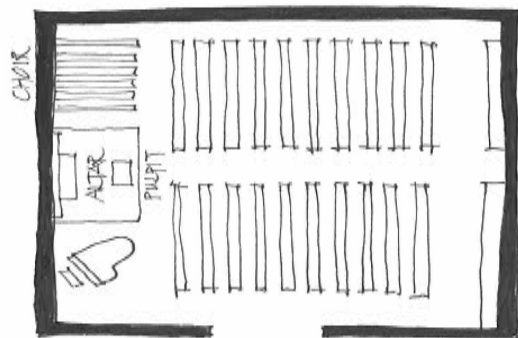
Figure 2.15 Typical Layout of Protestant Church in Hong Kong
No matter where the entrance is located, a longitudinal layout is preferred

Figure 2.16
Layout of Altar

Typical altar layout with cross, communion table and pulpit in the centre

Figure 2.17
Layout of Altar

For some churches, pulpit is not required to be placed in the centre, a bigger size cross can be accommodated because the pulpit will not block the view of the bottom of the cross

Figure 2.18
Layout of Altar

Another variation is the location of the cross not at the centre. In this case, the altar can be transformed into a stage with thematic backdrop or projection screen in the centre but without blocking the cross.

Figure 2.19
Layout of Altar

This is a very traditional church layout for different denominations with a liturgical background such as Anglican, Methodist and Church of Christ in China: pulpit on the left hand side and lectern on the right hand side. Choir is also seated in the altar area.

Figure 2.20
Layout of Altar

A contemporary setting with movable furniture such as choir seats, keyboard, drum set and pulpit.

Remarks:
1. Cross
2. Banner
3. Projection screen
4. Pulpit
5. Communion table
6. Drum
7. Piano
8. Lectern
9. Choir
10. Keyboard
11. Baptismal Pool
12. Sliding Panel
13. Raised platform

Table 2.10: Hong Kong One-flat Church Design Development from 1945 onwards

50s	60s	70s	80s	90s	2000
Hainan Church of The Church of Christ in China (Zhonghua Jidu jiao hui chuang hui qi shi zhou nian : 1918-1988, 1988)	Epworth Village Methodist Church H.K. (Lo & Wu, 1985)	HKMLC Living Stone Lutheran Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, www.hkmlc.org/livingst/ main.html)	Tai Po Christian & Missionary Alliance Church	Crossroad Community Baptist Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.ccbc.org.hk)	Just Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2009, http:// www.justchurch.hk)
North Point Alliance Church (Liang, 1977)	The Church of Livingstones (Kowloon)	Evangelical Chinese Gospel Church (Main Church) (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.ecgc.org.hk)	Shatin Free Methodist Church	E.F.C.C. – Tung Fook Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2009, http:// www.justchurch.hk)	Island Evangelical Community Church

Glad Blessings Free Methodist Church	Church of Saviour (Methodist)	The Church of Christ in China Kei To Mong Kok Church	Shatin Alliance Church	E.F.C.C. – Kong Fook Church	Hong Kong Evangelical Yan Chiu Church
(Xianggang xun li hui, 1994)	(Lo & Wu, 1985)	(Zhonghua Jidu jiao hui chuang hui qi shi zhou nian : 1918-1988, 1988)			

Remarks: The above table does not identify the year of establishment of the relevant church but the year in which the church started to have the design shown in the photo.

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2.6.5 Summary of the Relationship between Theology and Spatial Design

Since the nature of church consists of three attributes and it requires careful design to reveal the essence; churches are bombarded to convey their design in a holistic representation instead of a pure spiritual level consideration. The rationale of representing the Divine through church design is also rooted from history. The findings hence suggest that design must be reinforced in church circle. However, the scenario nowadays has become controversial issue: on the one hand, churches simply deliver the contemporary qualities with identity of the social services and the use of contemporary languages to construct the church space. On the other hand, majority of churches simply ignore design and create a monotonous and boring environment without both contemporary elements and sacred qualities. Church no longer presents the uniqueness of sacredness that: church is not a serene and meditative space for people to nourish spiritual experience; church space could not educate people to show awesomeness to the Divine; church space would look like any other spaces, such as lounge and conference room.

When churches admit that the first encounter of people about church is through the representation of the house of God, the design must be carefully constructed. Consequently, the ontological separation of the sacred and the profane has to be reviewed under secularisation which brings to the investigation of the relationship with church design and contemporary representation.

2.6.6 Summary of Secularisation and Church Design

From revival and neo-classic movement onwards, under the influence of secularisation, the authority of Church was diminishing and the sacred identity in a secular world was being challenged. Through the phenomenon in church spatial design, two attitudes were practised: the separation approach struck for the revival of traditional style to preserve the distinguished sacred identity; and the continuum attempted to merge the separation in order to break the threshold fear of non-believers. Under the influence of secularisation, urbanisation of Hong Kong reached a limit of densely populated environment, churches in Hong Kong moved to flats in different layers of buildings. Hong Kong church design under different challenges, such as limited space and operation of social services, has lost the inherited sacred identity; majority of churches even surrender the need of design. The search for a church design to reflect contemporary culture as well as to deliver the sacred quality was not a priority. Table 2.11 is schema 3 illustrates the effect of secularisation on design and the approaches to achieve the design of churches with contemporary and sacred qualities.

Table 2.11: Schema 3: Secularisation and Church Design

Secularisation and Church Design

Merge the separation of the sacred and the profane in a continuum

Preserve the separation of the sacred and the profane

Western Phenomenon

(Individual building type)

1. Functionalism church architecture

Establish the relationship of theology and spatial design
1. Theology of church
2. Historical church design development from Western to Hong Kong

Hong Kong Phenomenon

(One-flat church)

1. Without design and not sacred

Characters:
a. Limited space in flat and low ceiling height;
b. Provide social services
c. Multi-functional

Revival of traditional styles both in Western and Hong Kong

(Individual building type)

2. Non-conformist simple style design with minimum concern of contemporary culture

Relationship of church design and social community
1. Effect of secularisation on the sacred
2. From the sacred to the secular
3. Need of community spirit

3. Contemporary church, such as communal church
a. Contemporary but not sacred
b. Contemporary and sacred

2. Contemporary seekers-sensitive church, some with social services
a. Contemporary but not sacred

Disappearance of worship space
1. Theology of worship
2. Convergence worship – **Contemporary and sacred qualities**

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After a historical investigation to reveal the significance of theology and spatial design and the serious issue in Hong Kong church design, a schema is created to explore the relationship between secularisation and design. Based on the second hypothesis, which is the importance of the relationship with contemporary representation, the implication of secularisation to churches will be presented. This study has further reviewed the relationship with contemporary representation through sociological and architectural perspectives to merge the separation into a continuum; following that, theological standpoint in contemporary culture has been established; and due to the performance of church as small scale community space, sociological perspective about church as community to contribute to the urban society is also reviewed.

In respect of the significance of representing the sacred identity with contemporary quality, it can be tested by understanding the disappearance of worship space through the evaluation of the theology of worship with church that performs as a place of worship leading to the trend of convergence worship – as asserted by Robert Webber (2002), is analysed.

2.7 Relationship between Church Design and Social Community

It is understood that secularisation has made influences to churches vastly in different genres and severity. In the earlier stage, churches rejected the phenomenon and opted to go back to tradition. However, constantly, secular trends have provided resources for transformation, such as the application of business models in mega church. The effect of secularisation is irreversible; the approach of this paper is to encounter the challenges positively. When we admit

that this is the setting for churches to deliver the message, we could embrace both positive and negative influences and search for an innovative approach to build the sacred identity. Secularisation does not necessarily draw to counter sacred representation. On the other hand, through the influence of secularisation, we need to search for new ways of representing sacred in order to touch the contemporary world. However, the separation between the sacred and the profane still exists especially in Hong Kong churches.

2.7.1 Secularisation in Hong Kong Churches

In the case of Hong Kong, secularisation in association with urbanisation, rapid economical development and unlimited spreading of information further challenge the authority of religion. Hong Kong church design under limited space and multi-functional requirement has reached the extreme of surrendering the sacred identity to the identity of the operating social services. When churches realise the impact of secularisation on human beings in modern era, religion is regarded as superstitious and non-practical. Some churches have begun to find solutions to reduce the conflicts by focusing on social community or delivering a seekers-sensitive church design with contemporary quality. Regrettably, majority of churches in Hong Kong sacrifices the sacred spatial identity in order to break the threshold fear.

2.7.2 From the Sacred to the Secular

Differences between the Sacred and the Secular

French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1912/1995) was the pioneer who described the distinction between the sacred and the profane. In his book The

Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (1912/1995), he described the dichotomy of the sacred and the profane in religious thought. Everything was either sacred or profane without sharing anything in common. Another representative scholar on this title is Mircea Eliade (1954/1974). His approach was also similar to Emile Durkheim's (1912/1995), delivering the distinction of the sacred and the profane. Eliade stated that "the sacred is perceived in traditionally religious societies as something set apart, although potentially pervasive in influence. As such, the sacred provided access to that which was higher, eternal and ultimately real" (as cited in Brown, 2000, p202).

> In *Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, it summarised the dichotomy approach clearly presented by Durkheim: "All known religious beliefs, whether simple or complex, present one common characteristic: they presuppose a classification of all things, real or ideal, of which men think, into two classes or opposed groups, generally designated by two distinct terms which are translated well enough by the words profane and sacred."
> (Bowker, 1997, p.832)

At a time, classification approach inclined to polarise the differences, especially in religious discipline. The definition of the sacred was to set apart from the profane. In *Harper Collins Dictionary of Religion*, it is explained that Theologian Rudolf Otto in his book, *The Idea of the Holy* (1917) invented the concept of "opposition between the holy and the non-holy" (as cited in Smith et al., 1995, pp.944-945). Often, humans understood that differentiating from contradicting concept was an effective way to define something as everything would be judged in a relative manner. The differences between the sacred and the profane were understandable especially in our contemporary profane culture;

the value of the sacred was totally different from the profane. In church design, a distinction through the entrance design to symbolise the entering of the holy or the temple was applicable. Entering a church could be an escape from the profane world. Jones (2000) quoted from Arnold van Gennep (1909) that "The door is the boundary between the foreign and the domestic worlds in the case of the ordinary, between the profane and the sacred worlds in the case of the temple. Therefore to cross the threshold is to unite oneself with a new world" (as cited in Jones, 2000, p264). Upon this perspective, the dichotomy still existed. However, we could realise the need for sacred space to cleanse our soul after daily profane challenges.

Possibility to Merge the Separation of the Sacred and the Secular

Critics have commented that the separation from behavioural approach could not explain the interwoven relationship of something which could be either sacred or profane. As elicited in *The Harper Collins Dictionary of Religion*, "W.E.H. Stanner (b. 1905) noted the ritual use of such mundane things as water, fire, musical instruments and cosmetics; these things are often neither protected nor proscribed, and so–on Durkheim's own terms – can be considered neither sacred nor profane" (as cited in Smith, ed al., 1995, p.943). When churches engaged in searching for contemporary representation, contemporary elements were often retrieved to apply on sacred purposes, such as market driven strategy in mega church movement. It is essential to identify the levels of separation and the integration between the sacred and the profane in church design.

From the book *Searching for Sacred Space: Essays on Architectural and Liturgical Design in the Episcopal Church*, John Ander Runkle (2002) laid the foundations of church design in 4 questions.

"How do our buildings convey a vision of God's kingdom on earth?

How do our places of worship reflect our beliefs?

In what visible, tangible forms are we proclaiming a faith in the living God?

How may our church buildings help bring the Gospel into a new century?" (p.x).

These four questions correspond with the assumptions of the researcher that one needs to acknowledge that the earth or the contemporary society is the area where one needs to deliver the vision of God's kingdom. The term "bring the Gospel into a new century" is the key to set the mission. One needs to identify the sacredness in the contemporary culture for God is a living God and the way of representation is transforming from century to century. One has to admit that in a new century, a new representational style in sacred church design would always outweigh the traditional styles. If one simply adopts traditional style, such as Gothic as the authentic sacred form to differentiate from the profane culture, ones limit human creativity and God's refreshingly new vision in different era. It means that one must create a sacred space which could reflect contemporary culture.

A church with balanced perspectives will incorporate both the need to build the spirituality of the community and to merge the separation of the sacred and the profane in a continuum. Torgerson (2007) quoted from Robinson that "the Christian faith had the potential to break down the artificial distinctions

between 'sacred' and 'profane'" (as cited in Torgerson, 2007, p.17). Furthermore, Robinson elaborated his idea by stating that "the presence of God and the influence of Christ were present in the everyday life of our world… He sought an interaction between sacred and secular, religious and nonreligious, that would transform life according to God's intentions" (as cited in Torgerson, 2007, p.17). When churches focus on reaching the profane, a contemporary church design is essential to draw contact points with non-believers. The discussion in terms of church design is whether there is still a distinction between the sacred and the profane or the boundary between these two poles should be broken. Church design should find a language of representation easy to be understood by our culture. When ones add the issue of reaching the social needs of the world, churches start to operate social services in their church building. Church is no longer limited to conduct sacred activities. If there is a limitation of space, the same area is required to operate social services during weekdays and religious activities on the weekends. The sacred identity would be further challenged. At this stage, the theological standpoint on contemporary representation could establish the foundation.

Theological Standpoint in Contemporary Representation

The dilemma is that when churches face the contemporary culture, ones generate different reactions.

> Kieckhefer (2004) reflected on the struggle in encountering contemporary secular culture by contending that: Another widespread dogmatism holds that buildings conceived and designed as sacred must thereby be cut off from the profane world outside – that sacrality means detachment…The

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same misconception lies also behind the demand (from those who do not want sacred space) that churches should be like secular buildings of their time. (p.290)

It is true that the juggling between adopting traditional church design and exploring contemporary design is a prominent dilemma. When a church favours to set apart, it is easy to think of a traditional way to differentiate from the contemporary representation. On the other hand, when a church decides to associate with the contemporary quality, a design without sacred quality would be applied. To solve this dilemma, renowned Catholic theologian, Hans Kung (1976) stressed on the continuously changing images of the Church in history and churches must review its image accordingly.

> Kung added that: The Church, therefore, is the pilgrim community of believers, not of those who already see and know. The Church must ever and again wander through the desert, through the darkness of sin and error. For the Church could also err and for this reason must always be prepared to orientate itself anew, to renew itself. It must always be prepared to seek out a new path, a way that might be just as difficult to find as a desert track, or path through darkness. (p.13)

For Kung, even though he justified that tradition is important for Catholicism, churches must still go alongside the development of the society and make it contemporary. Churches should not be excused because of their traditions and neglect the challenge of facing contemporary society. By all means, however, churches must still insist on preserving their sacred identity when encountering profane influences. Kung (1976) continued to explain the principle by stating that "Ecclesiology is a response and a call to constantly changing

historical situations" (p.23). For Hung, it is essential for the Church to evolve and find new ways to represent God. He concluded that the Church must confirm its task to exist for the world. That is why we must understand the world, find linkage, and commit to the world. Hung upheld the value of traditions and the different cultural contexts which affected the images of the Church. He was committed to revitalise churches to breakthrough to their old image and live outside their comfort zone for new ways to reach out to the world. Whereas in Protestant circle, renowned Theologian Paul Tillich (1987) stated three principles in his article "Theology and Architecture", namely:

1. Expression of the Holy

2. Close relation of Protestantism to the secular world.

3. Element of unity through tradition and especially symbols.

Tillich affirmed the importance of creating sacred space by establishing the need of understanding and reflecting contemporary profane culture without surrendering traditions. After second world war, the dilemma in church design was either referring back to traditional style, such as Gothic Revival or the banal type of modern expression; some even did not concern about the sacredness of church into another extreme by making it wholly like a classroom. His theology supported the search for a contemporary representation in church design as one of the quality of sacred church design. Different periods portrait different unique situations for churches to encounter and church leaders could search for refreshing ways to represent God anew.

Church as Community Space

When one affirms that the world is changing and theology is updating simultaneously, we need to look into contemporary representation and react to it optimistically. In Hong Kong, under densely populated environment, multi-functional usage of limited church space is prominent. In the literature review, it is revealed that multi-purpose nature of church in western countries had begun after second war world. The book *Sixty Post-War Churches – Churches, Church Centres, Dual-Purpose Churches* (1956) was an attempt to show examples of churches shifted to the dual-purpose church for both religious and secular purposes. When churches started to provide social services to the community, the building for sacred use has been re-evaluated. The traditional term called nave was changed to the term hall for other secular activities. Architect like Edward Sovik (1973) deliberately designed churches welcoming for both sacred and secular activities and he called this kind of space the "centrium". Edward Sovik, an architect, an author and a teacher, contributed many insights regarding the design of contemporary church. One of his design ideas which became controversial was the design of a "centrium". As described, it is "a piece of secular, earthy (not other-worldly) architecture. It is essentially a beautiful assembly hall, intended for people, but not shaped around any particular configuration of people and furniture. There aren't any ecclesiastical motifs in the architecture. It's just a nice part of the world and a durable, permanent one but capable of accommodating change" (Sovik, 1973, p.87). His idea believed to be that the worshipper and the religious objects could transform the place into a worshipping space. He reinforced the address to the public and to search for a public language. Hence, church building should be opened for other purpose and

he borrowed from some congregations that "We want a building that isn't just for us; we want a building through which we can supply some of the unfilled needs of the community we belong to. It will be so planned and so available that it can be used for other purposes besides ours. And this will be our gift to the people around us" (Sovik, 1973, p.85). Their aim was that church building must be able to serve the community through building a multi-functional space which could tailor for different activities both the sacred and the profane. Sovik further elaborated that "We are the people for others. And even our buildings are intended to be vehicles of service to others" (Sovik, 1973, p.85). His concept was remarkable in the sense that church was a space welcoming the community and make connections to the world. It collides with the concept of communal church as suggested by Professor Kiekhefer (2004). However, whether the design would be a kind of "centrium" as recommended or it could be a space reflecting both contemporary and sacred quality with the hospitality and welcoming characters for outsiders without surrendering the sacred representations.

In Western country, churches serving the marginal groups in some poor areas also worship in a box-shaped environment like the former warehouse and these kinds of churches are termed as 'storefront churches' (Bradford, 2002). They converted this box shaped spaces into worshipping spaces which were similar to the cases we have been investigating in Hong Kong. Sometimes, church leaders with limited budget only approached the design of church in a very practical point of view. They would be satisfied with finding a place to gather and worship without in-depth theological consideration. When church leaders encounter pragmatic difficulties, theology and church space would be surrendered. However, some scholar, such as Sovik who delivered a

transformable church to serve the community with theological standpoint was provoking. In Hong Kong, when churches that provided social services served as small scale community space, it is vital to investigate the community spirit and understand the position of church as a community to contribute to the urban society.

2.7.3 Need of Community Spirit

After industrialisation, the concept of society was challenging the traditional community spirit. People in cities are often lack of intimate relationships and they are alienated. Relationship of neighbours is alienated and public spaces are replaced by shopping malls. The traditional function of a group of people who own the same identity to gather and live together was diminishing. The community spirit was taken away. In the past, a European village was formulated by a public square for villagers to gather and share ideas. All the essential buildings were located around, such as public hall, cathedral and markets. They were proud of their public square as their landmark; for some rich community, they raised money to build magnificent cathedral to express their wealth and dedication to God. The identity of a community was expressed through all aspects. When Christianity became popular in Hong Kong, churches built their own individual building in a prominent location to identity their existence and to provide both religious activities and daily necessities to the community. Due to limited land and the expansion of Christianity, churches moved to flats inside different levels of buildings and the outstanding identity was hidden without the prominent façades. As discussed, church leaders also surrendered the importance of design. Some church design applied a functional

approach without consideration of the contemporary quality of both the affiliated social services and the church itself. As a result, the identity and the sense of belonging were diminishing. This study of community aims to investigate the meaning and spirit of community in an urban setting and the implication of design with contemporary consciousness for the urban community in order to reinforce the sense of belonging and identity quest by urbanite. It is determined to establish the link between church as community and urban society with the assumption that the success of community could contribute significantly to its society. Its theological position follows the proposition of Anthony P. Cohen (1985) that community is a cultural field with a system of symbols interpreted separately with different meanings by different members. By establishing the boundaries, they consolidate their values and identities with a sense of belonging to the community. Hence, churches are motivated to apply design with contemporary quality to build the community spirit.

The researcher believes that Church as a community should place more attention in establishing a symbolic boundary through church design. The field survey has projected that majority of churches did not focus on symbolic means to deliver the contemporary quality and also the sacredness as a religious community. The importance of designing sacred church space would sometimes mean the overlooking of our contemporary urban environment. Hence, the understanding of urban environment is essential to establish a community with the focus of contemporary issues.

Community in Urban Environment

In order to establish the significance of community in our urban society, it is determined to investigate the problem of our society which brings to the quest of community.

> Poplin (1979) summarised succinctly the issues we need to deal with in our modern society: In short, although modern society can offer people the miracles of mass government, mass education, mass production and mass communications, it cannot offer them the security and belongingness that seem to accompany a sense of well-being. Hence the only alternative to the continued spread of alienation in the twentieth century is 'communities small in scale but solid in structure'. (p. 7)

To understand the problem of our mass society can affirm the significance of community, as society is massive and community is intimate and small in scale. He further explained the limitation of modern society by phrasing Nisbet's expression in *Moral values and community* that "Our mass society can only perform as a functional boundary to provide the hardware for mankind. Modern society can only satisfy fundamental human desires: living together, working together, experiencing together, being together" (as cited in Poplin, 1979, p. 82). Thus, there is a lack of concern to the in-depth human desires towards physical well-being, social well-being and cultural direction.

> On the other hand, Delanty (2003) summarised the significance and nature of community with great insights: The modern world has not been only the age of liberty, individualism and reason but has also been marked by a penchant for cosy world of community, belonging and

solidarity where the individual could feel at home in an otherwise homeless and increasingly insecure world. (p 186)

When we consider the community in a sociological and anthropological perspective, Poplin (1979) claimed that in a sub-section on the community in sociological perspective that, "Hillery has found that at least three major elements enter into most sociological definitions of community, including (1) geographic area, (2) social interaction, and (3) common tie or tie" (p. 8). In other words, the three major elements as represented in this research are physical well-being, social well-being and cultural direction. Under physical well-being, one has to investigate the environmental psychology in order to achieve suitable places to people to gather together. In terms of social well-being, the sense of belonging is the key to develop a community. For the cultural direction, we need to search for the identity of different community spaces. This approach aligns with the symbolic construction of community presents by Victor Turner (c1969) and Anthony Cohen (1985) for the sense of belonging and identity are the two vital elements in community which have to be achieved by symbolic representation.

Church as a Community in the Urban Society

The lack of sacred identity is something we need to rectify in order to achieve the spirit of community and to deliver the sense of belonging in both sociological and theological perspectives. In other words, churches with contemporary touch have great influence to the urban community; however, the quests of the sacred quality for both outsiders and insiders have greater influence to the major society.

One valuable insight from Eliade (1959) related to this study is that non-religious human being also inherited religious practice, they could not escape from it; instead, they were influenced by the power of religion. Eliade believed that the sacred and the profane were interwoven in everyone's life, no matter how we tried to escape from mythical religious belief, we would still be affected. To him, modern non-religious people were the inheritance of traditional religious people; hence, they were still practising some kind of religious rituals in another context in hidden ways. Although the sacred and the profane were separated, it inspired us that the need of sacred space was requested by non-believers as well for they had the hidden desire to experience the quality of sacred space. So for future implications, churches are urged to maintain the unique sacred identity and simultaneously express the contemporary quality. When someone enters the sacred space to experience the sacred, apart from design, the worship activity is another primal practice which affects the approach to represent the sacred. In the following, the theology of worship has been investigated to reveal the related sacred quality of church.

Summary

When churches are willing to merge the separation of the sacred and the profane into a continuum, church as a community which has been built in the foundation of urban environment to encounter urban society must search for the contemporary quality to build the sense of belonging. As a community serving the urbanite, inevitably, church is often the most iconic figure in reflecting contemporary quality. Moreover, the term church also indicates sacredness, which leads to the search for sacred quality in contemporary peripheral.

2.8 Disappearance of Worship Space

It is discovered that majority of one-flat churches give up design and leads to the disappearance of worship space; hence, the sacred identity has been lost. The dilemma is that when they are small in scale in densely populated urban environment of Hong Kong, they are limited by practical dimension to set up a multi-functional space. They can not afford to have a designated sanctuary space to create the sacred identity to worship the Deity. Church is a gathering place for Christians to gather weekly to worship and to celebrate the Divine and these corporate worships are usually held on Saturdays and Sundays; it has been practiced by all denominations. This investigation about the theology of worship aims to understand the purposes and principles of worship and search for related theological discussions which would give insights to the design of church. In this study, implications of church as a place of worship and the application of delivering the sacred quality in worship or veneration to the Divine will be established. Most importantly it is to enhance the relationship between worship and sacred environment closer into a continuum where the sacred and the contemporary elements could co-exist in a harmonious and meaningful gesture.

2.8.1 Theology of Worship

Church and worship are two interrelated terms. One of the physical existences of church is to house worshippers to conduct corporate worship. Christians are commanded to gather as one body to worship and church building is designed for the assembly to unit together in worship. (In the Bible, the book of Micah 4:2, Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the

mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. In the book of John 4:23, yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. In the book of Acts 2:1, when the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. In the book of Hebrews 10:25, let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.) Worship has been developed into different styles from liturgical to contemporary free style. However, in Hong Kong, the style of worship and the design of church often do not blend in each other which creates a situation that a one-flat church may withhold the traditional sacred elements but withstanding the worship in a liturgical way. One could imagine that the liturgy is tailor-made for a solemn and processional setting in a longitudinal space; but in reality some one-flat churches still apply a liturgical worship despite of the disorientation and lack of sacred identity. The importance of sacred space in worship has been isolated and the worshipping style could not be reflected in the environment for appropriate reactions. The relationship between liturgical worship and traditional church design is monumental and the separation would make the worship hard to perform completely.

Whilst emphasising the purposes of worship, it is reinforced that theology would induce spatial design. It is revealed that different worship styles require different ideal spatial settings. In addition, the current trend of convergence worship or younger evangelicals is investigated so as to search for a theological

standpoint which can merge the tradition and the contemporary with the revival of visual elements to enhance worship experience.

2.8.2 Purposes of Worship

From *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, the term worship means "to express in attitude or gesture one's complete dependence on or submission to a high authority figure, (fall down) and worship, do obeisance to, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to, welcome respectfully." From the authentic book on Hebrew study, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, the term worship means "to stoop down and to subdue or oppress". In short, worship is both an action to humble oneself and to uplift the Divine.

When Christians worship, the primary focus is the Divine who is believed to be the creator of the world and the redeemer of human beings through the whole salvation history; and the core message about the doctrine of Christianity as expressed in the Apostles' Creed is the believe of the Almighty God who is the maker of the heaven and the earth. And His Son, Jesus Christ who died and rose again from death. He ascended into Heaven and the Holy Spirit is with all believers. Through this act, all human beings can be reborn and transformed and celebrate the victory. Worship is a celebration of the victory of Christ over sin and death. In worship, one revitalises oneself spiritually through Christ in order to live a victorious life in the world. Another renowned scholar in worship, Robert Webber (1994) placed Christ as the centre of focus between human being and God when he formulated the principles of worship (see 1). Christians

worship is a thankful act to the Divine through Jesus Christ. Church space is the physical provision of a gathering place for people to worship.

Webber (2002) projected that: In the twentieth century a great deal of scholarly work has been done on this question: How do we experience Christ's presence in worship? Recent liturgical scholarship affirms first of all that the presence of Christ is experienced in the gathering of people…For this reason many new churches are being built with relational seating. This makes the community more aware of the presence of Christ, the head of the church, who assembles with his people, the body of Christ. (p.192)

When churches understand the principles and purposes of worship, relevant design solutions are generated to reinforce the messages.

2.8.3 Spatial Design and Worship Styles

Before understanding the worship styles and the related spatial requirement, the principal number seven 'Worship makes effective use of God's creative gifts – worship involves the whole person, time, art and space enhance worship' mentioned by Webber (1994) in the eight principles of worship (see Appendix 1) which relates to the use of art and space as formulated is worthy to elaborate. Marshall (1994) in *The Complete Library of Christian Worship Volumn 2* also accentuated that "Worship is an activity that includes every aspect of the human awareness: heart and mind, senses and intellect" (pp.374-375). From the Bible, the book of Romans 12:1 "offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship", ones understand that the whole body including ones' physical is embraced by the spiritual in

worship. The physical and spiritual are not separated, instead the physical is a quality of worship needs to be transcended. For a long time, in Protestant circle, worship is an activity basically of the mind. Both Webber (1994) and Marshall (1994) wanted to bring all our senses into worship.
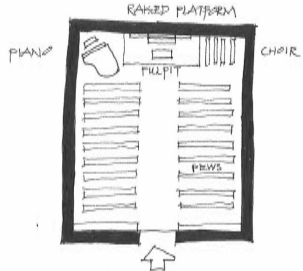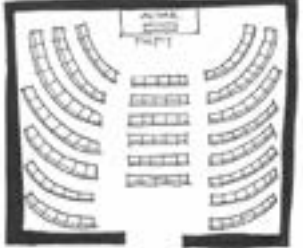
For this reason, design becomes a vital tool to enhance the worship. Other examples, such as when the deliverance of the message of unity in worship is significant, it means that the entire congregation is in service to worship God which does not limit to one with specific leadership position is in service, such as the choir or worship leader. In design, a high raised platform like a theatre setting for the leaders would not be appropriate for it delivered a message that only the one in stage is serving God and the rest is merely audiences. In this thesis, the concept from the younger evangelicals formulated by Robert Webber (2002) is applied for they are integrating both visual and verbal elements to deliver a holistic experience.

In Protestantism, worship style is much diversified; no one compromised style for all different denominations. Hence, there should be different criteria for the sacred church space under different worship styles. Liturgical style is regarded as traditional style; for contemporary worship style, there are free-church or evangelical and charismatic worship styles. In Appendix 2, the differences of these three models of worship are described.

To summarise, liturgical or sacramental worship focuses on the salvation history and the ideal spatial setting is longitudinal space focus on communion table. Free-church or evangelical worship places more on preaching and space in square layout can reduce the distance between preachers and worshippers. Pulpit is placed in the centre. Charismatic worship delivers more sentimental and

interactive experience with encountering of the Holy Spirit and they are flexible with the spatial setting. Below is a table of comparison about the three worship styles and their ideal spatial settings (see table 2.12).

Table 2.12: Comparison of the Three Worship Styles and Their Ideal Spatial Settings

	Revelation of Trinity	Focus of worship	Ideal Spatial settings
Liturgical	Father - centre	Sacrament, Holy communion	Longitudinal space focus on communion table
Free-church or Evangelical	Christ - centre	Preaching	Square shape layout plan Reducing the distance between preachers and worshippers. Use of Gallery Pulpit in the centre
Charismatic	Holy Spirit - centre	Praising and healing	Flexible, can adopt both settings

In evangelical circle, Webber (2002) differentiated evangelical churches into three approaches which are traditional evangelicals, pragmatic evangelicals and younger evangelicals. Webber created a detail comparison table of the three approaches (see table 2.13) (Webber, 2002, pp.201-2).

Table 2.13: Approach to Worship (Webber, 2002)

	Traditional evangelicals	Pragmatic evangelicals	Younger evangelicals
Style	Traditional program	Contemporary presentation	Liturgical Ancient/future Contemporary
Content	Thematic	Topical	Triune
Structure	Threefold: sing, preach, invite	Twofold: music set and preaching	Fourfold: narrative of gathering, hearing the Word, Communion, dismissal
Participation	Primarily congregational singing	Singing of choruses	Highly interactive
Arts	Banners	Art as illustration Drama	Art as embodiment Environmental arts
Seating	Rows	Theatres seats	Relational configuration
Space	Traditional turn-of-the-century buildings	Theatres or theatre-type spaces	Homes Warehouses Churches Modified Cathedrals
Symbols	Stained glass Pulpit and table Baptist font or pool	No symbols	Strong use of symbols Icons in many churches
Technology	Overhead projector in some churches	Widespread use of PowerPoint, video, etc.	Restore authentic symbols PowerPoint generally used for icon projection
Choir	Traditional choirs Presentational	No choir Worship leader teams	Singing serves the text Strong emphasis on congregational leadership

The utmost trend in worship and church theology is younger evangelicals or convergence worship; even though this is a Western phenomenon; however, in Chinese theological circle, theologians and scholars have started to introduce this

concept to Chinese context to bridge the gap between traditional and contemporary approaches (Chen, 2005; Teng, 2004). It is revealed that spatial design and the use of visual is significant, such as the use of symbols and environmental art. Webber dedicated five rows out of 17 to describe about spatial elements. With the high emphasis on spatial design to enhance worship, the researcher's standpoint is that younger evangelicals approach is the solution to rectify the serious problem in Hong Kong church design.

2.8.4 Convergence Style of Worship

In discussion about different styles of worship, eventually the researcher would like to borrow the concept from the term convergent movement or the term younger evangelicals promoted by renowned scholar in worship study, Robert Webber. This type of church practices a kind of style to integrate tradition and contemporary; with a mixture of liturgical, free-church and charismatic elements. In a pluralistic world, the search for a balanced approach can solve some dilemma about different focuses for the aim of every church is to glorify the Divine and to unit together as one body of Christ. A way to borrow every advantage from different styles could break the gap of different denominations.

The convergent movement or younger evangelicals could break through different traditions and deliver a message of unity in Christ. From the nine directions under convergence worship, one can acknowledge the attitude behind in order to embrace the strengths and weaknesses of all worship styles (Chen, 2005; Teng, 2004, Webber, 2002)

The nine directions under convergence worship are:

1) Historical and contemporary

2) Order and freedom

3) Verbal and symbolic

4) Rational and mystical

5) Inward and outward piety

6) Giving and receiving

7) Comforting and disturbing

8) Present and future

9) Individual and corporate

Through this movement, a balanced view towards the dilemmas and differences could be obtained for this movement incorporate them all together. When this theory is applied into the thesis, it supports the researcher's rationale of studying one-flat church under site constraints. For example, one would understand that under site limitation of one-flat church, a complete traditional liturgical worship, which is tailored mostly for churches with high ceiling height to deliver a sense of transcendence, could not be fully conducted. However, a convergence of traditional and contemporary styles does not require a traditional sacramental setting. If ones move along the continuum, ones would have more freedom to express the related theory under the site limitations. It could be an opportunity for a creative exploration.

In light of using symbols, ones could also integrate verbal and symbols together. Webber (2002) clearly stated that "When we search back the treasures from history, symbols are one of the keys and the use of symbols always closely related to the design of church…Younger evangelicals are rediscovering that the God who is present in all creation becomes intensely present in our worship through sign and symbol" (p.192).

2.8.5 Theology of Creation

Christians believe that arts, symbols and environment could reveal the creativity of human being dedicated by God to discover more astonishing spiritual experience. Christian worship includes the whole bodies and the five senses of worshippers as well. Hence, worshippers are encouraged to cleanse the souls before entering the sanctuary to offer the thanksgiving; hence, a spiritual path is essential to generate different responses and state of mind in different moments.

Through the emphasis of the theology of creation, visual elements become a crucial starting point in planning worship space. Webber (2002) tactfully illustrated the common practice in Protestant worship: "For centuries the focus of Protestant thought about worship has been on worship as a cerebral act... In this context, there has been little need or use for the arts" (p.209). It reflected the reality that the theology of creation is not the key. When ones focus on the theology of redemption, preaching of the Word is the focus. The sermon in worship becomes the peak of a service. The drilling of the scripture in reading it, preaching it and even memorising it are normal practice. Beauty of the environment and the use of symbols and arts could be eliminated in this sense. However, in theology of creation, all things are created by the Divine. In Christian belief, beauty is significant in the creation account and human is dedicated to manage this world and sustain the beauty of all creatures.

> Webber (2002) further commented that: This affirmation of the goodness
> of creation provides a basis for the arts in and of itself. Because God
> created a material world – a world of sight, sense, touch, movement and

matter – all of creation is a worthy vehicle through which the truth about the creator can be communicated. (p.210)

The application of the theology of creation to support the need of designing sacred church space is not commonly practised in Hong Kong churches. In the States, Webber (2002) mentioned that "But by the sixties a reversal had been begun taking culture back to the oral/visual/communal, back to cultural transmission. By 2000 this reversal was in full swing" (p.64). It does not mean that the verbal is not significant but both verbal and visual could accompany together to deliver the message.

Summary

In Hong Kong, the relationship between space and worship style has been lost. To target this phenomenon, the theology of creation is vital in order to enhance the importance of visual elements. Worship is in evolution regularly and the convergence worship or younger evangelical theology is challenging churches to transform and to achieve a worship style with the strength of contemporary and traditional qualities. When churches see the importance of worship, the implementation of creating a sacred space is vital. It is reviewed that sacred quality could contribute to the success of worship especially in convergence worship with integration of tradition and contemporary.

2.9 Summary of Literature Review to Affirm the Three Hypotheses

Through literature review, the effect of secularisation on church design is revealed and the situation in Hong Kong is affected seriously with the loss of sacred identity in one-flat churches. The investigation has sought different

disciplines, such as sociological, architectural and theological perspectives to affirm the hypothesis and the theological standpoints – The importance of church design through the study of theology and space is the foundation for the quality and criteria of design. This study strives to reinforce church design to uphold with contemporary touch and sacred quality. It is revealed that the church of our century should reflect the contemporary quality with sacred identity specifically through the transformation of traditional essence. Based on the literature review, the aims of the field work under qualitative research methods are to explore and discover church design in Hong Kong context and how users of churches respond to the above mentioned hypothesis. This thesis is further enhanced by a case study from stages of initial research to completion of design. Moreover, these theories and attitudes elicited from the literature review were then applied to a real project. And finally, a comprehensive design guideline is generated from the literature review and field work for future implications in church design.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

3.1. Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods

Qualitative methods through field works are applied to understand the subjective meaning of behaviours and the phenomenon of the spatial settings. When understanding of the reaction of human activities in a spatial setting, such as church, is required, through qualitative method, such as site observation, one can discover every detail by entering into the field with the involvement to observe. When one participates in the activity, the findings can be collected through the personal experience. Singleton and Straits (2005) affirmed the strength of field work by stating that "The ultimate goal of field research, however, is not personal but rather scientific – to build a general, abstract understanding of social phenomena" (p.306).

In applying qualitative research methods, the researcher has conducted a wide range of methods, such as site observation of 171 churches, site observation of seven selected churches with long term participation, interviews of 15 pastors and professors of theological seminary, visual simulation workshop of 15 groups and studying of the background information. Through site observation of a large number of churches, the scenario of one-flat church design is discovered. Through site observation on selected churches with long term participation, an insider's perspective is obtained which has lead to in-depth understanding of the reasons behind the practices. Interviews are conducted with the leaders to explain their rationales behind their practices in revealing the relationship between theology and space and the search for a church with sacred and contemporary qualities. (*Sacred quality refers to the use of symbolic meanings; Contemporary quality refers to the use of contemporary interior elements*) After categorising

the scenario of one-flat church design and obtaining in-depth perceptions of the reasons for the practices, the implication of conducting workshops is to explore the expectation of their ideal church space.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) established the relationship of qualitative research with social reality by stating that: Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry…They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning. (p.4)

Hence, it is necessary to govern the scope of different research methods through the established theoretical standpoints; and a list of questions to guide the directions in understanding and explaining the findings was then generated hence. (see Appendix 4)

3.2. Definition of Users

Users of church as a Community Space

When one conducts community research, one has to identify the users in the community. Poplin (1997) claimed that "It is in the urban community that one finds people of all races, religions, and creeds, people who hold a variety of value orientations and who have a variety of life-styles" (p. 45). However, in small scale community, the combination of users can be simpler for the targets of the social services provided are usually more homogeneous. Based on the book *Communities within cities: An urban social geography* by Davies and Herbert (1993), "There are now two questions: one is concerned with personal network

communities; the other with local community or neighbourhood. Although they overlap, they are different in conception" (p 81). It means that some users belong to the same physical boundary and they are called neighbourhood living in the same district or same housing estate; other users are extended through the network and they can be coming from elsewhere in the same city. These two kinds of users in the community are reflected in the church setting.

In respect of the targets of the related social services provided by churches, the users normally come from the local community or neighbourhood. They can be quite homogeneous, such as elderly centre with older persons coming from nearby estates with similar background and daily activities patterns.

However, for the church goers, the combination can be much diversified, which includes staff members, church members and friends. They are not necessarily coming from the local community or neighbourhood. The membership network of a church can cover different ranges from ages, occupations, education, income, social status and home districts. For example, when a church plans to plant a church in a newly developed district, they need to mobilise members of different age groups to participate. Some may live nearby to the location of the new church, some may live far apart. Undoubtedly, if the target group of the social services is young people, the church has to find more young people to particpate. Apparently, the young people who do not live nearby are also welcome to join. Ultimately, the team that establishes a new church must be diversified with different characters or gifts to serve the church in order to make success of the ministry.

In this study, due to the reason that the ultimate concern is about the construction of a church with both sacred and contemporary qualities, the church

goers are the focus in this study in order to reveal their attitude and expectation in creating a sacred space such as interviewing professors in seminary, and pastors to review their theological standpoint towards church design.

3.3. Explanation of Different Qualitative Methods

Qualitative Methods:

- Site observation

- Semi-structured interview

- Visual simulation workshop

Site Observation

Site observation has to be conducted with planning. The researcher has to set parameter to govern the focus. Singleton and Straits (2005) stated that "In contrast to causal watching, field observation is planned, methodically carried out, and intended to extract meaningful interpretations of the social world" (p.314). Sanoff (1992) also employed observation in order to understand the environmental settings.

Under site observation of selected churches with long term participation, the researcher has also participated in different activities organised by the seven selected churches. Criteria have been established to govern the selection which will be presented in the following section 3.4, Field Research Methods. The researcher has participated the research with first hand experience personally by attending one of the Sunday services, he is one of the worshippers in the assembly. The researcher can experience the spatial impact and the verbal message in the activity. Corbetta (2003) clearly reminded that "In participant observation the researcher 'steps into the field' and immerses herself / himself in

social context that she / he wants to study, lives like and with the people who are the object of the study" (p 236). Even though the researcher does not use participant observation, it is vital for the researcher to act as a worshipper to obtain first hand experience about worshipping in specific settings. Hence, valuable insights can be gained as an insider to evaluate the findings, which echoes with Corbetta annotation about 'vision from within' in particular.

Semi-structured Interviews

Apart from observation, semi-structured interviews are conducted in order to collect findings one cannot obtain by observation such as the intention and explanation of some actions.

> Singleton and Straits (2005) described interview as: Referred to as field interviewing, this respect of the research process may serve many purposes. It is impossible to observe everything in a setting or scene; many relevant events will occur in the researcher's absence, and there may be other revealing information to which the researcher is not privy. Hence, field researchers typically rely on the careful questioning of other participants, called informants, to gain information. (p 319)

In this research, interview is important to understand the perspectives or attitudes behind the actions and selections of church leaders such as pastors and professors in theological seminary. As suggested by Patton (1980), "direct interview were used to "find out those things we cannot directly observe. … The purpose of interviewing is to enter into another person's perspective" (p. 196). To use semi-structured interviews, the researcher is freer to probe beyond the answers. The flexibility allows interviewees to use their own words and to

expand their ideas for comparison. The selection criteria have been established which will be presented in the section 3.4, Field Research Methods.

Visual Simulation Workshops

Visual simulation workshops include "photovoice", drawing, selection of favourite types and model, see Sanoff (2000) and Kwok (2002). Wates (2000) denoted that "Through the use of visual images, participants are easier to express and understand. Moreover, visual stimulation can activate participants' creative thinking. Models are one of the most effective tools for getting people involved in planning and design" (p. 82-83). Through workshop, participants can discuss their needs and sharpen their ideas. In a community research, conducting workshops are like conducting community activities to facilitate interactions. Arranging workshops for users would facilitate respect among one another, collecting their valuable ideas as users would provide a sense of belonging to the community. In this field research, the contribution of the workshop is to understand the expectation of the ideal church designs from different groups. It is vital for the case study which has to transform the research findings into realistic design solutions for the renovation project.

3.4. Field Research Methods

From site observation of 171 churches, the researcher has obtained better understanding of the scenario of one-flat churches in Hong Kong. Seven churches have been selected to conduct site observation with long term participation in order to identify with the needs of the spatial arrangement and

the users. Interviews of professors from theological seminary and pastors will evolve deeper meaning about the theological standpoints of church and church design. Workshops are conducted to facilitate the informants of different levels to express their ideal church designs. The idea of user-oriented research, through site observations, interviews and workshops towards different kinds of users, has provided a wider perspective in the understanding of the users and the setting.

1. Site observation – Locate the phenomenon in Hong Kong church design through the visit of 171 churches.

2. Site observation of selected churches with long term participation– Seven churches are selected based on different criteria such as types of buildings: commercial building, private residential building, public housing estate.

3. Semi-structured interviews – 15 interviews have been conducted with three professors from seminary and 12 pastors from 12 different churches.

4. Visual simulation workshops – Only conducted in the case study. There exists two types of workshops, one is regarding spatial planning and the other is regarding selection of elements to construct the sacred space. For the spatial planning workshop, four workshops are conducted. For the selection of elements to construct the sacred space, 11 workshops are conducted.

3.4.1 Site Observation

Site observation is conducted in order to better understand about the situation of Hong Kong Church design.

Aims

- Understanding of the existing phenomenon, the characters, the problems or the limitations (see appendix 1 for the checklist for site observation);

- Understanding the distribution of one-flat churches in Hong Kong;

- Learning from the design experiences of churches incorporated with design and with no design;

- Revealing the considerations of theology and space in terms of the representation of the sacred and the contemporary qualities.

- Observing the environmental settings of church to reflect the three attributes: as a house of God, as a worship space and as a space for the community of believers

- Observing the conversion of space from the profane to the sacred and vice versa.

- Observing how the small scale community spaces fulfill the physical, social and cultural needs of the users.

- Observing different regular and special activities to obtain clear pictures of the daily activities patterns of the users.

- Observing how users react to the environment.

Sampling

In terms of sampling, it is understood that in qualitative method, one could not cover every church in Hong Kong. The researcher would like to apply probability sampling to select people, objects, and events to be studied. It is applicable to state that "Probability sampling designates a method that specially intends every unit in the universe under study to have the same known probability of being studied." (Pole, 2005, p.42) However, the researcher is required to set up a checklist with all the items for observations. (see Appendix 1) A list of questions as the parameter is established as a framework to locate the

research findings under related theories and concepts. (see Appendix 5) During the observation, field notes and photos are used to record the findings.

Structure of the Findings

The structure of the findings follows the list of questions in the course of church design. (see Appendix 4) In order to conduct a reflective and structural field research, the researcher has formulated a list of questions related to a Christian representation of sacred space and the three hypotheses under literature review to guide the site observation. The structure is: 1) Theology of church and sacred identity; 2) The elements used to compose the sacred identity; 3) Church as worship space; 4) Church as community of believers; and 5) Balance between the sacred and the profane in limited space. The representation of the three attributes of church is the key factor behind the structure to explore the practices by selected churches. The sacred identity is associated with church as the house of God and the elements applied are observed with greater effort to understand how contemporary and traditional elements are applied. At last, the consideration between the need of the sacred and the profane is examined to understand the methods best to resolve the dilemma.

3.4.2 Site Observation of Selected Churches with Long Term Participation

Through the site observation with long term participation, apart from exploring the above discoveries in site observation, the researcher acts as an 'insider' to participate in different activities to experience the space through participating in activities and observe how people interact in the environment.

The period of site observation with long term participation starts from June 2005, and every visit usually lasts an interval of time from three months to 12 months. The researcher regularly attends their services with participation of other activities, such as fellowship, prayer meeting, Gospel meeting, Christmas gathering and annual membership meeting.

Criteria and List of Churches Selected to Conduct Site Observation with Long Term Participation

In order to eliminate insignificant variables for the selection, some critical criteria are generated to govern the selection of churches.

1. Flat space – definitely this is the main issue of this research. Under the scenario of densely populated urban environment, one-flat churches are developed.

2. Different kinds of building – commercial building, private residential building, public housing estate.

3. Churches incorporated with design and no design – the aim of this research is to understand the design of church and how it can contribute to both the worshipping community and the society. Churches incorporated with design and no design have to be selected to differentiate from the different approaches.

4. Churches incorporated with social services – it is one of the unique characteristics of Hong Kong churches under limited space with both sacred activity and social services all in one. This is one of the significant reasons for the need of multi-functional and transformable space. The selection has to cover churches with social services and churches without social services. The variety of social services is also considered.

5. Churches with high capital resource – it is assumed that churches which do not search for sacred identity are not due to the short of financial buget. We can see how these churches built the sacred space and learn some experiences. Churches with high capital resource indicate that the majority of members is professionals and the number of congregation is more than five hundred.

6. Worship style – there are different worship styles; traditional/liturgical, contemporary, convergence. Different styles have different requirements for the worship space. (The researcher has excluded the charismatic worship because the focus is on Evangelical circle and the contemporary theology referring to is the "Younger Evangelicals" by Webber (2002) which has explained how evangelicals have been developed to target contemporary world.)

Out of these criteria, seven churches are selected. Table 3.1 shows the relationship of the selected churches and the criteria.

Table 3.1: The Relationship of the Selected Churches and the Criteria

	design	social services	flat space	Good resources of money	kinds of building	Worship style			Size larger than 5000sqft
						traditional	contempora ry	con verg ence	
Shatin Baptist Chruch	✓ contempora ry		✓	✓	commercial			✓	✓
Sheung Wan Baptist Chruch		✓	✓		commercial	✓			
E.F.C.C . Waterloo Road Church	✓ contempora y	Try to open	✓	✓	residential	✓	✓		✓
E.F.C.C. Kong Fook Church		✓	✓		Public housing	✓			
Island ECC	✓ contempora ry		✓	✓	commercial		✓		✓
Sai Sha Road Baptist		✓	✓		residential	✓			

Church								
Shatin Free Methodist Church		✓	✓		Public housing	✓	✓	

Selected Churches

Each church selected has its own uniqueness and fulfilled a combination of the criteria.

1. Shatin Baptist Church – highly resourced, incorporated with design, commercial building, convergence. This church is unique for church leaders spend a lot of money in creating multi-functional scheme. The growth rate is rapid.

2. Sheung Wan Baptist Church – with social services, commercial building, more traditional in worship style. The church leaders plan to apply design to improve the quality of the church.

3. E.F.C.C. Waterloo Road Church – highly resourced, incorporated with design, professionals and rich people, residential building, both traditional and contemporary worship styles respectively in different services. The location of this church is very strategic.

4. E.F.C.C. Kong Fook Church – with social services, public housing estate, more traditional worship, incorporated with no design. This church operates elderly centre which requires a lot of fitness equipment. It is located in the street level.

5. Island Evangelical Community Church – highly resourced, incorporated with design, professionals and rich people, inside commercial building, contemporary design languages are applied. The integration of coffee corner and sofa areas for causal conversations. It practises two different orientations of worship. A church which creates a moody/ relaxed

environment.

6. Sai Sha Road Baptist Church – with social services, residential building with small arcade, more traditional worship, incorporated with no design.

7. Shatin Free Methodist Church – with social services, public housing estate, more traditional worship, incorporated with no design. Typical site limitation inside public housing estate of the 60's. Target groups are the youth but the design does not reflect any youth quality.

Structure of the Findings

The researcher follows the list of questions when approaching a church design (introduced and explained in the above section3.4.1, Site Observation) as the parameter to arrange the findings (see Appendix 4). It follows the three attributes of churches as explained in the schema. Firstly, the researcher presents the most significant issue which is the theology of church and sacred identity. Secondly, the elements used to compose the sacred quality, which are related to the application of contemporary and traditional components. Thirdly, it is the consideration as a place of worship, and fourthly it is the expression of community of believers. Lastly, there comprises the implication of a balance-view between the sacred and the profane when churches operate social services to serve the neighbourhood.

3.4.3 Semi-structured interview

Criteria and Interview List

Criteria

- Types of buildings: Commercial, Residential, Public housing

- Types of social services: such as elderly centre and youth centre

- Financial situation

- Worship style: Traditional and contemporary style

- Size of congregation: 100 or below, 100-500, 500 or above

- Main target groups: such as professional and grass-root

- Church pastoral type: such as traditional fellowship and cell group

- Location: Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, New Territories

- Denomination: Evangelical, Ecumenical, Pentecostal

- Incorporated with design or no design

Out of the above criteria, key factors affecting the design are: size, worship style, theology / denomination, financial situation and provision of social services. In terms of space, the types of building are a significant criterion for different settings may have different concerns. It is obvious that financial situation is a hindrance for church to pay attention in design. But often essentially, it is their theology behind. Table 3.2 has shown the interview list from different churches with description of their characteristics together with three professors from Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary. Table 3.3 compares the pastors' attitudes about church design with their existing church design.

Table 3.2: Interview List

	Description	Church / person
1	Type of building: Build her own high rise building; incorporated with design; Pentecostal; Good resource of money; size of congregation above 500.	Wing Kwong Pentecostal Holiness Church 五旬節聖潔會永光堂
2	Type of building: Inside residential building; size of congregation below 200.	Shine Baptist Church 宣恩浸信會
3	Type of building: Inside commercial building; Good resource of money; size of congregation	Shatin Baptist Church 沙田浸信會

	above 500.	
4	Type of building: Inside shopping arcade; incorporated with design; size of congregation below 200	E.F.C.C.-Lam Tin Church 中國基督教播道會藍田福音堂
5	Type of building: Inside residential building; Good resource of money; incorporated with design; size of congregation above 500.	E.F.C.C.-Waterloo Hill Church 中國基督教播道會窩打老道山福音堂
6	Type of building: Inside residential building; incorporated with design; size of congregation below 200	Hong Kong Evangelical Yan Chiu Church 香港宣教會恩召堂
7	Type of building: Inside commercial building; Cell group church; provide social services – youth centre; size of congregation: below 200.	Yiu On Gospel Church 基督教耀安教會
8	Type of building: Inside residential building; incorporated with no design; no denomination; congregation size below 100.	H.K. Chinese Congregational Church Ltd. 華人基督教會福音堂
9	Type of building: Inside residential building; incorporated with no design; separated locations for different target groups; community church; congregation size above 500.	Tai Po Christian & Missionary Alliance Church 宣道會大埔堂
10	Type of building: Inside residential building; incorporated with design to create a sacred space; no denomination; provide social services – English tutorial	Evangelical Church Of All Blessings Ltd 基督教般福堂
11	Type of building: inside public housing estate; provide social services – elderly centre; incorporated with no design	E.F.C.C.-Hong Fook Church 中國基督教播道會康福堂
12	Type of building: inside commercial building; incorporated with no design; provide social services – children centre	Sheung Wan Baptist Church 上環浸信會
13	Professor of Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary	Dr. Andres Tang Siu-kwong
14	Assistant Professor of Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary	Dr. Desmond Choi Chi-keung,
15	Associate Professor of Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary	Dr. Nathan Ng Kwok-kit

Table 3.3: Comparison Table on Pastors Attitude about Church Design with Their Existing Church Design

	Pastor supports design	Pastor have hesitation about design
Existing church incorporated with no design	• Tai Po Christian & Missionary Alliance Church • Sheung Wan Baptist Church	• Shine Baptist Church • H.K. Chinese Congregational Church Ltd. • E.F.C.C.-Hong Fook Church
Existing church incorporated with design	• Wing Kwong Pentecostal Holiness Church • Shatin Baptist Church • E.F.C.C.-Lam Tin Church • E.F.C.C.-Waterloo Hill Church • Hong Kong Evangelical Yan Chiu Church • Yiu On Gospel Church • Evangelical Church Of All Blessings Ltd	

From the comparison table, it is revealed that some pastors support design even though the churches they are ministering are incorporated with no design.

Aims and Agenda

With reference to appendix 5, in which the interview questionnaire is distributed. Informants are asked to describe some straight forward data first before going into some theological and theoretical issues. The interviews are conducted in Cantonese; hence a bilingual version of the list of questions is produced for the sake of better communication.

One implication of this interview is to see whether they incorporate spatial elements as means to reveal the Divine. From their perspective on representing the nature of God, the study can reveal how it is reflected in spatial design.

From elements of a sacred space, the study can illustrate the balance between traditional approach and contemporary approach and their perception on spatial design as means to deliver the sacred identity.

The researcher attempts to create a synthesis of common elements from all different traditional styles in history. Some elements are consistently manipulated by different architects or planners in constructing Christian sacred space. Different periods have different styles to express the sacred but the use of elements was sustained. That is the reason why in this study, the researcher aims at transforming traditional insights into contemporary approaches. One can learn from nearly 2000 years of experience and this is a valuable treasure. This study does not aim at imitating any past styles but to understand how they want to transform traditional values to contemporary situations.

The study also attempts to understand whether they want to create a church with contemporary quality, a church design which would reflect contemporary culture.

From the concept of church and the sacred, the study reveals the importance of church as a sacred space as perceived by pastors. It is important to analyse how they perceive the concept of the sacred – whether it is purely a spiritual concept or an important physical concept to sanctify from the secular or the profane. From their description of the sacred, we may understand better the reasons why some churches do not create spaces with sacred identity.

In the end, the application of multi-functional devices is obtained in order to strike a balance between community and sacred needs.

3.4.4 Visual Simulation Workshop

Aims

The aim of the workshop is to design their ideal church in flat, which is the church in the case study, to discover whether the sacred identity and the contemporary qualities are being applied or not. Issues like how they set up the design brief and how they show their design preferences can be demonstrated. Through the two workshops, this study endevours to understand how informants visualise their ideal church designs in terms of design elements and spatial planning. Specifically, the application of traditional elements in their thinking are analysed as well.

Part 1 – Setting up the Design Brief:

Contents

- Brainstorming the themes: e.g. the nature of church and the attributes of God to be represented.

Part 2: Workshop 1 – Design of Each Area and the Use of Design Elements:

(based on the design brief to make selections and to visualise the ideas)

Aims:

- To understand how they visualise the spiritual quality of different areas of a sacred space.

- To understand how they visualise about the themes they set up.

- To understand their preference between traditional and contemporary images.

Procedure:

The procedure of workshop 1 is presented in table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Procedure of Workshop 1

Total time required: 70 minutes.

Duration	Activities	Remarks
15 mins.	**Introduction & Ice-breaking** **PowerPoint to introduce church design** **Individual review:** • Selection of the church designs	
10 mins.	Setting the design brief **Workshop introduction:** • Search for an ideal contemporary church design and sacred space • Space provides as a flat space with low ceiling height • No need to worry about budget in this workshop • No need to worry about transformation from profane nature (social services) to sacred nature (religious activities) **Workshop – setting up the design brief:** **Steps** • Brainstorming the themes	● Facilitator helps in visualising some ideas ● Using markers to draw bubble diagram on A1 paper
30 mins.	Composing the theme board step by step. Each section selects three images ● Nave design: (general ambience and atmosphere) ● Altar design ● Cross design ● Main entrance design ● Ceiling and light ● Furniture – communion table, pulpit and seat ● Art – abstract, realistic ● Material	● Select from 3R photo images and stick on A1 board based on the themes
15 mins	Presentation and round up	

Categories of Elements for Selection (see Appendix 6: Workshop 1—Elements

for Selection)

Nave Design (general ambience and atmosphere)
- Traditional or contemporary
- Transcendence or immanence
- Awesomeness / Solemnity or hospitality
- Quietness / Respectfulness or Cheerfulness / Peacefulness
- With view to the exterior or not

Altar Design
- Traditional or contemporary
- Cross design
- Wall behind altar
- Liturgical furniture such as pulpit

Main Entrance design
- Traditional or contemporary
- Sacred / set apart (remind people that they have entered a sacred space) or Intimate / Approachable (welcoming and friendly space)
- Progression of space

Ceiling and Light
- Grid ceiling, flat ceiling with recess lighting, coffer ceiling, and etc.
- Artificial and natural light
- Dim / Mystical or bright environment

Liturgical furniture
- Traditional or contemporary

Art
- Abstract art and realistic expression

Material
- Monotone and natural or Colourful and dynamic / Artificial
- Traditional or contemporary

Part 2: Workshop 2 —Area Relationship and Spatial Planning / spatial layout

game board

Aims:

- To understand the spatial sense in church design such as area relationship; progression of space / spiritual path; longitudinal space, auditorium space or communal space; open space or enclosed space

- Progression of space or sacred path through how they allocate the shape of the space and the circulation path.

- To understand the interpretation of flexible space / multi-functional space and space with designated purpose

- Reflection on the concern of the traditional church design approaches

- To understand between their practical or theological considerations

- To differentiate between worship oriented, preaching oriented or gathering oriented

- Use of windows and natural lighting by means of allocation of areas and activities near windows.

- Balance between social services and sacred activities

- Use of outdoor space

Project Brief:

- Limited space

- Multi-functional space, with both religious and social services activities

- Balance between sacred and profane needs

Procedure:

The procedure of workshop 2 is presented in table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Procedure of Workshop 2

Total time required: 55 minutes

Duration	Activities	Remarks
10 mins.	Set up some themes	
30 mins.	Step by step guided by facilitator to follow the design brief to decide about the use of space	Provide a base board with size of the existing church (Base board in paper on top of white board) Introduce the icons for selection with an Icons Checklist (Icons in the

		form of magnets)
15 mins.	• Presentation of the results	
	• Record the result by photo-taking	

Categories of Icons for Selection:

The icons are separated into religious activities and social services activities (see Appendix 7). For the social services activities and spaces, it is synchronised from different natures of social services. About the religious activities and spaces, blue colour icons indicate regular activities; green colour icons indicate occasional activities; and yellow colour icons indicate utility activities. (All the icons are extracted from websites cc.art.com and GospelGifs.com.)

Informants

Workshop 1: Selection of Design Images to Build an Ideal Church. There are four groups of informants.

Group 1: Theological students from Baptist Theological School.

For the theological students, because they do not have a real church to think about and the church backgrounds are quite different, the proposed ideas may not be bound by existing traditions. The theological students are studying in Baptist Theological School and they are going to be pastors in different churches. Baptist Theological School has been selected because this is the only seminary which has opened a stream on church worship and art and they place more focus on the importance of church design to enhance the quality of worship. Students are educated about the need of church design, and the workshop can facilitate

them to visualise the concepts and how to transform theological ideas into visual symbolic elements. They are trained theologically with church leadership experiences. When they group together, they are being challenged by different theological backgrounds. In the case of the workshop, these theological students have no boundaries and denominational traditions to follow with; it is interesting to analyse how they design their ideal church visually.

Informants from Sheung Wan Baptist Church

Group 2: Leaders from Sheung Wan Baptist Church – pastors and social services workers

Group 3: Laymen from Sheung Wan Baptist Church – two groups (youth and adult including elderly)

For group 2 and group 3, they belong to the same church and they plan to renovate the existing church venue after purchasing the upper level with more areas. Hence, the task is more realistic and the ideas are more specific. Relatively, they are more enthusiastic in the workshop for they were expressing ideas to a real project. They strive to see the transformation from their contribution to the final design. Different age groups have different criteria and it has been a challenge to synthesis all ideas into one design solution for this was a real project conducted by the researcher from research to design stage and the church can be built accordingly. Pastoral ideas may become the basic guidelines for their ideas were more considerate in terms of a balance between theology and practicality.

Informants from Cherith Baptist Church

Group 4: Renovation team from Cherith Baptist Church

Cherith Baptist Church is another church which would like to renovate and they have invited the researcher to conduct workshop for them. Like the

informants from Sheung Wan Baptist Church, the task is more realistic and the ideas are more specific. It is worthwhile to put the findings in the thesis because it is valuable that the researcher could encounter another real project and the informants are dedicated to the workshop.

Workshop 2: Area Relationship and Spatial Planning. Laymen from Sheung Wan Baptist Church – two groups (youth and adult including elderly and members of the renovation committee)

3.5 Revisions and Limitations

At a time, the researcher has the vision of enlarging the scope of field research by targeting five different churches to conduct workshops so as to do comparison between different churches. In view of the time limitation and the application of qualitative research method, quantity is not the key factor. Apart from researching different denominations, Baptist denomination has been selected to conduct in-depth research by applying all methods from direct observation, interview and workshop. The prime reason is that the Baptist is the only one denomination which has operated a centre for worship; and they also have a theological seminary. When the researcher interviews with professors in the Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, they affirm the significance of this research. Hence, one professor introduces to the researcher a church which is about to renovate. Consequently, a case study from research to design has been conducted and design guidelines are generated accordingly through this valuable experience. Through this case study, the research data formulated is realistic and it is also practical for the users to be involved with living benefits.

Regarding the semi-structured interview, initially, the researcher intends to interview pastors of all seven churches selected to conduct intensive site observation. However, due to time limitation and time-tabling, three churches have missed the interview of the respective pastors.

Regarding the two workshops for the lay people, the researcher aims at following the classification of fellowships by the church into four groups. Due to the limitation of time and the arrangement with informants; eventually, the informants of lay people are separated into two groups: the youth and the adult. For the adult, the range is from working adult to older people; whereas for the youth, they are secondary and university students.

For both workshops, it is planned to conduct separate workshops for the pastors and leaders. Only workshop one has been successfully conducted for the pastors and leaders. For workshop two, some leaders have managed to participate in the adult group; but this limitation has later been accommodated through committee board meetings with pastors and leaders.

3.6 Derivation of Design Guidelines

It was revealed from observation that there was a lack of design in churches in Hong Kong, and for the churches with design, majority of them was striving for a contemporary image which lacked a holistic approach and theoretical consideration. The idea of producing a design guideline is to facilitate stakeholders of church design projects to conduct well-balanced design concepts with a wider scope of consideration. The objective is to incorporate the theoretical framework into design practice with consideration of the three attributes of church, which is explained in schema one; contemporary and sacred

representation; and the contextualisation of relationship through the respect of design and the use of high quality multi-functional device in densely populated urban environment. There is no intention to convey one specific style of sacred representation through these guidelines.

The rationales of the design guidelines were derived from the literature review and the theoretical framework. With the theoretical standpoint that theology and church design are interrelated, the theology of church design must be established. Firstly, the consideration relates to schema one, the three attributes of church. Secondly, it is the reflection on the key research question which is about a contemporary and sacred representation. Lastly, it is the reference to schema two in regards to the contextualisation of relationship through the respect of design and the use of high quality multi-functional device in densely populated urban environment. Hence, before the consideration of the application of design elements, careful discussion on the theological standpoint is critical.

Theoretical and conceptual considerations:

1. Church natures and image of God (Theological consideration – Image of God; Natures of church): It is the most fundamental decision to be made and it relates to the first attribute.

2. Convergence of worship (The nine directions under convergence worship; Theological consideration – Worship): Relates to the second attribute.

3. Community building (Theological consideration – community of believers; Linkage with social community or neighbourhood; Administrative consideration – Affiliated social services (if any)): Relates

to the third attribute which is divided into two aspects. One is the community of believers and the other is the social services community.

4. Church mission to reach out (Theological consideration – Mission): One of the reasons for the establishment of church is to serve the society. When considering mission to the society, the contemporary approaches such as social services and the use of church design as tools to reach people are essential.

5. Contemporary cultural sensibilities in representing the sacred (Theological consideration – Sacredness): This consideration reflects the main research question about contemporary and sacred elements in church design. Ultimately, church as a sacred place should represent God in a contemporary manner.

6. Contextualised urban environment with spatial limitation: Reconsideration of the stewardship in order to respect design and to use high quality multi-functional device in urban environment thoughtfully.

Applications:

The topics below are designed quality to build a sacred church design. Under the evaluation on the hypothesis, the guidelines are composed in a direction that research questions could be answered. The following applications are design responses to the theoretical considerations in the above discussion, the issues are separated into three sections as follows:

1. Traditional and contemporary considerations: When the term sacred was explored, sacred relates to traditional convention. The researcher

is not promoting the revival of traditional styles. Instead, some of the traditional essences are valuable ideas to be transformed to contemporary representation. A balance between these two poles is the solution to create a church of our day. This section answers the research question no.4: What are the considerations for the deliverance of sacred quality through the transformation of traditional essence, but not imitation, into contemporary representation?

2. Religious and community considerations: As discovered in literature review and field research, another dilemma is the balance between religious and community considerations or the dilemma between sacred and functional needs. This section answers the research question no.5 & 6: Searching for the sacred representation of churches in densely populated urban environment with spatial limitations? How to express the immanent nature of God in church design?

3. Design and multi-functional considerations: Eventually, church in limited space serving different activities has to employ design to carefully analyse and use the space wisely. Designer carefully employs multi-functional scheme to solve the related problems with limited space. This section also answers the research question no.7: How to deal with functional requirement such as multi-functional scheme and transformable space from sacred to secular usage and vice versa but without surrendering the sacred quality?

Critical assessment of the limitations or alternatives

It is understood that different denominations have different historical preferences and theologies. It is difficult to comprehend all these individual denominational requirements. As guidelines, the key is to stimulate a thorough assessment in the design of church instead of creating one ideal type or style. Hence, the contents in the guidelines are focused on reflective questions from theoretical consideration to involve the application of a design approach.

However, when design is following younger evangelical theology, which is reviewed to be a relevant and challenging theory for contemporary churches, a balance between tradition and contemporary is significant.

These guidelines did not deal with the different natures of social services and how they can be transformed into a place for worship. Instead, a general suggestion about social services affiliated by church is delivered.

One more limitation on these guidelines is that they cannot comprehensively cover all different site constraints which may hinder an ideal church design. Therefore general situations together with predictive constraints are discussed throughout this research.

3.7 Methods Applied to the Design of Church

In the design of the case study, the application of the design guidelines was implemented. Prior to the commencement of design stage, field research was implemented to understand the requirements of the users and the church. In the data analysis, synthesis from different research methods has been conducted. The theoretical considerations and the application considerations in the design guidelines were discussed with church leaders through interviews and workshops.

After analysis of the data together with site analysis, transformation of the research data to the design solution was conducted. Apart from following the client brief, the design guidelines were applied in the design to generate the design concept. The aim is to create a church with both contemporary and sacred qualities.

Chapter 4: Field Research Report and Analysis

From the different research methods, the research findings gathered were related to the three sections in the literature review. This chapter applied a thematic approach following the three sections to understand the phenomenon of existing practice and the expectation of church design by the informants through different field works such as site observation, semi-structured interview and visual simulation workshop. Hence, the findings indicate the relationship between theology and spatial design; the relationship between church design and contemporary implication; and the representation of the sacred identity and transformation of traditional essence. Each research method was presented individually in order to pass judgment on the existing church scenario through observations; understand the attitudes and practices from pastors through interviews; and gather expectations of different users from workshops.

4.1 Through Observations to Reveal the Relationship between Theology

and Spatial Design

In respect of this topic, investigating the relationship between church and its design theory and whether or not churches incorporate specifically with spatial design would play a significant role in this scenario of churches incorporated with no design and a lack of sacred identity. Hence, the structure of the research findings was arranged in the hierarchy of churches presented with design or no design respectively. Specifically, based on site observations of 171 churches and site observations of selected seven churches with long term participation, the practices of churches could be discovered personally.

4.1.1 Site observation

From site observation of 171 churches out of 1181 churches in Hong Kong (see Appendix 8: One-flat Churches Visited in 18 Districts), these Hong Kong churches were classified into four categories under the division of sacred quality and contemporary quality, the relationship of theology and spatial design was then discovered explicitly. (*The term sacred quality refers to the presence of symbolic meanings; the term contemporary quality refers to the presence of contemporary interior features.*) These explanations of the terms could be found in literature review.

Table 4.1: Scenario of Church in Terms of the Representation of Sacred Quality and Contemporary Quality

Sacred quality	Contemporary quality	Scenario of Hong Kong Church
Strongly expressed	Weakly expressed	1. Churches adopting Western traditional church design methods, especially those with individual buildings. Theology and design were related but retained in a traditional manner. (see figure 4.1) Figure 4.1 Church adopting Western traditional design
Weakly expressed	Weakly expressed	2. Most of the churches in Hong Kong lacked resources to incorporate design; together with a theological position that church was a community of believers, not a building, made design a minor issue and the concept of creating a sacred space minimal. Design was detached from theology. (see figure 4.2)

Figure 4.2 Church incorporated with no design

Weakly expressed	Strongly expressed	3. Most of the churches incorporated with design was within this category. Churches sensitive to newcomers delivered a space with contemporary touch and warmth. Those with social services also focused more on contemporary design. They were not aware of sacred representation in the churches even relative budget was spent on design. Theology was related to design in the sense of creating a contemporary design to attract newcomers. Theology and sacred representation was detached. (see figure 4.3)

Figure 4.3 Church incorporated with contemporary design

Strongly expressed	Strongly expressed	4. Rarely seen churches with this approach but this was the most significant direction from the literature review to revitalise the essential sacred quality with contemporary manner under substantial theological standpoints. (see figure 4.4)

Figure 4.4 Church with sacred and contemporary quality

From the site observation, data were collected for the understanding of the existing phenomenon − i.e. the characters, the problems or the limitations of the design

experiences of churches incorporated with design and churches incorporated with no design. Appendix 8 indicates the 171 churches in 18 districts visited and Appendix 9 reviews the 39 churches out of 171 which had incorporated design. Refer to Appendix 10 representing some exceptional scenarios in densely populated urban environment.

Church incorporated with no design. In reality, most of the churches did not concern about design. Church leaders were simply serving the functional needs and had surrendered the relationship of theology and design. It is understandable that there were different limitations in terms of architectural features for the creation of sacred space. Table 4.2 illustrates the scenario of one-flat churches incorporated with no design.

Table 4.2 Scenario of One-Flat Churches Incorporated with no Design

Topic	Description
General spatial features (see figure 4.5)	Low ceiling height Large columns separated spaces Limited space Structural walls segmented the space into small compartments Improper and non prominent façade

Figure 4.5a Low ceiling height

Figure 4.5b Structural walls segmented the space into small compartments

Figure 4.5c Improper and non prominent façade

| General impression (see figure 4.6) | Spiritual ambience at first glance was weak Unclear indication of the progression into a spiritual space Monotonous and standard decoration Wear and tear interior Unorganised spatial arrangement |

Figure 4.6a Spiritual ambience at first glance was weak

Figure 4.6b Monotonous and standard decoration

Figure 4.6c Unorganised spatial arrangement

Common practices Spatial System (see figure 4.7)	Longitudinal layout Blocked views of windows Unorganised storages Unorganised displays Improper circulation planning, which caused disturbance in between programmes

Figure 4.7a Unorganised storages

Figure 4.7b Longitudinal layout

Figure 4.7c Improper circulation planning

Material and detail (see figure 4.8)	Blocked front view by projection screen, sometimes covered the holy cross and the name of the church Burgundy colour flannel curtain as backdrop for altar Theme banners on the two sides of the altar Different non-traditional musical instruments such as drums and guitars for worship Open shelves with messy stuff Wall mounted electrical fan Exposed electrical pipes Uncovered Main Circuit Box Different styles of chairs and loose furniture Stained glass effect adhesive films covered windows (partial imitation of traditional feature) Modular false ceiling tiles or open ceiling Artificial plants

Figure 4.8a Blocked altar by projection screen

Figure 4.8b Theme banners on the two sides of the altar

Figure 4.8c Different styles of chairs and loose furniture

Figure 4.8d Stained glass effect adhesive films covered windows

Uncommon practices but stimulating in design reflection (see figure 4.9)

Altar without the symbol of cross
Altar in front of windows with view of the exterior environment

Figure 4.9 Altar in front of windows with view of the exterior environment

Spatial arrangement related to limited space

Multi-functional scheme (see figure 4.10)

Stackable or folding chairs and tables, sometimes incorporate with heavy duty trolley for transport
Hanging movable partitions (some are poor in acoustic)
Staff offices were used to conduct other activities, such as Sunday school

Figure 4.10a Folding chairs with heavy duty trolley

Figure 4.10b Moveable partition

Figure 4.10c Staff offices were used to conduct other activities

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Display scheme (see figure 4.11)	Posters placed in clutters in different levels and sizes. They are placed on doors and cabinets Unorganised souvenirs display

Figure 4.11a Posters placed in clutters

Figure 4.11b Unorganised souvenirs display

Storage (see figure 4.12)	Insufficient enclosed large space or store room to store large stuffs Untidy boxes were placed on floor or underneath chairs

Figure 4.12a Insufficient enclosed large space or store room to store large stuffs

Figure 4.12b Untidy boxes were placed on floor or underneath chairs

Difficult problems	Low ceiling height
Spatial system	Large columns separated spaces Structural walls segmented the space into small compartments Narrow-width wall; the use of projection screen had blocked the front view such as the holy cross symbol Improper and Non-prominent façade; Front door design and exterior signage were difficult to deliver the sacred message. Inaccessible as compared to individual churches situated on streets. Limited natural lighting Poor acoustics in multi-functional space
Operation	Limited space for the church to arrange training and gathering Affiliated social services such as kindergarten with randomly oriented colourful decorations which distracted the worship. The problem of dual identities as church and social

services centre
Limited space for causal social gathering (especially in weekdays)
Untidy devices on the seat to hold bible and hymn book

It was revealed that design of church was not a trend in Hong Kong churches and church leaders were not keen on relating theology with spatial design.

Church incorporated with design. From site observation, for churches incorporated with design, most of the church design was aiming at attracting newcomers with a contemporary and decent style which was described by Webber (2002) as pragmatic evangelicals; hence, design was significant in a practical perspective in attracting non-believers instead of reflecting the sacred identity. From site observation, apart from the majority of design in contemporary approach, some design insights with sacred quality could still be discovered. Table 4.3 indicates some design insights gathered from church incorporated with design.

Table 4.3 Design Insights in Church Incorporated with Design

Topic	Description
Design features	Feature wall to deliver the sacred identity
(see figure	Special cross design
4.13)	Modernised pattern applied in stained glass
	Contemporary design language; use of contemporary material such as stainless steel
	Varied ceiling height

Lighting system was combined of different types of lighting effects
(but lack of consideration of natural light)

Figure 4.13a Feature wall to deliver the sacred identity

Figure 4.13b Modernised pattern applied in stained glass

Figure 4.13c Use of contemporary material such as stainless steel

Figure 4.13d Lighting system was combined of different types of lighting effects

Representation of the nature of God by churches incorporated with design. From site observation, reflecting the immanent side of God through the application of church design was a common practice. Hence, a hospitable and welcoming ambience was created instead of a solemn and majestic one. However, some one-flat churches with low ceiling height attempted to resemble classical style to reveal the transcendent side of God. They installed pointed ceiling, rows of columns, pointed windows and so on which were not harmonised with the site characteristics. (see figure 4.14)

Figure 4.14 Resembled classical style

4.1.2 Site Observation of Selected Churches with Long Term Participation

Church incorporated with no design*.* Out of the seven churches in which site observation was conducted with long term participation, four churches which provided social services did not apply design. When church was attached with social services, religion was helpful to the secular society through the provision of the social services instead of the sacred activities. Hence, the design of churches oriented from the identity of the social services instead of the sacred identity. In this section, the practices of three churches were presented. (One of the four churches with social services was the church which had conducted case study; hence, the data was presented in the chapter 5, Case Study. This case study church would like to revitalise the sacred quality and deliver a sacred church identity even with affiliated social services.)

Regarding these three churches, they provided different kinds of social services and located in different types of buildings. However, they both surrendered the importance of design, the use of contemporary design languages and the representation of the sacred.

Case no. 1: E.F.C.C. Kong Fook Church. When the researcher attended the Sunday service the first time, there was a lack of welcoming atmosphere for the main entrance door was closed. It was realised that they used the side entrance instead of the main entrance to enter the worship space. The result of this arrangement was not hospitable and the side entrance was simply an exit door without any design in terms of symbolising the entrance of a sanctuary. (see figure 4.15a)

Figure 4.15a Side entrance without any design to symbolise the entrance of a sanctuary

Figure 4.15b Worship space was monotonous
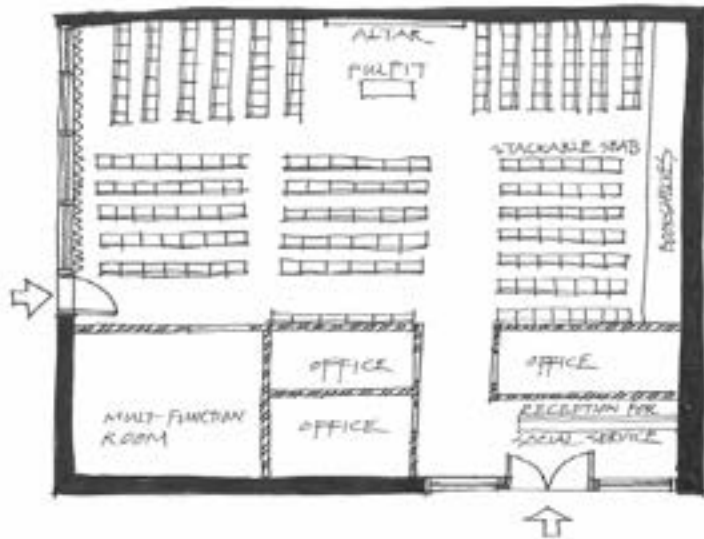
Figure 4.15.c Floor Plan

The atmosphere of the worship space was monotonous and imitated an institution; (see figure 15b) with full height book shelves along one wall, false ceiling was formed by modular grid pattern acoustic board with concealed fluorescent tube aluminum light box. It resembled the rationale of historical meeting place for the non-conformist as mentioned

in literature review which simply required a simple interior space to conduct worship. Through the seating arrangement, the concept of community of believers was reinforced and it could reduce the distance between preacher and worshippers as well. The chairs were placed in three different orientations like a U shape to face the altar and it encouraged the eye contact among worshippers to edify the unity spirit. Another positive side of this church was that worshippers could utilise the area outside for mingling after services. However, the church design surrendered the use of natural lighting by covering the windows with burgundy flannel curtain.

The need by the social services overridden the need of the religious activities. In weekdays, the space was mainly occupied by the elderly centre. Multi-functional scheme was essential to the limited space. It had movable partitions and multiple usages of rooms, such as offices used as storage of equipment of the social services during Sunday services. The equipment used by the social services occupied plenty of space and during weekend, church administers needed to shuffle them into different rooms to release the worship hall for Sunday services. The main entrance design was oriented from the social services instead of the creation of church identity. From the exterior, one might be misled with the existence of an elderly centre more than a church. (see figure 4.16)

Figure 4.16 Entrance representing elderly centre more than church

Regarding the worshippers, after each service, worshippers needed to set up the worship hall into Sunday school venue. Worshippers, especially the younger ones, contributed their efforts to move the folding chairs, opened the movable partitions, opened the folding table, moved the white board panels and prepared the bibles. The sense of community was enriched through these activities; in limited space, the community spirit was reinforced through participation in setting up the venue. Worshippers were not in a hurry to leave, instead, they either stayed in the sanctuary or outside to chat for around 20 to 30 minutes.

Case no. 2: Sai Sha Road Baptist Church. It located inside a small local shopping arcade under a residential complex. The exterior signage was not prominent. It took some time to search for the route to the unit occupied by the church. When one arrived, the hospitality was experienced by the ushers instead of the entrance design; the entrance design resembles a community centre without proper entrance design to denote that it was a sacred space. (see figure 4.17) The design of the sanctuary was simple and functional. (see figure 4.18a) The suggestion of a Christian church through design relied on the altar design. This church has a longitudinal layout with low ceiling height; when worshippers stood up and sing in the worship, the oppressive feeling was quite strong. The church design had surrendered the use of beautiful sunlight and covered the windows with panels. (see figure 4.18b) Ideally, the use of lighting would deliver a vital symbolic meaning and it reduced the oppressive feeling of this site limitations. This was a common practice by most of the churches to enclose the worship space and avoid disturbance from outside.

Figure 4.17 Resembled a community centre more than church

Figure 4.18a Simple design using longitudinal layout

Figure 4.18b Surrendered the use of sunlight
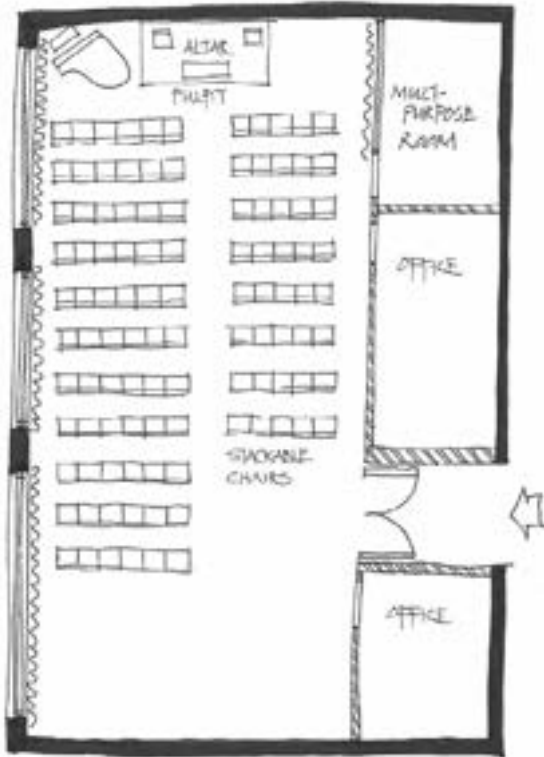
Figure 4.18c Floor Plan

In weekdays, the space was mainly operated as child care centre; the space was occupied by foldable tables and chairs for the purpose of tutorial class. Hence, the image of a church was not expressed.

Similar to other churches that needed to set up the space into Sunday school after Sunday service, worshippers had to arrange the chairs and the movable partitions.

Because the arcade was not busy in the morning, the circulation space of the arcade could be used by the church members to chat after Sunday service. The circulation space was transformed into a mingling space for worshippers. It solved the problem of limited space especially when church desired to increase the capacity, the allocation of space for mingling inside limited space needed to be surrendered.

Case no. 3: Shatin Free Methodist Church. The church was combined with three compartments in the arcade of a public housing estate and each compartment was rectangular in shape. As a worship space, it was quite straight forward to use a longitudinal layout to fulfill the functional need of sitting more people. (see figure 4.19) It was reminded again that the maximum capacity was the first priority for many churches. Under the site constraint, if the cross in the altar was put in the centre, the projection screen would definitely cover the cross.

In limited space with multi-functional purposes, it was a common practice for the church to transform the space from the social services nature to the worship setting before Sunday service. Church members needed to assist in converting the space from study centre to Sunday service venue. When people came late, they might disturb the programme for the circulation was in the front. When the service finished, worshippers enjoyed to chat around for at least 30 minutes. The researcher witnessed an incident where they had birthday party afterwards; members could hold spontaneous activities freely. Because the congregation size was relatively small as compared to the floor area, there was plenty of space for worshippers to move around. This church had occupied three bays of units and the service simply ultilised one bay. The rest of the areas could be

used for other ministries. However, the movable partition had poor acoustic effects, which caused interference when different activities were held simultaneously.

Figure 4.19a Use of longitudinal layout
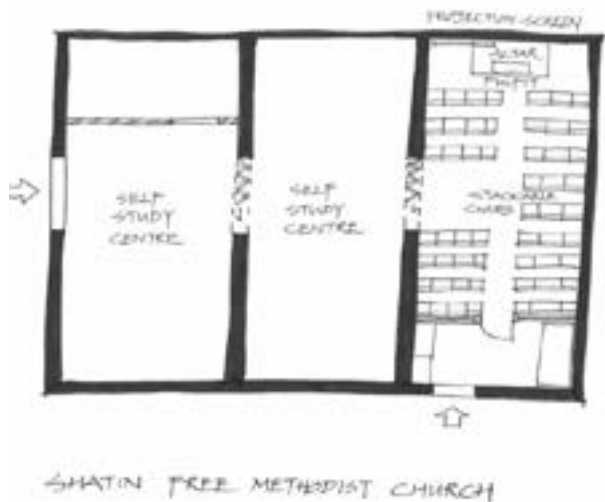
Figure 4.19b Floor Plan

Church incorporated with design. For the three churches which applied design, the design was a seeker-sensitive approach as mentioned by Webber (2002) to describe the pragmatic evangelicals which focused on attracting newcomers. One church was contemporary to a level that the effect of the altar design is more like a lounge than a church. (see figure 4.20) It stimulated the reflection that church design needed to strike a balance between sacred and contemporary qualities; if not, the sacredness would be sacrificed.

Figure 4.20 Altar design resembled a lounge

Figure 4.21 Use of words to deliver the sacred message

The design of one church incorporated many slogan through the use of words to deliver the sacred message. (see figure 4.21) Their design approach was modern without non-functional decoration and extra ornaments. Large amount of the construction cost were allocated on mutli-media system and movable partitions to achieve a high standard multi-functional hall. The design concern was not placed on the sacred identity. The elaboration of churches incorporated with design under site observation with long term participation would be presented in detail in the section 4.2, Relationship of Church Design and Community.

Representation of the nature of God by churches incorporated with design. From site observation of the three churches with long term participation, all the church designs reflected the immanent side of God, such as creating a hospitable entrance design to

reflect the friendliness attribute of God. This type of church was termed pragmatic evangelicals by Robert Webber (2002). Church leaders applied a seeker-sensitive approach for they realised that contemporary society searched for aesthetic manifestation.

Even tough church leaders got used to achieve the theme of a friendly image by other means such as through the love relationship of the community of believers, a church with design as seen from site observation could enhance the theme with better effect. For example, one of the churches provided ample relaxing space for worshippers to mingle around after Sunday services which could reinforce the fellowship and the image of a friendly God. (see figure 4.22)

Figure 4.22 Church design with ample relaxing space

4.2 Through Observations to Reveal the Relationship of Church Design
and Contemporary Implications

To begin the analysis of the relationship of church design and contemporary implications, two kinds of contemporary expressions have been explored; they are the use of contemporary design language in church design and the expression of the social community in regards of the affiliated social services. Concerning the application of contemporary design language, the aim is to attract newcomers or to fulfill the concept of

seeker-sensitive approach as mentioned in literature review by Webber (2002) to express the orientation of church ministries to target newcomers. Through site observation of different churches incorporated with design, one may comprehend the different representations of community practiced by churches. How church leaders transform the spaces from the sacred to the profane and vice versa. How they manipulate the limited space to perform multi-functional purposes. It is revealed that when churches apply design, the majority of the design outcomes will be a community approach.

4.2.1 Church Design Reflecting Contemporary Awareness

Church design reflecting contemporary awareness through site observation. Three churches out of the seven churches which had been conducted site observation with long term participation applied contemporary design elements into the church designs. However, the designs had three different kinds of approaches respectively. The first one is a clean and efficient contemporary look; the second one which resembled an entertainment space image; and the third one is a more sophisticated kind of contemporary look which resembled a club house image. These three churches are presented to reveal their design practices in different approaches to reflect contemporary quality.

Case no. 1: Shatin Baptist Church – clean and efficient contemporary look. When the researcher first entered the church, the impression was that it looked like an office more than a church. (see figure 4.23) The direction to the worship hall was clearly indicated through the spatial planning for there was a large reception on the right hand side of the lift lobby with a hallway adjacent to the reception area leading to the worship hall. As a church, there was a lack of sacredness in the progression of space and the

distinction of entering a sacred space was vague. (see figure 4.24) Instead, the functional design with simple and clean details was applied. The design of the worship hall or the sanctuary was basic and functional design which was consistent with the image of the lobby area outside. When the researcher compared this church with other churches, the layout plan was very much appreciated as an evangelical church for it did not use a longitudinal layout; but instead, the pulpit had been placed in the midway of the longitudinal hall which reduced the distance of the preacher and the lay people. (see figure 4.25) Regarding the window, the view was blocked even though the view outside was not dizzy. The researcher understood that their worship relied very much on audio visual system such as projector and blocking the sunlight from shining into the interior could achieve an effective lighting control system. This church aimed at high performance on audio visual output.

Figure 4.23 Entrance looks like office or centre more than church

Figure 4.24 The distinction of entering a sacred space is vague

Figure 4.25a Pulpit in the midway of the longitudinal hall to reduce distance of preacher and lay people
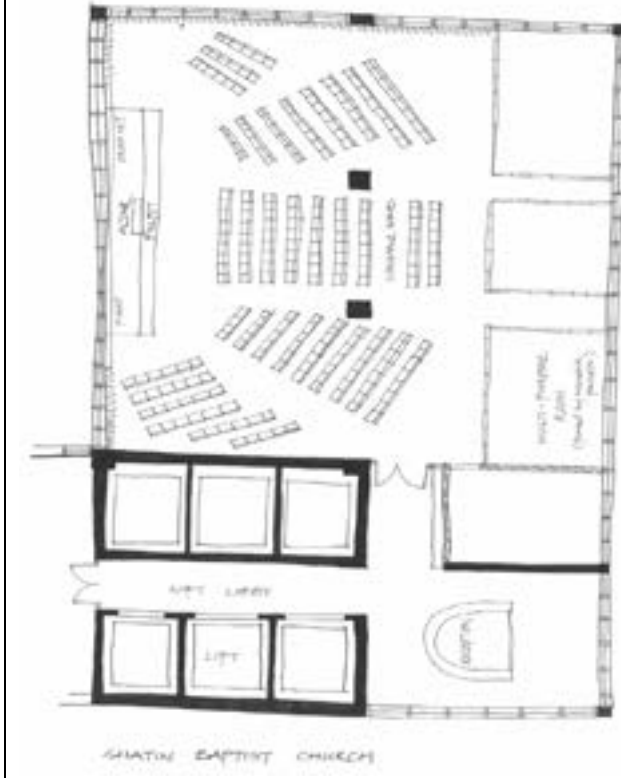
Figure 4.25b Floor Plan

When maximum capacity was the aim, after Sunday service, there was not enough space for people to mingle afterwards. Because they needed to prepare for the next service, worshippers could not stay in the worship hall. With the crowd of people waiting for lifts to leave, the circulation spaces were very busy. Worshippers had no choice but to find other places outside church for chatting.

The worshippers had discipline to line up in ground floor lift lobby to wait for lifts to access to the church. Worshippers were greeted by ushers in the corridor before

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they entered the sanctuary. There was freedom in selection of seats and it was not the middle section facing altar directly to be filled up first. In a worship space with pulpit placed in the midway of the longitudinal hall, the compartments on the two sides would have good eye contacts with the worship leaders or preachers. In the worship, there were two projection screens on the two sides for worshippers to look at. There was a main circulation route at the back of sanctuary which allowed people to move around without disturbing the activities in the front. When the service finished, majority of people left and waited for the lifts to go down. The common area for chatting was not enough and because there was another service waiting, the desire to stay and chat diminished. If people were after informal fellowship, they met in restaurant for sharing and eating. The provision of ample space for chatting after activities in a compact area was not enough. It was reminded that there was a church which needed to line up in the entrance and to go directly to the sanctuary with ushers leading ones to sit accordingly. After Sunday services, worshippers were requested to leave immediately in order not to disturb the next Sunday service. The site of this church was formerly a cinema with high stage. The experience of worshippers was like watching a show with performers in the stage instead of a unified community to serve God in the service. This kind of practice resembled the concept described by Kilde (2002) as "audience-centred nature of evangelical worship" or described by Loveland and Wheeler (2003) as "performance-oriented worship service" which delivered an experience of attending a performance.

Case no. 2: E.F.C.C. Waterloo Church – resembled an entertainment space image. This church located in a main street with windows facing a busy main road. Even though

it was located on the second floor, the design of this church still manipulated the window area to attract outsiders and to identify the existence. (see figure 4.26) It could be reached both by staircase and by lift which was different from the churches which were located in commercial buildings. One of the staircases was an open one with view to the main street. (see figure 4.27) From the researcher's perspective, the spiritual path could begin from the staircase. Indeed there was limitation that the first floor belonged to another organisation and the design could not start from the street level. However, crowds of worshippers were using this staircase to access to the church.

This church very much served like communal church mentioned by Kieckhefer (2004) with ample spaces in the entrance for causal conversation. The relaxing mood was delivered in the entrance lobby because there was view of the outdoor environment and different posters for people to browse around. (see figure 4.28)
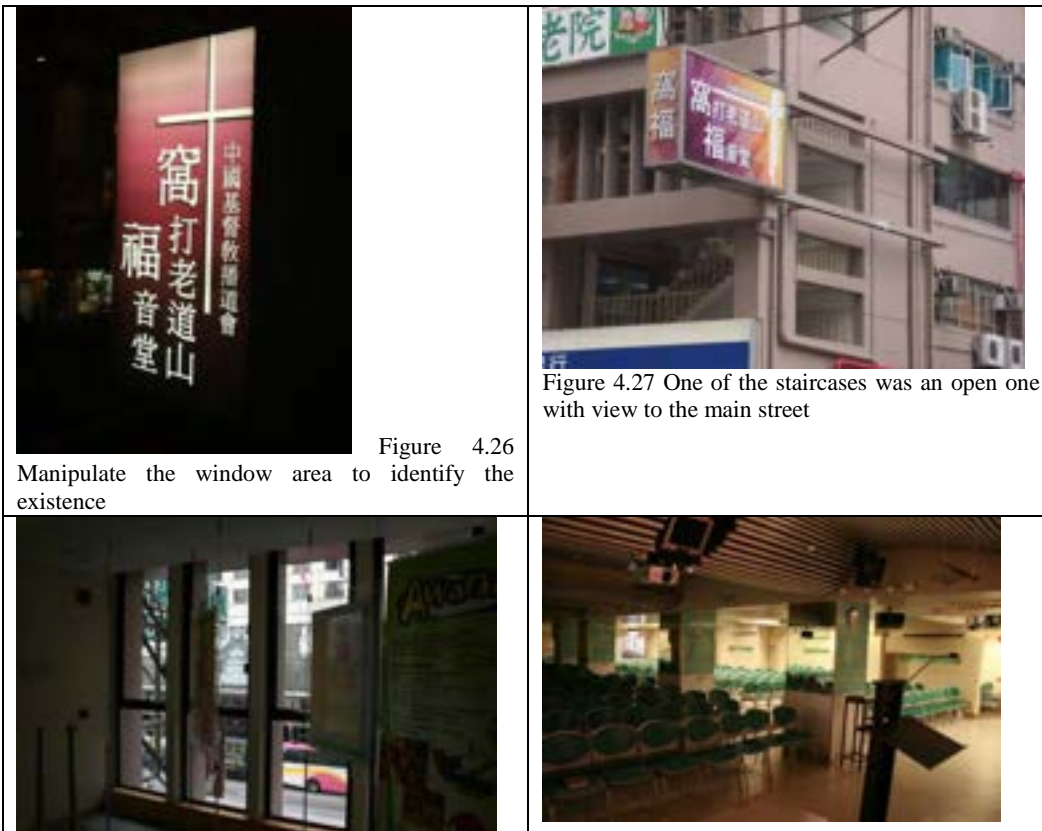
Figure 4.26 Manipulate the window area to identify the existence

Figure 4.27 One of the staircases was an open one with view to the main street

Figure 4.28 Entrance lobby with view of the outdoor environment	Figure 4.29 Mirror in the columns and metallic tubes for the false ceiling not blend in with the sacred space
Figure 4.30 Design of the cross and the hidden baptismal pool	Figure 4.31 Hidden baptismal pool

Figure 4.32 Floor Plan

About the sanctuary, the contemporary elements such as mirror in the columns and the use of metallic tubes for the false ceiling did not blend well with the sacred nature of church. (see figure 4.29, 30) The method of using mirror in the column associated with restaurant and the metallic tubes were used in arcades and fitness centre with association of efficiency and high technology. The altar was designed with resemblance of a stage in lounge. In fact, the design of the cross and the hidden baptismal pool behind were successful elements that contributed to the sacredness but the whole ambience distracted this beautiful design. (see figure 4.31)

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About the participation of worshippers, the path to the sanctuary was quite straight forward; after entering the entrance door, one needed to pass through a rectangular entrance foyer to the far end, and then turned right at the end of the foyer would be the door to the sanctuary. The entrance foyer was spacious to let people stayed around for a while and moved on to worship. The good quality acoustic control and the separation of another compartment as sanctuary allowed worshippers of the earlier Sunday services to mingle around without disturbing the next Sunday services. The sanctuary was in a longitudinal layout with two rows of columns to separate the sanctuary into three rectangular compartments. Worshippers could select the seats freely and the middle compartment was filled up first even though they needed to sit in the rear. Most of the worshippers liked to have eye contact with the worship leaders instead of watching live broadcast in the two compartments on the sides. After service, half of the worshippers stayed behind to chat for around ten minutes before they left. The entrance foyer with activities, such as counters for registration and promotion of activities with people lingering around. Corridor was wide enough which allowed people to stand at a side without disturbing the circulation. However, they also needed to rely on neighbouring restaurants to continue the sharing.

When one visited the church during weekdays, one felt comfortable for the freedom to sit down in a sofa to chat and read or go to get some drinks. This was also a gesture to show hospitality.

Case no. 3: Island Evangelical Community Church – a more sophisticated kind of contemporary look which resembled a club house setting. From the ground floor lift

lobby onwards, there was carefully designed scheme to welcome worshippers such as ushers wore uniform, free standing signage and mobile reception counter. Every detail was nicely designed. One could feel the hospitality in different levels and the design facilitated worshippers to feel comfortable and concentrated in the worship. Even though sometimes the researcher doubted whether the relaxed ambience would make worshippers fell sleepy, the deliverance of a worship ambience was successful. (see figure 4.33) When worshipping on the first floor, Hall A, which was a longitudinal layout with dark wood panel, dark colour carpet and exposed ceiling painted in black, (see figure 4.34) sitting in front was the first choice in order to avoid the possibility of loosing concentration. If sitting at the back, which would be quite far away from the altar, even though there was projection screen with live broadcast between rolls to shorten the distance visually, the distraction still existed. The design approach surrendered the use of natural lighting in order to achieve the best effect for live broadcasting.

Worship on the second floor, Hall B in a semi-circular layout was more of an intimate experience even though one needed to watch live broadcast during preaching. (see figure 4.35) The semi-circular layout setting could perform a cozy effect in worship space to deliver the immanent side of God.

Figure 4.33 Moody ambience may let worshippers feel sleepy

Figure 4.34 Worship hall A in a longitudinal layout

Figure 4.35 Worship hall B in semi-circular layout is more intimate

When the number of worshippers increased, the coffee corner and sofa area in Hall B were also filled with worshippers. People could worship with their coffee cup in front. Once when the worship began, the researcher heard that the coffee corner was quite

noisy and the usher feedback was they allowed and did not mind some noise in the coffee corner in the singing section.

There was plenty of space for people to chat before and after services, such as people waiting and chatting in the large ground floor lift lobby; there was a large common area on the left side of the entrance in the first floor, Hall A. In the second floor, Hall B, there was a sofa corner next to a coffee corner which was ideal for chatting and sharing as well. Worshippers were not requested to leave the sanctuary when the Sunday service finished; they could pray there, meditated on their own, chatted with friends, bought a cup of brewed coffee or enjoyed the sea view in the sofa corner. In a relaxing environment, worshippers were encouraged to linger around and to build the community spirit. The interval between two morning services was 30 minutes which was enough for chatting after service.

The contemporary quality of this church was associated with some contemporary design languages such as the combination of materials (see figure 4.36) and other design elements. If someone wished to integrate contemporary with the sacred, one must be selective so that they could be counter-balanced and mutually complimentary. Island Evangelical Community Church has created a good example for the integration.

Figure 4.36 Contemporary design languages such as the combination of materials

From site observation of 171 churches, churches incorporated with design usually associated with contemporary representation in Hong Kong. The elements churches used to reflect contemporary quality were simple and geometric forms with the combinations of sharp colour, dynamic patterns, and contemporary materials such as glass and so forth (see figure 4.37). Appendix 9 indicates the 39 churches which have been visited with incorporation of design. Out of the 39 churches, three churches attempted to create a traditional effect such as through the use of arches and pillars instead of creating a contemporary outcome.

Figure 4.37 Elements churches used to reflect contemporary quality

4.2.2 Church Design Attracts Newcomers

From site observation with long term participation, the three churches which would like to use design to attract newcomers were applying seeker-sensitive approach with the use of contemporary images. There was one church which has created a serene ambience for worshippers to experience the serenity through the use of lighting and materials with darker colours. From observation, both newcomers and worshippers enjoyed the setting.

From the site observation of 171 churches, for churches without social services and applying design, they were attractive to newcomers for the designs were contemporary, welcoming and comfortable. For churches with affiliated social services and applying design, the contemporary representation was following the nature of the social services to attract the local community. Hence, the identity of a sacred church was weak and the transformation of the multi-functional hall into a sanctuary would only rely on the altar design. When churches provided social services, the holistic consideration as a sacred church was surrendered; the use of serene ambience which was associated with sacred quality to attract newcomers was neglected. However, large number of churches did not apply design as a medium to attract newcomers.

4.2.3 Multi-Functional Scheme to Utilise the Limited Space

Through site observation with long term participation, the most commonly practiced multi-functional scheme was movable partition; but the qualities are varied (see figure 4.38). The one with best acoustic effect was really expensive. Other schemes such

as multi-functional room, folding or stackable chairs and folding tables were applied as well.

Figure 4.38 Movable partitions are varied in qualities

The multi-functional scheme has solved practical spatial problem but the identity and ambience transformation from a profane nature to a sacred nature was under-developed.

The above phenomenon aligned with the site observation. The most commonly seen example was movable partitions, stackable or folding chairs and folding tables so that the space could be converted to different usages. Some churches employed specially designed trolley to transport the stackable chairs (see figure 4.39). They also used stackable tables when the main hall needed to convert into Sunday school venue or dining area. For the usage of movable partition, the quality was varied. Only a few churches were willing to use the professional ones with very good acoustic effect. Some churches used movable partitions with very poor acoustic effect which were unfavourable acoustically to allow different groups to run different activities at the same time. Churches also liked to have multiple usage of each room such as the office of pastors could be transformed into a classroom for Sunday school or in weekends, offices were

used to store equipments of the social services which were placed in the worship hall during weekdays.

Figure 4.39 Specially designed trolley

4.2.4 Church Provides Social Services

From the site observation of seven selected churches with long term participation, the four churches with social services surrendered the reflection on contemporary aesthetic and the need of sacred quality. The contemporary quality was expressed through the provision of social services and provided a design satisfying the practical need of the social services.

From site observation of 171 churches, the designs of churches with social services were mainly oriented towards the identity of the social services. It meant that the attraction of church was relied on the social services instead of the church spatial identity. The most complicated scenario in terms of designing sacred church was churches with affiliated kindergartens. The interior space was filled up with colourful display which hindered the concentration of worshippers.(see figure 4.40a)

Figure 4.40a Kindergarten filled with colourful display

There were two types of social services; one was the government subvention kind and the other was self-financed by the church herself. It meant that for the government subvention kind, the budget and design would encounter more restrictions. It was also a factor for the lack of sacred quality in church design with social services. Hence, churches simply designed a sacred altar to perform the task of a worship space (see figure 4.40b). From the site observation, even though there was more freedom in design for social services self-financed by church herself, they insisted on surrendering the sacred identity.

Figure 4.40bChurches simply designed a sacred altar to perform the task of a worship space

4.2.6 Summary

The differences in contemporary representation could bestow diversified inspirations for the search of contemporary qualities. Awareness to the use of contemporary design languages is to pay attention on the balance with the sacred association. This study opts to challenge churches not to simply satisfy with delivering a contemporary image but surrender the sacred identity. The serene and spiritual ambiences related to sacred quality are attractive to newcomers as well. This kind of sacred quality is reinforced by Robert Webber (2002) when he endorsed the concept of younger evangelicals.

The preference of expressing the immanence of God incorporates well with contemporary quality, such as the hospitable atmosphere in the entrance one can experience in the churches with contemporary design inviting newcomers to participate comfortably.

The application of multi-media devices is one of the contemporary means to deliver a dynamic effect in worship. However, through the achievement of a contemporary effect, different sacred symbols may be surrendered such as the hesitation of the use of natural lighting and the covering of the cross by projection screen. Of course, through the use of multi-media devices, different symbols could be employed to enrich the message. Another scenario which is worthwhile to remark is the provision of a semi-circular layout could overcome the need of watching live broadcast in preaching as practiced by one of the churches. An appropriate layout and ambience could transform the limitation of watching live broadcast.

The scenario of a church with a coffee corner and sofa area for relaxing which have been integrated as part of the worship space is an effective contemporary touch. In a contemporary society, diversified practices to embrace different expectations are valid. When a balanced approach is highlighted to incorporate different traditions, one should be open-minded to receive challenges by different rationales and practices. This kind of spatial arrangement is a multi-functional scheme to ultilise a relaxing area which can be used for sacred activity.

From the field research, the researcher has discovered many approaches to multi-functional scheme under space limitation. This practical requirement has no conflict with the inherited theological perspective of detachment with culture and simple life. Their aim is to use the space wisely which aligns with the attitude of good stewardship as taught in the Bible. Hence, most of the multi-functional schemes are simply functional design without aesthetic concern such as posters were displayed everywhere (see figure 4.41a). When churches are transformed from the profane activities to the sacred activities, there are simply the cross, the pulpit and the flower arrangement to represent the sacred (see figure 4.41b); some churches even cover the cross with the projection screen in Sunday services, The transformation from the nature of the social services to the sacred nature is not successful. This study opts to encourage creative ideas about transformation from the profane to the sacred nature and vice versa.

Figure 4.41a Posters are displayed everywhere

Figure 4.41b Simply the cross, the pulpit and the flower arrangement to represent the Sacred

4.3 Through Observations to Reveal the Representation of the Sacred Identity with Contemporary Quality and Transformation of Traditional Essence

The three attributes of church which have been established in literature review are the fundamental concerns to establish the sacred quality. Then, the conception of the sacred and the use of elements to deliver the sacredness are revealed.

4.3.1 The Three Attributes represented by Church Design as the Foundations of Sacred Identity.

Regarding the three attributes of church as presented in the literature review, only one church out of the seven churches which have conducted site observation with long term participation concerned about the expression as the house of God. Church as a place of worship was the most prominent practice represented through design. Not even one church tried to use design symbolically to reflect the church as a community of believers. In terms of design to reveal the three attributes, church as community of believers was under developed because this attribute was associated with spiritual representation through preaching, fellowship and teaching instead of design representation. The common practices of churches to create space for worship and space for the community of believers were a practical approach in terms of spatial planning and facilities provision such as allocating large area for worship purpose and areas for fellowship. Six churches out of the seven churches surrendered the sacred identity.

From the site observation of 171 churches, when searching for the three representations or attributes of church, the concept of the house of God as reflected by church design was rarely seen. Hence, the sacred identity was weak. For churches incorporated with design, they usually focus on the concept of the space for worship; no matter traditional worship, pragmatic worship or convergence worship as categorised by Webber (2002), the common practice was a creation of a prominent altar to draw the centre of focus. Regarding the holistic design concern such as progression of space and use of symbols was underplayed. About the expression of the space for the community of believers, they preferred to deliver the message by the spatial arrangement such as ample

space for mingling before and after activities. The symbolic representation of the sacred community spirit has been overlooked. From site observation, concerning the symbolic representation of community of believers, the method churches liked to employ is the composition of a large feature by small units to express unity. (see figure 4.42)

Figure 4.42 Composition of a large feature by small units to express unity

Below is the elaboration of the three attributes reflected in church design.

Church design reflects the house of God to represent the sacred. Through church design to reflect the concept of the house of God was not a common practice. As a house of God, churches mainly expressed the concept through the design of the altar. However, church as the house of God was experienced from the entrance onwards to different areas. Churches practiced a partial representation of the house of God by simply focusing on the altar design which was difficult to deliver the sacred message spatially. On the other hand, as a house of God, it was discovered that contemporary quality was the main concern with a lack of attention to achieve the sacred quality. From site observation with long term participation, only one church which reflected the concept of

the house of God. This church design has created a sacred experience with progression of space and the ambience was serene and meditative. (see figure 43)

Figure 4.43 With progression of space; ambience was serene and meditative

From site observation of 171 churches, one church has the conviction of creating a house of God with design details abided with the theology. It was expressed that when they considered the symbolic meaning of Divine lighting from above, they decided not to

hang any equipments from ceiling to block the penetration of the lighting into the sanctuary (see figure 44).

Figure 4.44 No hanging equipment to block the penetration of lighting

Church design facilitates believers to worship. A longitudinal worship space was a common practice to draw the centre of focus as a space for worship. One pastor stated that if placing the pulpit in the midway of a longitudinal plan, the preacher has to move his or her heads from left to right in order to address to the congregation. From the observation, majority of worshippers liked to choose seats that were closed to the preacher or worship leaders. In this point of view, pulpit in the midway could reduce the distance from worshippers to preachers. When concerning evangelical theology in worship, a pulpit in the midway was better for preaching of the Word. It was understood that there were different site constraints for the orientation, what the researcher wondered was how consistent do Christians applied their theology in practicum. From the observation in one church, the use of projection screen in the midway of the longitudinal plan could provide a clearer image of the altar but the physical distance was still a hindrance. Whereas in the church with semi-circular layout with the altar in the midway of the longitudinal floor plan, even though worshippers needed to watch live broadcast during preaching time, the intimate feeling and concentration level could still be obtained.

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The use of spiritual path to prepare worshippers to enter the sanctuary was seldom implemented. This research endeavours to encourage churches to incorporate the use of spiritual path in design.

About the ambience of worship spaces with design concern, there are three main types under practice the researcher has categorised: a cheerful worship environment, a solemn atmosphere, and a cosy ambience for worship. (see figure 4.45)

Figure 4.45a Cheerful worship environment

Figure 4.45b Solemn atmosphere

Figure 4.45c Cosy ambience for worship (Retrieved on 1 July 2009, http:// www.justchurch.hk)

From site observation, as worship spaces, large percentage of churches implied longitudinal layout instead of pulpit in the midway of a longitudinal plan aiming at reducing the distance between preacher and laity. This scenario was contradicting to the evangelical approach with preaching as the climax of the worship. It was true that longitudinal layout was easier to create the centre of focus with a narrower view and altar at the end of the space. Of course there were churches restricted by the site constraints which could only use longitudinal layout in order to have a better circulation of space. Another scenario which favoured the location of the pulpit in the midway of a longitudinal plan was the use of projection screen in some churches covered the cross in the middle of the altar. By placing the pulpit in the midway, the width of the altar was wider and by the use of two projection screens on the sides could solve the problem of covering the cross. (see figure 4.46) Some churches used semi-circular layout to reinforce the community spirit in worship. But it contradicted with the requirement of maximum seating capacity. However, the researcher believed that seating capacity was not the highest priority when theology was consulted, even though the seating capacity was the key for many churches in order to house more worshippers and to use up the physical space practically.

Figure 4.46 Use of two projection screens on the sides could solve the problem of covering the cross in the middle. (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http:// www.yantze-church.org)

Church design reflects the theory and value of community of believers. From site observation of seven selected churches with long term participation, there was only one church with a symbolic expression of the community of believers. In terms of design, churches liked to focus on the practical spatial consideration to reinforce the community spirit. When the attribute of church as community of believers was recollected, the emphasis on the spiritual edification has overridden the spatial representation.

From site observation, there was a lack of design examples to reflect the spirit of the community of believers symbolically. Some churches used the composition of small units to form a large image to symbolise the unity of different believers. It was understood that symbolic representation in design was under-explored; the concept of the community of believers could be seen primarily in the spatial arrangement such as the provision of ample space for chatting after activities. There was a dilemma between providing enough space for chatting after Sunday services and incorporate maximum usage of space for the seating capacity. Both approaches were in practice and the problem was becoming more serious when they had more than one service in Sunday. It meant that they could not stay and chat after service in the sanctuary. Due to limited chatting space within church, they have to find places outside if they want to continue the fellowship.

4.3.2 Use of Elements to Deliver the Sacredness

The use of lighting to deliver the sacred quality was also underdeveloped. There was only one church with the use of natural lighting to contribute to the creation of sacred

atmosphere. (see figure 4.47) The example was different from the rest of the cases in terms of creating a dim and mystical environment to enhance the lighting effect. It broke the common practice of the other churches which preferred a bright environment. It seemed to be a phenomenon that churches surrender the use of natural lighting and blocked the view of the windows. It was understood that the exterior of a densely populated urban environment was unattractive as compared to the garden view or natural scenery which was usually aligned with the image of church. From observation, it was a pity that although one church present with a view of the sky, they still blocked it.

Figure 4.47 Use of natural lighting to contribute to the creation of sacred atmosphere

In addition, the use of artificial materials seemed to be a recognised practice. For churches which had limited budget, artificial materials were both cheaper and more durable. For more budgeted church, the use of natural materials was mainly wood; and the use of stones was mainly applied on feature walls. There was no extravagance in spending money on church design especially on the usage of expensive natural materials. In addition, durability was a big concern.

From site observation, churches in search of design mainly targeted for the contemporary outlook to attract newcomers. They thought that sacred nature could create the threshold fear. Only a few of them has built churches with sacred and contemporary

qualities. Some churches simply surrendered the sacredness and allowed the social services to manipulate the identity. Churches looked like community centre more than church especially when the cross was the only outstanding feature which was however almost always covered by projection screen. Some churches imitated traditional style to create the sacred nature but the effect was not satisfactory for the site limitation of flat space with low ceiling height was contradicting with the characters of traditional styles. (see figure 4.48)

Figure 4.48a Shau Kei Wan Methodist Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.skwmc.org.hk)

Figure 4.48b Hong Kong West Point Baptist Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.xijin.org.hk)

Figure 4.58 One-flat church imitates traditional style

From site observation, churches seldom considered transforming traditional design elements. For churches incorporated with design, they aimed at creating a contemporary outlook. As discussed in literature review, (under the section 2.1.3, Traditional Quality of Symbolic Meaning) symbols seldom associated with Protestantism or Evangelicals. Hence, the use of symbols was minimal. The cross, the pulpit, the bible and the flower arrangement were used in all churches. Baptismal pool or baptismal font and communion table were not an obligation in the list. (see figure 4.49) The use of lighting as a symbol could be a striking element but the application is still

underdeveloped. Other symbols like dove, fire, water and angel were mainly seen in posters for special occasions.
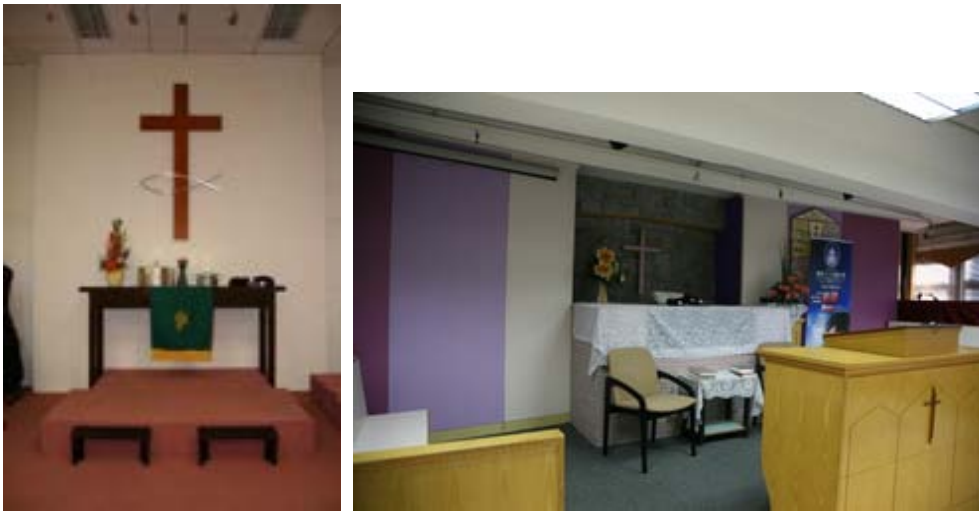
Figure 4.49 Baptismal pool or baptismal font and communion table as symbols

From site observation, only a few churches attempted to transform traditional design elements instead of imitating traditional styles. Commonly used traditional design elements which are successful are light, progression of space and symbols. Transformation of the element of reinforcement of height has been seen but the site limitation hindered the outcome. If the use of art was discovered, they usually employed church members to create them instead of spending money to buy them. (see figure 4.50) Artworks which churches have bought were the souvenir type of mass produced religious products such as scripture with picture frame. The most commonly seen symbols were the cross, the pulpit and the flower arrangement. Following next would be the communion table and baptismal pool. Some church designs paid attention in the use of light and the effect was prominent. Other symbols such as dove, fire, angel, living water and so on were mainly applied in posters. The explicit use of symbols was therefore not the trend in church practice.

Figure 4.50 Use of art created by church members

Site observation of selected churches with long term participation also revealed that church design to reflect the sacred nature was not a main concern. Through the application of some sacred symbols such as the cross and the pulpit, which were often ineffective for the holistic sacred atmosphere. It was a challenge for church design to provide both sacred and contemporary qualities. For the seekers sensitive approach, the delivering of sacred nature was not in the design brief. The sacred quality usually relied on the altar design only. The spiritual path (see figure 4.62-66) and the careful use of symbols have been lost from traditional essence in church design. From the observations, when churches need to be multi-functional and focused on the communal side, they would neglect the sacred nature. A communal church wanted to create the quality like hospitality and cheerfulness were different from the commonly recognised sacred natures such as awesomeness and quietness. In one-flat church, the site limitation in creating the sacred and transcendent nature was immense for the space was low in ceiling height (see figure 4.67-72) , lack of windows for the manipulation of natural lighting and small in size. However, these practical constraints could divert churches to deliver the immanent

nature instead of the transcendent nature of God. It meant that immanence and sacredness should co-exist to construct sacred spaces in one-flat churches.

Regarding the representation of the Sacred, below are two issues which are presented with figures to summarise the research findings and analysis. Topics are spiritual path and ceiling height limitation.

Spiritual Path

Creation of a spiritual path or progression of space is one of the traditional practices in church design. The traditional approach is the creation of a linear path (see figure 54a). To modify from linear path, sometimes split path is created (see figure 54b). However, under the constraint of limited space, this is not a current and common scenario in one flat churches in Hong Kong. Churches simply give up spiritual path in the creation of sacred spaces.

Below is a proposal of different spiritual paths which can be implemented in one flat churches.

If there is a lift lobby, the spiritual path can start from it - from lift lobby to reception, leading to worship hall and then the location of altar. It then depends on the layout to decide whether the designer can create a U turn or L turn to extend the path (see figure 4.51-53).
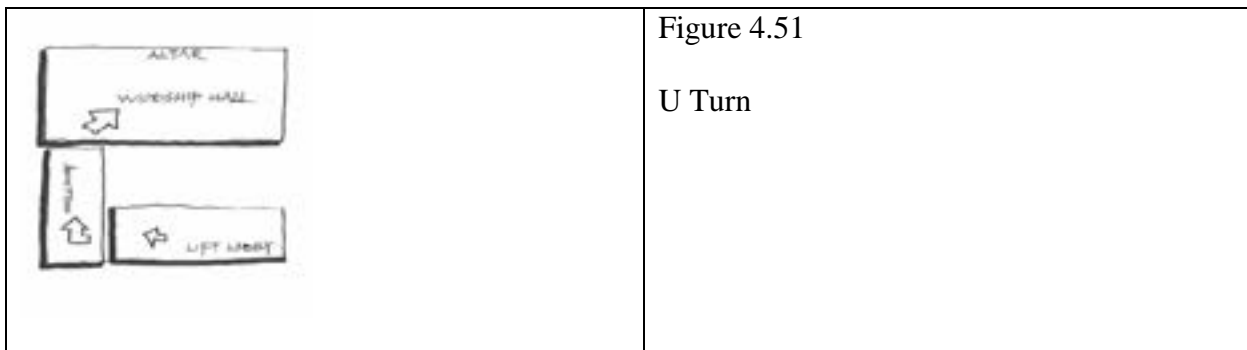
	Figure 4.51
	U Turn

	Figure 4.52 U Turn
	Figure 4.53 L Turn
	Figure 4.54a Linear Path
	Figure 4.54b Spilt Path

Ceiling Height

One common scenario of one flat church is low ceiling height. If a big cross would like to be placed in the centre (see figure 4.56), the pulpit will block the bottom part of the cross. In churches with a narrow wall behind the altar, the projection screen will even block a large part of the cross (see figure 4.57).

In order to create a large cross, pulpit can be placed aside, provided that it does not conflict with denominational tradition. If churches prefer to place the cross and the pulpit in the centre, the size of the cross must be reduced (see figure 4.58).

For churches with a higher ceiling height such as 3500mm, they may try to create a transcendent feeling with the addition of a curve ceiling and arch (see figure 4.55).

If the width of the altar is narrow, with people standing while singing, only the top part of the projection screen can be seen (figure 4.59). With a raised platform, the projection screen must be placed on the either sides of the pulpit (Figure 4.60).

Churches which adopted a contemporary style did not install false ceiling in order to reduce the oppressive feeling.
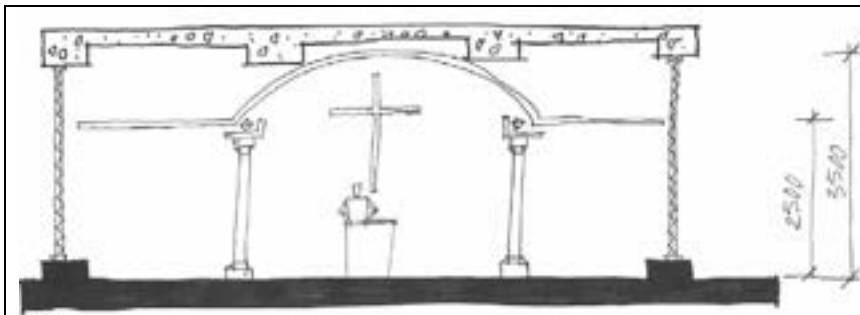
Figure 4.55
Church design trying to create a higher ceiling effect
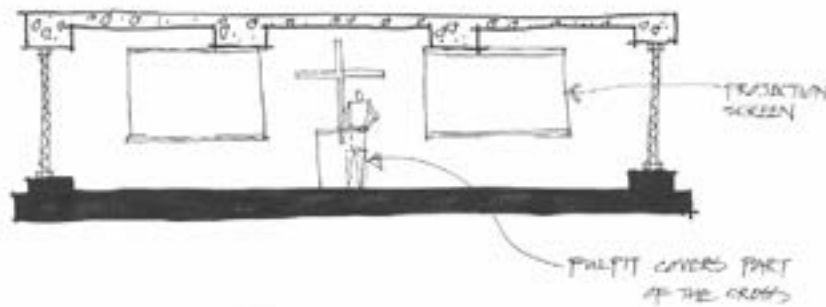
Figure 4.56
By placing cross and pulpit in the centre, two projection screens are needed. Pulpit covers the bottom part of the cross.
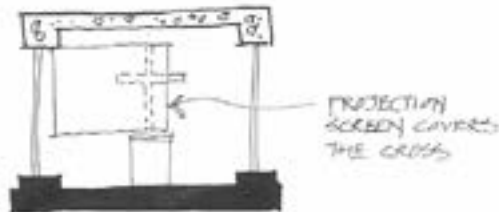
Figure 4.57
In the scenario of a narrow back wall behind altar, cross will be covered by projection screen
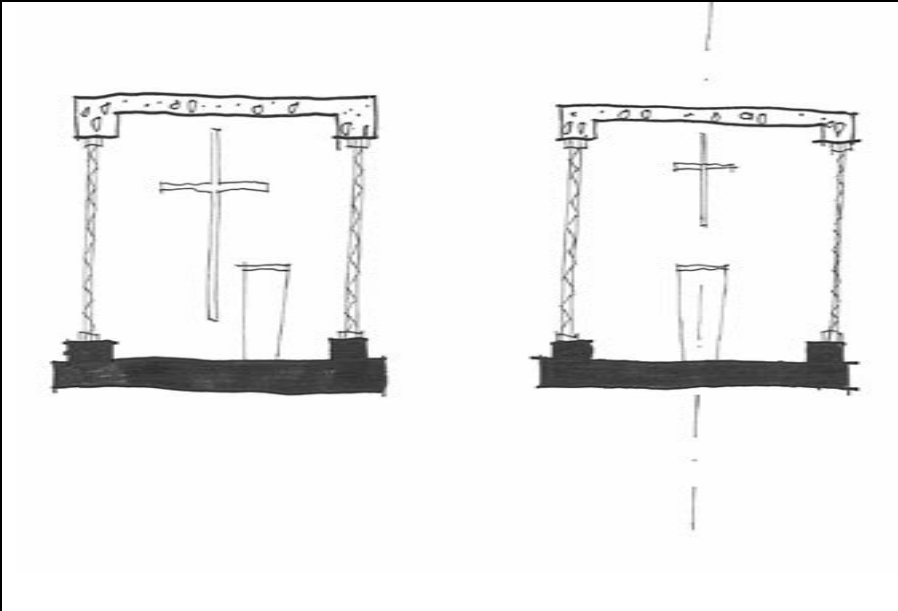
Figure 4.58
The use of a big cross with pulpit not in the centre or pulpit and cross in the centre by using a small cross.
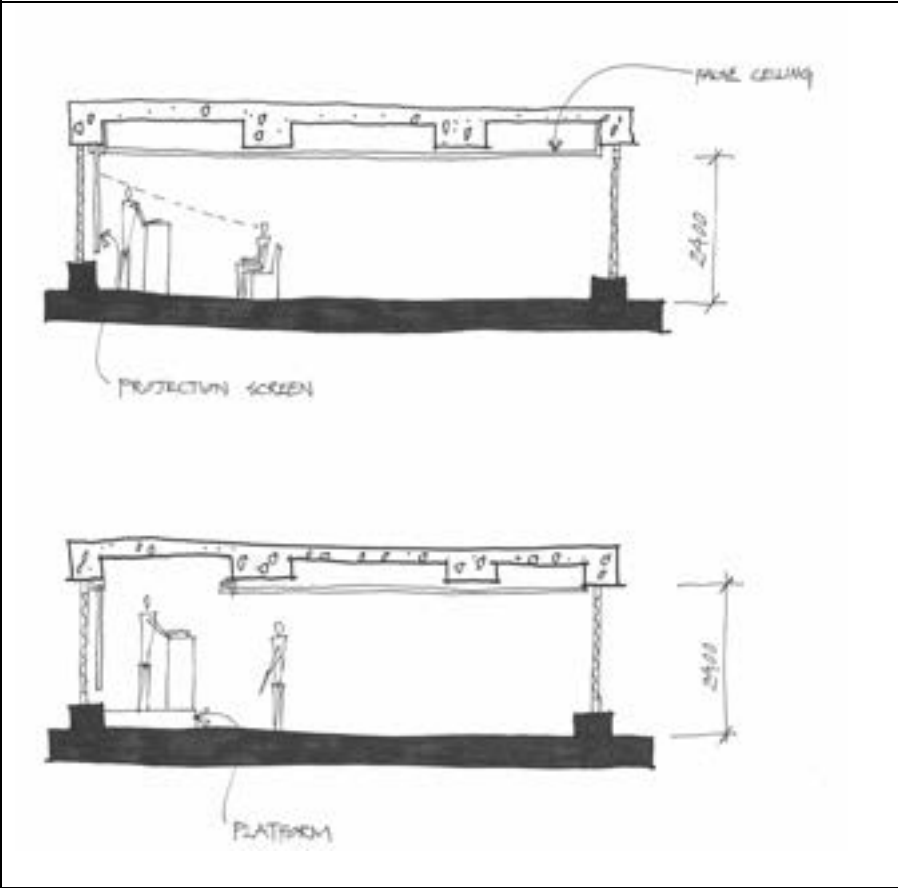
Figure 4.59
Limit of low ceiling height

Figure 4.60
When a platform is used, projection screen must not be placed behind the pulpit.

Layout Plans Analysis from Site Observation

1. Plan in a square shape
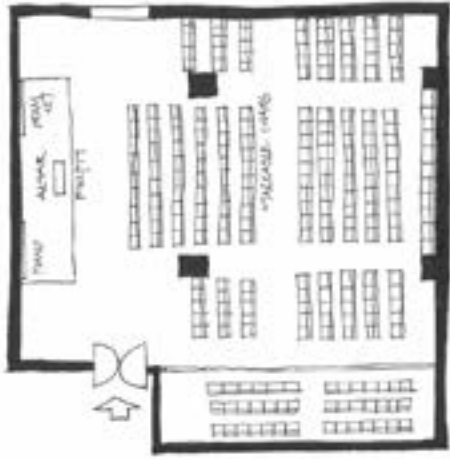
Figure 4.61 Shatin Alliance Church

This was a church with a square-shaped plan with columns in the middle of the
sanctuarty and entrance near altar. When location of entrance was limited by the building
layout, a proper progression of space was surrendered. The biggest issue was the
circulation because the entrance was near the altar, people walking passing after services
started caused disturbance to worshippers.

2. Plan in a Rectangular Shape

   Longitudinal Layout
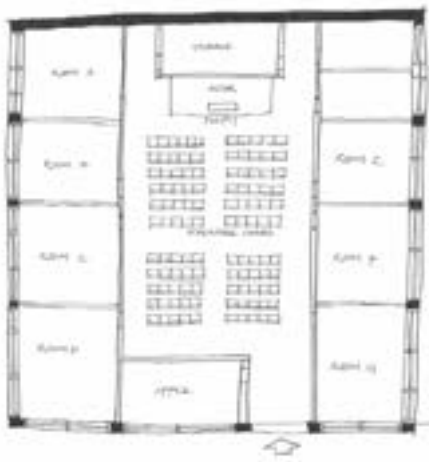
Figure 4.62 Grace Methodist Church

This church was located in a kindergarten with classrooms surrounding the assembly area which is converted into a worship space. Limitation is distraction from the colourful decoration along the classrooms. The only option to set up a proper altar was the far end of a longitudinal layout.
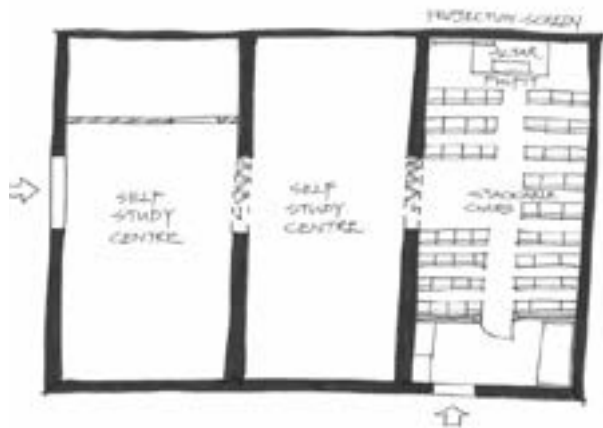
Figure 4.63 Shatin Free Methodist Church

This site was composed with three bays separated by structural walls. A longitudinal layout was created in each bay. However, the narrow width of the altar back wall was a big problem; such as when allocating the cross, projection screen, banners and pulpit, it was difficult to avoid these elements from blocking each others.
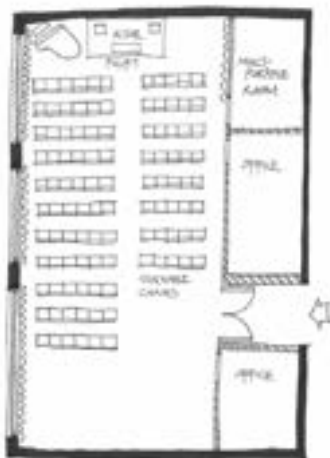
Figure 4.64 Sai Sha Road Baptist Church

Unlike the previous two churches, the floor plan of this church was possible to create an auditorium layout. This is one of the churches with a typical longitudinal layout with a central aisle and altar at the far end. It did not make use of natural lighting.

Figure 4.65 E.F.C.C, Waterloo Church

This church has created a spiritual path to prepare the worshippers' hearts and souls before worship. There was space for people to mingle before and after service. However, the spiritual path from main entrance to sanctuary entrance was also the mingling space which made it harder for worshippers to experience the spiritual path.

In term of the sanctuary, the columns limited variations in layout, thus the longitudinal layout was selected. Baptismal pool was located at the back of the altar covered by an especially designed sliding door .

Figure 4.66 1/F, Island Evangelical Community Church

In this longer length longitudinal plan, projection screens were placed in the middle of

the sanctuary to create a projected image of the altar for worshippers sitting at the back.

Baptismal pool was located at the back of the altar covered by sliding door .

Auditorium and Communal Layout
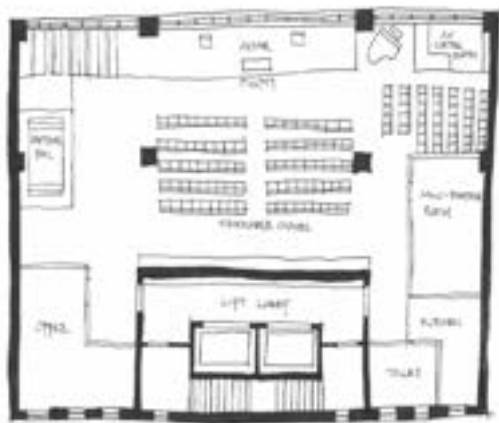
Figure 4.67 Sheung Wan Baptist Church

This church has occupied the whole floor of a commercial building and the creation of

spiritual path started from the lift lobby. Altar was placed in the centre of the longer side

of a rectanglur plan to create an auditorium layout; with windows at the back of the altar, light was diffused into the sanctuary as a symbolic element.
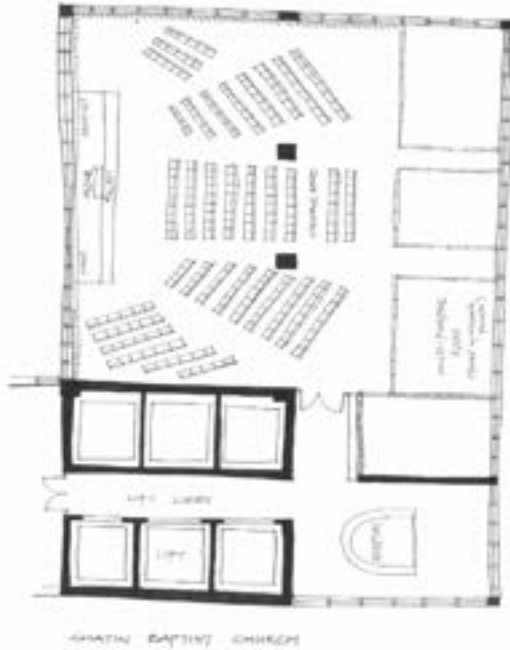
Figure 4.68 Shatin Baptist Church

This is a church with both a communal layout and an auditorium layout in the sanctuary. Although there were windows located at the back of the altar, they were covered. The space for mingling before and after service was relatively small because space for maximumm capacity was one of the goals.
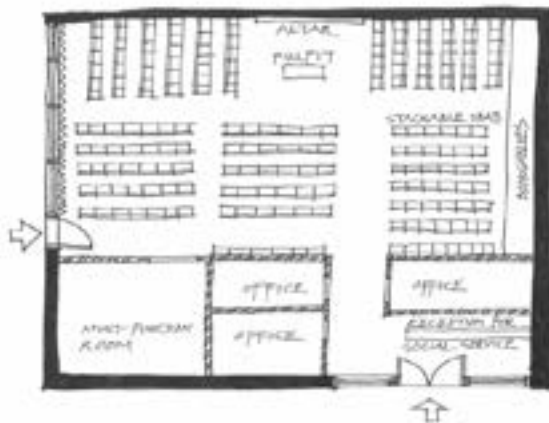
Figure 4.69 E.F.C.C. Kong Fok Church

This is one of the few churches which both a communal and an auditorium layout had been applied, with the pulpit located in the middle of the longer side of a rectangular layout. However, this was a church without professional design, the effect was very basic and functional.
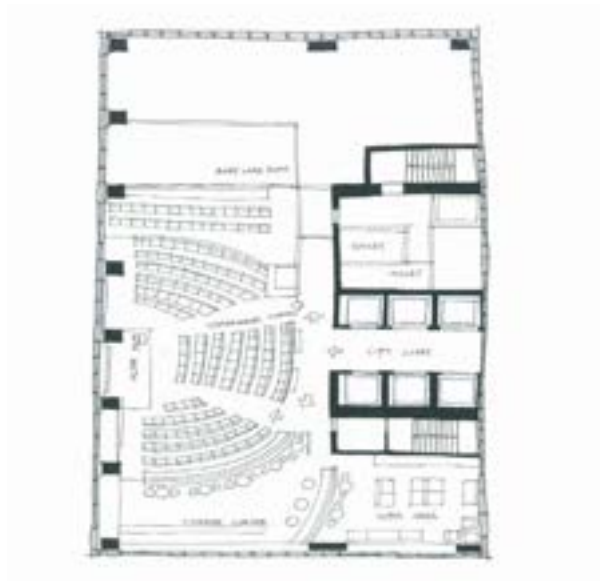
Figure 4.70 2/F, Island Evangelical Community Church

A communal layout was created through the semi-circular seating arrangement.

Coffee corner and sofa area further delivered a relaxing mood within a worship space.

Summary of the Layout Concepts of Churches

	Figure 4.71 Typical layout plan with a longitudinal layout
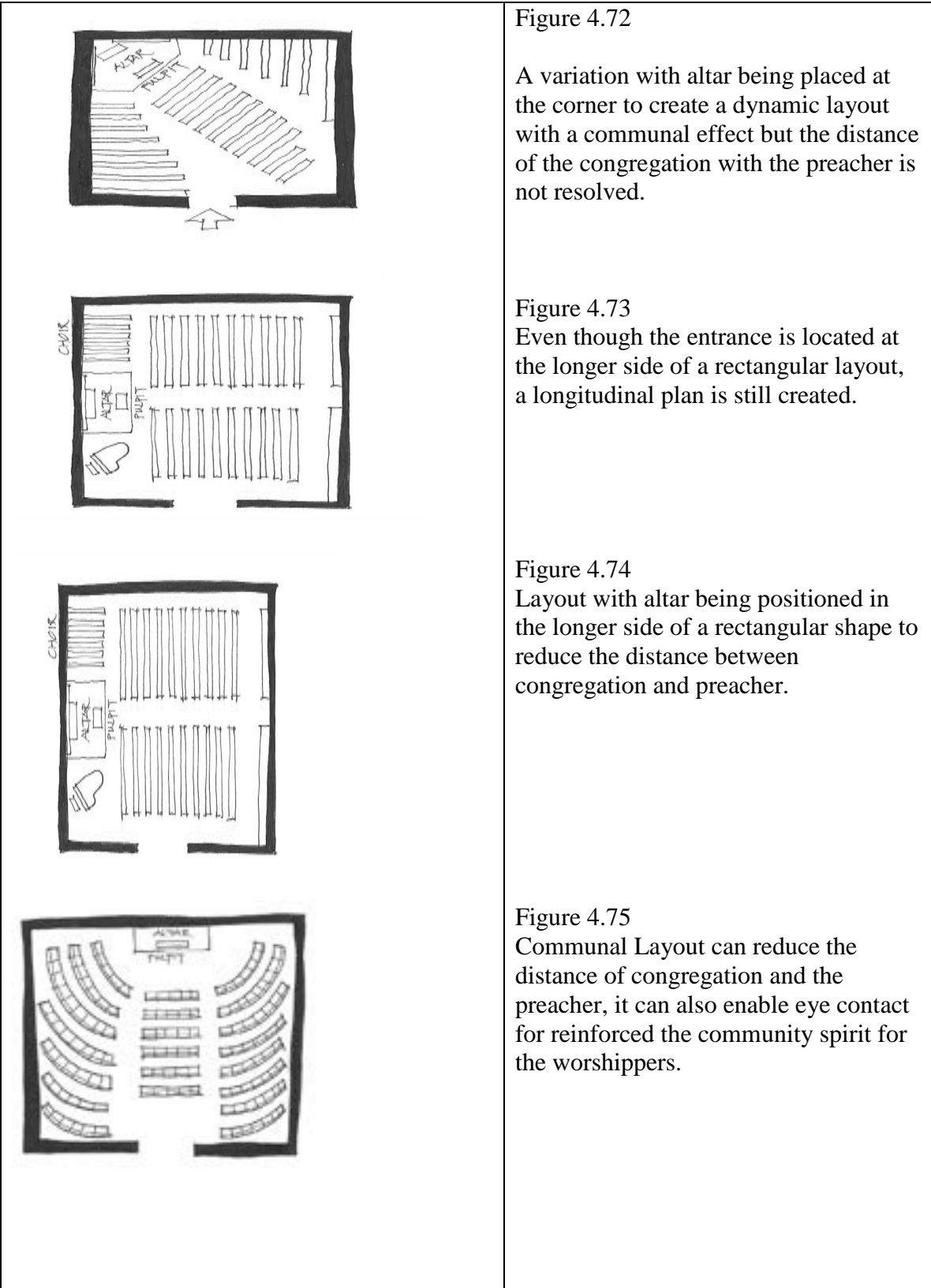
Figure 4.72

A variation with altar being placed at the corner to create a dynamic layout with a communal effect but the distance of the congregation with the preacher is not resolved.

Figure 4.73
Even though the entrance is located at the longer side of a rectangular layout, a longitudinal plan is still created.

Figure 4.74
Layout with altar being positioned in the longer side of a rectangular shape to reduce the distance between congregation and preacher.

Figure 4.75
Communal Layout can reduce the distance of congregation and the preacher, it can also enable eye contact for reinforced the community spirit for the worshippers.

Variations of Layout in the Same Floor Plan

	Figure 4.76 Creation of an auditorium layout
	Figure 4.77 Creation of a longitudinal layout
	Figure 4.78 Creation of a Communal Layout

The common scenario of churches was to form a longitudinal layout with altar at the far end of the worship hall (see figure 4.77). If maximum capacity is a key, space for mingling will be reduced.

From my literature review, which is focused on preaching in evangelical churches, a layout which can reduce the distance between congregation and preacher is preferable. Hence an auditorium layout like the layout in figure no. 4.76 is more appropriate. Apart from reducing the distance between congregation and preacher, layout which facilitates the communal spirit is also significant. Semicircular layout is one of the options (see figure 4.78). However, the capacity will be reduced.

4.4 Through Interviews to Reveal the Relationship between Theology and Spatial Design

When the interview was reviewed, informants directly expressed their attitudes on the relationship of theology and spatial design. Interview findings were essential to understand the hidden meaning as explained by the users which researcher could not obtain through site observation.

4.4.1 *Understanding the attitudes and practices from pastors and professors of Seminary*

Out of the 12 pastors from 12 different churches, there were seven churches incorporated with design and five churches incorporated with no design. Within the five churches incorporated with no design, three pastors hesitated about applying design in

church and two pastors supported the significant contribution of church design. From the seven churches incorporated with design, all the seven pastors expressed their support on church design. Five churches out of the seven churches incorporated with design did not aim at creating a church with sacred identity. The design of some churches were more community oriented and these churches appealed to break the threshold fear; hence, some pastors preferred to set the sanctuary as the area with sacred quality and the areas outside the sanctuary as social areas for gathering people. Contemporary design was created to attract newcomers (see figure 4.79).

Figure 4.79 Contemporary design to attract newcomers

For the two churches which had thematic ideas to create a sacred space, the design of one church tried to give symbolic meaning to the space such as the theme of Noah ark and rainbow to construct the altar in remembrance of the covenant of God. The construction of the platform of the altar in a boat shape was intended to convey the message of worshippers united together in one boat (see figure 4.80) Another church used modernised pattern of stained glass with creation as the theme to design the wall behind altar (see figure 4.81)

Figure 4.80 Platform of the altar in a boat shape

Figure 4.81 Modernised pattern of stained glass in altar

One pastor highlighted that he wished to put more chairs for seating capacity and cabinets for storage capacity. It fitted with the phenomenon from the site observation that maximum capacity was the key. However, one pastor intended to create more mingling space for community building.

One pastors mentioned that church was not confined within the four walls; it was simply a gathering place for congregations to assemble and celebrate. The implication was that members were encouraged to use places outside the church such as homes for gathering. These two churches were both incorporated with design but they reinforced that churches could not limit to the building.

Generally speaking, when talking about spiritual experience of worshippers, pastors did not mention spatial design as a medium. Two pastors pointed out the use of space, atmosphere and religious art were relevant media to create spiritual experience.

Another two pastors reinforced that all means were possible to generate spiritual experience. Through preaching and singing hymns in worship to experience the Deity were the top priorities in the list. It revealed that church as a place of worship was vital. However, the design of the physical space to enhance the style of worship was under-developed from the site observation. It was encouraging to play tribute to one of the professors who stated that a properly designed church could lead worshippers in adoration. He further emphasised that the concept of time should accompany with the space to link worshippers experience with the salvation history mentioned in Christianity. He stated that this church space should provide the context for worshippers to enter into the stories of the Divine. This theological insight could inspire Christians to design a church with the awareness of the key concepts in the stories of the Divine taught in the Bible from the creation account to the covenantal act; and then from salvation history to the Divine promise dedicated to humankind.

From the interview, it was discovered that most of the pastors had the attitude of creating an appropriate sacred space for spiritual experience but due to the pragmatic concern of attracting non-believers, church design did not apply theology. However, professors from Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary affirmed that theology and spatial design are still interconnected and it is significant to investigate the design of church in our contemporary settings. They also affirmed the importance of learning from the tradition and some traditional design elements in sacred space were valuable for the exploration of contemporary representations such as the progression of space, the use of symbols and the use of lighting. Through this research, the attitudes and practices of churches incorporated with design or no design are revealed and hopefully, more

stimulation could be collected to improve the phenomenon of the lack of church design –

the achievement of church design with theological standpoint to represent the sacred.

4.4.2 Churches Incorporated with no Design

      Pastors did not support the contribution of church design. For pastors who did not

focus on church design, they believed that church was a gathering place of believers and

church space was simply a functional place to gather people; hence, it is not necessary to

put focus on church design. They expressed that church design could drain a lot of human

and financial resources and they preferred to invest more energy in other activities to

edify believers and serve the community.

      Three pastors expressed that church design was a superficial issue. When one

church was planted in a public housing estate, the need of social services had overridden

the need of sacred activities in spatial terms. The phenomenon about the overwhelming

need of social services which made the church looked more like a community centre than

a church; spaces were occupied by the related facilitates used by the social services which

lead to the lack of church identity. (see figure 4.82).

Figure 4.82 Occupied by facilities used by social services
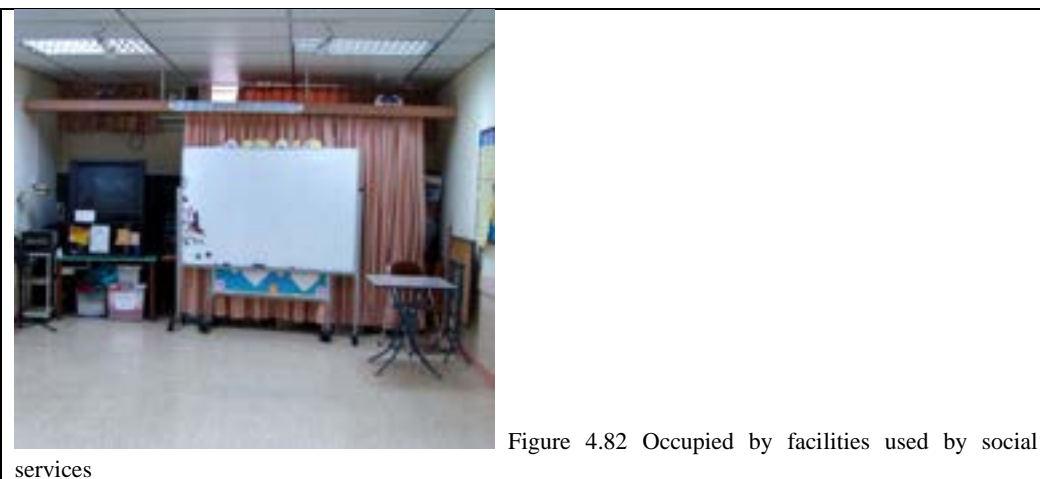
One of the pastors believed that apostolic period without church buildings was the best configuration of church; houses of believers became the cells and the sanctuaries, focus could be placed on edification of believers instead of the institutional setting of managing a church building in a complicated operational structure. Even though he shared in this way, the church he ministered was professionally designed with contemporary touch. He confessed that this kind of arrangement was only an ideal type which was difficult to fulfill.

Churches like to deliver the concept of "home" and it was revealed that the home feeling was also a hindrance of church design. (The "home" concept in the Bible was not about warmth and intimacy but as refuge when believers went back to their spiritual home which was the church to be protected by the Divine. The concept of home which was associated with intimate, causal and warmth was a psychological reflection of the expectation of home contrasting with work environment and the complex society outside. In the Bible, house of God as the home of believers was the refuge where believers could find protection. This message is clearly expressed from the Bible, such as Psalm 42 and 43). For pastors did not concern about design, the solution to achieve the concept of "home" was based on the relationship and action executed by the community of believers.

From the interview, it was expressed that natural lighting hindered the effect of audio visual performance. For pastors who did not focused on spatial design, they relied on audio visual system to deliver better quality worship. Hence, the atmosphere could be a minor issue; it could be a simple theatre setting with professional lighting control system to deliver quality images.

Despite one pastor supported the idea of church design, his thought was that the use of direct wordings was better than symbols as he thought words were easier to be understood. And his thinking might impose important issues on the lack of design. Especially when church design integrated symbolic meaning into the setting, careful design of visual elements such as symbols must be applied in order to successfully deliver the sacred message. When churches surrendered design, they hung scripture wordings to enrich the identity of a church (see figure 4.83). It was commented that Christians were lack of teaching of symbolic meanings. Consequently, the cross became the only symbol. Of course, the pulpit, the bible or the flowers arrangement were always used but they preferred a very minimum use of symbols. And without associated teaching, the functions of symbol were still hidden. One pastor highlighted that symbols could create distraction, especially in small area. Without concern about symbolic meanings, the urge for design was disappeared.

Figure 4.83 Hung scripture wordings to enrich the identity of a church

For pastors who did not focus on design, when they were asked to review about different design issues such as the use of natural materials and progression of space, their responses were following a practical approach. For examples, they said that due to budget consideration, natural materials are not considered, especially stone such as marble and

granite which were expensive. Natural wood might not be used as well and it was better to be replaced by plastic laminate. They preferred some contemporary synthetic materials which were cheaper but with appearances very similar to the natural materials they were imitating. Regarding progression of space with a proper entrance to distinguish the profane and the sacred, it was not highlighted. One pastor commented that church was not a building after all; hence, the physical place was not important, they could celebrate in every place.

Due to limited space, they preferred to wisely use the area. For churches with affiliated social services, church activities generally occupied weekends and at nights during weekdays; throughout weekdays, social services were conducted to make the spaces become productive. Hence, churches had to carefully allocate the complexity of activities. It was indicated that the only assistance design could contribute which pastors considered was on multi-functional scheme to achieve a better spatial usage.

4.4.3 Churches Incorporated with Design

Pastors and professors supported the contribution of church design. For churches incorporated with design, symbolic elements were applied such as what was mentioned above about one church built the altar to symbolise Noah Ark and use of rainbow to symbolise the covenant of God. Some churches also used natural lighting through windows to create the ambience for meditation. One pastor tried to deliver deeper meaning behind symbol such as flower arrangement was not solely to beautify the sanctuary but to represent the Christian God as the creator of nature and of the world. One pastor desired to highlight the majesty of the Divine in worship but he realised the

limitation of one-flat church with low ceiling height. The majority of pastors recognised the power of design to deliver the message.

For pastors who expressed their concerns about design, when discussing about views of exterior, pastors pointed out that the scenery outside was a critical issue to decide whether it was appropriate to enjoy the exterior views or not. They preferred natural environment to look at instead of a densely built environment. It was highlighted that if the environment outside was decent and nice, they felt at ease to welcome worshippers to view the exterior.

When the topic of establishing a church with contemporary look was taught, two pastors thought that it was not necessary for they emphasised on the sacredness of church to be sanctified or set apart from the profane and contemporary culture. However, in reality, the sacredness in their associated church design was not properly presented. They overlooked the point that message should be contemporary in order to relate to the lives of non-believers and believers as well and the key is to create church design with both sacred and contemporary qualities.

One pastor asserted that for non-believers let them identified this place as church was essential. Hence, church design should be differentiate from other natures of spatial design. For believer, church design was also vital to create a place of worship and a place for believer to cleanse their souls. One pastor had the conviction that architectural design was an educational tool to teach believers to achieve spiritual experience. More details about church design with respect to sacred and contemporary qualities are presented in the following two sections.

4.5 Through Interviews to Reveal the Relationship between Church Design and Contemporary Implication

4.5.1 Attitudes of pastors and professors of seminary regarding contemporary awareness

Among the pastors who have been interviewed, three pastors disagreed with this issue. The key reason was that contemporary culture was constantly changing; churches could not chase after culture. One pastor mentioned the sanctification concept to set apart from secular culture. In this regard, it was noted in Kieckhefer's (2004) statement of 'sacrality means detachment'. Another pastor also mentioned about not spending money and time on this matter. He preferred to dedicate time on edifying the community of believers such as visitation and fellowship. This imbalance of expression about the three attributes of church as discussed in the section 2.1.1, Theological Definition of Church was obvious. In fact, for some of the pastors who supported this issue, from site observation and interview, their prime focus was the edification of the community of believers, they did not focus on church design. Preaching and teaching were the activities they would reinforce if they wanted to reflect on contemporary culture. Even though they agreed with this issue, the effort to the idea of reflecting contemporary quality through spatial design was not a high priority.

It was revealed that seven pastors and three professors agreed with the reflection of contemporary quality, it supported one of the theological standpoints which was searching for the contemporary representation of Christ in Church design. From site observation, they had created churches with contemporary quality but the sacred identity was somehow very weak. About the issue of reflecting contemporary quality, some

findings from the interview were revitalising. One pastors stated that culture did not mean non-sacred, it depended on how Christians made use of the elements; Christians had to design a church to reflect contemporary quality. Another pastor reminded Christians that church design was a kind of education for people to obtain spiritual experience; they needed to transform traditional church elements into a contemporary representation. One pastor reinforced that churches must proceed with the development of culture but were not overwhelmed by culture. On the other hand, Christians could preserve traditional elements tactically. He would like to see more creative and contemporary representation of symbols instead of using some old and static representations. It was reminded that church design needed a contextualised representation; for contemporary Christians were not living in the Middle Age but instead in Hong Kong, a completely different cultural background as compared to the traditional ones.

To conclude this section, a professor reinforced the need to reflect contemporary culture but not to an extreme that there was minimum distinction with their daily secular experience. Worshippers should be able to identify the difference when entering a church. Even though he was not using the word sacred, his idea aligned with the theological standpoint of searching for a contemporary and sacred church identity.

4.5.2 Multi-functional Scheme to Utilise the Limited Space

Through the interview, when pastors were asked about expectation for a multi-functional church space in terms of spatial design and functional needs, some pastors perceived that this should be a space for all purposes and all kinds of activities could be held in this multi-functional space so that churches could serve the community better;

whereas some other pastors stressed that the sacred identity must be retained under multi-functional scheme. These two attitudes could be a compliment instead of a conflict for a sacred church space could still extend the usage to other secular activities to invite non-believer to experience the sacred and contemporary qualities.

4.6 Through Interviews to Reveal the Representation of the Sacred Identity and Transformation of Traditional Essence

4.6.1 The Three Attributes Represented by Church Design as the Foundations of Sacred Identity

Through the interview, the attributes of church which pastors commonly referred to were community of believers and place of worship. This community of believers was sanctified from the secular to the sacred, as representative of the Divine to witness in the world. As discussed in literature review under the section 2.1.1, Theological Definition of Church, there was solid biblical ground for the imbalanced apprehension on this attribute and the first priority was the edification of community of believers. Out of the 12 pastors, the concept of church as a place of worship was clearly expressed by four pastors only. Under this phenomenon, we could imagine that the spatial representation as a place of worship was limited. The attribute of church as a house of God was not mentioned. One pastor highlighted that church was not a place. This concept was commonly taught to believers that church leaders were not maintaining an organisation or a place, the essential quality was the spiritual growth of believers. One could imagine that under these attitudes, the search for a sacred representation of church space was stagnated.

When they mentioned about seeker-sensitive, they searched for contemporary approaches in design and worship style to associate with newcomers. Their concept of seeker-sensitive was also a detachment from designing a church with sacred identity. In worship, they highlighted on the use of band and worship teams to give a contemporary image as well. Apart from the significance of the contemporary quality which has been affirmed in the former section, in this section, the sacred quality is reinforced to deliver the church identity.

Another rationale which hindered the sacred identity was to extend the usage of the space for other purposes. One church offered the sanctuary for other local organisations as the venue for different programmes. This approach aligned with Sovik's idea (1973) about church as "Centrum" which had been discussed in literature review. The design of church should be able for other organisations to ultilise in order to share the blessing with the community. Their rationale was that the church space was a gift from the Divine for the sake of both believers and non-believers. However, in practice this approach usually surrendered the sacred quality; which was in fact not a contradiction with the incorporation of the sacredness in the church design.

Eight pastors highlighted that they wanted their churches to deliver a "home" feeling to people. They delivered a home concept which was contradicting with the sacred quality. Their idea of "home" was to create relax and causal atmosphere with the warmth expressed through the caring from believers. In terms of design, for the churches incorporated with no design, the home feeling was expressed by the causal arrangement. For the churches incorporated with design, some of the pastors thought that creating a church with sacred identity would minimise the home feeling. However, a professor

stated that the theme of church as the spiritual home as indicated in the Bible was associated with protection from God for He was the rock and refuge. (From the Bible, Psalm 42 and 43 is expressing the eagerness of the Israeli under exile to worship in the house of God, under His protection).

4.6.2 Conception of the Sacred

One pastor mentioned that there were three layers of representations of the term 'sacred'. The first layer was to call apart or to be sanctified from the secular or from former worldly lifestyle. The second layer was to focus on the individual spiritual life of believers; the pure heart of believers and the relationship with God. The third layer was to focus on the sacred deed such as taking care of the under-privileged groups. The first priority of sacred representation indicated by pastors was through the community of believers. Sacred representation of church space was not mentioned.

On the other hand, one pastor delivered an insightful explanation of the sacred which was everything could be sacred and could draw people to the presence of God. This included spatial design and symbols.

When pastors presented about the concept of sacred space, they mentioned about the spiritual quality and the function of sacred space. Regarding the spiritual quality of sacred space, pastors mentioned that churches should be sanctified from the world, should be aligned with the presence of God and should be gathered by the community of believers to form a sacred space. About the functional aspects, churches were spaces for people to have spiritual experience such as in Christian terms: to encounter God, to

understand God and to develop relationship with God. It was a place of serenity and security.

However, one pastor mentioned that there was no sacred space. Some of them thought that sacred space was about people but not place. Hence, the most important sacred quality of church was the sanctified life of the community of believers.

One pastor mentioned that it was significant to dedicate area exclusively for religious purpose and for multi-functional purpose. Some pastors concerned about the teaching of reverence to the sacred space for under multi-functional scheme, believers carelessly expressed their disrespect of the altar such as leaning on the communion table.

Two professors delivered insightful ideas about the term sacred. One of the professors thought that people misunderstood the concept of sacred that: God was supreme and did not concern earthy life. Instead, although God was different from human beings, He was willing to incarnate into the world to transform, renew and uplift the life of human beings. This was the biblical concept of the sacred which should be delivered to people, especially to the busy and unsettled city dwellers. Another professor perceived that both the love and justice of God should be delivered under sacred representation. In a service, church should not focus too much on the needs of human beings and overlooked the solemn or sacred atmosphere. However, in reality when churches faced all the limitations such as multi-functions and flat space, churches solely would create a contemporary space to target human needs.

It was interesting that one pastor mentioned that they would like to deliver the majestic and sacred nature of God in worship; hence, they selected white colour for the walls. The concept of the white colour symbolised sacred was prominent; but from site

observation the effect was not convincing for the rest of the interior design was not coherent with the sacred concept.

When sharing about the sacred nature of God, the findings reflected the concept of Torgerson, Mark Allen (2007) that the immanent nature of God was the contemporary message. The attributes of God mentioned by pastors were love, grace, caring, intimate, salvation and God with us. Only two pastors highlighted the supremacy of God such as: God is the ultimate answer of the questions of life and the power of His teaching. Two pastors expressed their desire to achieve both transcendent and immanent natures for worshippers should understand the majestic nature as well. It was said that worshippers could understand the immanent nature before the transcendent nature was delivered. Hong Kong churches could also make reference to Western churches that the sanctuary was transcendent but the chapels in the two sides were immanent. However, in one-flat church with multi-functional nature in a limited space, actualization of this idea could be a great challenge. One professor elaborated that no matter transcendence or immanence, the wonder effect when worshipper approached the church was essential. This wonder effect was different from our everyday life experience. It reinforced the search for sacred identity which was differentiated from the secular or the profane world experience. It aroused the discussion that the contemporary quality of a church which this study had been edified may reduce the wonder feeling. This study opts for the searching of a contemporary representation of the sacred identity of church; this rationale requires attentive investigation of the use of elements to convey the sacredness.

4.6.3 Use of Elements to Deliver the Sacredness

When pastors and professors were asked about the redesign of their associated churches, it was an applause that pastors preferred a church with both sacred and warm or welcoming quality. They mentioned about the use of symbols, progression of space and the use of lighting to deliver the message.

The cross was definitely the most frequently used Christian symbols. However, from the observation, sometimes the cross was covered by projection screen during worship. For some churches, the cross was the only representation of a sacred space; if the cross was taken away, the space would give the impression of other categories of space such as conference room or lounge. (see figure 4.84)

Figure 4.84 Without the cross, the space would look like conference room

In regards to the use of symbols, one pastor preferred a careful concern in the use of symbols. Most of the pastors selected minimum use of symbols. Among these pastors, one pastor mentioned that in special occasions such as children bible class, they had careful concern about the use of symbols. Another pastor pinpointed that recently he applied more symbols to deliver the majesty and presence of God. He agreed that the success was affiliated with education about the meanings of the symbols. This

phenomenon corresponds with Kieckheffer's (2004) and Webber's (2002) description that Protestantism approach towards the use of symbols was quite sceptical. Under the lack of education by pastors about the meaning of symbols, it was obvious that they preferred minimal use of symbols.

In terms of the atmosphere, hospitable atmosphere had been selected by all pastors. It aligned with their concept of church as a 'home' which was warm and welcoming. For professors, they would reinforce that awesomeness or solemnity could not be replaced by hospitality. Hence, progression of space or a spiritual path was the solution. One professor reminded Christians that the awesomeness was difficult to deliver and a wrong approach could convey boring and static effects. Another atmosphere about the quietness/respectfulness and cheerfulness/peacefulness, the result was balanced. Three pastors preferred both atmospheres because different target groups had different preferences. Undeniably, the worship style was the core method to convey the required atmosphere. It meant that in a church, different worship style might be practiced in the same sanctuary. It was suggested that a transformable worship space especially by lighting effect could solve the problem. This kind of transformable atmosphere also applied to atmosphere before and after service and atmosphere in the service. Before the service, a cheerful atmosphere was valid but in the service, a reverential atmosphere was necessary.

Even though the use of spiritual path might be restricted by the limited and multi-functional space; half of the pastors preferred the processional spatial planning instead of the flexible open space planning. One pastor who favored flexible open space because he thought that people was individualistic and it was hard to use means to guide their

spiritual experience. One professor reminded us that the key of both methods need a centre of focus which was the altar to unit all things together. It implied that a flexible open space was not a classroom; instead, a well-designed altar as the centre of focus for worshippers was essential as a worship place. However, from the site observation, a large number of churches which had flexible open spaces did not rely on the altar design. They simply used movable pulpit and foldable table covering with white cloth as the communion table. (see figure 4.85)

Figure 4.85 Causal altar design with movable pulpit and foldable table for communion

Pastors who had selected open flexible space also selected communal space as compared to sacramental space. It related to two of the attributes of church which was a place for worship and a place for the community of believers. When comparing the choices made by the professors, they all selected sacramental space. One professor pinpointed that the fundamental function of church was for worshipping God; sacramental space emphasised on the relationship with God and believers whereas communal space emphasised more on the relationship among believers. He further elaborated on the act of 'sending forth' in a Sunday service which illustrated the invitation by the Diety for believers to participate in a worship and to receive the Word of God; under this circumstances, the lives of Christians were transformed to send back to

the community to have fellowship with the community. By placing more focus on creating sacramental space could enhance this sacred act and he illustrated that windows in the church was crucial in this perspective as light passing through the windows into the church carried a symbolic meaning of light passing out to the community. In the act of 'sending forth', worshippers were symbolised as the light of God sent forth by God to serve the community.

When pastors evaluated on the issue of the sanctuary with view to the exterior environment, their concern was whether the exterior environment would distract the worship or not. It was acceptable when the exterior was a beautiful natural environment. In densely populated urban environment, the exterior view could cause distraction; hence, a professor highlighted that it was fine but could not be excessive. Another professor encouraged the openness inspite the exterior environment was busy and messy. He suggested that views to the outdoor environment could be controlled according to the programme. For example, in prayer time, it was appropriate to let worshippers to have views of the exterior for this was what the church cared for – prayer for the community. He also stressed that quite a number of churches simply blocked the view for the sake of convenience. One pastor mentioned a theological reason instead of the pragmatic motives which focused on the theology of redemption instead of the theology of creation in which a church he belonged. Consequently, the idea of sanctuary with outdoor view was one method under the theology of creation to relate the worship with the natural environment which was described in the Bible as the creation of God.

When the topic of spaces became more clearly defined by flexible space, the quest for flexible space had dominated the result, only three pastors preferred spaces clearly

defined. It aligned with the observation that one-flat churches with limited space favour a flexible spatial arrangement with multi-functional scheme. These three pastors who preferred spaces clearly defined were working in churches with flexible spaces. From the site observation of selected churches with long term participation, under flexible spatial arrangement, there were different dilemmas such as poor acoustic effect for the performance of movable partitions.

Traditionally, high and pointed ceiling were associated with church. Ideally, professors and pastors preferred high and pointed ceiling but they realised that in one-flat church, it was impossible to achieve this outcome. When compared with other churches in the observation, few churches tried to create a high and pointed ceiling effect in a flat with low ceiling height. (see figure 4.86) More churches preferred not to use false ceiling in order to reach a higher effect and to reduce the budget as well. (see figure 4.87)

Figure 4.86b

Figure 4.86a Epworth Village Methodist Church (Retreived 1 July 2009,
http://epw.methodist.org.hk/hall/hall_b_1024.jpg)
Create a high and pointed ceiling effect in a flat with low ceiling height:

Figure 4.87 Open ceiling to reach higher effect and reduce budget

Majority of selection preferred bright lighting effect. Two pastors mentioned that it depended on situations, both effects were applicable. Only one pastor selected a dim and mystical lighting effect. From the observation, only a few one-flat churches created a generally dim and mystical ambience. (see figure 4.88)

Figure 4.88 Generally dim and mystical ambience is not the trend in HK churches

When considering the selection of colour, all pastors preferred bright colour and one pastor mentioned that both were fine. When they selected from monotone and natural or colourful and dynamic colours, only three pastors preferred colourful and dynamic colours. Within the three pastors, one pastor worked in a church mainly serving for the youth. For a youth-oriented church, it could be obvious that colourful and dynamic colours would covey a more energetic and youthful image. Some churches hoped to

deliver a contemporary image by using dynamic colours. However, common perception of sacredness associated with monotone and natural colour scheme.

Due to the fact that natural materials associated closely with the image of church and the majority of pastors selected this category. In reality, it was discovered that artificial materials dominated the church market for artificial materials were relatively lower in price and more durable. These kinds of artificial materials were imitating the effect of natural materials such as stone effect tile and wood effect plastic laminate.

Church design transforms traditional design elements. Pastors appreciated the spatial effect of traditional church design. The use of symbols and visual images were powerful ways to communicate the spiritual experience. Table 4.4 indicates the comments by pastors and professors of the theological seminary on the 12 practices in traditional church design.

Table 4.4: Comments by Pastors and Professors on the 12 Practices in Traditional Church Design

Common practices	Remarks
Search for sacred spatial representation. Prominent sacred architecture as landmark	In biblical times, sacred spatial representations were instructed by God. It was recognised that after apostolic period, throughout history, different believers in different periods were designing new approach in church design to represent God.
Church as landmark could be a symbol for people to have spiritual experience. Majority of pastors and professors agreed with this practice. One pastor recalled his experience in Korea where church architecture as landmark was very striking. One pastor reminded Christians that if people misperceived the symbol by believing that only going to church could achieve the spiritual experience, this had to be eliminated. Pastors also understood that the cost of a prominent landmark was a factor. One pastor rejected this practice because there was negative effect in church history. He mentioned that church was about community of believers, it was not necessary to gather in a specific building; wherever Christians gathered, there was a church. Hence, a landmark effect was a wrong indication.	

Induce symbolic meaning to the architectural design.	e.g. nave means ship, ceiling and dome to denote heaven; Orientation of altar facing east; Sacred geometry, proportion (Barrie, 1996, p.67)
This was supported by six pastors and rejected by four pastors. One pastor who rejected this practice expressed that the sanctuary concept should extend to every believer's family instead of limiting to the church building. One pastor who supported this practice mentioned that it could allow believers to express their creativity.	
Use of Christian symbols	God used symbols to communicate with human and through symbols, human can understand God better. Therefore, symbols were introduced to deliver messages in Church.
Four pastors agreed with minimum application and six pastors commented that it was worthy to apply. It was highlighted that education was essential and contemporary expression would be better. Another pastor was mindful of the abstract expression. Another reminder was that under limited space, careful application was a concern. A pastor reinstated that they focused on using words or slogans instead of symbols.	
Use of art such as painting, stained glass, sculpture and fresco	A powerful mean to deliver message especially in the past for those who are illiterates. Artistic elements are employed to transform the Church into a three dimensional story book.
Only two pastors rejected this practice. Pastors who agreed with this practice concern about the budget but they believed that anything beautiful was good. One pastor mentioned that they used it in preaching through PowerPoint projection. Same as the use of symbols, they requested education before application.	
Proper designed entrance and facade	Traditionally, grandiose entrance with porch was designed. The first encounter of sacredness and the separation of sacred and profane
Voices who supported this practice, believed that from entrance onwards, the heart of worshippers should be prepared. Voices that rejected this practice considered everyday and everywhere was sacred and no need to differentiate through the entrance.	
Progression of space	A sacred path for worshippers to proceed in order to prepare their hearts to worship God. Raised platform as altar for the clergy at the end of the central aisle
Slightly more pastors preferred this practice. Professors agreed with this practice as well.	
Manipulation of light and shadow such as rose window, stained glass window	The drama and symbolic meaning generated by light were always

	associated with the power and glory of God
Only two pastors gave negative comments and because one pastor focused on the application of multimedia in worship, natural lighting was avoided to reduce distraction. Even though majority of pastors supported this practice, from the observation, only a few churches used natural lighting in church design.	
Symmetry in form & geometry	Awesome and Stable
The comment was depending on the church space. If possible, symmetry was desirable.	
Reinforce the height of the nave with high ceiling, pointed roof, vault, arch or column to reflect the transcendence of God	High in scale was a popular and effective element to let worshipper to experience the transcendence of God.
Pastors understood the limitation of one-flat church and they concerned about the budget; hence half of the pastors did not think that this practice was necessary. On the other hand, majority of pastors stated that high ceiling height could deliver a better church identity.	
Honest use in natural materials such as wood and stone.	Materials such as stone or timber are exposed without disguise. Honesty was one of the virtues of Church.
Slightly more pastors rejected this practice and economic concern was the key. For pastors who supported this practice, the natural effect of the material was actually a simulation from artificial materials.	
Designated activities in different areas	Church had enormous space. A cathedral could have many small radiating chapels inside to remember different saints. Different areas were named separately with different functions.
Only two pastors supported this practice and one pastor highlighted that it helped to educate the believers about proper responses in different areas. Under the limitation of space, the need of multi-functional scheme hindered the direction of designated activities in different areas.	
Selection of location	High position, prominent location such as near the square or remembrance of saints
They mentioned that it was hard to practise this in Hong Kong, a densely populated urban environment. One professor stated that churches should be recognisable by the community and ready to serve the community. In order to highlight its existence, one method was about the signage which must be differentiated from other business. In Hong Kong, the churches were scattered around in different levels in the community, this was a kind of immanent phenomenon. (see figure 4.97) When churches were in the midst of the secular world, bringing people to have spiritual experience in a sacred church depended on the church design. He affirmed that by	

means of design to convey the sacred identity, churches could be sanctified from secular culture.

Figure 4.97 Churches scattered around in different levels in the community

4.7 Analytical Framework: Functions of Church in Relationship with the Three Attributes

When a church is established in terms of design, the practical function and the sacred function are the two categories under consideration. These issues are depended on the theology to influence the decision making. Hence, theology is the key (see table 4.5).

These three concepts: theology, practical function and sacred function are related to the three attributes of church. When discussing theological definition of church, church is identified as the community of believers. When considering church as a place of worship, the primal concern is the practical function of a worship space, such as the capacity, the layout, and the sound effect. When one associates church as the house of God, the concept of symbolic expression is brought forward. Community is the spiritual level which is the ultimate definition theologically. Undeniably, this is a worshipping community united together in a place dedicated for God, and which is named the church or the house of God.

While this thesis explores the dilemma between contemporary expression and sacred expression, it is known that contemporary design focuses more on the practical function and the performance as a worship space whereas the sacred design reinforces the

symbolic expression and the representation of the sacredness of church as the house of God. In order to link the central issue in the above two diagrams, a theological standpoint must be applied to represent the physical existence of a church community by balancing the contemporary and sacred representations. The sacred expression is associated with symbolic expression which is one of the traditional essences of church design.

When church associates with community services, it is revealed that the design is pinpointed on the functional need of the social services. For churches affiliated with social services, it was discovered that the designs were mainly contemporary and social services oriented. A balance must be achieved through a theological reflection so that community of believers can benefit from both functions. Simultaneously, the sense of belonging could be achieved.

Table 4.5 Functions of Church in Relationship with the Three Attributes

Theological Standpoint (Church as community of believers):
-Contemporary and sacred representation to balance both practical and symbolic expression which can create the sense of belonging among believers

Practical Function:
-Communal/social function
-Operation of a church: activities and facilities
-Contemporary Worship
-Contemporary representation

Community of Believers

Theology : 3 attributes of church

Worship

House of God

Symbolic expression:
-Sacred identity/sense of belonging
-Sacred representation (traditional essence associated with sacred expression requires transformation)

4.8 Field Research Analysis of Observations

Through observations, one could discover that most of the one-flat churches are incorporated with no design. Theology and spatial design is unrelated. This scenario corresponds to the first research question of this thesis. When churches incorporated with

no design, they mainly focused on the practical needs such as housing more people, saving resources on decoration (in which spending money on decoration is regarded as superficial as compared to spending money on edifying worshippers) and accommodating the functions of the affiliated social services. In the scenario that church leaders neglected the theological implication of church design to represent God, the absence of design could be predicted. The theological issue behind this scenario is pinpointing on the different emphases on the three attributes of church as a house of God, a place for worship and a community of believers. In the literature review, the significance of church as the house of God and the exploration of church design to represent God of our age are affirmed.

Field observations also revealed that when churches moved to new venues or undergo renovations, most of these churches would incorporate with design. Church leaders started to realise the contribution of design to attract newcomers and to create an appropriate worship atmosphere. When the researcher visited churches incorporated with design, different design insights had been gathered. One of the outstanding practices was the creation of a hospitable space to break the threshold fear of entering church.

However, in many other cases, the sacred identity was not properly represented. In most of the churches, the altars were the only area with clear representation of church identity. With practical concerns as described, church leaders traded off the sacred representation for budget reason. It is understandable that creating a transcendent effect is very difficult in limited space and it is also very costly. Due to the lack of discussion on this issue, representing the immanent side of God which was shown to be more appropriate in limited space had not been explored properly.

In the context of churches where the focus was on attracting newcomers and spreading the gospel messages, contemporary design would be highly respected. With this aim, some churches created ample space to blend in with a contemporary image and relaxing mood. Church leaders realise that the use of contemporary languages in church design could reduce the remoteness between the secular and the sacred. They agreed that newcomers would find it easier to participate in a setting they feel familiar with.

Churches provide social services as a means to serve the community and to create a network with neighbourhoods. In this case, it is understandable that social services dominant the spatial planning and the identity for they have a preconception that newcomers find it harder to go to church. Instead, newcomers or neighbours feel easier to participate in non-religious activities or social services affiliated with church organizations.

When churches need to provide a variety of activities for religious or non-religious natures, multi-functional scheme is essential. However, the absence of advice from professional interior designers and the stringent budget allocated for design create the problem of some poorly designed multi-functional schemes. Some church leaders realise the significance of a well designed multi-functional scheme to provide a better space for their members. It is a matter of budget allocation and the conviction that a high quality space can enhance the sense of belonging.

In the workshops, it is discovered that the church members' interpretation of sacred identity is a balance between contemporary language and traditional essence,

which is revealed consistently in workshops by different age groups. Even church leaders share the same approach in their workshop output. Symbol is another element which they like to apply in the workshop, but it is not a practice from the observations findings. In addition, the concept of representing the house of God in church design is reinforced. When the church is being renovated, the leaders would like to present a renew image with a prominent sacred identity.

Additionally, it is discovered that maximum seating capacity is the primal concern, majority of church leaders want to house as many worshippers as possible in limited space. Hence, a spatial preparation for worshippers to enter the worship is downplayed. The traditional essence of creating a spiritual path contradicts with the allocation of more seating capacity.

Apart from seating capacity, the attribute of church as a place for worship is also highlighted. Church leaders also pay attention on the quality of worship under worship renewal movement. Apart from the quality of activities in worship, church leaders who plan for new worship spaces also concern about the spatial setting to enhance the mood in worship.

4.9 Field Research Analysis of Interview

Through interview, the researcher would like to draw insights for the design of churches. The analysis is divided into two streams with one group of pastors who have no particular preference for design and the other group of pastors who support design. Through this research, it is hoped that insights from these different perspectives can

inspire church users to have a broader and more comprehensive church design in the future.

4.9.1 Pastors not supporting the contribution of church design

The fact is that these pastors think that church design consumes a lot of human and financial resources which may not directly benefit the community. Based on church education of simplicity in daily living which focuses on practicality and de-emphasises on superficiality, they consider church design with crafty materials solely for decorative purposes are out of touch and impractical; hence, worshippers in traditional church setting would simply worship in a community hall without any sacred identity. When church leaders focus on the edification of believers, they neglect the contribution of a sacred church design for the experience of God. It is understandable that if church leaders think of the need of believers who are accustomed to the environment, a sacred space with no design is indeed considered fine. However, when inviting newcomers to church, the need of church design should not be overlooked in order to impress the non-believers with a contemporary image and welcoming atmosphere. in order to present a contemporary image and welcoming atmosphere to non-believers.

Another issue related to financial resources is the mixed use of different furnishings which gives an unorganised and clustered feeling without a coherent theme. For church leaders, they consider the mix-and-match furnishing corresponds to the concept taught in the scripture as a home feeling. However, it is often misunderstood that church - as the spiritual home of believers - may be enhanced by the mixed use of furnishings and different styles to create a cozy and relaxed image of home.

In the interviews, the pastors mentioned that they would cover the windows to reduce the effect of glare from the natural light when using multimedia functions and to have better focus on the worship. In order to compromise the affect of the use of natural light to the audio visual effect, the temporary changes of effect about window treatment according to different activities could solve the problem, such as the use of electrical blind to cover the windows when needed. Church design relating this issue under this criterion is essential.

It is realised that church leaders prefer to use scripture to replace symbols for they think that words are easier to be understood. On the one hand, it is undoubtedly that scripture is a powerful tool but on the other hand, the application of symbols is equally influential in church design as clearly suggested in the literature review. If a sacred church incorporates both scripture and symbols, a more harmonising or complementing effect would be yielded. Hence, the teaching on the meaning of symbols is essential.

The concerns about the conflict between design and other issues raised above-said could be rectified or improved accordingly. This research aims to breakthrough the idea that spending money on church design is not worthy. Indeed, there is theological significance to deliver church as the house of God with the application of relevant sacred identity.

4.9.2 Pastors supporting the contribution of church design

One of the noteworthy sharing about the identity of church is to let non-believers identify a church environment as a church itself. It indicates that the sacredness must be presented (present). The most direct way is to follow a traditional style to build a new

church for non-believers to associate traditional styles with sacred church representation. This research would like to encourage church leaders to build churches with both sacred and contemporary qualities. It means that not only traditional essences must be retained but also contemporary vocabularies should be incorporated.

When a church incorporates design, pastors need to select a relevant design concept. In regards to the contemporary look in church design, some pastors believe that sacredness of church must set apart from contemporary culture. However, they may overlook the fact that the (biblical?) message should include contemporary elements in order to relate to the lives of non-believers and believers as well. Nonetheless, the deliverance of contemporary message does not mean the surrendering of sacredness from the secular. In church design, the application of contemporary representation to transform traditional essences in creating the sacredness would balance the significance of both qualities.

Conception of the sacred

As stated by one of the professors about the significance of generating a wonder feeling in church design, it is inspiring to church leaders that both non-believers and believers could encounter God through the wonder feeling.

4.9.3 Use of elements to deliver the sacredness

Even though pastors support the use of symbolic elements, they tend to apply a minimum usage of symbols. It is true that the use of a wide range of symbols is difficult for the knowledge of symbols is not widespread. This research would like to encourage more knowledge on the meaning of symbols and to apply symbols through contemporary vocabularies.

If there is a decent exterior environment, pastors would feel more at ease to welcome worshippers to enjoy the views. It reflects that pastors think that a messy environment could be a distraction in worship. Hence, pastors would also agree that an unorganised interior environment would also create distraction during worship session.

As for the interior environment, a hospitable atmosphere has been chosen due to the minimisation of threshold fear. Pastors prefer to create a seekers sensitive church image. Under this approach, the awesomeness or solemnity associated with church atmosphere is surrendered. In order to solve this issue, providing a spiritual path at the entrance could be one of the methods. Another means is the use of transformable technique, such as the use of lighting effect and multimedia, to create different atmospheres for different requirements.

The formation of spiritual path is supported by pastors despite under limited space. Under the preference that pastors prefer spiritual formation, spiritual path could be one of the ways to edify believers. This research would like to encourage investigation on the implication of spiritual path in one flat church. In order to facilitate this investigation, the relationship of theology and church design needs to be reinforced. The significance of the attribute of church as the house of God must be recovered. When pastors affirm the contribution and significance of design, providing education towards their members would be required.

4.10 Summary of Field Research Analysis to Establish a Church with Sacred and Contemporary Qualities

In practice, the term Church is associated with community of believers and the edification of believers are principally based on teaching and fellowship. The symbolic expression is normally overlooked. Some pastors like to restrain the association of church as the building and they simply did not keen on the necessary of church design. Hence, as a place of worship, church design was very basic and without the creation of a suitable ambience. Some churches practiced liturgical worship in a basic monotonous space which integrates two extremes together uncomfortably. From field work, a few symbolic representation of community of believers in church design were discovered. When these images were chosen for the visual simulation workshop, these design images have been selected by different groups. It indicated that creative expression in design to reflect symbolic meanings such as community of believers was attractive. (see figure 4.89)

When church applies design to represent the sacred, the researcher would like to remark that in interior design, single out one element to represent the sacred without the co-ordination of other design features could not achieve the effect such as in the case of that church which is mentioned about the deliverance of the sacredness through the use of white colour as wall, (see figure 4.90) the rest of the interior elements are not incorporating.

Figure 4.89 Creative expression in design to reflect symbolic meanings such as community of believers

Figure 4.90 White colour symbolises sacred was prominent; however without co-ordination of other design features could not achieve the effect

For churches with design, when leaders planned for the design, it was not obvious that theology came before decision on the design implication. Hence, practical concern dominated the decision making such as the use of longitudinal layout and the spatial planning for seating capacity. Even though maximum seating capacity can be justified theologically, the provision of ample space for mingling is of major significance but not discussed in-depth unfortunately. From practical point of view, seating capacity must be incorporated inside the flat but mingling space can be traded off by manipulating the spaces outside the church. However, the image of a hospitable church identity will be diminished.

From the field work, only a few churches were practicing convergence worship. However, Chinese scholars have introduced this concept to Hong Kong churches and it was prophetic to initiate more dialogue on this issue. The shift of worship from liturgical

into contemporary style or free-church worship was rapid at that period. However, there were still many conversations about the strengths and weaknesses of both styles. Hence, the convergence worship formulated by Robert Webber (2002) was a possible solution to resolve the dilemma for it reinforced the integration of traditional and contemporary advantages. Through the workshop, informants has created their ideal worship spaces with qualities illustrating what was delivered by Robert Webber (2002) when he promoted the concept of younger evangelicals or convergence worship.

Concerning the use of space by sacred and profane activities, there are two types of phenomenon under churches incorporated with design. One type of church, which provides social services and religious activities in the same church space, orientates the design from the angle of the social services that sacred elements mainly existed in the altar and posters around for information about religious activities. The design was very much social services oriented. The other type of church, which do not have affiliated social services, accustomes the design into contemporary image to attract newcomers; and they were willing to offer the church space for outsiders to use. For the first type of church, a transformable space from profane nature to sacred nature was under-developed. The identity of the space was dominated by the social community instead of the religious community. For the second type of church, reinforcement of the sacred quality on top of the contemporary image could be explored in order to achieve the uniqueness of a sacred church identity.

This research needed to breakthrough the misunderstanding that traditional design elements meant traditional representational style which associates with pointed or high roof, stained glass and columns. The traditional design elements were the common

practices which church builders or designers preferred to use in design. For examples, the use of lighting is the element and stained glass is one of the methods. We could explore methods to integrate the use of lighting in contemporary church design.

The wonder effect as mentioned by one professor is vital for church space. No matter what elements are applied to deliver the sacred, the magical experience through spatial design is reinforced. It is undeniable that wonder effect in church space must be associated with sacred quality. In one-flat church, the representation of the immanent nature is more appropriate spatially.

The research findings indicated that design was a growing concern; however, church design was targeting on the contemporary issues such as the need of the social community and the application of contemporary aesthetic. The sacred identity was not a concern in practice but through workshop and interview, the urge for a church with both sacred and contemporary qualities is yielded. When the findings evaluated from the theoretical framework, scenario supported by the majority does not mean that it was worthy to maintain. Example such as when it was revealed that majority of churches did not apply design, the researcher needed to change this phenomenon because the theory of this study was to educate churches to realise the importance of spatial design. Hence, the field work revealed the reality and the attitude behind which were required to make dialogues with the theoretical standpoints. It is concluded that this phenomenon was a serious issue in Hong Kong churches which needed to be amended. When it is revealed that this issue was quite complicated with the lack of existing practices to support the urge for both sacred and contemporary qualities, the researcher wished to generate design guidelines to contribute more reflections and practical suggestions for pastors and church

administrators. The design guidelines are also supported by the case study. In the case study, a demonstration of the progress from research to design to achieve a church reflecting both sacred and contemporary qualities was illustrated. The design approach was supported by the users of the church and the design fulfills their ideal church with both contemporary and sacred qualities.

Chapter 5: Summary of Proposed Design Guides for Future Considerations

(Design Guidelines)

When designing a church, design brief must be formulated; some fundamental issues such as the three attributes of church: 1) church as a house of God; 2) church as a worship space; and 3) church as a community of believers are significant topics to be responded. From literature review, it is revealed that the three attributes are significant but need to be reinforced. From field research, church as a house of God is underdeveloped. After all these explorations and experiences, a design guideline is generated with both theoretical considerations and practical applications to deal with the establishment and implementation of the design strategy.

To begin with, 'A list of questions when approaching a church design' is applicable to be the initial parameter to arouse discussions among members of the church.

A List of Questions when Approaching a Church Design:

Theology of church and sacred identity

1. What is the theological standpoint of this church design? In this paper, the focus is on the three attributes of church which are: the house of God, space for worship and space for the community of believers.

2. What is the aesthetic manifestation of this church design – i.e.: the style of design representation such as modern and post-modern? Churches can select from photos used in workshop to reveal about their aesthetic preferences.

3. What is the nature of God reflected from this church design?

4. Does this church design reflect the sacred nature and identity of church?

The elements used to compose the sacred identity (see table 5.1)

Table 5.1: Elements in a Sacred Space

Categories		
Theology of God	Transcendence	Immanence
	Quality under Transcendence	Quality under Immanence
Sanctuary atmosphere	Awesomeness / Solemnity	Hospitality
Sanctuary atmosphere	Quietness / Respectfulness	Cheerfulness
Sanctuary atmosphere	Traditional	Contemporary
Entrance atmosphere	Traditional	Contemporary
Entrance atmosphere	Sacred / set apart	Intimate / approachable
Spiritual path	Processional space	Flexible open space
Sanctuary spatial planning	Sacramental space	Communal space
Sanctuary spatial planning	With views of the exterior	Enclosed during services
Sanctuary spatial planning	Spaces clearly defined	Flexible space
Height	High and pointed ceiling	Flat and low ceiling
Use of symbols	Careful concern in the use of symbols	Simplicity / minimum use of symbols
Light	Dim / Mystical	Brightness
Colour	Dark	Bright
Colour	Monotone and natural	Colourful and dynamic
Material	Natural such as wood and stone	Artificial such as plastic and ceramic tiles

5. Does this church design transform traditional design elements? If so, in what

ways? And what kinds of symbols are used for this transformation?

6. Does this church design reflect contemporary culture?

Worship space

7. How may this church design facilitate believers to worship? How does this

church incorporate their theology of worship when it is designed as a place of

worship?

Community of believers

8. How does this church design reflect the theory and value of "community of

believers"?

Balance between the sacred and the profane in limited space

9. How would this church design have aesthetic appeal to newcomers?

10. Is multi-functional scheme incorporated for the utilization of limited space?

11. Does this church provide social services, what is the balance between the sacred and the profane?

After some preliminary brainstorming and discussion from the above questions, church administrators, pastors and renovation committee members would follow a more elaborated guideline to consolidate the ideas. In this research, the guidelines are separated into two categories – one is the theoretical and conceptual issue, which follow the seven guiding perspectives as shown below and reflect about some values and attitudes of church in relationship with design; the other one is the application of the theories and concepts in three sections which are namely: traditional and contemporary considerations; religious and community considerations; and design and multi-functional considerations.

5.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Consideration

Incorporation of theoretical and conceptual considerations for design brief would enhance a thorough study in replace of a pragmatic approach.

5.1.1 Church Nature and Image of God – a balanced concern or a holistic approach for church as the house of God, as a place of worship and as a place for the community of believers.

Theological consideration – nature of church

- Any denominational tradition the designer/ researcher has to abide with?

- A balanced concern or holistic approach for church as the house of God, as a place of worship and as a place for the community of believers.

- Which models of church the designer practising and does he/she prefer a balanced approach as delivered by Dulles (1987) (see Appendix 12)?

- Which theology is the designer following - redemption or creation theology.

  o From theology of creation, the appreciation of visual elements is highlighted which leads to the application of symbols such as the symbol of light.

- In what ways a sense of belonging and the identity can be delivered?

  o They are reinforced by community spirit and environmental psychology. In environmental psychology, the identity is described as the spirit of place by Noberg-Schulz (1979).

- Being aware of the linkage with the stories of God

  o The concept of time should accompany with the space to link our experience with the salvation history of God.

  o Awareness of the key concepts in the story of God from creation to covenant; and salvation to promise.

Theological consideration – image of God

- As a house to represent God - what images or attributes of God you would like to represent through spatial design?

- Transcendence and immanence

  o awesomeness and hospitality

  o Respectfulness and cheerfulness

  o Sanctify or set apart and intimate or approachable

- Through what channels of spatial design would these images of God express in? E.g., Entrance, reception, nave, altar…

5.1.2 Church Mission to Reach Out – with mission as the focus of the church, breakthrough is necessary to evangelise the world.

Theological consideration – mission.

- Understanding the urban society and contemporary culture.

  o Aware of the contribution of church as small scale community space to encounter the problem of the society.

  o Evaluating the community spirit to achieve the identity and sense of belonging.

  o Through the contribution of spatial design to facilitate the sense of belonging through the proud and joyful possession of the nicely designed church.

  o Through the use of symbolic meaning to deliver a unique and outstanding church identity to the community.

  o In Postmodern culture, people search for religion and spirituality (Hanna and Wozniak, 2001), threshold fear is not a problem to be solved; instead, a church with both sacred and contemporary qualities is essential.

- Analysing the physical, social and cultural well-beings of the local community (see Appendix 11).

5.1.3 Convergence of Worship – incorporating the younger evangelical theology of worship by Webber (2002) which is an approach to integrate the strengths of different traditions together to form a balanced perspective.

- Convergence worship: The nine directions under convergence worship are: (Chen, 2005; Webber, 2002).

- o Historical and contemporary

- o Order and freedom

- o Verbal and symbolic

- o Rational and mystical

- o Inward and outward piety

- o Giving and receiving

- o Comforting and disturbing

- o Present and future

- o Individual and corporate

Theological consideration – worship

- Reflection on Christ as the centre of worship.

  - o From literature review, it is written that worship is a celebration of the victory of Christ over sin and death. In worship, we revitalise ourselves spiritually through Christ in order to live a victorious life in the world. Another renowned scholar in worship, Robert Webber (1994) placed Christ as the centre of focus between human being and God when he formulated the principles of worship. (see Appendix 8) Christians worship is a thankful act to the Divine through Jesus Christ.

- Is the message of worshipping together as a body of Christ clearly delivered?

  - o In order to reinforce the unity of Christians, the setting to facilitate the connection between individual worshippers to experience the corporate worship is vital as well. One can explore the possibility of semi-circular layout.

- Any heritage you must follow.

- o Worship style – liturgical (traditional style) and contemporary (free-church or evangelical and charismatic worship styles). In evangelical circle, there is convergence worship which is an integration of contemporary and traditional styles (Webber, 2000).
  - o Is it possible to explore different worship style such as arranging one more Sunday service for convergence worship?
- Worship ambience
  - o Choices between cheerful atmosphere; solemn atmosphere and cosy ambience.

5.1.4 Community Building – the need for both sacred and profane activities. Two kinds of community: 1) the provision of sufficient space for community building, such as fellowship and chatting, and 2) for serving the social community.

Theological consideration – Community of believers

- How to reinforce the spirit of the body of Christ?
  - o The common practice under limited space to deliver the unity is the set up of the venue by church members.
  - o Refer to the message of worshipping together as a body of Christ under Theological consideration – worship.
  - o Provision of ample space for mingling. This arrangement needs to balance with the provision of maximum seating capacity.
- How to express brotherly love symbolically?
  - o Apart from human interaction, the use of symbols can perform as a reminder for worshippers.

Theological consideration – linkage with social community or neighbourhood

- Possibility to open the church space for other organisations to arrange programmes, even non-religious programmes.

  - The consideration is about the usage of sacred space especially the altar; whether the differentiation of sacred and profane activities is necessary. As refer to Sovik (1973), he would like to build churches which can serve other purposes and benefit the social community. His idea is to avoid the use of religious motif to represent church identity but a nicely designed interior space for all purposes. One of the considerations is whether the representation of a sacred identity will hinder the offer of the church space for other purposes.

- Encouraging neighbours to use the church space such as meditation in the sanctuary.

  - In this perspective, the serene and meditative ambience is appropriate for neighbours to have spiritual experience and to calm their soul.

Administrative consideration – Affiliated Social Services (if any)

- Here are merely some brief items for reflection; operating different social services requires different criteria which are not covered in this design guidelines.

  - Kinds of target users.

  - Facilities and activities.

  - Allocation of human resources and financial resources.

  - Balance between the sacred and the profane requirements.

- How may this social service interrupt the operation of the church activities?

5.1.5 Contemporary Cultural Sensibilities in Representing the Sacred – delivering a sacred and contemporary identity with the transformation of traditional elements.

Theological consideration – sacredness

- What are the sacred qualities? And how it is represented?
  - The use of both spiritual and physical levels to represent the sacred.
  - Reconsideration of the methods to experience God; the five elements to experience the sacred (activity, human, time, space and object).
  - Transformation of traditional elements into contemporary representation. (see section 3.3 in Appendix 3)
  - Areas of sacred representation such as entrance, reception, nave, altar.

5.1.6 Contextualised Urban Environment with Spatial Limitation – use of transformable or multi-functional device.

- Use of durable and good quality multi-functional scheme.
  - The concept of good stewardship is not only on spending less money but spending wisely.
- Quality transformation from the sacred identity to the profane usage and vice versa

o In existing practice, the transformation relies mainly on functional approach with the provision of an appropriate physical setting for worship. The sacred elements are delivered entirely by the altar which is always not an ideal method. The respect of the sacred identity is a key concern.

5.1.7 Cost Consuming Level – no extravagant way out in design but it is not necessarily minimising cost to surrender the importance of design.

- Good stewardship requires tactfully invest money on design to represent God (the case study supports this perspective)

  o Cost on durable products.

  o Cost on special design features.

5.2 Applications

In the applications of the theoretical considerations, the issues are separated into three sections which are traditional and contemporary considerations; religious and community considerations and design and multi-functional considerations. The topics under the three sections are designed quality to build a sacred church design.

5.2.1 Traditional and Contemporary Consideration

Traditional Consideration

- Reconsideration of traditional essence and the elements required to be transformed? (see section 3.3 in Appendix 3)

- Symbolic consideration
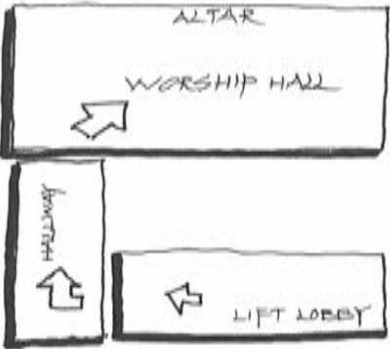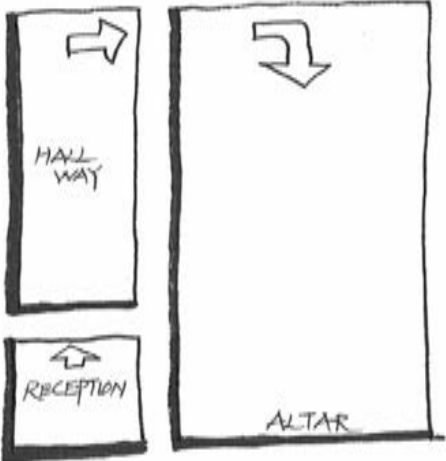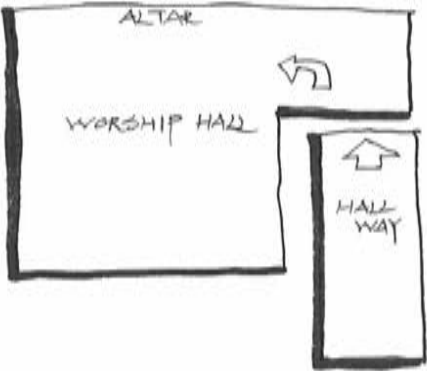
o Webber (2002) introduced two layers of symbols which are the dominical and ecclesiastical symbols. By these, he wanted to differentiate the symbols related to Jesus and the symbols practiced by church tradition.

o Main themes

o Selection of symbols, such as symbols associated with different denominations, dominical and ecclesiastical.

o Quantity of symbols applicable

o Methods and locations (refer to Appendix 1 for kinds of symbols and media with symbols)

o Partial representation would not achieve the goal such as white colour would symbolise sacredness but it needs to align with the interior ambience.

o Breakthrough: areas to avoid:

  symbols randomly selected or used in Protestant circle

   - Symbols only used together with posters as a temporary means.

   - Lack of application of symbols in Christian festivals

   - Lack of education

   - Lack of respect of symbols such as pulpit, communion table and baptismal fonts or pools.

   - Focus on the cost of using symbols to minimise the application.

- Art consideration

  o Origin of the art: by creative ideas of church member, by mass production or by professional artist.

  o Message associates with the themes, the nature of God and the

nature of church.

o Methods to be used

o Location along the spiritual path or progression of space; artwork can be located in utility areas such as toilet or staircases.

o Breakthrough: areas to focus

- Artwork budgeting wisely.

- Good use of artwork created by members of church for church consideration.

- Artwork associated with posters creation for periodical activities

- Artwork as a non-verbal means to deliver messages. Conventionally, pastors think that words are more straightforward and effective.

- Progression of space

o The concept of spiritual path is a way to prepare worshippers to cleanse their souls before worshipping God.

o Methods for application such as begin from lift lobby before the entrance door; create an entrance foyer before entering the sanctuary (see figures in Chapter 6, Case Study).

o Breakthrough

- In a small and multi-functional area, direct/unobstructed progression of space seems to be a restriction.

Graphical analysis of Spiritual Path

	Figure 5.1
ALTAR WORSHIP HALL HALLWAY LIFT LOBBY	U Turn
ALTAR HALL WAY RECEPTION ALTAR	Figure 5.2 U Turn
ALTAR WORSHIP HALL HALL WAY	Figure 5.3 L Turn

Creation of a spiritual path or progression of space is one of the traditional practices in church design. The traditional approach is the creation of a linear path (see figure 5.4). To modify from linear path, sometimes split path is created (see figure 5.5). However, under the constraint of limited space, this is not a current and common scenario in one flat churches in

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Hong Kong. Churches simply give up spiritual path in the creation of sacred spaces.

Here is a proposal of different spiritual paths which can be implemented in one flat churches. If there is a lift lobby, the spiritual path can start from it - from lift lobby to reception, leading to worship hall and then the location of altar. It then depends on the layout to decide whether the designer can create a U turn or L turn to extend the path (see figure 5.1-5.3).
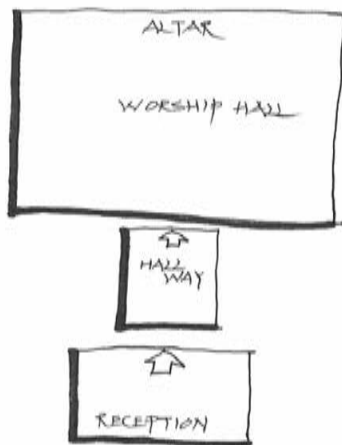
	Figure 5.4 Linear Path
	Figure 5.5 Spilt Path
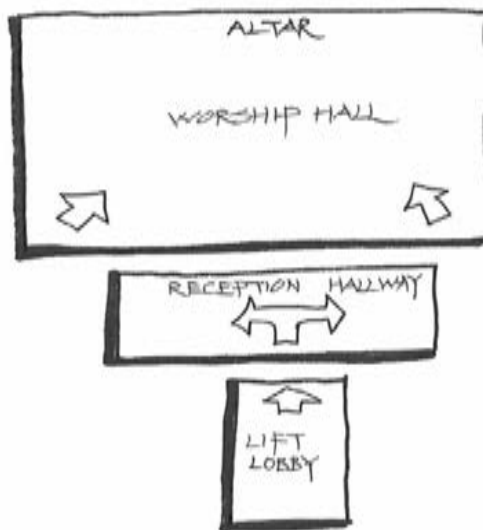
- Use of natural lighting

  - Powerful message — Use of natural lighting is related to the use of windows. Windows in the church is essential such that windows symbolise light penetrating the church and light entering into the community. In the act of 'benediction / sending forth ', worshippers are the light of God to be sent by God to light up the community.

  - Theology of creation – it relates to the views of the exterior environment. It is suggested to compare the theology of redemption with the theology of creation; under the creation theory, openness to the environment is very appropriate.

  - Site constraint

  - Methods for application such as construction of glass panel in front of windows; stick films on window; paint on window (see figures 5.6, 5.7 & 5.8).

Figure 5.6 Glass panel in front of windows
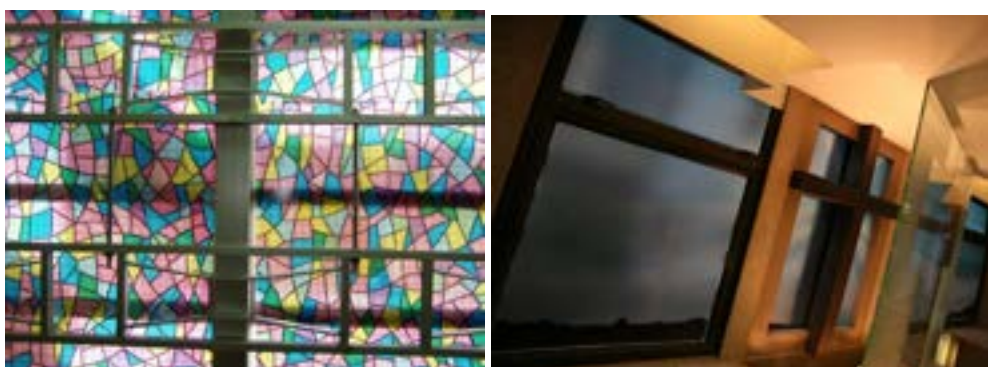
Figure 5.7 Stick films on windows

Figure 5.8 Paint on window

- Openness to the environment – dense and chaotic exterior environment

    o This is both a church mission concern and a worship concern. Close space reinforces concentration for moving objects outside may distract people from worship.

    o Exterior environment is chaotic and unpleasant; or beautiful natural scenery which would enhance worship.

    o It is the mission field of the church to send believers to the world as good witnesses when service ends. And appropriate and relevant openness to the exterior will send this message to the world.

    o Methods for application such as partial view of the exterior through clear glass surface above eye level or narrow opening with clear glass surface; construct a panel with pattern to block the clear vision of the exterior.

Contemporary Consideration

- Contemporary attitudes and values to encounter

- Contemporary technology and material

    o Bruggink (1965) affirmed the search of contemporary representation by stating that "the architecture must be of our age;

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it must speak through our technology." (p.613)

- o Contemporary materials are good choice to deliver the contemporary quality, however, some materials are harder to match with sacred quality such as stainless steel.

- o Levels of contemporary expression as compared to traditional consideration

- Use of church areas applicable to contemporary style.

- o In practice, utility areas, such as pantry, office and toilets are appropriate with contemporary style

- o In the case of the sanctuary, the levels of contemporary expression as compared to traditional and sacred consideration must be taken into account.

- Honesty of material, natural material

- o Due to practicality and high maintenance cost of natural materials, artificial materials would often considered as a substitute with its closely matching appearance to the natural ones with its low cost and high durability.

- o It is mentioned that Christianity is a religion of honesty; therefore, disguise of material is a bad example. It seems that it is not an important issue nowadays for the use of artificial materials does not associate with honesty. Bruggink (1965) mentioned about the integrity considerations in his five principles in church design (p.613). However, the integrity consideration is a challenge for honest materials. Artificial materials like plastic laminate can bring out the wood veneer effect successfully; they are more durable but less costly.

- Colourfulness

    o Use of colourful materials subtly. Be mindful that mis-use of sharp colours on large surfaces undermines sacred space.

- Metallic and high-tech effect

    o The image of sacredness seldom associates with metallic and high- tech effect. It is advised not to let them dominate the space.

- Simplicity/minimalism

    o Contemporary consideration seems to go for simple design details.

- Ceiling design

    o Open ceiling versus false ceiling. Open ceiling exposes the services which gives an unorganised outlook. Installation of false ceiling would create different effects which is usually built by wood or gypsum board; however, it is more costly and of high maintenance cost; false ceiling in modular grid in office setting would be irrelevant for the sacred representation.

    o Reinforcement with height. High ceiling height associates with transcendent quality. In one-flat church with limited ceiling height, one needs to evaluate the search for immanent quality instead.
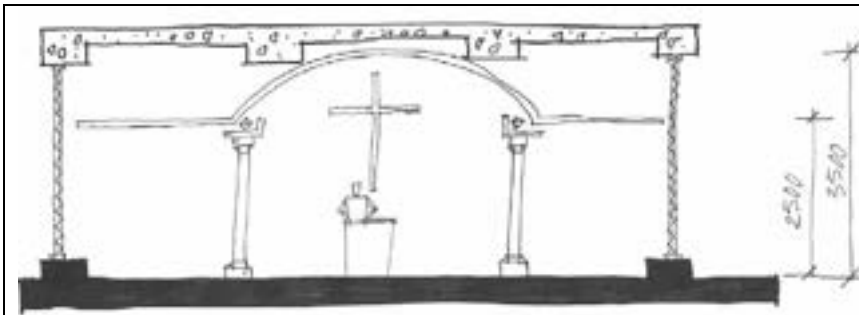
	Figure 5.9 Church design trying to create a higher ceiling effect
 	Figure 5.10 By placing cross and pulpit in the centre, two projection screens are needed. Pulpit covers the bottom part of the cross. Figure 5.11a In the scenario of a narrow back wall behind altar, cross will be covered by projection screen
	Figure 5.11b The use of a big cross with pulpit not in the centre or pulpit and cross in the centre by using a small cross.
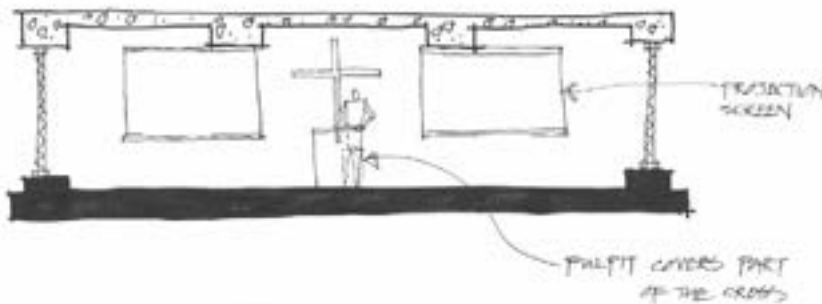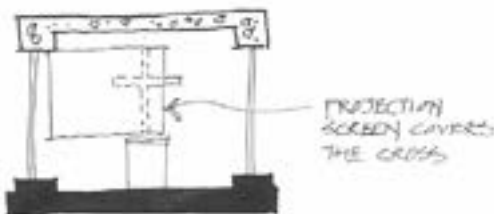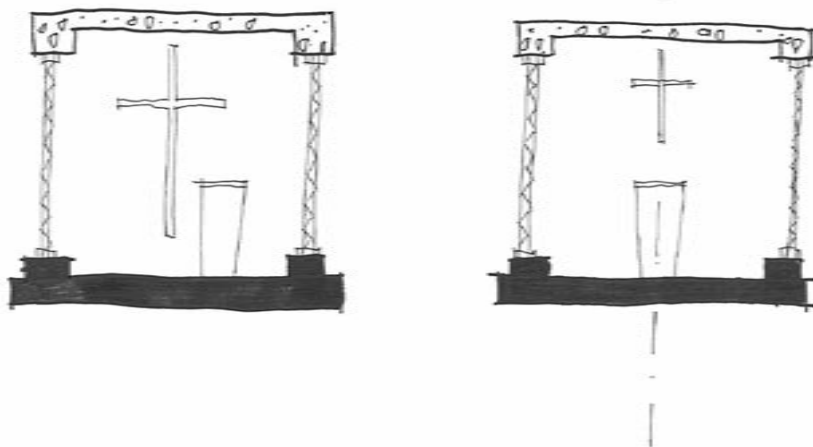
One common scenario of one flat church is low ceiling height. If a big cross would like to be placed in the centre (see figure 5.10), the pulpit will block the bottom part of the cross. In churches with a narrow wall behind the altar, the projection screen will even block a large part of the cross (see figure 5.11a).

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In order to create a large cross, pulpit can be placed aside, provided that it does not conflict with denominational tradition. If churches prefer to place the cross and the pulpit in the centre, the size of the cross must be reduced (see figure 5.11b).

For churches with a higher ceiling height such as 3500mm, they may try to create a transcendent feeling with the addition of a curve ceiling and arch (see figure 5.9).

5.2.2 Religious and Community Consideration

Religious Areas and Facilities Consideration

The elements contributing to the sacred space are revealed as in Table 5.1

- Entrance atmosphere
    - Whether the ambience of the entrance is bought out more effectively in hospitable or solemn setting is a significant concern.
    - It affects the first impression of a sacred space and the identity of the church.
    - Is the concern of threshold fear valid?
- Nave atmosphere and layout
    - Celebrative or sacramental: It depends on seasons and occasion.
    - Flexibility in layout.
    - Careful consideration of lighting system
    - Longitudinal layout with pulpit at the far end or pulpit in the midway to reduce the distance. If preaching is the theme, pulpit in the midway is better.
- Communal / open flexible plan or sacramental / processional plan
    - Evangelical churches do not favour for sacramental / processional

plan for preaching is the peak of worship.

o Auditorium layout can reduce the distance between preacher and worshippers. Use of the midway of a longitudinal plan to set up the altar can reduce the distance between preacher and worshippers.

o Communal layout associates with semi-circular or U-shape seating arrangement can reinforce eye contacts between worshippers.

Layout Concept of Churches
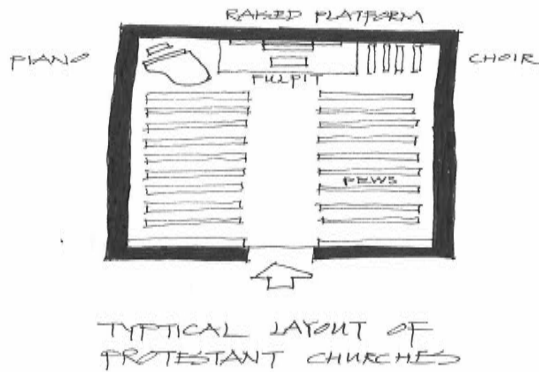
 TYPICAL LAYOUT OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES	Figure 5.12 Typical layout plan with a longitudinal layout
	Figure 5.13 A variation with altar being placed at the corner
	Figure 5.14 Even though the entrance is located at the longer side of a rectangular layout, a longitudinal plan is still created.
	Figure 5.15a Layout with altar being positioned in the longer side of a rectangular shape to reduce the distance between congregation and preacher
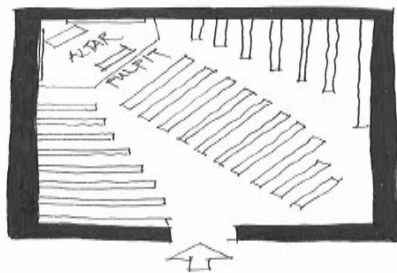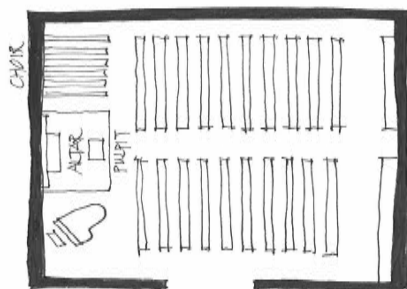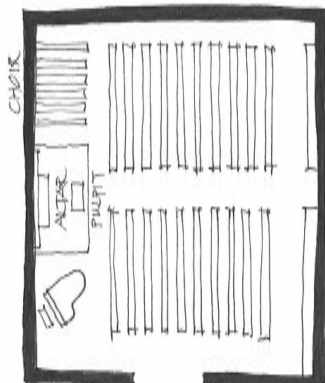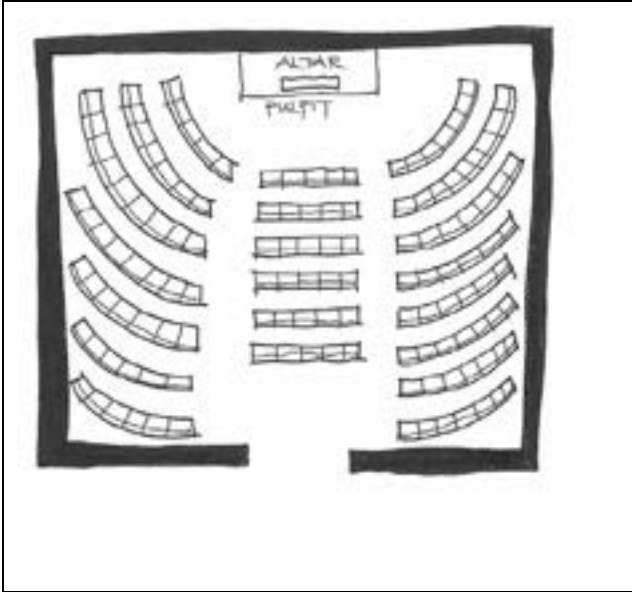
Figure 5.15b
Communal layout can reduce the distance of congregation and the preacher, it can also enable eye contact for reinforced the community spirit for the worshippers.
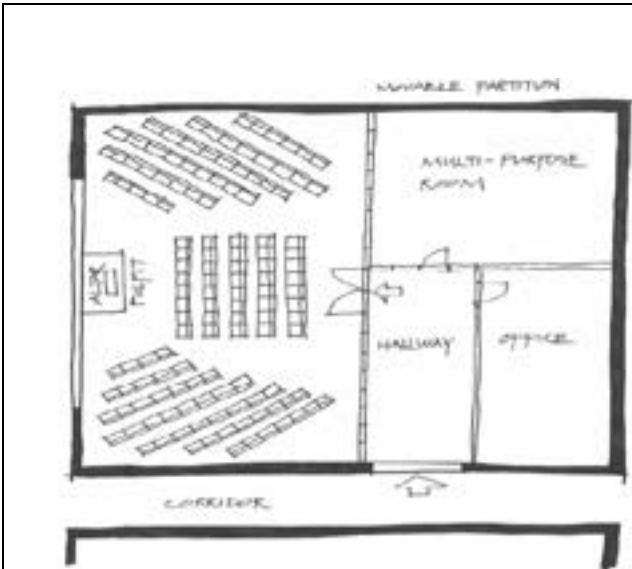
Figure 5.16
Creation of an auditorium layout
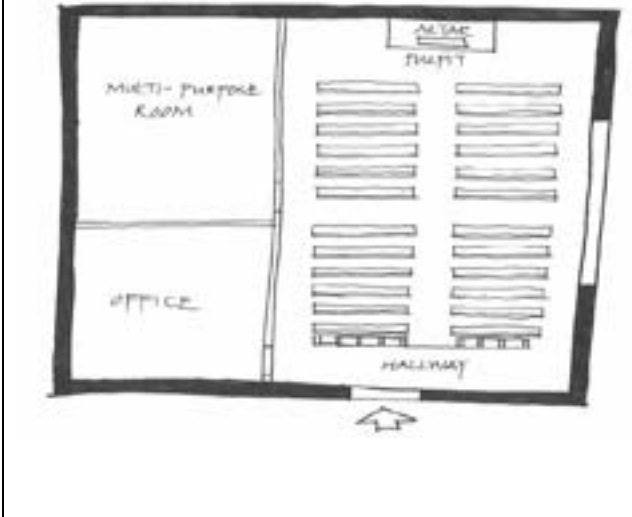
Figure 5.17
Creation of a longitudinal layout

	Figure 5.18 Communal Layout
The common scenario of churches was to form a longitudinal layout with altar at the far end of the worship hall (see figure 5.17). If maximum capacity is a key, space for mingling will be reduced. From my literature review, which is focused on preaching in evangelical churches is better with a layout which can reduce the distance between congregation and preacher is preferable. Hence an auditorium layout like the layout in figure no. 5.16 is more appropriate. Apart from reducing the distance between congregation and preacher, layout which facilitates the communal spirit is also significant. Semicircular layout is one of the options (see figure 5.18). However, the capacity will be reduced.	

- Spiritual path or progression of space (refer to Section 5.2.1, Progression of Space)

- Hospitality / welcoming versus holiness / solemnity

  o Welcoming / warm atmosphere would sometimes downplay the holiness mood if these are to be co-existed; whereas progression of space from a welcoming entrance / pathway to a solemn sanctuary would enhance both features interdependently.

- Monument versus home

  o The limitation of space and height hinders the creation of monumental space. However, it is equally appropriate to create a home feel church which is more intimate. But the concept of

home must be clarified first.

- o We need buildings that make us feel at home. (Giles, 1999, p.146)

- The use of symbols (refer to symbolic consideration)

- Altar design, center focus

    - o including wall behind altar, the cross, the pulpit, the communion table and the baptismal pool; space for banners, and space for projection screen.

    - o Altar in the midway of a longitudinal plan allows a wider width for the allocation of these elements (see figure 5.19)

Figure 5.19 Altar in the midway of a longitudinal plan allows a wider width for the allocation of elements

Typical Layout of Altar
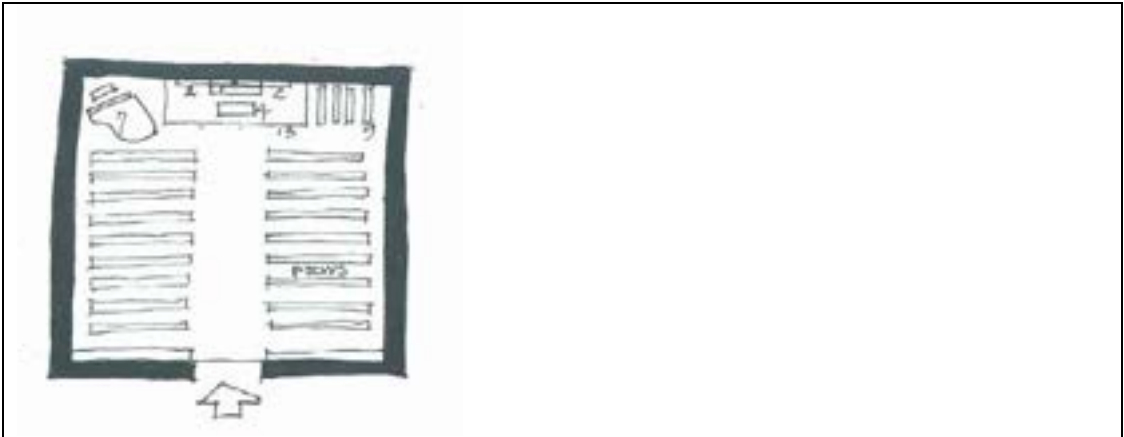
Figure 5.20 Typical Layout of Protestant Church in Hong Kong Context

This is a longitudinal layout plan with cross in the centre, choir on the right hand side. Whether the pulpit is placed in the middle or on the left and lectern on the right is a denominational practice.
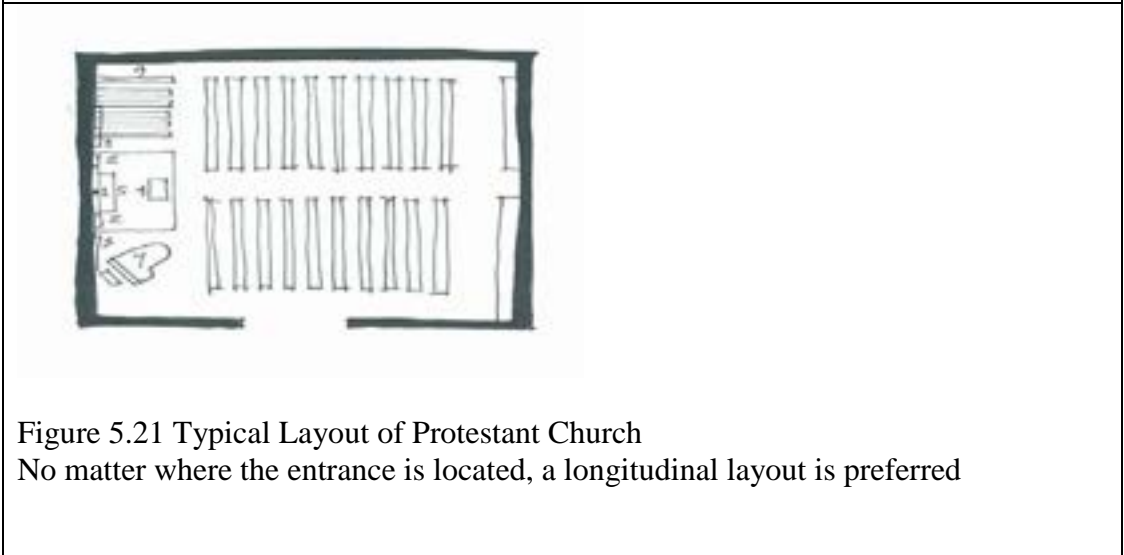
Figure 5.21 Typical Layout of Protestant Church
No matter where the entrance is located, a longitudinal layout is preferred

Figure 5.22
Layout of Altar

Typical altar layout with cross, communion table and pulpit in the centre

Figure 5.23
Layout of Altar

For some churches, pulpit is not required to be placed in the centre, a bigger size cross can be accommodated because the pulpit will not block the view of the bottom of the cross

Figure 5.24
Layout of Altar

Another variation is the location of the cross not at the centre. In this case, the altar can be transformed into a stage with thematic backdrop or projection screen in the centre but without blocking the cross.

Figure 5.25
Layout of Altar

This is a very traditional church layout for different denominations with a liturgical background such as Anglican, Methodist and Church of Christ in China: pulpit on the left hand side and lectern on the right hand side. Choir is also seated in the altar area.

Figure 5.26
Layout of Altar

A contemporary setting with movable furniture such as choir seats, keyboard, drum set and pulpit.

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Remarks:
1. Cross
2. Banner
3. Projection screen
4. Pulpit
5. Communion table
6. Drum
7. Piano
8. Lectern
9. Choir
10. Keyboard
11. Baptismal Pool
12. Sliding Panel
13. Raised platform

For churches which followed a traditional layout and concern, cross must be placed in the centre because it is the most significant symbol of Christianity.

A very traditional layout of church has pulpit on the left side and lectern on the right side. Choir is also located at the altar area (see figure 5.25). Some churches also placed the pulpit at the centre of the altar because the Word of God is the highlight of a service or worship (see figure 5.22). Examples of such can be found at Sheung Wan Baptist Church and Tai Po Christian & Missionary Alliance Church.

However, for a number churches, the pulpit is only a movable stand which can be placed on the side (see figure5.23). Two examples are Island Evangelical Community Church and Just Church.

For churches which did not observe traditional setting such as Crossroad Community Baptist Church, cross was placed on one side and the projection screen in the middle (see figure 5.24).

Churches such as E.F.C.C. – Tung Fook Church created a stage-like setting for the altar, a contemporary setting with movable furniture such as choir seats, keyboard, drum set and pulpit was applied.

- Baptismal Pool
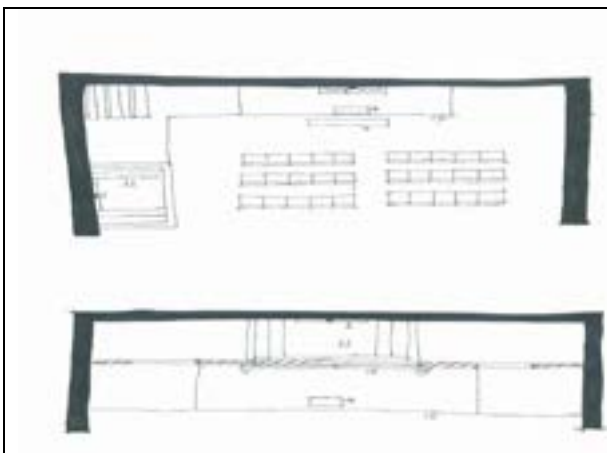
Figure 5.27
Baptismal pool on the other side not attached to the altar

Figure 5.28
Baptismal pool is built at the back of altar

	Figure 5.29 Baptimal pool is located at the entrance
	Figure 5.30 Use of a portable baptismal pool
	Figure 5.31 Baptismal pool underneath the platform in altar area.

Remarks:
1. Cross
2. Banner
3. Projection screen
4. Pulpit
5. Communion table
6. Drum
7. Piano
8. Lectern
9. Choir
10. Keyboard
11. Baptismal Pool
12. Sliding Panel
13. Platform

Regarding the baptismal pool, if churches placed it in altar area, one way was to locate it behind the back wall of the altar (see figure 5.28). Churches such as Island Evangelical Community Church and EFCC Waterloo Road Hill Church had a set of sliding panels in front to hide the baptismal pool.

Some churches located it under the raised altar (see figure 5.31) and some churches simply used portable pool (see figure 5.30).

For churches which are not practicing immersion type of baptism, which is called aspersion, therefore a portable holy water font is used.

Church such as Sheung Wan Baptist Church placed the baptismal pool on the left side of the sanctuary (see figure 5.27). As they use of movable chairs, during baptism, the orientation of the chairs are moved to face the baptismal pool.
In some Catholic churches, baptismal pool is placed near the entrance as a sacred symbol to remind worshippers the importance of baptism in Christ (see figure 5.29).

- Raised platform

    o All participants are in service in a worship, so it is advised not to use high platform like a stage. It causes a separation and misunderstanding that only the ones in the stage are serving God and congregations sitting down are only audience.

- Seats arrangement, use of pews or chairs

    o Encouraging eye contacts through the seat arrangement. Site limitation can be a factor, especially when churches' concern is maximum capacity.

    o Reinforcing the sense of community

    o Pews are better in delivering the sacred atmosphere but it lacks feasibility in limited space with multi-functional requirement.

- Liturgical furniture, such as baptismal pool or font, can be vital symbols to remind worshippers about their faith.

- Use of artificial lighting

    o Lighting - bright or moody

- o It also depends on occasion. Controlled by a lighting system with various combinations.

- o Energy saving level

- The use of fragrance

Community Consideration – Balance between Religious and Social Services

- Consider the parameter with physical, social and cultural / spiritual well beings (see Appendix 13)

- Transformable space in terms of identity transformation.

- The possibility of future expansion

  - o Plan for expected seating capacity under future expansion.

  - o Plan for extra storage space.

  - o Leave rooms for books to be bought regularly.

- User-oriented

  - o Needs of different ages

  - o Needs of different groups such as target users of the social services and Christians

  - o Opportunities for them to express ideas such as workshops

  - o Creativity expression: make rooms for church members to contribute in the building of the new church.

- Hospitality – It is suggested by Richard Giles (1999) that "even minute details such as the location and cleanliness of toilets will say something about the church's hospitality, whether the need of newcomers are well-considered" (Giles, 1999, p67). Thoughtful thinking to plan for different areas can deliver welcoming message.

5.2.3 Design and Multi-functional Consideration

- Storage system

  - Use of storage room or large cabinet for big items

  - Possibility of using the low cabinet for storing folding chairs and folding tables.

  - If platform is used for the altar with furniture on top such as choir bench, integrate the volume of the base of the bench with the platform to create a larger space for storage.

- Display system

  - Display without disturbing the ambience in worship. Utilise cabinet doors as display panel with device such as curtain to cover them in time of worship. (see Figure 5.32)

  - In order to avoid untidy effect, do not stick posters randomly on doors and walls.

Figure 5.32 Cabinet doors as display panel with device such as curtain to cover them in time of worship

- Seating orientation and type of seats

  - use of stackable or foldable chairs. There are different designs to modify the stackable chairs such as adding pocket for holding hymn and bible. (see Figure 5.33)

Figure 5.33 Modify the stackable chairs such as adding pocket for holding hymn and bible

- Partitioning system such as hanging movable partition

  o Awareness of the quality and the budget allocation.

  o Consider the implication of a good quality acoustic effect in multi-functional scheme.

- Sound proof quality

  o It relates to the types of movable partition which also applies to the use of false ceiling and ducts for ventilation; and whether the partitions should reach the true ceiling or not.

  o The addition of sound proof materials inside partitions.

  o If the sanctuary occupies majority of the area with different rooms around, a good quality sound proof system applies to pastoral office, counselling room, prayer room and child care room in order to function properly.

- Multi-media and AV system

  o Hindering the design setting or not. Sometimes, the hanging loudspeakers block part of the view of the projected images on the projection screen.

  o Black out effect

- Site characteristics and limitations

- o Possibility of placing the use of natural lighting in a high priority.

- o Possibility of creating spiritual path.

- o Possibility of creating a change in ceiling height levels.

- o Orientation

- Area relationships

  - o The location of the audio visual control area with the altar

  - o The location of office area in relation with windows

  - o The location of child care room with view of the sanctuary.

- Time management

  - o When places are used by different functions at different time slots, time management must be carefully planned.

- Environmental Consideration

  - o Openness to environment to use natural light

  - o Use of energy saving light source

  - o Quality of signage to affect the urban landscape and to deliver the church identity.

5.3 Summary

The relationship of the design topics with the seven guiding principles as indicated in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Relationship of the Design Elements with the 7 Guiding Principles

	Church nature	Church mission	Convergence of Worship	Community building	Contemporary cultural sensibilities	Contextualised urban environment	Cost consuming level
Symbols	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Artwork	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Progression of			✓			✓	✓

space							
Use of natural light		✓	✓			✓	✓
Openness to the environment		✓	✓			✓	
Contemporary materials					✓		✓
Honesty of material	✓				✓		✓
Colourfulness			✓		✓		
Metallic and high tech effect					✓		✓
Simplicity/minimalism	✓		✓		✓		✓
Raised platform			✓				
Hospitality	✓	✓			✓		
Celebrative or sacramental	✓	✓	✓				
Lighting - bright or moody	✓		✓				
Monument vs home	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Reflect future glory vs everyday life issue	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Longitudinal or auditorium layout	✓		✓				
Seats arrangement, use of pews or chairs			✓	✓			
Communal / open flexible plan or sacramental / processional plan	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Height or rooftop design / pointed or flat	✓		✓			✓	✓
Baptismal pool or font			✓				✓
Liturgical furniture			✓				✓
Open ceiling vs false ceiling					✓		✓
AV system			✓		✓		✓
Fragrance			✓				

When church leaders are eager to follow these design guidelines, it is expected that the relationship of theology and design would be counter-enhanced. Careful consideration of existing constraints, in-depth exploration of relevant styles and extensive discussion among church member/ related parties before the execution of a representative design are imminent. Undeniably, design solution can be varied, but one theme this study is determined to achieve is that churches in

Hong Kong will be built with the concept of delivering a church with both sacred

and contemporary qualities harmoniously.

Chapter 6 Case Study

6.1 From Research to Design

A case study was conducted on Sheung Wan Baptist Church from stages of initial research to design. This church was located in a commercial building with social services ran on self-financed basis. The church had purchased the upper floor in order to create a new image for the church, to expand the seating capacity, and to enrich the quality of the social services. They decided to allocate the upper floor to operate as the child care centre and the youth ministry; and the lower floor can be reserved mainly for religious purposes.

The time frame for the project of Sheung Wan Baptist Church was fairly relaxed and the whole construction or renovation process took over one year to complete. The researcher, in this case, performed as both the researcher and the designer; the researcher was given support to conduct all kinds of field work such as: site observation, interview, focused group discussion and workshop. Apart from field research, regular meetings with the designated renovation team members were conducted. The design process was an on going process with discussions at different stages both on functional and spiritual issues. They also bestowed the designer the sovereignty to design a church with sacred and contemporary qualities.

It was a valuable opportunity to have conducted research and design on their renovation project to create a sacred house for an enhancement of spiritual experience.

6.1.1 Criteria of the Design Brief included:

The criteria of design brief were formulated into three aspects: Theological consideration; thematic idea; and functional requirement.

Theological consideration

- Location of the Cross in front of pulpit and pulpit in front of communion table

Thematic Idea

- Creation of a sacred atmosphere.

- Creation of a welcoming space.

- Creation of a church image appropriate for the local community

Functional Requirement

- Seats for approximately 200 worshippers for Sunday services.

- Production of transformable design for different activities such as gospel lunch during weekdays.

- Preparation for multi-functional purpose.

- Creation of a room for counselling, child care and meetings.

- Keeping of existing baptismal pool.

- Provision of platform large enough for performance in special occasions such as festival celebration.

- Provision of a pantry with similar size as existing one for the staff of the child care centre to prepare food for the children.

The criteria mentioned in the meeting were mainly originated from a pragmatic point of view. Regarding the design concept, the researcher was required to incorporate the research findings generated with the design brief. Below are the findings from different research methods applied in order to understand the existing situation and practice, the attitudes, and needs, and the expectations by different groups of participants.

6.1.2 Research Methods:

Research methods conducted were:

1. Meetings with pastoral team and renovation team members

2. Field visits and site analysis from observation

3. Site observation in different activities such as Sunday services, baptism ceremony, fellowships, love feast (supper after Sunday services) and .the tutorial class of the child care centre.

4. Survey of the whole congregations in Sunday services

5. Focused group discussion with elderly fellowship

6. Semi-structure interview with the representing pastor

7. Visual simulation workshop with the pastoral team, the social services leaders, the adults and the youths.

6.1.3 Limitations

The researcher had difficulty in conducting one of the workshops with the two pastors due to arrangement problems. However, a number of meetings had been conducted with the two pastors and committee members of renovation group to discuss about their needs, the design approach and inter-relationship of rooms. Because of the time frame and the arrangement with the two pastors, the researcher could only divide the church members into two groups, one for the adult (working adult to elderly people) and one for the youth (tertiary and secondary students).

6.2 Field Research Report

6.2.1 Meetings with Pastoral Team and Renovation Committee

The renovation committee consisted of one church pastoral consultant who was a professor in Baptist Theological Seminary, two pastors, person in-charge of the child care centre, elders and senior members who had different expertise related to construction, insurance and security system. They offered their assistance unconditionally and voluntarily; and their sincerity had become an impetus to the researcher. After receiving the design brief; the researcher performed analyses on the site, area relationship and the usage of space by different activities. Some possible layouts were produced for brainstorming purpose. The researcher synthesised their responses together with findings from other research methods, such as interviews and workshops.

The ultimate decision had to be approved by the renovation committee. They contributed many ideas on the technical side of the design; their concern was mainly on the layout and the ultilisation of space. About the design concepts and selection of materials, the designer was granted the freedom of choice to his expertise prior to approval at each stage.

6.2.2 Field Visit and Site Analysis from Observation

This church was situated in the third and fourth floors of a small scale commercial building in Sheung Wan. They had occupancy of the two floors which was an advantage to execute design for the progression of space or the spiritual path could commence from the lift lobby. There were two entrances on two sides of the rectangular shape lift lobby. These two floors were linked by a fire escape staircase located outside of the flats and was next to lift lobby. (see figure 6.1)

Figure 6.1 Two floors were linked by fire escape staircase next to lift lobby

Concerning the third floor, after one enters the flat, one had to turn 90 degrees to reach the main interior space. The shape of the flat was in U-shape. (see Appendix 11 for the structural layout plan) When one put a centre line cutting the windows and the lift lobby, the areas were basically identical except the area next to the wall with windows; for the wall was constructed in an angle with the adjacent walls. It was logical to use the two sides of the flat next to the

lift lobby for administration and utility such as offices, toilets, pantry and small multi-functional room. The load bearing walls adjacent to the wall with windows could be indentified where the cabinets were located. There were two columns in the middle of the open area which might block the view of someone sitting behind facing the window. The ceiling height was 2700mm and the beams were 2400mm from structural floor slab. The exterior environment was surrounded by high-rise buildings with a distance of the width of a small street. (see figure 6.2)

Figure 6.2 Exterior environment was surrounded by high rise buildings

On fourth floor, the shape of the flat was also in U-shape which was nearly identical to third floor. (see Appendix 11 for the structural layout plan) When one put a centre line cutting the windows and the lift lobby, the interior areas were symmetrical. The width of the flat extended from the structural wall between lift lobby and the flat to the columns in the third floor which formed the exterior facade of the building from fourth floor onwards. There located an outdoor podium which was on top of part of the interior space of the third floor.

It means that the waterproof system must be professionally constructed to avoid water leakage to third floor. It was recommended to abide to the regulations for construction works in podium such as the installation of permanent poles, which was only feasible with approval from building authorities with complicated lodging procedures.

6.2.3 Survey of the Whole Church

A survey was conducted to collect data about the perception of different age groups of worshippers towards the quality of sacred space and the most influential and striking symbols in their spiritual journeys. The survey was conducted after one Sunday service. PowerPoint was presented to introduce the aim of the survey and to describe the selection of the elements in details (see Table 6.1). In each category, images of the elements were shown to participants as reference. They had to select step by step right after the explanations. Eventually, a total of 67 questionnaires were returned.

Part 1: Selection of the elements to build a sacred space

The results shown in Table 6.1 below represented the informants' preference of selection of the elements towards building a sacred space.

Table 6.1: Selection of the Elements to Build a Sacred Space

Categories	Elements	Nos.	Elements	Nos.
Nature of God	Transcendence (Glorious and majestic)	40	Immanence (Love and caring)	25
Sanctuary Atmosphere	Awesomeness / Solemnity	26	Hospitality	42
Sanctuary Atmosphere	Quietness / Respectfulness	32	Cheerfulness / Peacefulness	35
Sanctuary Atmosphere	Traditional	31	Contemporary	26
Entrance Atmosphere	Traditional	28	Contemporary	33
Entrance Atmosphere	Sacred / set apart	25	Intimate / Approachable	39
Use of symbols	Careful concern in the use of symbols	17	Simplicity / Minimum use of symbols	42
Space	With views of the exterior	36	Enclosed during services	24
Light	Dim / Mystical	4	Bright	61
Colour	Dark	11	Light	54
Colour / material	Monotone and natural	50	Colourful and dynamic / Artificial	14

The researcher had generated results under different age groups as well.

If the majority of selection was highlighted (with at least ten more number of selection than the other column), they preferred the deliverance of the transcendent quality to Immanent quality. (*Transcendent quality refers to the glorious and majestic nature; immanent quality refers to the love and caring nature*). They also liked hospitable sanctuary space; for the entrance, an intimate and approachable atmosphere were highly preferred with views of the exterior; bright lighting, light colour, and natural and monotone materials were also their

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priorities. Regarding the selection of contemporary and traditional elements, the result was merely equal.

It implies that for the entrance, they preferred an approachable and intimate atmosphere which could break the threshold fear. In the sanctuary, even tough they preferred to express the transcendence of God, they also concerned for the presence of hospitable atmosphere. Because the majority of the selection about the atmosphere of the sanctuary was not towards the transcendent side, such as awesomeness / solemnity, quietness / respectfulness, the atmosphere could be a transformable one between transcendence and immanence. In terms of atmosphere, the church would deliver transformable ambiences between quietness / respectfulness and cheerfulness / peacefulness.

Part 2: Selection of the most influential symbols

For the selection of symbols, the rank was listed below:

1. Cross   2. Bible   3. Jesus   4. Dove   5. Angel   6. Candle   7.Light

8.Baptismal Pool   9. Pulpit   10. Chalice

From the survey, they preferred a minimum use of symbols; hence the designer would be selective to apply the symbols. It was no doubt that the use of the cross, the bible, the baptismal pool (especially for churches practicing immersion in baptism), the pulpit and the chalice (associates with communion

table to remember holy communion) were the common practices. The symbol of light could be applied in this church with long bays of windows.

6.2.4 Focused Group Discussion with Elderly Fellowship

One of the pastors recommended the researcher to participate in one of the elderly fellowships and to take this chance to explain the design. The researcher took this opportunity to conduct a focused-group with them to share about their concerns about church design. The main focus of the elderly fellowship was about physical well-being, such as comfort and safety. The elderly shared about the design of the existing chairs which were not proper for their lumbar support. Regarding air-conditioning system, they commented that some areas were very cold. They also mentioned that there should be enough toilets to reduce the time of waiting.

They also concerned about the needs of different age groups, such as having enough space for the youth to play around and suitable requirement of the child care centre.

They had a sense of belonging to this church; they trusted the decision made by the two pastors and the renovation committee.

6.2.5 Site Observation

Theology of church and sacred identity. The first impression of this church was very home-like. Christians felt at ease when they were moving around. The unorganised arrangement of the usage of space, such as freely posted bulletins or posters, however, had hindered a well organised worship space. But there were features suggesting the creation of a worship space such as Baptismal pool at the back of the altar, a carefully designed pulpit integrating the communion table and the pointed arch details added on the windows to imitate traditional sacred feature. (see figure 6.3)

Figure 6.3 Imitate traditional sacred feature

In terms of the use of design elements, there was partial imitation of traditional features such as pointed arch feature along the windows. However, because it had been designed for ten years and the impression was quite old-fashion now (see figure 6.4). The back wall of the baptismal pool was also carefully designed to create a feature wall and two partitions to cover the path at the back when baptism was practiced (see figure 6.5). The glass panel details of

the upper parts of the movable partitions were created in the shape of a pointed

arch to enhance the spiritual quality associated with church (see figure 6.6).

However, this church design did not reflect successfully the sacred nature and

identity of church because this was some partial representation without holistic

consideration. One could be distracted by the photo-copier and the unorganised

arrangement in the entrance. In the worship hall, the use of rectangular

fluorescent light box in the open ceiling with the exposure of electrical and

mechanical services would further distract the sacred ambience. Looking at the

space partially, there was the application of sacred symbols, such as the

baptismal pool, the cross, the pointed arch window; but as a whole, the sacred

atmosphere was weak

Figure 6.4 The impression was quite old-fashion

Figure 6.5 Back wall of the baptismal pool is carefully designed

Figure 6.6 Shape of the pointed arch in movable partitions

Elements in a sacred space. Table 6.2 indicates the design preferences to
express either the transcendence or the immanence of God.

Table 6.2: Design Preferences in Relation to Transcendence and Immanence

Categories		
Theology of God	Transcendence (Glorious and majestic)	Immanence (Love and caring)
		Immanence side is presented
Use of symbols	Careful concern in the use of symbols	Simplicity / minimum use of symbols
		Use of typical symbols except the use of baptismal pool and the symbolic use of the colour purple
Atmosphere	Awesomeness / Solemnity	Hospitality
		Hospitable because of the causal mood
Atmosphere	Quietness / Respectfulness	Cheerfulness
	Not a quiet mood	Not really cheerful
Spiritual path	Processional space	Flexible open space
	No consideration of a spiritual progression	Definitely a flexible open space
Space	Sacramental space	Communal space
		More as a communal space
Space	With views to the exterior	Enclosed during services
		Not completely enclosed for they used some films to cover the window with diffusion of sunlight

Space	Spaces clearly defined	Flexible space
		Definitely a flexible open space
Height	High and pointed ceiling	Flat and low ceiling
		Low and exposed ceiling
Light	Dim / Mystical	Brightness
		Bright environment with enough fluorescent lamp
Colour	Dark	Bright
		Bright colour dominated the ambience
Colour	Monotone and natural	Colourful and dynamic
	Monotone and natural	
Material	Natural such as wood and stone	Artificial such as plastic and ceramic tiles
	Prominent natural materials are used for the altar	More artificial materials

The table showed that there was a lack of concern about the traditional design elements. However, in terms of symbols, they had applied symbolic colour apart from the standard and common practices by evangelicals such as the cross, the pulpit, the communion table and the flower arrangement. The design was out of date after ten years.

Worship space. This church design facilitated believers to worship by designing an outstanding altar as a focal point to draw attention in worship. One unique feature which was the use of a bell to announce the commencement of Sunday service. (see figure 6.7)

Figure 6.7 Use a bell to announce the commencement of Sunday service

Community of believers. There was no symbolic design to reflect the spirit

of community of believers. One could interpret that the connotation of the use of

stones to build the back wall of the altar was symbolising the unity of Christians.

Balance between the sacred and the profane in limited space. The design

was not attractive due to the old-fashioned style and the poor spatial planning

and organisation. Design was not the key element in attracting newcomers.

About multi-functional scheme to utilise the limited space, they had movable

partitions but the acoustic effect was unsatisfactory. They used folding chairs and

tables for easy transfer from one activity to another activity, such as the

transformation to a supper venue after Sunday service. With the operation of a

child care centre, the space needed to provide more storage space for the social

services. Basically, the social services did not hinder the existing design as a church.

Researcher's reflection. The first impression of this church design was that it was quite inappropriate as a sacred space. The use of different materials and details in the feature panel was complicated and old-fashion. (see figure 6.8) They even put the photo copier in the entrance area which gave the impression of entering an office instead of a sacred church. (see figure 6.9) The appearance was relatively untidy, might be because of the lack of storage space. During weekdays, because they operated a child care centre, the sacred identity was further reduced. The reflection was that the use of sacred identity in the entrance area was important to remind people about the spiritual quality.

Figure 6.8 Use of different materials and details in the feature panel was old-fashion

Figure 6.9 Photo copier in the entrance area which gives the impression of entering an office instead of a sacred church

About the participation of the worshippers, in Sunday services worshippers could enter the church from both entrances in the lift lobby. People were relatively silent because the common area and the sanctuary were separated by a curtain only. (see figure 6.10) Every Saturday helpers needed to set up the venue for Sunday service. And after service worshippers worked together to set up into Sunday school requirement. The community spirit was built through working together in a limited space to achieve the multi-functional purpose. Worshippers were not required to leave immediately after service. They had the freedom to help in setting up the place and to chat with other worshippers. Nevertheless, because they had only one service in Sunday, there was enough time for the transformation from one setting to another setting.

Figure 6.10 Common area and sanctuary separated by a curtain only

During weekdays, day times were used by the child care centre and night times by church members to hold fellowship, choir practicing, meeting and training. Regularly, during lunchtime, the area was used by a Christian organisation to hold gospel luncheon. Pantry was crucial for this church to provide supper for children or food or snacks for other functions at other times.

6.2.6 Semi-structured Interview

Even tough the immanent side of God was reinforced, when concerning about sacred representation, more selections were clung on the transcendent side. He treasured the traditional value in representing the Divine. Hence, when the discussion of the traditional elements in church design had begun, he agreed that most of the elements was transformable to contemporary usages. However, he disagreed that Christians should build a church reflecting contemporary culture for culture changed constantly and became old-fashioned soon afterwards. Indeed, the representing pastor intended to raise that contemporary quality was

not simply trend; instead, it was the attitude of perceiving something. Contemporary essence was more than application of fashionable style of design.

When discussing about the nature of church, the representing pastor focused on the importance of the community of believers; he also mentioned that church was a place of worship and special design of church was also a means to represent God. His perspective on the sacred was a dichotomy concept and sacred space was somewhere called apart upon for people to dedicate to God.

He expressed that the connection between the interior sanctuary and the exterior secular world was significant; hence the windows with views to the exterior would alert the worshippers the concern of the social community outside. About the affiliated social services, he stressed the importance of their needs but it was vital to preserve the quality of a worshipping space. It was reminded that the practice of multi-functional space could not cast away the sacred quality. He also stated that lay people and non-believers also wanted to experience a church with sacred quality.

6.2.7 Visual Simulation Workshop

Because the data collected was used as a reference only, the description was recorded in appendix 15.

6.3 Analysis of the Field Research Findings

In order to establish the design concept, the researcher analysed from the interview with the representing pastor, meeting with renovation committee, survey of the whole church and workshops to understand their attitude towards different aspects such as transcendence and immanence; sacred/solemn atmosphere and secular/ approachable atmosphere; contemporary and traditional qualities; and the use of symbols. From the workshops, through the selection of themes and representations, one could understand their expectations in building their ideal churches. It was reminded that the diversified ideas from different groups must be resolved tactfully. Ideas from different groups had to be incorporated into the design to indicate that their contributions were valuable.

The concept of constructing a sacred and contemporary church identity was not only recognised by the representing pastor and one of the the professors, who was the consultant of this church but also affirmed by the findings in the workshops of all groups. Furthermore, it was acknowledged by the survey with a balanced viewpoint and endorsed by the discussion with renovation committee. The idea of sacred representation through transformation of traditional elements into contemporary representation was reassured. About the expectation of the theme, the symbol of light was commonly delivered from workshops.

5.4 Design Concept (see Appendix 14 for layout floor plan)

5.4.1 Sanctuary in 3rd floor (see figure5.11)

When the research findings were applied to design concept, the researcher aimed at integrating literature review and user-oriented field research to generate an appropriate design concept. The designer was committed to achieving the best outcome of the design concept through time, budget, continuous investigation and most importantly to the understanding of its implications to the worshippers. From the field research, it was understood that the idea of a sacred and contemporary church design was verified with the transformation of traditional elements into contemporary representation including explicit use of symbols. When the design was carried out from the field research, other issues such as budget control, practicality and durability were also essential. For the case in Sheung Wan Baptist Church, practicality and durability were their prime concern on product design or furnishing. About the construction fee of the design, the researcher would reduce its cost and allocate more budgets on designing the main features otherwise to deliver the spiritual messages, which indeed was the main focus of the whole design process. For example, the cross in the altar area, feature wall in lift lobby and the entrance were the key areas with special design

features, of course the designs of the rest of the areas were corresponding with

each others.

6.11a

6.11b

Figure 6.11 Sanctuary in 3rd floor

6.11c

6.11d

6.11e

6.11f

6.11g

6.11h

6.11i

6.11j

6.11k

6.11l

6.11m

6.11n

6.11o

6.11p

6.11q

6.11r

6.11s

Figure 6.11a,b,c In the lift lobby, the first encounter of the church would be a solemn and serene atmosphere

Figure 6.11d,e,f,g The treatment in the entrance foyer contrasted with the lift lobby which was contemporary and forthcoming for the worshippers and newcomers.

Figure 6.11h Approaching to the altar

Figure 6.11 i-o The cross feature and the altar in different perspectives to deliver the sacred identity

Figure 6.11p.q Another angle of the entrance foyer

Figure 6.11r,s Cabinets with storages, display panels and covered by curtain in worship

When applying the commonly expressed symbol of light into the design, the theme of the design was 'Light from the Cross' which was represented in different aspects such as through the light to guide the ways, the light to uplift the spiritual life, the light to shine to the world and the light to inspire the worshippers. The spiritual path became the key element to link the different representations. Even though the application of spiritual path was the greatest challenge under limited space, it was a significant medium for the deliverance of a sacred space. With the use of different lighting concept as the elements to guide the worshippers to experience the spiritual path, the quest by the informants was fulfilled together with the creation of an impressive spiritual experience. In the lift lobby, the first encounter of the church would be a solemn and serene atmosphere centering with a stoned finish cross in a backdrop of natural stone wall effects to prepare the hearts and souls of the worshippers before entering into the sanctuary. By using linear concealed lighting at bottom level, it created an effect which symbolised the scripture from the Bible illustrating the Word of God as the lamp of footpath and the light of the road to lead worshippers to the sacred space or the sacred home in the world. When one looked at the light from below, one needed to bow down and humble oneself first before one lifted up the eyes to veneration. The main design feature of the entrance was the cross panel.

The treatment here contrasted with the lift lobby which was contemporary and forthcoming for the worshippers and newcomers. When worshippers entered the church after calming their souls in the lift lobby, they would be filled with vibrant ambience. The glass panel cross symbolising the penetrating power with filtering light; and the four panels in the four sides of the cross composed of abstract patterns were used to guide worshippers to lift up their eyes. And there continued their spiritual path from a swing to the entrance; and worshippers approached the sanctuary by walking towards the altar. In the entrance area, the symbolic meaning arose from a linear blue-lighting falling from the ceiling to the altar which attracted worshippers to lift up their eyes and follow towards the cross. It was reflected in workshop two that participants wanted to place the orientation of the altar to the window side. By this action, it would serve two purposes. The first purpose was to enhance the power of light through natural lighting with the use of colour film on the windows behind the altar; with the theme 'from sunrise to sunset' to symbolise the eternal shine from the Divine who was revealed as the Creator of the world. The second purpose was the concept of sanctuary with views to the exterior to symbolise the relationship with the local society. With the cross as the most striking symbol representing the light shining on the worshippers and the light reaching to the world that extended

from the interior to the exterior respectively. The layering concept was further elaborated to create a glass cross panel to reinforce the different perspectives in understanding the messages of the cross. In the glass panel, scripture from the Bible, the Gospel of John 3:16 was inscribed with five languages (Hebrew, Greek, Latin, English and Chinese) to deliver the message of Jesus is the Saviour of the world from ancient to presence. The glass panel was etched with grids to symbolise the unity of the community of believers in Christ. The existence of another layer of the cross paralleling with the grid of the interior layout was also a treatment out of the angled window wall.

The layout of the seats for worshippers and the seats for choir were focusing on the cross in the altar to remind worshippers that Jesus is our target of worship and they would experience the theme of Jesus as light of the world.

In a limited space with multi-functional device, display panels were provided along the wall units; but during Sunday service, they were covered by sheer curtain as a reminder for worshippers to leave their burdens and focus on worshipping God.

When worshippers left the church, scripture from Bible, the Gospel of Mathew 5:14-16 was displayed in the entrance hall to remind worshippers about their roles as light of the world in good witnessing to their neighbours.

6.4.2 Affiliated Hall in 4th floor (see figure 6.12)

The hall was mainly used by the youth of the church and children of the social services. A more energetic approach was introduced in response to the findings from the youth. The theme of the hall was 'Life fills with abundance', through the Biblical teaching of Jesus as the truth, the life and the path to grant believers the meaning of life. By executing this theme, the lift lobby was constructed into contemporary touch, such as delivering a colourful and energetic feature wall through the use of rainbow colours in balloon patterns, and the sunny sky to symbolise a bright future with hope by the light of God. In the panel with balloon- patterns, there was scripture from the Bible, the Gospel of John, 10:10 to proclaim the love of Jesus and He is the life giver. The cross feature was not prominent for it was integrated with the structure to symbolise the incarnation concept. However, the cross was not built with conventional materials, such as wood or stone but with stainless steel as a metaphor of contemporary image of the Deity. At the front part of the hall, the feature imitated the holy scroll which symbolised the eternal truth found from bible which guided believers in seeking of abundant life. In the centre of the scroll was a combination of different images with the theme of path. The path message was expressed through the sea, the land and the sky make harmony with the scriptural

message. Apart from the scroll, there was a rustic-finish cross to contrast with

the contemporary touch to remind worshippers that without God's suffering and

resurrection 2000 years ago, believers would not experience the eternal love of

God.

Figure 6.12 Affiliated Hall in 4th floor

Figure 6.12a Lift lobby

Figure 6.12b Feature panel

Figure 6.12c Rustic cross feature

6.4.3 Solutions to Achieve Contemporary and Sacred Church Design

There was no definite solution on the scheme to deliver a contemporary and sacred representation. The generation of a design guideline could facilitate the design process with a holistic reflection on the exploration; for example, by the use of contemporary materials together with natural materials, which were traditionally associated with sacred space could be one solution. (see figure 6.13) Without careful consideration, random combining of contemporary elements and sacred elements would often cause conflicts or have design resulting in a limbo situation.
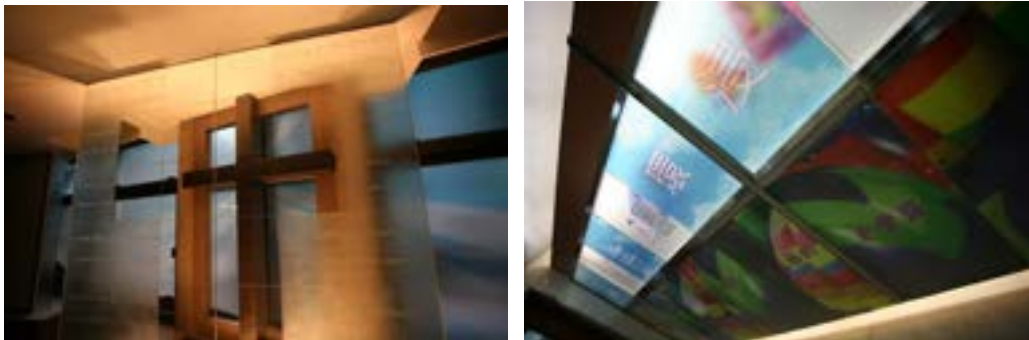
Figure 6.13 Use of contemporary materials together with natural materials

Figure 6.14 Carefully highlight of sharp colour instead of large surfaces on wall

Use of contemporary design language was another means but the use of sharp colour would hinder the sacred representation. A careful highlight of sharp colour instead of large surfaces on wall would deliver a more appropriate effect as a sacred space (see figure 6.14). Practically, contemporary approach of simple style could integrate well with church design under limited budget. Simplicity in design could eliminate overly-elaborated details which would also reduce the cost.

Multi-media elements could be another medium to create sacred symbols in a contemporary way but the cost would be more expensive due to the need of equipments installation. In this case study, however, the budget allocation did not allow the exploration in this aspect.

6.5 Design Reflection:

6.5.1 Transformation of Traditional Design Elements. When the reflection on the use of traditional elements was conducted, elements the researcher used were the search of sacred representation, such as natural lighting, spiritual path, proper entrance and symbols.

Table 6.3 expresses the reasons for the application of some elements and the reasons why other elements could not be applied: (The description here is for the

explanation in a design perspective in this case; whether the elements are still valid to sustain in contemporary context is another issue to be discussed.)

Table 6.3: Application of the 12 Pillars in Traditional Church Design in Sheung Wan Baptist Church

Common practices	Remarks
Search for sacred spatial representation. Prominent sacred architecture as landmark	In biblical times, sacred spatial representations were instructed by God. We recognised that after apostolic period, throughout history, different believers in different periods were designing new approach in church design to represent God.
Churches inside building only added exterior signage to identify the existence. The consideration was whether the signage was prominent enough to stand out from the surrounding environment. In terms of spatial representation, under the limitation of flat space, Christians would explore a contemporary urban way of spatial representation of sacred space.	
Induce symbolic meaning to the architectural design.	e.g. nave means ship, ceiling and dome to denote heaven; Orientation of altar facing east; Sacred geometry, proportion (Barrie, 1996, p67).
Under the limitation of a flat space inside building, it was hard to deliver. For example, a cross plan for the sanctuary means that we must have a rectangular space to begin with and the 4 corners were cut to form rooms for other functions. It would end up with a waste of space in terms of area relationship and a waste of window area for sanctuary uses. About the ceiling, for the height was limited to around 2800mm, a dome ceiling was not the case. To create a ceiling to denote heavenly image in flat space with beams would segment the graphics into pieces. In terms of budgetting, using ceiling to denote heaven would be quite expensive as well. Alternatively, use of artificial lighting effect to suggest that light from above would be possible. To summarise, interior design project had a lot of restrictions to deliver this	

essence.	
Use of Christian symbols	God used symbols to communicate with human and through symbols, human would understand God better. Therefore, symbols were introduced to deliver messages in Church.

The most dominant symbol was the cross and that put it in doors, feature walls and altar.

The symbol of lighting was another theme I can manipulate, such as light from below in lift lobby to lead the worshipper to the way to entrance. Then, light from above to guide you to lift up; and natural light in front to experience the power of light from nature.

Because of space limitation, the use of symbols must be selective. Different denominations had different focuses of using some symbols. Apart from the most prominent ones such as the cross, the use of lighting, the pulpit, the bible and the flower arrangement, other symbols such as the use of dove alone required careful consideration for it associated with charismatic movement. The use of dove needed to be re-evaluated. Even though dove was a common symbol for Christianity, when the researcher proposed to use it prominently in the lift lobby, it was reminded that it could be easily associated with charismatic stream which was not the theological approach of the Baptist. Hence, the consideration of the size and location of the symbol should be thoughtfully considered.

Use of art such as painting, stained glass, sculpture and fresco	A powerful means to deliver message especially in the past for those who are illiterates. Artistic elements were employed to transform the Church into a three dimensional story book.

Ideally, an artwork made by their members would be displayed but if churches needed to buy original artworks, cost was a major hinderance. Churches preferred to buy the mass produced ones. Sculpture was the hardest to be applied for it occupied floor space. If a church needed to spend extra money on buying artwork, difficulties would be encountered. The kind of artwork applied in this project was photo montages in some graphic panels

Proper designed entrance and facade	Traditionally, grandiose entrance with porch was designed. The first encounter of sacredness and the separation of the sacred and the profane

The design of a proper entrance to differentiate the sacred from the profane world was applied. In this project, a welcoming entrance was designed; the impact of sacredness was the large cross which one would see through from the entrance door. Apparently, the realisation of entering a sacred space began from the lift lobby. The design of the lift lobby was sacred and distinctive from outside world to remind people of entering a sacred space. The mood was changed when one turned an angle to walk ahead and open the entrance door to experience the dynamic effect of this sacred church space.

Progression of space	A sacred path for worshippers to proceed in order to prepare their hearts to worship God. Raised platform as altar for the clergy at the end of the central aisle

From lift lobby onwards, the serenity was created and led to the entrance which was more contemporary. When the lift was opened, a stone effect tile wall with a simple big cross as the feature wall to create a serene atmosphere. Following the light from below guides one to the entrance, a bright and dynamic cross inside the entrance area was used to lead the eye to look at the light from above. Turning right, one would see the light through the windows in front.

It was discovered that with a lift lobby, somehow it was good in terms of creating a spiritual path for there was another compartment which would create a change in ambience. The site was suitable in creating a path without wasting space, for one-flat churches focus on usability and capacity to sit more people.

Manipulation of light and shadow such as rose window, stained glass window	The drama and symbolic meaning generated by light were always associated with the power and glory of God.

The location of the altar turned to the window side for the lighting effect would be more prominent for the attendants were facing the light source while worshipping. The concern was whether the natural lighting would create glare to human eyes or not. Apart from natural lighting, artificial lightings were applied in the whole interior design with special symbolic effects such as suggesting lighting from above to shine onto the altar.

Reinforce the height of the nave with high ceiling, pointed roof, vault, arch or column to reflect the transcendence of God	High in scale was a popular and effective element to let worshipper to experience the transcendence of God.

It was not applicable due to the height limitation of the site. Sacred space was not

necessary to associate with tall ceiling height. Instead, as discussed, the immanent attribute was more relevant to one flat church.	
Honest use in natural materials such as wood and stone.	Materials such as stone or timber were exposed without disguise. Honesty was one of the virtues of Church.
It was hard to apply because natural materials are expensive. The tiles in stone finish were used for they are cheaper. The plastic laminate in wood veneer finishes making it more durable and cheaper as well.	
Designated activities in different areas	Church had enormous space. A cathedral could have many small radiating chapels inside to remember different saints. Different areas were named separately with different functions.
Contrary to this, multi-functional was the scheme. Even the raised platform for altar area could be transformed to performance stage. The sanctuary could be transformed into dinning hall as well. Child care room could be used as counselling and meeting room.	
Selection of location	High position, prominent location such as near the square or remembrance of saints
Not applicable for the church has already selected the site.	
Consecrated – the symbolic christening of the space	Altar was consecrated
The church had conducted a dedication ceremony to consecrate the sanctuary and to reinforce the significance of a sacred church.	

6.5.2 Community of Believers

Layout of Seating. Even though the researcher realised that a relational layout which facilitates better connection between worshippers was appropriate but under limited space, it was hard to apply because maximum capacity was the goal. However, because the planned capacity was not yet reached at the time

after renovation, temporary, the relational layout could be applied by arranging the chairs into a semicircular plan. Once the capacity was reached, and this was not the first priority.

Use of grid pattern to symbolise unity. In this design, the glass panel cross was stretched with grid pattern to symbolise the unity of the community of believers. Use of tiles came naturally with grid pattern also served this effect. However, this symbolic meaning required education before the functions of the symbols could be laid out.

6.5.3 Place of Worship

Orientation of Altar and Use of Natural Light. It was not necessary to put much effort in conveying the concept of using more natural lighting and placing the window side as the back of altar. Apart from delivering a symbolic message in worship to let the light of God to shine upon worshippers, this orientation created an layout which would reduce the distance from far corners to the pulpit in the altar. Comparing to the longitudinal layout usually practiced by liturgical churches, Protestant preferred a layout which would reduce the physical distance between worshippers and preacher. However, some protestant churches did not pay attention to this. One solution from observation was the addition of big

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screen in the middle of the longitudinal layout to reduce the physical distance visually.

The seat arrangement of the choir facing the cross in the middle of the altar was another scheme to reinforce the significance of adoration to the subject of worship which was Jesus Christ.

The action of covering the display panels inside wall unit in the sanctuary was another symbolic action to avoid worshippers being distracted from sermons.

6.5.4 House of God

Symbolic representation. The design intended to deliver the concept of house to represent God through the sacred quality. It was delivered through symbolic representation and was integrated in the entire design concept.

6.5.5 Multi-functional Scheme and User Creativity Scheme

Use of panels which allow users to design. As a user-oriented design, apart from understanding the users through different research methods, the researcher tried to introduce some panels for users to input their creativity into the environment. Although, the final designs of the panels would be produced by the researcher, these panels could be altered or arranged in a manner for subsequent

uses. The themes were brainstormed with them and were deduced from analysis of the workshops.

Display Space. In a limited space, when there was a lack of corridor space for poster display, the sanctuary had to be used to display as well. Thus, the researcher had designed a wall unit with display panels, but it would be covered in time of services in order not to disturb the ambience (see figure 6.11r,s).

The researcher had to design a name card display board in addition to the poster display which would be covered when not in use.

Storage device. Because spaces were very valuable, basically, storages were kept in cabinet along walls. The researcher had designed the low cabinet area to store the folding table and folding chairs. There was a rooftop which could be turned to storage space. After considering the building regulations, it was proposed to install a legitimate movable metal frame canopy.

In order to wisely ultilise every corner under limited space, the bench for choir in the platform also served as a storage space integrating with the platform space.

6.5.6 Others

Trust relationship. Sheung Wan Baptist Church had a trusting relationship with the designer which gave the designer freedom to make design decisions emphasising the creativity of the design.

Delivering the design concepts under the challenge of practical concern. Use of cross feature with structure extended from interior to exterior – apart from the extra cost, the safety regulation and insurance coverage of device hanging on the outdoor must be taken into account.

Use of a glass door entrance to deliver a welcoming image – one of the difficulties was the cost of a fire proof glass door was three times more expensive than a fire proof wooden door with a small glass panel. Clear glass door would be more inviting; however, the glass door effect had to be surrendered because of the fire escape regulations and the site constraints.

Use of lighting – The light fixture of the 4th floor changed from pendant lamp shade for compact fluorescent lamp to rectangular fluorescent light box because they preferred a brighter effect. However, the institutional image was inappropriate with the ambience of worshipping environment.

Use of lighting for 3rd floor – cost. A relatively more expensive effect was not proposed in the beginning in order to save money despite of a more aesthetic

appealing outcome. As mentioned above, careful budgeting on some design features was the prime concern. When there arose doubts about the use of pendant lamp shade and preference over the brighter effect of rectangular fluorescent light box, the researcher expressed the idea of coffer ceiling design concept which would be more expensive than simply installing light fixtures (see figure 5.11h). The lesson for the researcher was however a more costly design solution could only be communicated when the timing was right.

Environmental friendly and energy saving. The researcher tried to use energy saving light sources such as compact fluorescent bulb and fluorescent tube for the general ambience. Only a few tungsten lamps and halogen lamps as spotlight were used. The dilemma was the application of LED which had a high set up cost but was low in energy consumption cost and was highly durable. Hence, the pulpit and the communion table used LED in its limited lighting installation space.

Use of roller blinds to cover the notice board in the full height cabinet – concerning about the cost and the durability, the roller blinds were replaced by curtains. Informants also questioned about whether this detail would create wastage of space and it was explained that the low cabinet was usually deeper

than the upper part; and the design was simply manipulating the difference of depth to create an alcove effect with lighting and curtain.

Use of a proper reception and waiting area – under this planning, space would be segmented. Once at the time of layout marking on site, members from the renovation team altered the layout to gain more space for the entrance foyer. Eventually, another meeting was arranged to clarify the aim of this design approach and the initial design was retained.

Chair and flooring – due to tight budget, it was decided not to change the existing ceramic tile flooring and the folding chairs. From the design point of view, it was not most feasible aesthetically but it was acceptable.

Use of open ceiling – it would reduce the budget but the exposed services would be quite distracting and messy. However, in order to reduce construction cost, it was proposed to have the electrical and mechanical services in the ceiling painted in black; but this church would like a brighter effect, so the use of coffer ceiling solved the problem of open ceiling and concealed the electrical and mechanical services without darkening the true ceiling and services.

Location of air-conditioning – In low ceiling height, the direct air flow from the ceiling mount type split unit would make some places overly cold.

Location of projection screen – Projection screen was better not to block the view of the cross. In a space with low ceiling height, the screen should be mounted as high as possible. Lighting control was important to dim the lighting output when projection was used. If budget allowed, purchasing a good quality projector would be a practical choice.

Existence of columns in the centre part of the sanctuary – Wall mounted television on columns blocking the view to the altar had solved the problem of existence of columns in the centre of the sanctuary.

Feature wall in lift lobby – consideration must be made on the fire services regulations irrespective of the use of fire proof materials or the obstruction to fire escape route. In the 4th floor lift lobby, the researcher had created a kind of full-height cabinet for display purpose with light feature inside but the consideration of fire proof material had affected the design layout.

5.6 Review after Completion

In terms of the design, it was received by the researcher praises and appreciation from the Sheung Wan Baptist Church Renovation Team Committee, church members and visitors. Despite the design concept was very well accomplished, there was always rooms for improvement. When the consultant of

the church wrote an article about the church design concept, he affirmed the significance of design through historical and theological perspective. He clearly explained the design concepts step by step to educate church members to understand the symbolic values.

Through this case study, the researcher wishes to encourage church leaders to build their churches with a firm conviction to use the sacred space to uplift the adoration of worshippers. This case study has been a successful example to illustrate that theology and space in church design are closely linked, and a sacred and contemporary church design is inter-dependent in well developed design churches in Hong Kong.

Chapter 7: Conclusion – Theoretical implication

The conclusion addresses and gives suggestions to the research questions in detail which carefully summarises the research process and analysis in the chapters.

This study is substantial as church design is an area which has lost its sacred identity in urban environment under limited space. It has become a substantive issue not only because of its loss of sacred identity but also of its lack of holistic representation of the attributes from church. Primarily, this study aims to illustrate the significance of the inter-relationship between traditional elements and contemporary representation for a holistic approach in church design. Only through this approach, the sacred identity can be transcended with the presence of contemporary and sacred qualities. The majority of Hong Kong churches would incline to focus on the need of multi-functional scheme which has nonetheless dominated the design approach; especially where space is a constraint in which social services and religious activities occur. Under the influence of simplified living style, limited resources and budget, having a sophisticated design is often not the churches' prime concern – churches have overlooked the monumental effects of the sacred identity in church design. They often focus on an attractive contemporary outlook to non-believers. The

phenomenon reveals that design of sacred space has been surrendered which brings to the identity crisis of church. In the design industry, the creation of sacred space under densely populated urban environment is a great challenge. Creative thinking has to be implied to search for urban and contemporary representation in church design without loosing the sacredness. The theory and practice upheld by Robert Webber (2002) would inspire Hong Kong churches to improve the situation. This study endeavours to inspire creative and pertinent designs in small-scale churches distinctive in Hong Kong with solid theoretical standpoint and detail practical application.

From the field research, experiences have been collected from the site observations of churches both incorporated with design and no design, interviews with pastors and professors and the expectations from visual simulation workshops.

Some significant findings revealed that considerable churches are prepared to invest money on design but the representation of sacred quality on the reflection of unique identity of church is downplayed. But the case study found that the informants would still prefer to have a church with sacred identity. Professors from the Theological seminary have delivered insightful ideas, such as the significance of creating a wonder effect when one encounters a church the

concept of sacredness may not necessarily mean awesomeness; however, it may denote an immanent representation of God on the other hand; and the solemnity of God should not be overpowered by the offering of hospitality. Under these challenges, the design of sacred space is vital - with the use of elements incorporating symbolic meaning and progression of space.

Despite the trend towards the immanent side of God in this insecure and busy urban city, churches should however play the role as community space for the delivering of community spirits such as building the sense of belonging of the community and its identity. The concept of community delivered by sociologist Cohen (1985) vitalized the use of symbols to build the sacred identity. Therefore churches must recall the importance of creating sacred church identity and create unique spaces for church members to utilise with.

7.1 Evaluation of the Hypothesis, Research Questions and Theoretical Standpoints

After all the literature review and the field works, the researcher has to evaluate the hypothesis of this research thesis in detail. The hypothesis is "**It was hypothesised that designing church as a small scale community space in densely populated urban environment requires to put a balance between**

community need and sacred identity with the application of contemporary design." It means that identity is vital to one-flat church; theology has to be generated in church design; this church is serving in a community and both sacred identity and contemporary quality are inevitable.

Under this hypothesis, one main research question and six research questions have been designed.

Main research question: How to design one-flat churches with physical constraints and multi-functional needs while preserving sacred and contemporary qualities simultaneously.

Six research questions:

Theoretical investigation:

1. Is there still a relationship between theology and church design in contemporary setting?

2. What is the role of design in creating a relevant sacred identity of contemporary church?

3. Why is it essential to create a church design with contemporary vocabulary?

Application investigation:

4. What are the considerations for the deliverance of sacred quality through the transformation of traditional essence without literal imitation of traditional elements, into contemporary representation?

5. How to express the immanent nature of God in church design?

6. For churches in densely populated urban environment with spatial limitations, how to deal with functional requirements such as multi-functional scheme and transformable space from sacred to secular usage and vice versa but without surrendering the sacred quality?

From the hypothesis and research questions, four theoretical standpoints have been established.

1. Theology and sacred space are inter-related.

2. Search for the contemporary representation of Christ in church design without surrendering the sacred identity.

3. Search for the sacred identity of one-flat church in densely populated urban environment.

4. Transformation from traditional experience to contemporary sacred representation.

To answer the main research question, the research process addressed the understanding of the physical constraints and the multi-functional needs especially through observation. In terms of church representation, schema three in literature review differentiated the different types of church design. Through different research methods, it was indicated that preserving sacred and contemporary qualities simultaneously is essential. From literature review, a contemporary representation of the sacred identity is vital and it is continuously investigated in Western church design. These kinds of churches are usually occupying individual building with ample spaces. However, church design in Hong Kong is not developed in this manner or is not following this trend anyway. Moreover, theology and church design in a majority of churches are neglected. The key assumption behind this investigation leads to the first research question in respect to the relationship between theology and church design in contemporary setting.

From the field work, the first research question about the relationship of theology and spatial design in Hong Kong church design is not revealed prominently. The survey of Hong Kong churches reveals that churches with professional design prefer to create a contemporary outlook to attract newcomers and this is described as a seeker-sensitive approach. From site observations of the

selected seven churches, when the phenomenon are analysed under the perspective of 'theology of church and sacred identity', one would discover that the churches are designed without in-depth theological discussion. The most outstanding theological concern in respect to design implication is to reinforce the idea of the community of believers in design, such as creating a semi-circular layout to enhance the mutual contact of worshippers.

There is a dilemma between practicality and theology in church design as suggested in the interview and workshop findings respectively that ideally worshippers prefer to have elements of sacred identity but in reality these elements are often not represented explicitly in church.

From site observation of 171 Hong Kong churches, the phenomenon of churches without sacred identity is indeed considered rather serious when compared to Western experiences. When churches in Hong Kong encounter site constraints such as low ceiling height, limited floor area and limited budget, these constraints often become hindrances for the exploration of a contemporary representation of Christ in an urban setting. The scenario is discouraging when churches are reluctant to contextualise the message through the design of sacred space as a means to create spiritual experience. Yet, it is encouraging to find that professors in seminary agreed to the importance of a contemporary sacred space

as suggested in this research, and they affirmed that the finding of a balance between theology and church design cannot overlooked and they are closely related. From interview, most of the pastors confirm the significance of design and they agree that a professional church design will support worship and attract newcomers. Hence, more communication should bring forth between pastors and designers for the search of sacred identity in a contemporary context so as to rattle the settlement of a plain contemporary design.

When the importance of creating sacred space is acknowledged from the literature review, it poses a challenge to educate Hong Kong churches to put more resources in exploring the this issue. Church is also bearing the representation as a house of God. The reality that the sacred space exists in the contemporary urban environment must be embraced by churches.

It is when some churches with sacred identity segregate themselves from the secular world, and thus surrender their design elements associated with secular culture that this paper stands, it raises the urgency of the issue on the separation of the sacred and the profane. It is also hoped that a breakthrough can be mounted between these two extreme walls and a continuum can be reached finally. And through this research, stimulation from different secular disciplines, such as community, urban environment, contemporary culture and environmental

psychology can be instilled into future church designs. Succinctly, this study endeavours to influence churches to have different perspectives of theologies behind church design and to absorb the positive impacts to secular disciplines in order to embrace the richness of both contemporary and sacred church design inter-dependently. Hence, the role of design needs to be explored.

The second research question is about the role of design in creating a relevant sacred identity of contemporary church. From the observations and interviews, the role of design is to create a decent and contemporary looking church atmosphere to attract newcomers. From the interviews, pastors also affirm that design can facilitate the active participation of worshippers. Church design in Hong Kong is not well developed as compared to Western church design. However, Hong Kong churches have unique characters, such as flat space with low ceiling height, which can be a distinctive character for urban churches. In terms of design, it is more challenging to work with limited space to deliver a sophisticated solution. This searching of sacred representation is the edge in church architectural history when churches situate in urban environment with many constraints. The value of this design approach can mark a new era in church design. When Christians claim that their creativity is inspired by the

Divine, this study endeavours to discover more successful examples in this unique scenario and hopefully instills diverse perspectives from the different qualities of church design.

Through the workshops, informants are keen on expressing their design ideas to contribute to their ideal church design. Through the design process, members are engaged in the development of the church design and the sense of belonging is built accordingly. Actually, the contribution by members is important in setting up the criteria for the design solution. As the conduction of the workshops is under the case study from research to design, informants are keen to see how their ideas can be integrated into the final design. It is recommended that a design process with user participation could have multiple benefits. From field research, the role of design is not simply on creating a relevant church identity but also facilitating the active participation of members in order to build their sense of belonging.

Apart from affirmation of design, the quality of the church space has to be established as well. The third research question is to investigate whether it is essential to create a church design with contemporary vocabulary. From the field research, church design with contemporary vocabulary is a growing trend. The

main purpose is to attract newcomers. From the observations, the contemporary

representation somehow deviated from the representation of the sacred identity.

When contemporary vocabulary is applied, the sacred quality is somehow

lacking. This paper aims to reassure the contemporary representation of sacred

identity which is affirmed from the literature review, interviews with pastors and

professors in theological seminary. For churches with no design, the implication

of contemporary vocabulary can assist in creating a welcoming atmosphere. For

churches with imitation of traditional design, the transformation by applying

contemporary vocabulary can breakthrough the image of a static and

old-fashioned church atmosphere (The researcher is not commenting on churches

with their own individual buildings and application of a variety of revival styles;

for they are another category which has delivered a solemn traditional image of

church without the site limitation of flat space and low ceiling height).

Theoretically, a church design which can reflect contemporary essence can

breakthrough the image of an old-fashion institution. Hence, a contemporary

representation is more welcoming and helpful in attracting newcomers.

While this paper aims to search for a sacred and contemporary church

design, different topics from theology to history and to identification of key

theological concerns have been investigated. The target is not to deduce one

specific style of representation as different church architectural styles appear throughout history. And in contemporary culture under the influence of post-modern culture, it is irrelevant to deliver one specific style. However, the researcher has produced a thorough summary of proposed design guides for future considerations (design guidelines) for pastors and designers to consider in the process of designing a church.

After summarising the three theoretical questions, the application side of church design is of equal importance in giving guidance practically. The fourth research question is the consideration for the deliverance of sacred quality through the transformation of traditional essence without literal imitation of traditional elements into contemporary representation. This study aims to promote the transformation from traditional experience to contemporary sacred representation. Even though the use of traditional elements is not a common practice in Hong Kong churches, this is the utmost quality in search of sacred identity. One can imagine that churches searching for contemporary expression to attract newcomers do not require applying any traditional elements. However, the theology of younger evangelicals which highlights the respect of both traditional and contemporary qualities is significant. Both traditional and

contemporary elements can compliment each other to represent the sacred and contemporary quality of church.

This paper disagrees with the idea that sacredness of church building is a barrier for social outreach. When more people in the post-modern era search for spiritual meaning in their life, experience with the sacredness has become an essential part of an urban environment. The scenario from the site observation is that more churches determine to deliver a welcoming entrance to break the threshold fear and the sacred quality is experienced in the sanctuary. From the case study, when the design of a spiritual path was delivered, the sacred quality was introduced in the lift lobby to cleanse the soul and to calm the heart; when worshippers exit from the lift lobby into the entrance, they then experienced a sense of welcoming and contemporary atmosphere. The 12 traditional essences generated from literature review and study trips can serve as a foundation in church design.

Through the transformation of traditional essence, contemporary church design inherits from historical knowledge in searching for contemporary representation. The researcher believes that church design should have a solid foundation in historical perspective in order to consolidate an appropriate contemporary expression.

One of the traditional essences which is not applied with careful thought is the use of light. From the observations, windows are always covered with curtains to block the outdoor light from entering in. One reason is to black out the space for AV projection purpose. The other reason is to block the messy exterior view from disturbing the worship atmosphere. In the case study, feedback from worshippers prefers to apply the use of natural light into the design. More investigation could be conducted in this manner to find more solutions to avoid the view of a messy high rise building as well as the glare generated by natural light when facing windows.

It is advised to apply the spiritual path in church design for this approach can let worshippers to experience a change in atmosphere. Especially when churches would like to integrate contemporary and sacred representations together, the sacred atmosphere can be applied in the entrance to calm the soul and gradually introducing the contemporary languages into the sacred space. Contemporary Western church design has many high-quality examples. One can explain that Western churches located in individual church buildings with sufficient site opportunity to create spiritual path. However, churches in limited spaces can be a challenge such as the case study examples discussed earlier.

It is also recommended to search for contemporary representation of

symbols. Through the literature review, symbols can perform great impact to worshippers. Of course, education is required in order to successfully deliver the message. Through the observations, symbols such as lamp, dove and shepherd are used regularly but mainly in posters and leaflets for temporary purpose. In logos of some churches, symbols such as fire and dove are used as well. The researcher would like to encourage more exploration of different symbols as permanent artworks to deliver the sacred identity.

The fifth research question is to encounter the criteria for expressing the immanent nature of God in church design. In order to search for the identity of one-flat church in densely populated urban environment, the immanent nature of God plays an unthinkable role. It does not mean that this paper deemphasise the transcendent quality; however, the interview findings reveal that almost all pastors elect the expression of the immanent nature of God and agree that transcendent quality is somewhat more difficult to deliver, and likewise in the case of God's relevance to urbanite. This scenario also aligns with Torgerson's (2007) analysis that church architecture for the immanence is the trend.

From site observations, majority of churches with low ceiling height and limited space. This kind of site characteristic is in favour of representing the

immanent nature of God. It is recommended that churches in urban environment should admit this limitation and transform it into an advantage in searching for a contemporary immanent representation. This kind of immanent representation in church design under urban setting can be a new era in church design history.

The last research question is regarding churches in densely populated urban environment with spatial limitations. How to deal with functional requirements such as multi-functional scheme and transformable space from sacred to secular usage and vice versa without surrendering the sacred quality? It is revealed that every church has applied multi-functional scheme in the designs in different manners. The most commonly seen practice is the use of movable partitions. However, good quality ones are costly and most churches installs low quality products which could not fulfil the task satisfactory.

Due to its multi-functional nature, the areas must be flexible in conducting different activities. This criterion has created identity crisis for church design. From the observations, churches with affiliated social services are the most difficult in delivering the sacred identity. The design of the space is tailored mainly for the social services with minimum exploration for the sacred identity. Moreover, the sacred elements usually focused on the altar design.

It is advisable to apply multi-media to transform the space from the secular to the sacred. Especially when the facilities of the social services occupied the space, the installed sacred elements were minimal. Through the projection of sacred images to reveal the sacred quality can be one of the favourable contemporary languages.

7.2 Summary

The identity of a church should be represented by the three attributes simultaneously. Apart from representing church as the place of worship and as a community of believers, church as the house of God is imminent. The exploration of a church design to represent God of this age is a traditional practice church leaders should not neglect. It is a theological issue to explore contemporary representation of God through church design. Believers and non-believers can experience the nature of God through a theologically based church design.

Moreover, church leaders need to face the challenge of church design in densely populated urban environment with limited space. Hence, presenting the immanent quality of God is relevant in a small worship space. Due to limited space and the extension of church to provide social services, the sacred identity

is lost in many cases. This research affirms that the sacred quality must not be surrendered under the practical need of the provision of social services. In order to reduce the threshold fear of entering a church, some church leaders opt to create a church atmosphere with strong contemporary quality and weak sacred identity.

When churches are situated in urban environment, the contemporary quality is essential. However, it is vital to employ contemporary vocabularies to create the sacred identity. It is suggested that the image of sacred identity through contemporary vocabularies still gives a welcoming impression to newcomers; this approach aims to breakthrough the threshold fear and create a meditative space for worshippers. In reality, the spiritual path is essential such as the experience of a solemn entrance to calm the soul and a reception foyer with contemporary vocabularies to enhance the relevance of church and the society.

This research endeavours to inspire pastors to re-think about the use of an environment to deliver the message. It means that theology and church design are closely related. It is understood that there is a theological position that church design is not the priority in a church; a place is sacred because of the presence of God.

However, in our contemporary world, spatial representation is significant

and people can experience God through different senses. In secular world, church leaders have to use various channels secular people are familiar with. Design is one of the channels. However, church leaders should not simply choose a design only entertains non-believers. As discussed, design which can generate a wonder feeling in a religious sense is essential.

Eventually, church leaders are motivated to agree that this approach is a contemporary method to reveal God. In different periods in the past centuries, God uses relevant methods to reveal Himself. It means that a contemporary representation is essential to express a kind of creativity granted by God.

In order to achieve these recommendations, providing education is essential to arouse more communication between church leaders. Professors from a seminary has affirmed the significance of this research, and workshops have been conducted with theological students to raise the awareness of church design.

Church leaders are encouraged to pay reference to traditional essence in church design such as the use of spiritual path and symbols. For a better effect, church leaders need to educate their church members about the meaning of Christian symbols. This research aims to differentiate from direct imitation of traditional styles with transformation of traditional essence into contemporary

representation given there are many traditional qualities in which contemporary church design can learn.

When church leaders plan to choose a design for a new church, there arises primary issues in the concept of design such as: transcendent or immanent, traditional or contemporary, sacred or secular, and multi-purpose or single-purpose. As a worship space, it should be a place for meditation and a place which can generate a wonder feeling. Hence, a balance between practical function and spiritual function is vital. It means that the three attributes of church must be presented simultaneously in church design in order to fulfill the vision of establishing church in the world.

Chapter 8: Appendices

Appendix 1
Eight Principles of Worship (Webber (Ed.), 1994)

In the book *The Complete Library of Christian Worship* edited by renowned scholar Robert E. Webber (1994), he wrote about the eight principles of worship which was mentioned in the chapter 'Understanding the Principles of Worship'.

1. Worship celebrates Christ -Worship is based on the history of salvation; Worship is event-oriented
2. Worship tells and acts out the Christ event
3. In worship God speaks and acts – The Word as reminder of God's presence; sacraments as sign acts
4. Worship is an act of communication
5. In worship we respond to God and to each other – responses as inner experience, worship demands obedience and renewal
6. Worship is an act of the people
7. Worship makes effective use of God's creative gifts – worship involves the whole person, time, art, and space enhance worship
8. Worship as a way of life

Appendix 2
Explanation of the Three Worship Models (Webber (Ed.), 1994)

In the book *The Complete Library of Christian Worship*, the three worship models were elaborated as follows:

Robert Taft explained that "Liturgical worship: enactment of salvation history – for those who approach worship from a liturgical and sacramental point of view, Christian worship is an action which recalls the events of the history of salvation. This recollection which is based on biblical models of worship, is not simply an intellectual remembering; it becomes an actual participation in the saving event through forms of worship empowered by the Holy Spirit and received in faith"(Webber (Ed.), 1994, p.266).

Timothy Mayfied elaborated that "Free-Church worship: ascribing worth to God – Free-church worship occupies a middle position between the liturgical/ sacramental forms of worship and the informal worship of many charismatic churches. Whereas free churches may follow a formal order of service, their worship does not conform to historic Eucharist-centered liturgies. This worship has three objectives: to speak to God, to listen to God, and to respond to God – a sequence based on the ancient biblical structure of proclamation and response. This style of worship is found in evangelical and fundamental churches as well as in many mainline Protestant congregations. Many Pentecostal churches also use a free-church format in their Sunday morning services" (Webber (Ed.), 1994, p.272).

Gregory Wilde mentioned that "Charismatic worship: responding to the Spirit – Worship, for Pentecostal and charismatic Christians, is an expression of the experience and empowerment of the Holy Spirit – an event which for many brings the Scriptures to life and continuously incarnates Jesus Christ in his church. The release of a life of praise, of intercession, and of spirirtual gifts for ministry takes place in the setting of the body of Christ at worship" (Webber (Ed.), 1994, p.275).

Appendix 3

Checklist for Site Observation

Ref. No.:

Name of the Church:

Denomination:

Year of establishment:

Pastor in charge:

Number of staff:

Number of membership: Church

                                Social services

Number of services attendants:

Location:

Building types:

Rent / Buy:

Date of Visit:

Contact Person:

Contact Numbers:

Activities— Social Services (Please tick when appropriate)		Activities— Religious (Please tick when appropriate)	
Elderly		Fellowship (nos.:)	
C&Y integrated		Cell group (nos.:)	
Family integrated		Executive meeting	
Self studying		Counseling	
Kindergarten		Service	
Child care		Prayer meeting	
Nursery		Training course	
Studying tutorial		Sunday school	
Community service		Marriage ceremony (Occasional)	
Medical service		Ceremony (Occasional)	
Counseling service		Baptism (Occasional)	
Others		Eucharist	
		Choir practicing	
Symbols (Please mark the media to present the symbols)		Worship team practicing	
Cross		Administration	
Jesus		Food preparation	
Biblical figure		Love feast (Occasional)	

Angel	Game	
Lamb	Party (Occasional)	
Dove	AV show	
Eagle	Reading	
Candle	Borrowing books	
Flower arrangement	Waiting	
Altar	Meditation	
Large chalice and bread	Small group sharing	
Small chalice and bread	Christmas (Occasional)	
Biblical story	Easter (Occasional)	
water	Chatting	
Nature	Enquiry	
Water	Others	
Pulpit		
Communion table		
Baptismal pool or font		
Others		
Remarks: Media with symbols (Checklist for marking)	**Interior: Furniture / Facilities** (Please tick when appropriate)	
1.Sculpture	Altar	
2.Relief	Communion table	
3.Carving	Pulpit	
4.Painting	Choir pew	
5.Poster	Pew	
6.Wood craft	chair	
7.Ceramic	Piano	
8.Display gift	Organ	
9.Lamp	Band	
10.Cloths	AV control system	
11.Floor pattern	Lighting panel	
12.Furniture	Screen	
13.Metal craft	Projector	
14.Logo	Baptismal font	
15.Signage	Baptismal pool	
16.Banner	stage	
17.Light box	Book shelves	
18.Stainless glass	Display rack	

19.Window		Signage	
20.Curtain		Display system	
21.Others		Personnel board of pastoral team	
		Boards for different departments	
		Security system	
		Washroom	
		Pantry / Kitchen	
		Others	
Display system (Please tick when appropriate)		**Multi-functional scheme** (Please tick when appropriate)	
Display cork board		Folding partition	
Stick on windows		Folding chair	
Stick on doors		Stackable chair	
Hanging from ceiling		Folding table	
Stick on glass panel		Convertible device	
Stick on walls		Storage	
Hanging display rack		Movable stage	
Display rack		Multi-media	
Display cabinet		Others	
Display shelves			
Others			
Wall finishes (Please tick when appropriate)		**Flooring types** (Please tick when appropriate)	
Wallpaper		Vinyl tile	
Emulsion paint		Vinyl wall to wall	
Washable paint		Carpet tile	
Ceramic tiles		Carpet wall to wall	
Wooden panel		Wood	
Wooden dado panel		Ceramic tile	
Acoustic tile		Stone	
Fabric panel		Plastering	
Mirror		Paint	
Plastic laminate panel		Others	
Glass panel			
Others			
Lighting types (Please tick when appropriate)		**Ceiling types** (Please tick when appropriate)	

(Please mark the type of light)			
Fluorescent		Seamless-Gyp. Board false ceiling	
Compact flurorescent		Modular-Aluminum ceiling tile	
Sodium vapour lamps		Acoustic ceiling tiles	
Incandescent		PVC ceiling tiles	
Halogen		Exposed ceiling	
Leon		Light trough	
LED		Others	
HID			
Others			
Remarks: Types of light		**Cabinet finishes** (Please tick when appropriate)	
1.Up light		Wood	
2.Spotlight		Plastic laminate	
3.Conceal light		Acrylic	
4.General light		Glass	
5.Hanging light box		Stainless steel	
6.Pendant		Others	
7.Wall lamp			
8.Reflective			
9.Lighting louver			
Exterior signage types (Please tick when appropriate)		**Exterior** (Please tick when observed)	
Banner		Entrance design	
Light box		Path	
Stainless steel			
Acrylic			
Wood			
Others			
Items to collect (Please tick when collected)		**Scheme for some target groups** (Please tick when appropriate)	
Guidelines for area usage		Care for elderly	
Weekly bulletin		Care for children	
Newcomers welcome pack		Care for newcomers	
Church information			
Security arrangement			
Name card			

Web site			
Worship order			
Floor plan			
Social services leaflets, etc.			
Areas (Reminder for photo-taking)			
Entrance		Washroom	
Reception		Pantry	
Hall		Kitchen	
Multi functions room		Store room	
General office		Library / Book corner	
Pastoral office		Computer corner	
Meeting room		Children corner / play room	
Counselling room		Other	

Appendix 4

A   List of Questions when Approaching a Church Design:

Theology of church and sacred identity

1. What is the theological standpoint of this church design? In this paper, the focus is on the three attributes of church which are: the house of God, space for worship and space for the community of believers.

2. What is the aesthetic manifestation of this church design – i.e.: the style of design representation such as modern and post-modern? Churches can select from photos used in workshop to reveal about their aesthetic preferences.

3. What is the nature of God reflected from this church design?

4. Does this church design reflect the sacred nature and identity of church?

The elements used to compose the sacred identity

Elements in a Sacred Space

Categories		
Theology of God	Transcendence	Immanence
Sanctuary atmosphere	Awesomeness / Solemnity	Hospitality
Sanctuary atmosphere	Quietness / Respectfulness	Cheerfulness
Sanctuary atmosphere	Traditional	Contemporary
Entrance atmosphere	Traditional	Contemporary
Entrance atmosphere	Sacred / set apart	Intimate / approachable
Spiritual path	Processional space	Flexible open space
Sanctuary spatial planning	Sacramental space	Communal space
Sanctuary spatial planning	With views of the exterior	Enclosed during services
Sanctuary spatial planning	Spaces clearly defined	Flexible space
Height	High and pointed ceiling	Flat and low ceiling
Use of symbols	Careful concern in the use of symbols	Simplicity / minimum use of symbols
Light	Dim / Mystical	Brightness
Colour	Dark	Bright

Colour	Monotone and natural	Colourful and dynamic
Material	Natural such as wood and stone	Artificial such as plastic and ceramic tiles

(The above categories are generated by following the interior design elements in design with the specific implication in church such as theology and use of symbols. The two columns of selection are basically separated into traditional transcendent approach on the left column and contemporary immanent approach on the right column)

5. Does this church design transform traditional design elements? If so, in what ways? And what kinds of symbols are used for this transformation?

6. Does this church design reflect contemporary culture?

Worship space

7. How may this church design facilitate believers to worship? How does this church incorporate their theology of worship when it is designed as a place of worship?

Community of believers

8. How does this church design reflect the theory and value of "community of believers"?

Balance between the sacred and the profane in limited space

9. How would this church design have aesthetic appeal to newcomers?

10. Is multi-functional scheme incorporated for the utilization of limited space?

11. Does this church provide social services, what is the balance between the sacred and the profane?

SCHOOL OF DESIGN
THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
Doctor of Philosophy

Project Title:

Designing Small Scale Community Space in Densely Populated Urban Environment from a User-oriented Perspective – A Case Study of Church Restricted in Flat Space

Interview Pastors, Deacons and Professors in Seminary
訪問牧師、執事及神學院教授

1. **Sharing personal and particular experiences; understanding of the affiliated church**
   分享個人經驗；了解所屬教會

1.1 How will you describe your affiliated church in terms of interior design? Are there any advantages or limitations as a church?

你如何形容所屬教會的室內空間及設計？那些是強項及那些是弱項？

1.2 Understanding the character or nature of your affiliated church

What are the proclamations of your church? What kind of religious life you would like to deliver? What kind of religious community you are shaping? What are the missions to the society?

What are the percentages of activities arranged for Church members and community outsiders?

How will you describe your worship or service?

了解所屬教會的特色及本質

貴教會所宣講的內容是什麼？你希望形造一個怎樣的信仰群體？貴教會對社會的宣教使命是什麼？有關貴教會的整體活動，服務教友而設和服務社區而設之間的百分比是什麼？

你如何形容貴教會的崇拜？

2. **Theological standpoint of God**
   對神這概念的神學立場

2.1 What nature of God you would like to present to humankind, both believers

and non-believers, in our contemporary society?

你希望讓生活在現代都市下的人，無論信徒或非信徒，去認識及了解神的那些特質？

2.2 In what ways God in search of human being and develop relationships with believers?

神採用多小途徑去與人建立關係及接觸？

2.3 How can people experience the nature and sacredness of God in church?

人在教會可以如何經驗神的本質和神聖？

3. Sacred representation
　神聖的表象

3.1 Please select the qualities of a church sacred space from the list below.(please select 1 from each row)

請選擇你認爲屬於教會神聖空間的特質 (每一橫列請選其一)

Elements in a sacred space 神聖空間的元素

Categories		
Theology of God 神學中的神論	Transcendence 超越性	Immanence 內在性
Use of symbols 象徵符號的使用	Careful concern in the use of symbols 細心地使用象徵符號	Simplicity / minimum use of symbols 簡約 / 少用 象徵符號
Atmosphere 氣氛	Awesomeness / Solemnity 有威嚴的	Hospitality 親切的
Atmosphere 氣氛	Quietness / Respectfulness 寧靜 / 可尊崇的	Cheerfulness / Peacefulness 歡樂的 / 和平的
Spiritual path 屬靈的路徑	Processional space 設有進程的空間	Flexible open space 活動的開放空間
Space 空間	Sacramental space 禮儀爲重的空間	Communal space 社區交流爲重的空間
Space 空間	With views of the exterior 崇拜時可觀看戶外環境	Enclosed during services 密封式
Space 空間	Spaces clearly defined 空間使用清楚介定	Flexible space 有彈性的活動空間
Height 高度	High and pointed ceiling 又高又尖頂的天花	Flat and low ceiling 又平又低的天花
Light 光	Dim / Mystical 幽暗 / 神秘	Brightness 光猛

Colour 顏色	Dark 深色	Bright 鮮色
Colour 顏色	Monotone and natural 單色系及自然為主	Colourful and dynamic 多色彩及副動感為主
Material 物料	Natural such as wood and stone 自然為主如木、石	Artificial such as plastic and ceramic tiles 人工為主如膠板、瓷磚

3.2 What is your opinion about traditional approaches in church design?
你對傳統的教會設計有何意見？現今教會能否借鏡？

3.3   What are the essential design elements to be deduced from tradition which can be manipulated in our contemporary box church – church restricted in flat space?
從以下的圖表，那些設計原則可以應用在現今之平頂教會空間？

Please tick as appropriate and explain your choice:
請於適當位置加上 " ✔ " 並加以說明

12 Practices in Traditional Church Design 傳統教會設計的十二支柱

Common practices 共同做法	**Remarks** 備註
Search for sacred spatial representation. Prominent sacred architecture as landmark 尋找神聖的空間表象 顯眼的神聖建築作地標	In biblical times, sacred spatial representations were instructed by God. We can recognise that after apostolic period, throughout history, different believers in different periods were designing new approach in church design to represent God. 於聖經時期，神委派人去建造神聖的空間表象。我們了解到使徒時期後的整個歷史，不同時期的不同信徒都設計出代表神的教會建築。
Induce symbolic meaning to the architectural design. 引用象徵意義在建築設計上	e.g. nave means ship, ceiling and dome to denote heaven; Orientation of altar facing east; Sacred geometry, proportion (Barrie, 1996, p67). 例如教堂的中殿代表船，天花及圓供頂的圖案代表天堂；聖壇位置向東，神聖的幾何及比例。

Use of Christian symbols 採用基督教象徵符號	God used symbols to communicate with human and through symbols, human can understand God better. Therefore, symbols were introduced to deliver messages. 神利用象徵符號與人溝通，藉著象徵符號，人類能夠更認識神。
Use of art such as painting, stained glass, sculpture and fresco 採用藝術品如繪畫，彩光玻璃，雕塑和壁畫	A powerful mean to deliver message especially in the past for those who are illiterates. Art are employed to transform the Church into a three dimensional story book. 一個有效的傳遞信息媒介，於昔日特別對文盲人士能大大發揮作用。藝術轉化教堂成為立體圖書。
Proper designed entrance and facade 副獨特設計的入口及門面	Traditionally, grandiose entrance with porch was designed. The first encounter of sacredness and the separation of sacred and profane 傳統的設計上是採用宏偉的入口並設門廊。是經歷神聖的首先接觸，也副分隔神聖與世俗的作用。
Progression of space 空間的進程	A sacred path for worshippers to proceed in order to prepare their hearts to worship God. Raised platform as altar for the clergy at the end of the central aisle 信徒一步步進入去敬拜神能夠作心靈的預備。
Symmetry in form and geometry 形狀上對稱及幾何	Dignified and steadfast 莊嚴及穩重。
Manipulation of light and shadow such as rose window, stained glass window 利用光與影例如玫瑰彩光窗及彩光玻璃窗	The drama and symbolic meaning generated by light are always associated with the power and glory of God 光所帶出的戲劇性及象徵意義與神的能力及榮耀聯結一起。
Reinforce the height of the nave with	High in scale is a popular and effective

high ceiling, pointed roof, vault, arch or column to reflect the transcendence of God 加強主堂的高度及高度感例如使用尖頂天花，拱頂，拱門和柱去表達神的超越性。	element to let worshipper to experience the transcendence of God. 形造高的效果去讓崇拜者經歷神是一個普遍及有效的手法。
Honest use in natural materials such as wood and stone. 忠實地使用天然材料如木和石	Materials such as stone or timber are exposed without disguise. Honesty is one of the virtues of Church. 石和木的外表都不會偽裝化。忠實是教會其中一個品德。
Designated activities in different areas 指定活動在不同地方進行	Church has enormous space. A cathedral can have many small radiating chapels inside to remember different saints. Different areas are named separately with different functions. 教室空間廣大。主教座堂設有不同的小禮堂紀念不同聖人。不同的空間給予不同名稱及功能。
Selection of location 地點的選擇	High position, prominent location such as near the square or remembrance of saints 處於高位或突顯的地方如山丘或廣場。也有一些位置是建造在聖徒埋葬的地方以示紀念。

3.4 What is your opinion about design a church which can reflect our contemporary culture?

對於設計一所可以反映現代文化的教會，你有什麼意見？

4. Theological standpoint of church and the term "sacred"
對教會這概念及對神聖一詞的神學立場及詮釋

4.1 What are your concepts about the nature of church?

你對教會的本質有何看法？

4.2 In what levels or ways a church space can facilitate in representing God?

教會空間在什麼層面或方法能夠幫助去表達神？

4.3   What is sacred? How many representations of sacred?
　　　　何謂神聖？有多少神聖表象的類別？

4.4   What is sacred space?
　　　　何謂神聖空間？

5. Detail design criteria – Sacred and profane
　　詳細設計的要求 – 神聖與世俗

5.1 How to deal with church (sacred) needs and social service (profane) needs in one given space?
在同一個空間上如何面對教會(神聖)的需要及社會服務(屬世)的需要？

5.2 What are the three most frequently used Christian symbols?
你最常用的三個基督教象徵符號是什麼？

5.3 Can you list out the top three limitations of one flat church with limited space?
可否列舉出對一層式教會空間的三個最大限制？

5.4 What is your expectation for a multi-functional church space in terms of spatial design and functional needs?
你對多用途教會空間的設計及實際需要有何期望？

5.5 If you redesign your church, what are the criteria or themes?
若重新去設計你所屬的教會，有何守則和主題？

5.6 From your experience, what are the expectations of church design from lay Christians? What are the expectations of church design from non-believers? How to attract newcomers?
　從你的經驗，平信徒對教會設計有何期望？非信徒對教會設計有何期望？
　設計上如何吸引新來賓？

5.7 What is your opinion of employing non-believers as the designers of church space?
　　你對邀請非信徒設計師來設計教會有何意見？

Workshop 1 – Elements for Selection

Nave Atmosphere

Altar Design

Hong Kong Church Altar

HKC 01	HKC 02	HKC 03	HKC 04
HKC 05	HKC 06	HKC 07	HKC 08
HKC 09	HKC 10	HKC 11	HKC 12
HKC 13	HKC 14	HKC 15	HKC 16
HKC 17	HKC 18	HKC 19	HKC 20
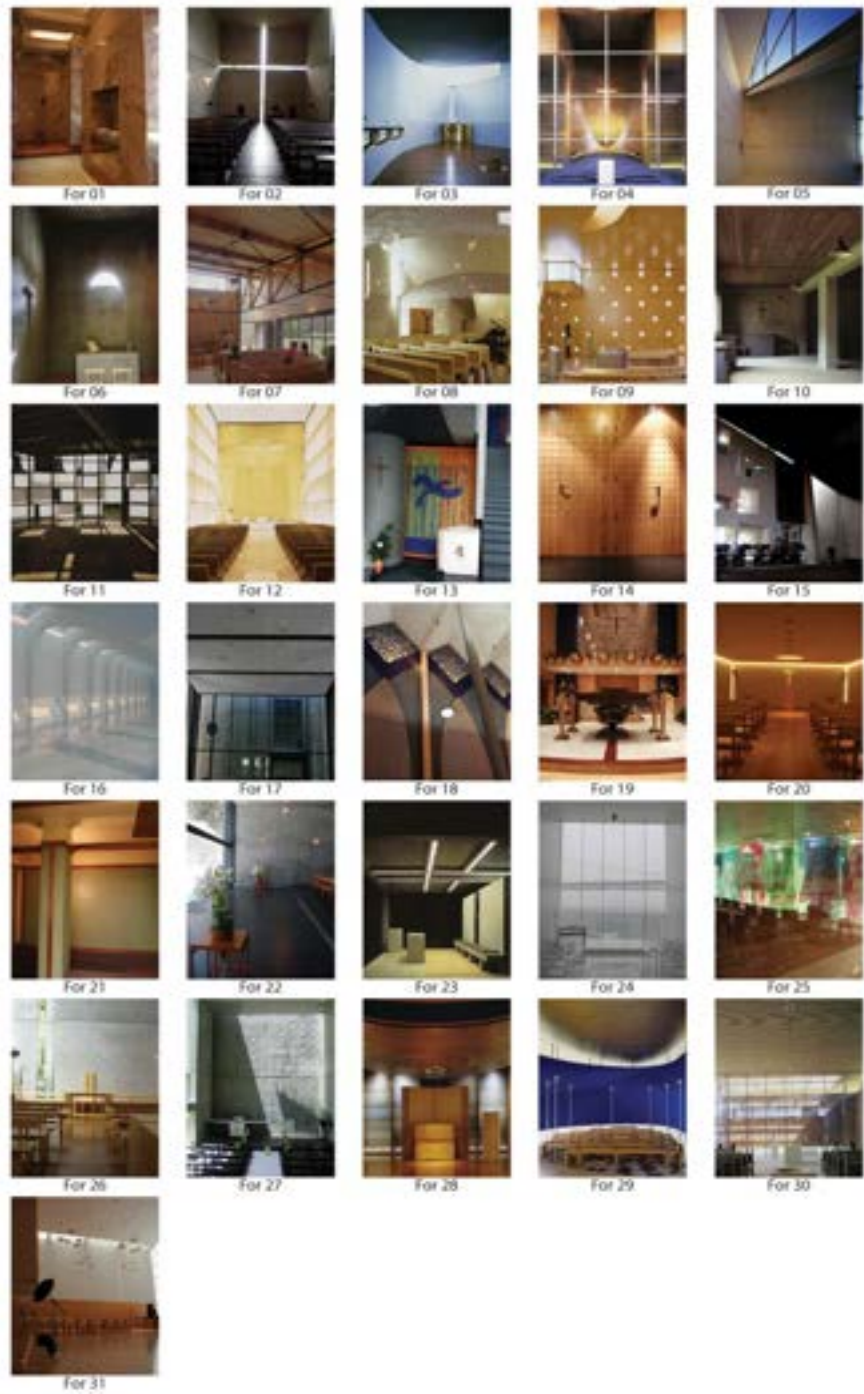
Cross Design

Cro 01

Cro 02

Cro 03

Cro 04

Cro 05

Cro 06

Cro 07

Cro 08

Cro 09

Cro 10

Cro 11

Cro 12

Cro 13

Cro 14

Cro 15

Cro 16

Cro 17

Cro 18

Cro 19

Cro 20

Entrance Design

HKE 01

HKE 02

HKE 03

HKE 04

HKE 05

HKE 06

HKE 07

HKE 08

HKE 09

HKE 10

HKE 11

HKE 12

Ceiling Design and Lighting Effect

Cel 01

Cel 02

Cel 03

Cel 04

Cel 05

Cel 06

Cel 07

Cel 08

Cel 09

Cel 10

Cel 11

Cel 12

Cel 13

Cel 14

Cel 15

Cel 16

Cel 17

Cel 18

Cel 19

Cel 20

Cel 21

Cel 22

Cel 23

Cel 24

Cel 25

Cel 26

Cel 27

Cel 28

Cel 29

Cel 30

Cel 31
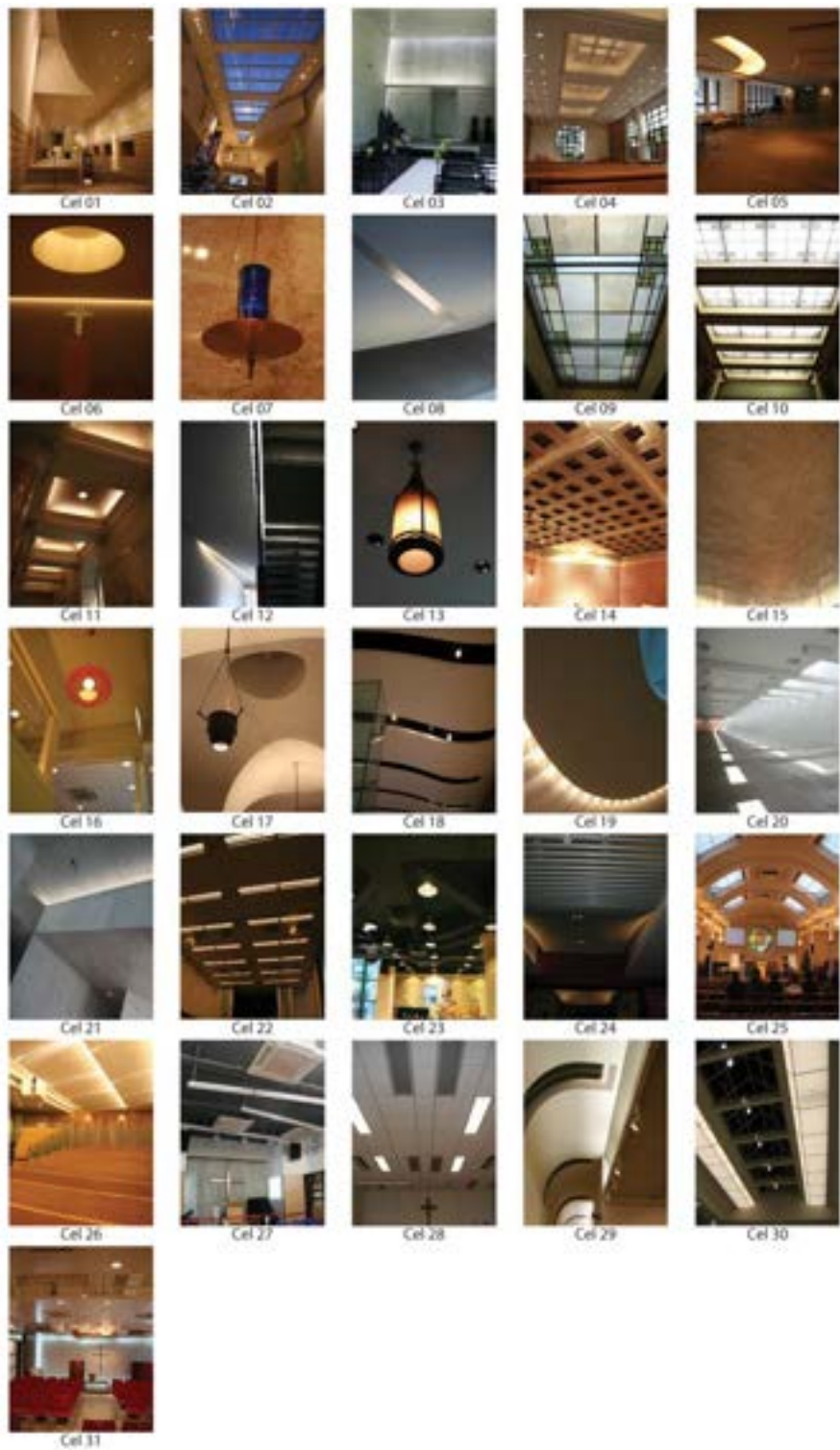
Liturgical Furniture

Lit 01   Lit 02   Lit 03   Lit 04   Lit 05

Lit 06   Lit 07   Lit 08   Lit 09   Lit 10

Lit 11   Lit 12   Lit 13   Lit 14   Lit 15

Lit 16   Lit 17   Lit 18   Lit 19   Lit 20

Lit 21   Lit 22   Lit 23   Lit 24   Lit 25

Lit 26

Materials

Mat 01

Mat 02

Mat 03

Mat 04

Mat 05

Mat 06

Mat 07

Mat 08

Mat 09

Workshop 2: Icons for Selection

Activities and Spaces — Religious 信仰— 活動或所需空間	Activities and Spaces — Social Services 社會服務 — 活動或所需空間 (Synchronised from different natures of social services)
Fellowship 團契	Large group area 大組活動
Cell group 小組	Reception 接待室
Executive meeting 會議	Office 辦公室
Counseling 輔導	Teaching 教導
Service 崇拜	Storage 儲存
Prayer meeting 祈禱會	Counseling 輔導
Sunday school 主日學	Meeting 聚會
Eucharist 聖餐	Library 圖書館

Choir practicing 詩班練習	Small group area e.g. computer 小組如電腦室
Food preparation 預備食物	Others 其他
Display 展覽	
Love feast 愛筵	
Game 遊戲	
Party 派對	
Reading 閱讀	
Library 圖書館	
Waiting 等待	
Meditation	

默想	
Informal sharing 非正式小組分享	
Worship team 敬拜隊練習	
Chatting 閒談	
Enquiry 詢問 詢問	
Child care 照顧兒童	
Others 其他	
AV Control Room 音響控制室	
Training course & big event 培訓 / 大型活動	
Christmas	

聖誕慶典	
Easter 復活節慶典	
Marriage ceremony 婚禮	
Baptism 洗禮	
Ceremony 慶典	
AV show 影音聚會	
Storage 儲存	
Reception 接待室	
Office 辦公室	
Admin.	

行政	
Washrooms 洗手間	

Remarks: All the icons are extracted from website cc.art.com and GospelGifs

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Appendix 8

One-flat Churches Visited in 18 districts

</div>

District	Name
Eastern 20	The Church of Christ in China Chaiwan Church
	The Church of Christ in China Quarry Bay Church
	North Point Alliance Church
	Shau Kei Wan Methodist Church
	Island Evangelical Community Church
	Siu Sai Wan Methodist Chapel
	E.F.C.C. – Tung Fook Church
	E.F.C.C. - Christ Church
	The Church of Christ in China Hop Yat Church (Island Place Chapel)
	Hong Kong Grace Baptist Church
	Living Word Centre Road Side Church
	North Point Church of the Nazarene
	Shaukeiwan Alliance Church
	Hing Wah Alliance Church
	Grace Lutheran Church
	The Church of Livingstones (Hong Kong) Ltd
	Shau Kei Wan Evangelical Church
	Shaukiwan Swatow Baptist Church
	Causeway Bay Baptist Church
	Quarry Bay Baptist Church
Wanchai 8	Evangelical Chinese Gospel Church (Hong Kong Branch)
	Chinese Methodist Church, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
	Wanchai Baptist Church
	All Virtues Baptist Chapel
	Evangelize China FellowshipHong Kong Canaan Church
	Causeway Bay Church of the Nazarene
	The Salvation ArmyEnglish Speaking Corps
	Just Church
Central & Western 9	Church of Saviour (Methodist)
	EvangelicalPunFookChurch
	E.F.C.C. – Kong Fook Church
	Island City Church (Hong Kong)
	Hong Kong West Point Baptist Church
	Assemblies of God West Point Church

	Western District Alliance Church
	United Pentecostal Church of Hong KongSheung Wan Grace Church
	Sai Ying Pun Free Methodist Church
Southern 8	Lei Fook Church Christian Alliance Aberdeen Church
	Ap Lei Chau Methodist Church
	Christian & Missionary Alliance Gracious Rock Church
	Aberdeen Baptist Church
	Stanley Baptist Chapel
	Wah Kwai Alliance Church
	Wong Chuk Hang Alliance Church
	The Wah Fu Swatow Christian Church
Yau Ma Tei / Tsim Sha Tsui / Mong Kok 13	Cumberland Presbyterian Tao Hsien Church
	The Church of Christ in China Yaumati Kei To Church
	The Church of Livingstones (Kowloon)
	E.F.C.C. – Waterloo Road Church
	Christian Central Church (Jordan)
	Ping An Christian Church
	The Church of Christ in China Kei To Church (No. 3)
	Mongkok Peace Evangelical Center
	Mongkok Baptist Church
	Christian Shone Tao Association Mongkok Church
	Martinson Memorial Lutheran Church
	Chinese Christian Assemblies of God
	Victory Avenue Swatow Baptist Church
Sham Shui Po 14	The Church of Christ in China Kei To Church (Cheung Sha Wan)
	E.F.C.C. – Yan Fook Church
	Fukshing Church
	Assembly of God Paul Church
	First Assembly of God Church Pak Tin Branch
	Lai chi Kok Peace Evangelical Ctr Ltd
	E.C.F. Kowloon Canaan Church
	E.C.F. Kowloon Canaan Church
	C & MA Mei Foo Church
	Diamond Lutheran Church
	Christian Soong Un Church
	Lock Tao Christian Association Shamshuipo Church
	Sham Shui Po Peace Evangelical Center

	Shun Tin Baptist ChurchSham Shui Po Chapel
Kowloon City 8	Yan Tze Church of U.B. in Christ
	Agape Methodist Church
	St. Mark 's Church of United Brethren in Christ
	Christian Philadelphia Church
	Kai Tak Christian Church
	Emmanuel Chinese Church
	Hong Kong Evangelical Yan Chiu Church
	H.K. Chinese Congregational Church Ltd.
Wong Tai Sin 7	Grace Methodist Church
	Chinese Rhenish Church, Choi Wan
	Wing Kwong Pentecostal Holiness Church
	Pentecostal Church of Hong KongGrace Chapel
	Christian Evangelical Centre Ci En Church
	Choi Ping Baptist Church
	Brotherly Love Swatow Baptist Church Tung Tau Chapel
Kwun Tong 10	Kwun Tong Methodist Church
	E.F.C.C. Lam Tin Church
	Ngau Tau Kok Baptist Church
	Pentecostal Church of Hong Kong Church of Praise
	Garden Estate Baptist Church
	Shium Ay Alliance Church
	Kwun Tong Church of the C & MA
	Peace Lutheran Church of HK
	Peace Lutheran Church of HK
	The Evangelical Lutheran Church of HK Ling Fung Lutheran Church
Sha Tin 16	The Church of Christ in China Shatin Church Ltd.
	Shatin Alliance Church
	Yiu On Gospel Church
	Shatin Baptist Church
	Shine Baptist Church
	Sai Sha Road Baptist Church
	E.F.C.C. Kong Fok Church
	Christian & Missionary Alliance Joyful Peace Church
	Tsim Sha Tsui Baptist Church Sai Sha Chapel
	ELCHK Abiding Faith Lutheran Church
	Shatin Free Methodist Church

	Elim Full Gospel Church
	Assembly of God Union Church
	E.C.F. Shatin Canaan Church
	Onesiphorus Mei Lam Church
	Kwong Lam Baptist Church
Tai Po 10	The Church of Christ in China Kei To Tai Po Church
	Tai Po Christian & Missionary Alliance Church
	The Faith Church
	Tai Po Methodist Church
	Tai Po Peace Evangelical Centre
	Tai Po Baptist Church
	Tai Po International Baptist Church
	Tai Po Evangelical Fellowship
	The C & MA Therismos Church
	Living Word Lutheran Church
Tuen Mun 4	E.F.C.C.- Shan Fook Church
	Tuen Mun Alliance Church
	Ling Fai Lutheran Church
	The Christian Church of Eternal Truth
Yuen Long 8	Tin Chung Alliance Church
	Assembly of God Yuen Long Gospel Centre
	Assembly of God Holy Light Church
	Yuen Long Alliance Church
	Yuen Kei Alliance Church
	Kei Fuk Alliance Church
	United Pentecostal Church of Hong Kong
	The Evangelical Mutual Loving Gospel Lutheran Church
Tsuen Wan 9	Chinese Rhenish Church, Tsuen Wan
	Wing Kei Conservative Baptist Church
	Christian Central Church (Tsuen Wan)Ltd.
	Tsuen Wan Church of the Christian &Missionary Alliance
	Kei Yam Alliance Church
	ELCHK United Lutheran Church
	Tsuen Kwai Tsung Tsin Church
	The Salvation Army Tai Wo Hau Corps
	Tsuen Wan Baptist Church
Kwai Tsing 11	Sheung Kwai Chung Peace Evangelical Centre
	E.F.C.C.- Fook On Church

	The Church of Christ in China Anani Church
	The Church of Christ in China Tsing Yi Chi To Church
	Crossroad Community Baptist Church
	Tsing Yi Peace Evangelical Centre
	Lai Yiu Alliance Church
	Cherith Baptist Church
	The Christian Church of Eternal Truth
	Tsing Yi Methodist Chapel
	Hong Kong and Macau LutheranYan Tsing Church
North 6	Sheung Shui Baptist Church
	Chinese Rhenish Church, Sheung Shui
	Fanling Assembly of God Church Grace Light Church
	Remembrance of Grace Church (Fanling Church)
	Christian Glorify Grace Church
	Xi Lin Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Sai Kung 8	King Lam Alliance Church
	Church of Love
	E.F.C.C. Fook Yat Church
	Po Lam Cumberland Presbyterian Church
	Lock Tao Christian Association Tseung Kwan O Church
	Kwun Tong Church Choi Ming Chapel
	Conservative Baptist Ming Tao Church
	The Salvation Army Tseung Kwan O Corps
Islands 2	Tung Chung Alliance Church
	Mu Min Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Total: 171	

One –Flat Churches Visited Incorporated with Design

- Churches with design: 39 out of 171 churches I have surveyed with interior design (22.8%)

| District	Name
Eastern	E.F.C.C. – Tung Fook Church Shau Kei Wan Methodist Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.skwmc.org.hk)
	Hong Kong Grace Baptist Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.hkgbc.org) Shaukeiwan Alliance Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.hkskwac.org) Hing Wah Alliance Church

(Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.hwac.org.hk)

Shau Kei Wan Evangelical Church

(Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.skwec.org)
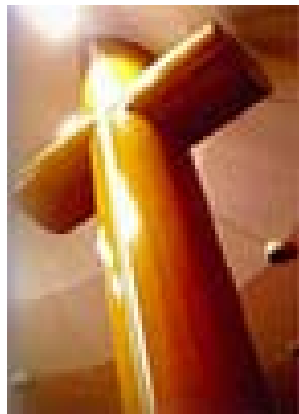
Causeway Bay Baptist Church

(Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.cbbc.org.hk)

Quarry Bay Baptist Church

(Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.qbbc.org)

Island Evangelical Community Church

	Shau Kei Wan Methodist Church
Wanchai	Chinese Methodist Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2009, http://www.cmc-methodist.org.hk) Wanchai Baptist Church Just Church

	 (Retrieved on 1 July 2009, http:// www.justchurch.hk)
Central & Western	Assemblies of God West Point Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.agwp.org) E.F.C.C. – Kong Fook Church EvangelicalPunFookChurch
Southern	Wah Kwai Alliance Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.wkc.hk/html/main.asp)

	Christian & Missionary Alliance Gracious Rock Church
Yau Ma Tei / Tsim Sha Tsui / Mong Kok	E.F.C.C. – Waterloo Road Church Ping An Christian Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.hkpac.org/)
Sham Shui Po	E.F.C.C. – Yan Fook Church

	 (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.hkpac.org) C & MA Mei Foo Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.mfac.org.hk)
Kowloo n City	Yan Tze Church of U.B. in Christ (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http:// www.yantze-church.org) Hong Kong Evangelical Yan Chiu Church
Wong Tai Sin	Chinese Rhenish Church, Choi Wan

	 (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://crccw.church.org.hk) Choi Ping Baptist Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.choiping.org/newweb/cp/index.htm) Wing Kwong Pentecostal Holiness Church
Kwun Tong	E.F.C.C. Lam Tin Church Shium Ay Alliance Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.shiumay.org)

Sha Tin	Elim Full Gospel Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.elimchurch.org/questcms/main/main.php) Shatin Baptist Church Yiu On Goepel Church
Tai Po	The Church of Christ in China Kei To Tai Po Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.kttpc.com.) The Faith Church

Tuen Mun	The Christian Church of Eternal Truth (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.etruth.org.hk/~webtm/index-f.htm)
Yuen Long	
Tsuen Wan	
Kwai Tsing	Crossroad Community Baptist Church (Retrieved on 1 July 2007, http://www.ccbc.org.hk)
North	Xi Lin Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Sai Kung	Po Lam Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Islands	Tung Chung Alliance Church
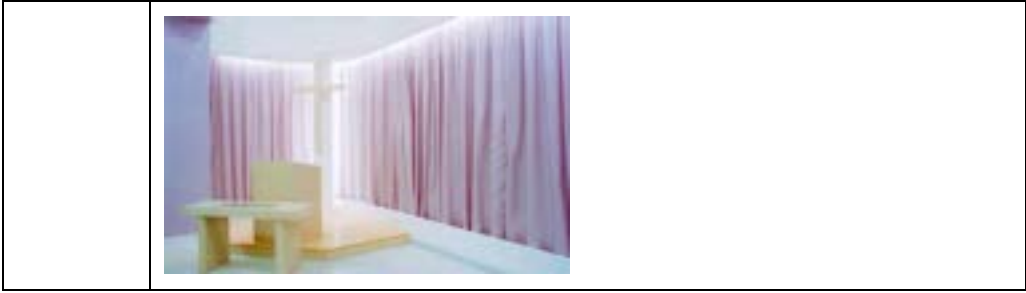
Appendix 10

Some Exceptional Scenarios Discovered in Densely Populated Urban Environment

Churches transformed from former cinema. From site observation, two churches were renovated from former cinemas to churches, such as E.F.C.C. Tung Fok Church. (see figure 8.1) Despite of the cinema had high ceiling which would have been a traditional association in creating sacred space, the sacred identity was found missing in the church design as it was not intended to create a sacred representation after all.

Churches with the entitlement of land ownership. Another scenario was that two churches from the sample of 171 had dealt with site developers to rebuild their church into high-rise building and sub-let other floor areas for other commercial use, such as the Church of Christ in China Mong Kong Church. In other words, they hoped to have occupancy of few levels only. (see figure 8.2) However, two churches which also occupied their whole building decided to build a high-rise to be used by the church itself such as Wing Kwong Pentecostal Holiness Church. (see figure 8.3) Under the condition of densely populated urban environment, some churches with the entitlement of land ownership prefer to build high-rise building with some sacred identity in the facade in order to better ultilise the limited space.

Churches closely located together. When the researcher visited different churches in Hong Kong, the scenario of churches closely located together had pushed to the extreme with cases such as there was one commercial building in Shatin with seven churches located in different levels (see figure 9.4) and Chi Wo Lane in Tai Po with three churches situated closely together on ground level.

Figure 8.1 E.F.C.C. Tung Fok Church, transformed from former Cinema

Figure 8.2 Church of Christ in China Mong Kong Church, with the entitlement of land ownership

Figure 9.3 Wing Kwong Pentecostal Holiness Church, with the entitlement of land ownership (retrieved 29 May 2009, from http://farm1.static.flickr.com/10/17070052_e19ebe8d8f.jpg)

Figure 8.4 One commercial building in Shatin with seven churches located in different levels

Appendix 11

Design Outputs of Workshop 1 & 2

Workshop 1: Design of Each Area and the Use of Design Elements

Group 1: Theological students from Baptist Theological School

Group1.1.1

Cel 26 · For 19 · For 31 · HKC 20 · Art 17 · Art 20

Group 1.1.2

Cel 04, HKC 06 · Mat 07 · For 18 · Cro 04 · Cro 09, For 02 · HKE 03 · Lit 05 · Lit 10

Group 1.1.3

For 08

For 12

For 27

HKC 08

HKC 16

HKE 05

Lit 24

Mat 07

Art 06

Group 1.1.4

Cel 04, HKC 06	Cel 25	Cro 15
For 27	HKC 01	HKE 05
HKE 09	Lit 21	Mat 07

Art 04	Art 05	Art 09	Cel 02	Cro 01
Cro 04	Cro 05	Cro 09, For 02	For 04	HKC 02
HKE 04	Lit 02	Lit 15	Mat 02	
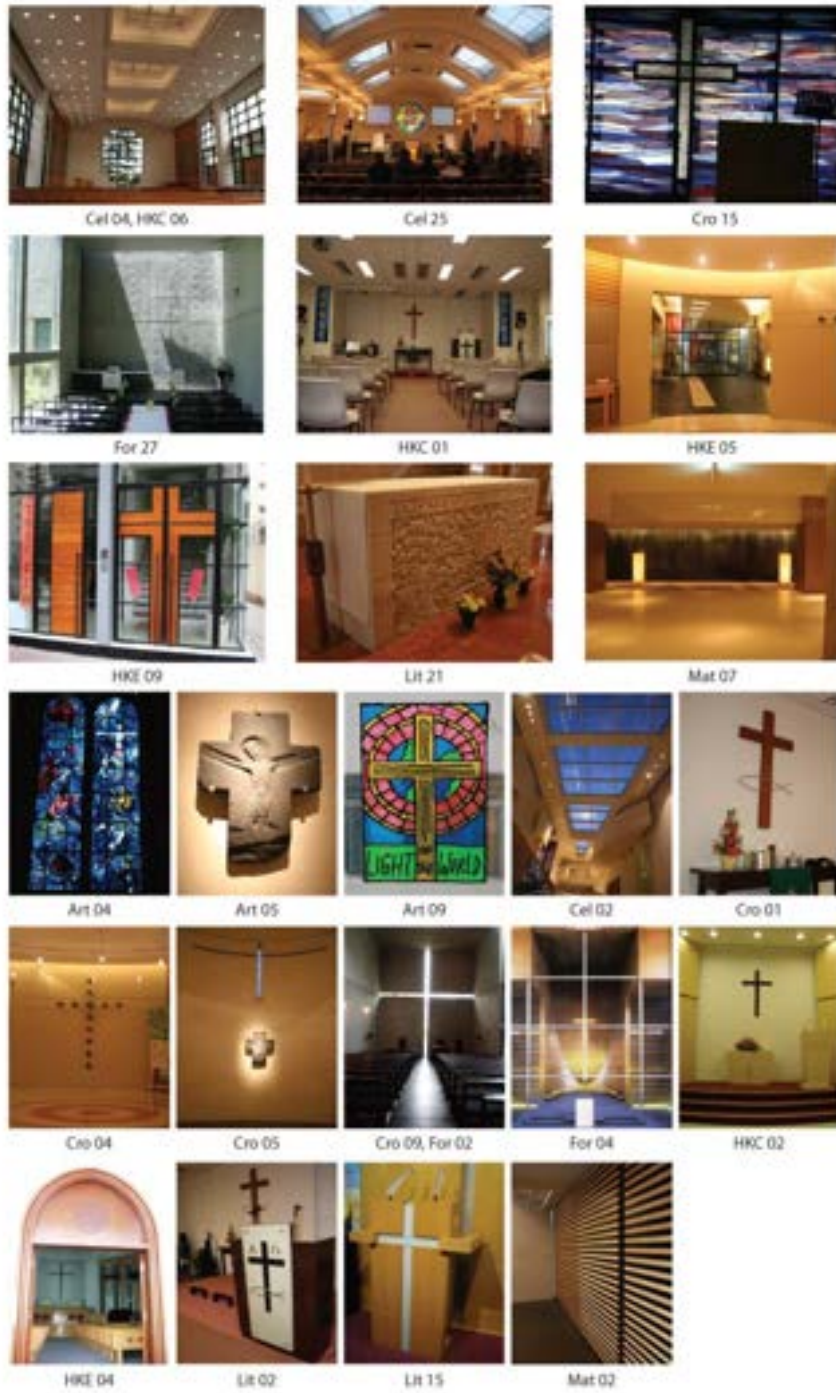
Group 1.1.5

Art 25

Cel 25

For 18

For 19

For 27

Lit 25

HKE 05

Art 04

Art 11

Art 15

Cro 01

HKC 04

HKE 02

Lit 02

Lit 05

Group 1.1.6
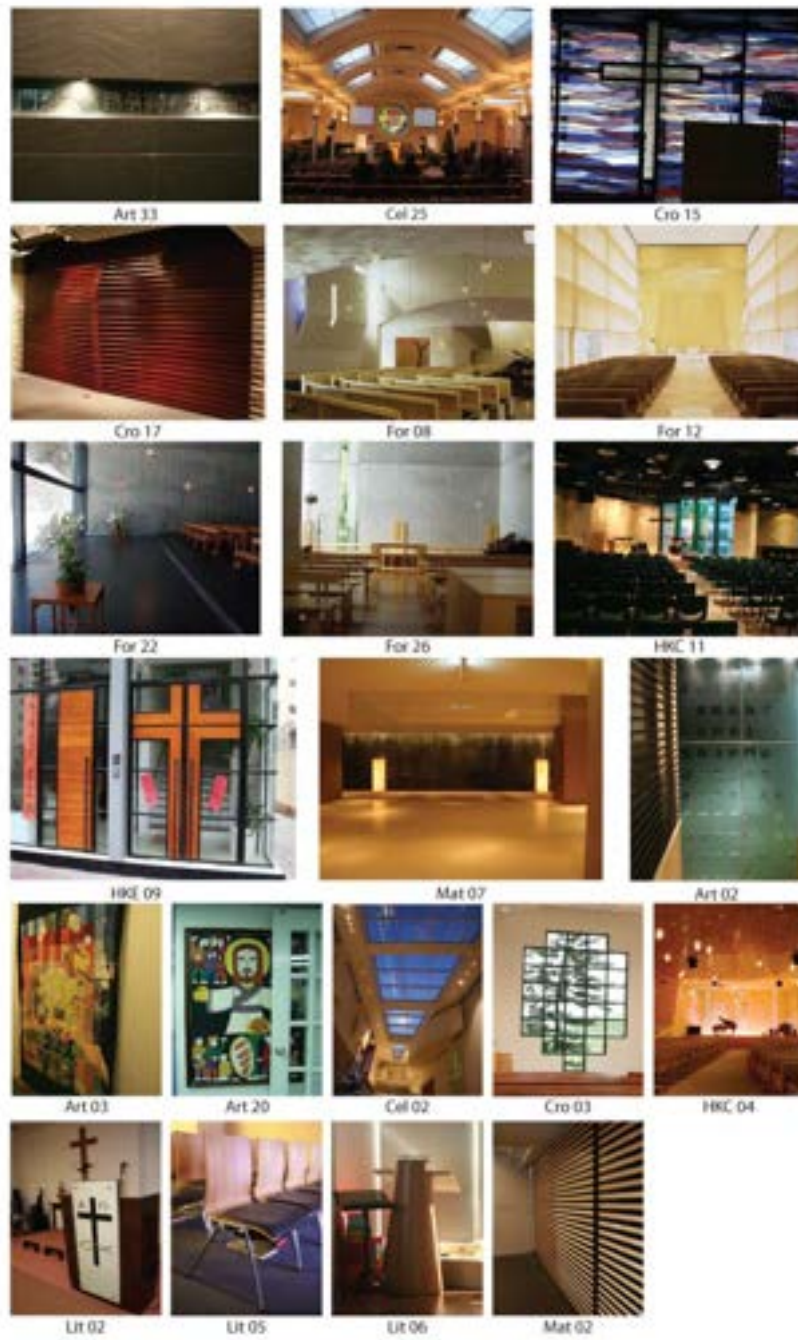
Art 33   Cel 25   Cro 15

Cro 17   For 08   For 12

For 22   For 26   HKC 11

HKE 09   Mat 07   Art 02

Art 03   Art 20   Cel 02   Cro 03   HKC 04

Lit 02   Lit 05   Lit 06   Mat 02

Informants from Sheung Wan Baptist Church

Group 2: Leaders from Sheung Wan Baptist Church – pastors and social services workers
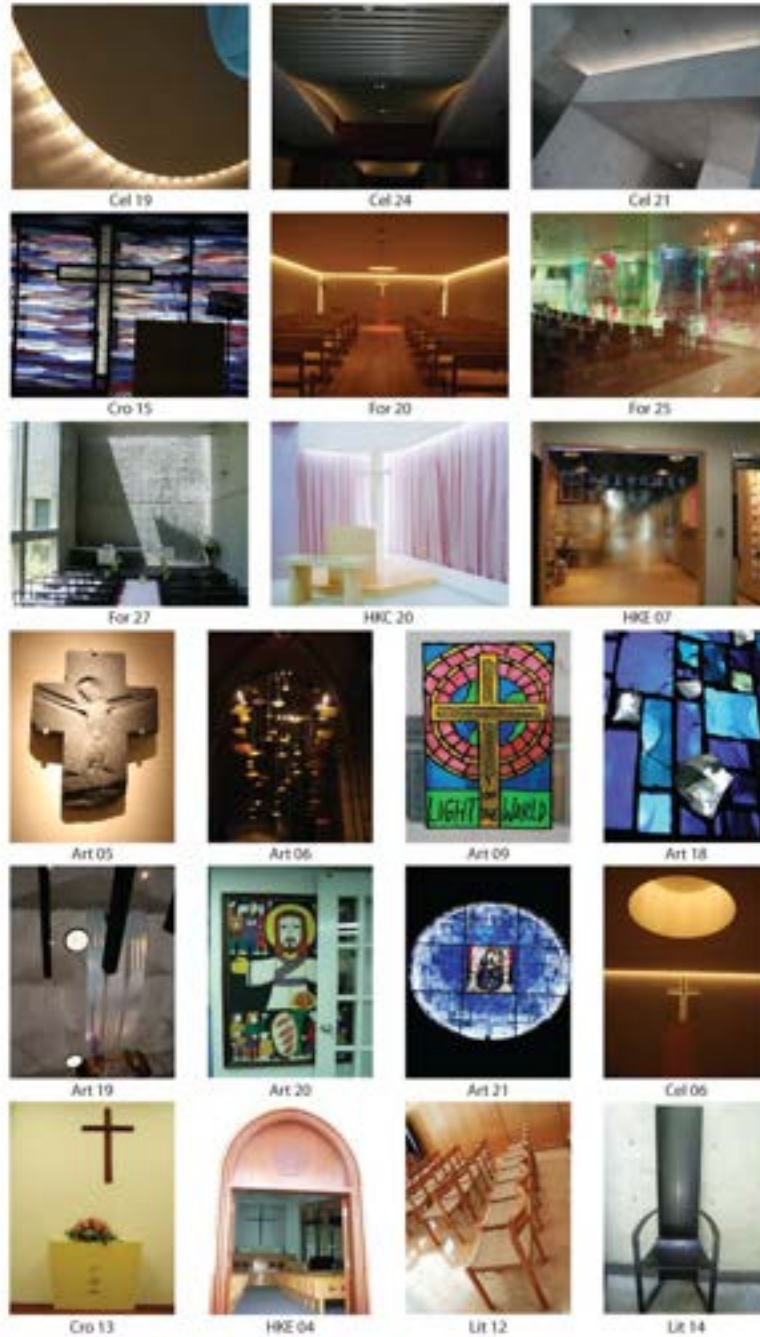
Group 1.2.1

Group 3: Laymen from Sheung Wan Baptist Church – two groups (youth and adult including elderly)
Group 1.3.1 Adult

Art 33	Cel 26	Cro 16
For 12	For 27	HKC 08
HKE 11	Lit 22	Lit 26
Mat 07	Cro 01	Cro 08	HKC 02
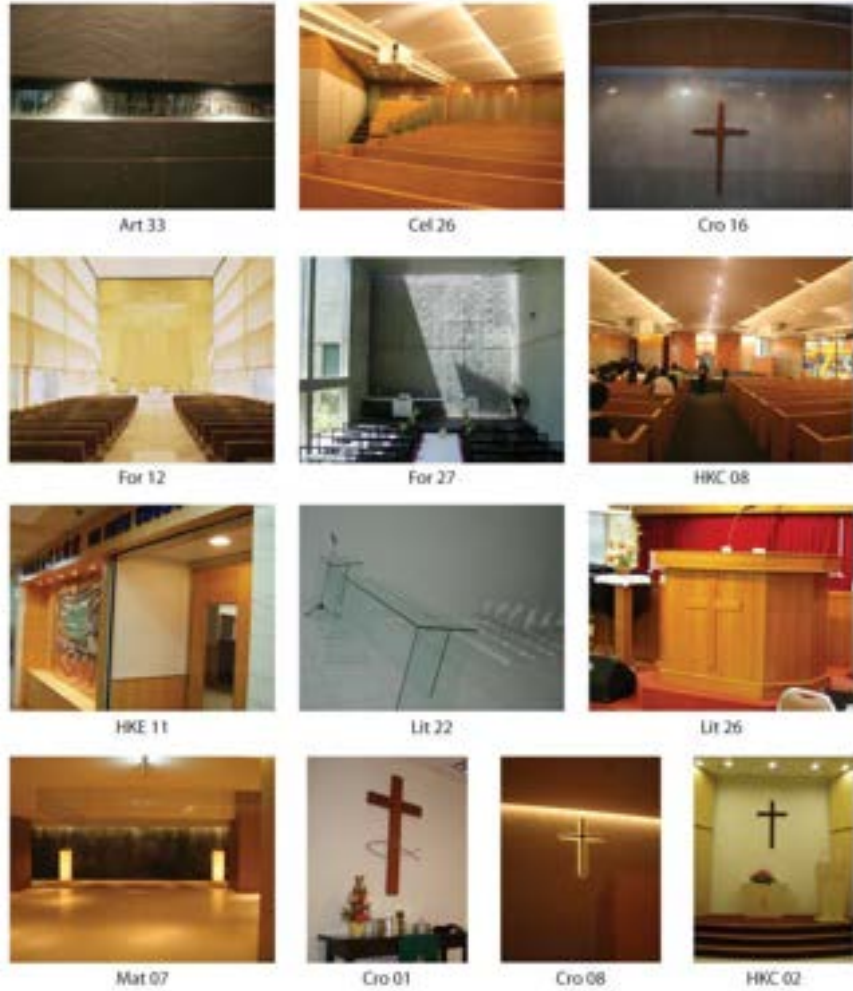
Group 1.3.2 Adult

Cel 04, HKC 06

Cel 24

Cel 26

Cro 20

For 08

For 22

HKC 08

Mat 07

Art 09

Art 16

Cro 02

Cro 09, For 02

Lit 04

Lit 19

HKE 04

Group 1.3.3 Youth

Art 31

For 09

For 08

For 20

Lit 21

HKC 11

HKC 19

Mat 03

Art 18

Cel 02

Cel 05

Cel 13

Cro 06

Lit 01

Lit 02

Group 1.3.4 Youth

Art 29

Cel 04, HKC 06

Cel 18
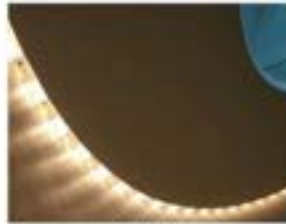
Cel 19

Cro 15

For 12

For 17

For 24

For 25

HKE 09

HKC 10

Lit 22

Lit 25

Mat 08

Art 06

Lit 08

HKE 03

HKC 04

Group 4: Renovation team from Cherith Baptist Church
Group 1.4.1

Cel 26

Cro 15

For 07

For 09

For 12

For 20

For 25

HKE 09

HKC 19

Art 02

Cro 04

Cro 09, For 02

For 04

HKE 04

Group 1.4.2

Art 24

Cel 04, HKC 06

Cro 15

Cel 22

Cel 25

Cel 26

Cro 16

HKE 07

HKC 08

HKC 13

Lit 24

Mat 03

Art 19

Cro 01

Cel 09

Lit 06

Workshop 2: Area Relationship and Spatial planning
Structural Layout Plan of 3rd Floor
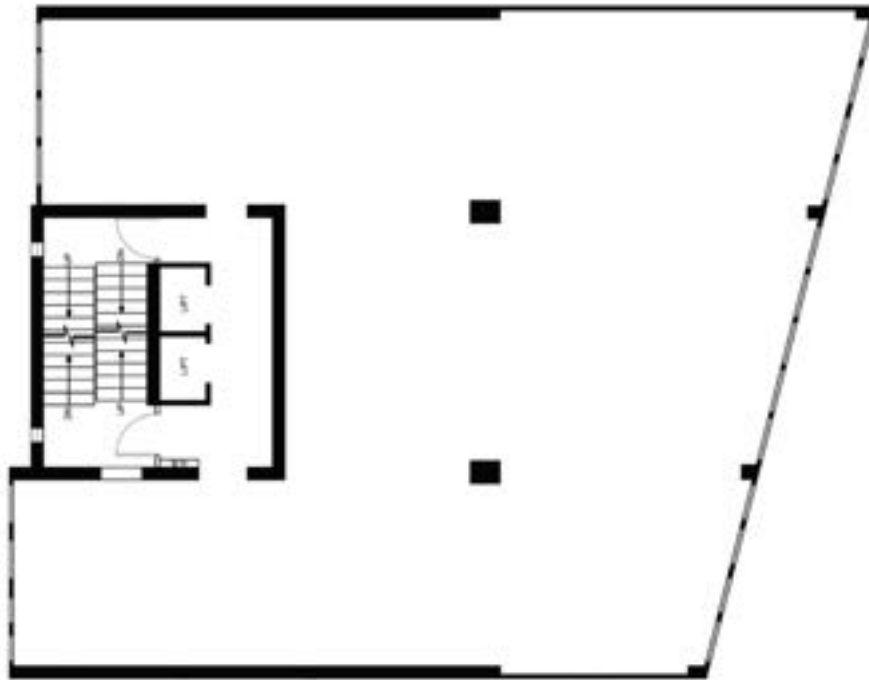
Structural Layout Plan of 4th Floor
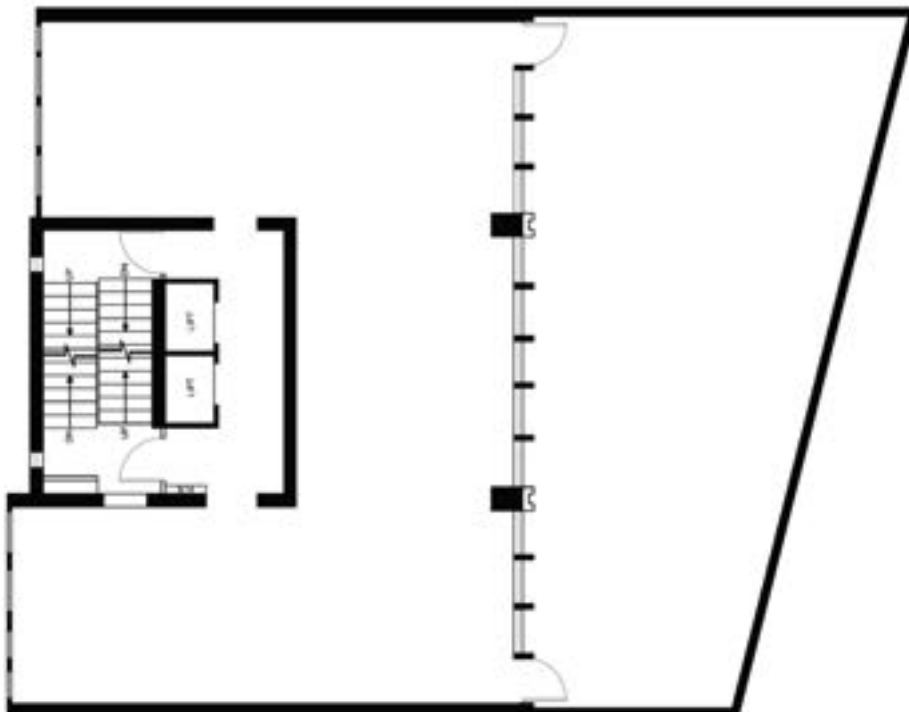
Adult Group and Youth Group

Group 2.1 Adult

3rd Floor
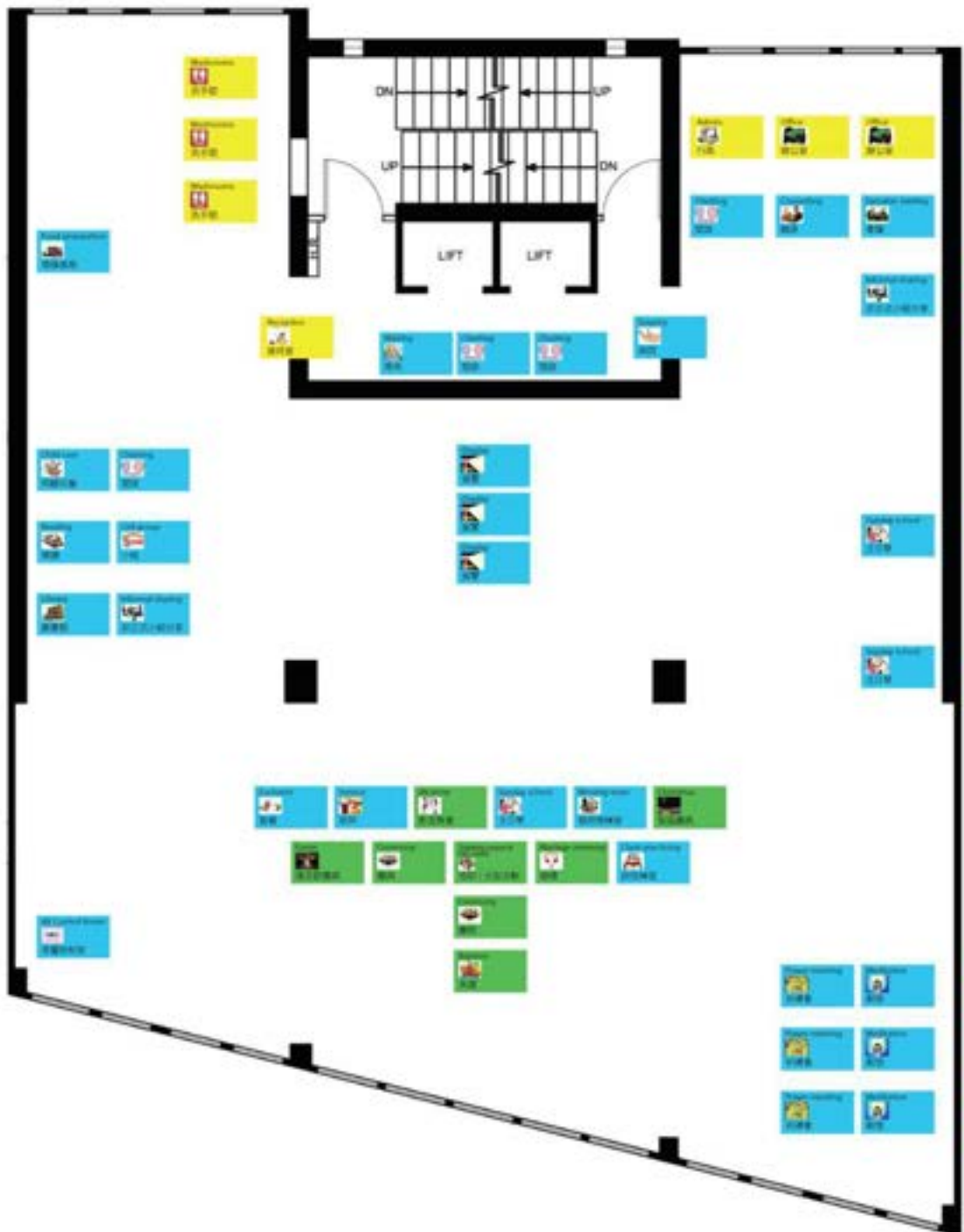
Group 2.1 Adult
4th Floor
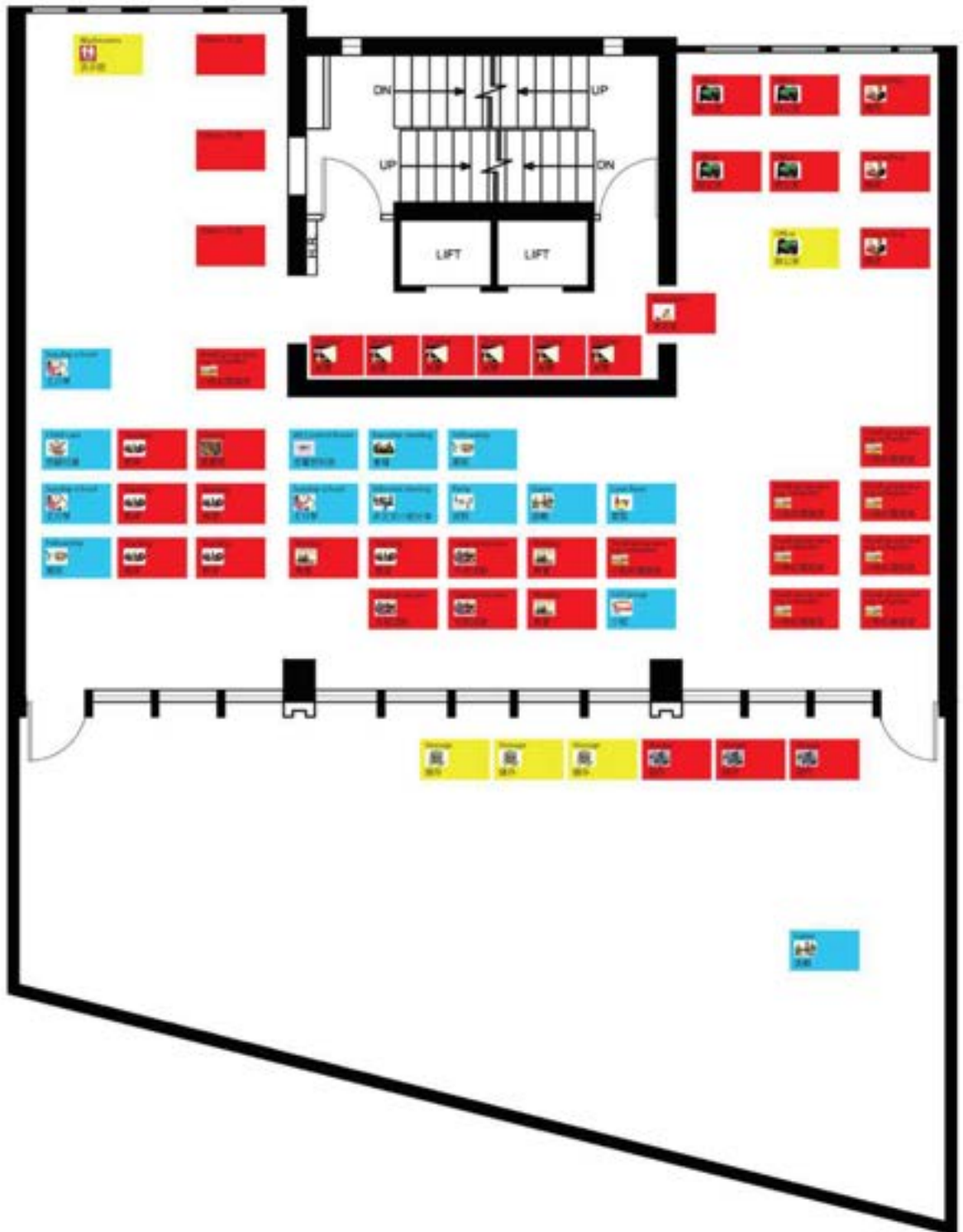
Group 2.2 Adult
3ʳᵈ Floor
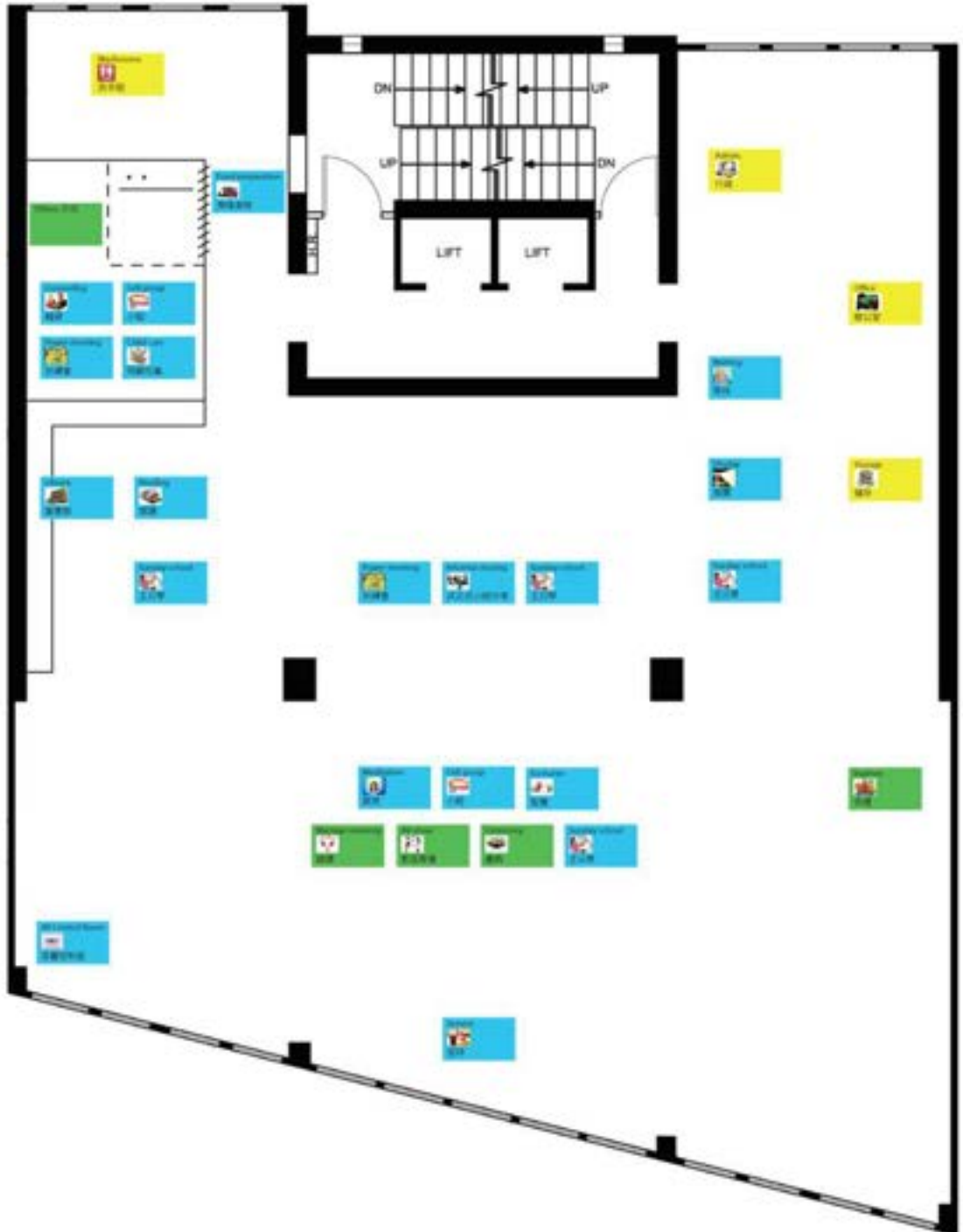
Group 2.2 Adult
4th Floor
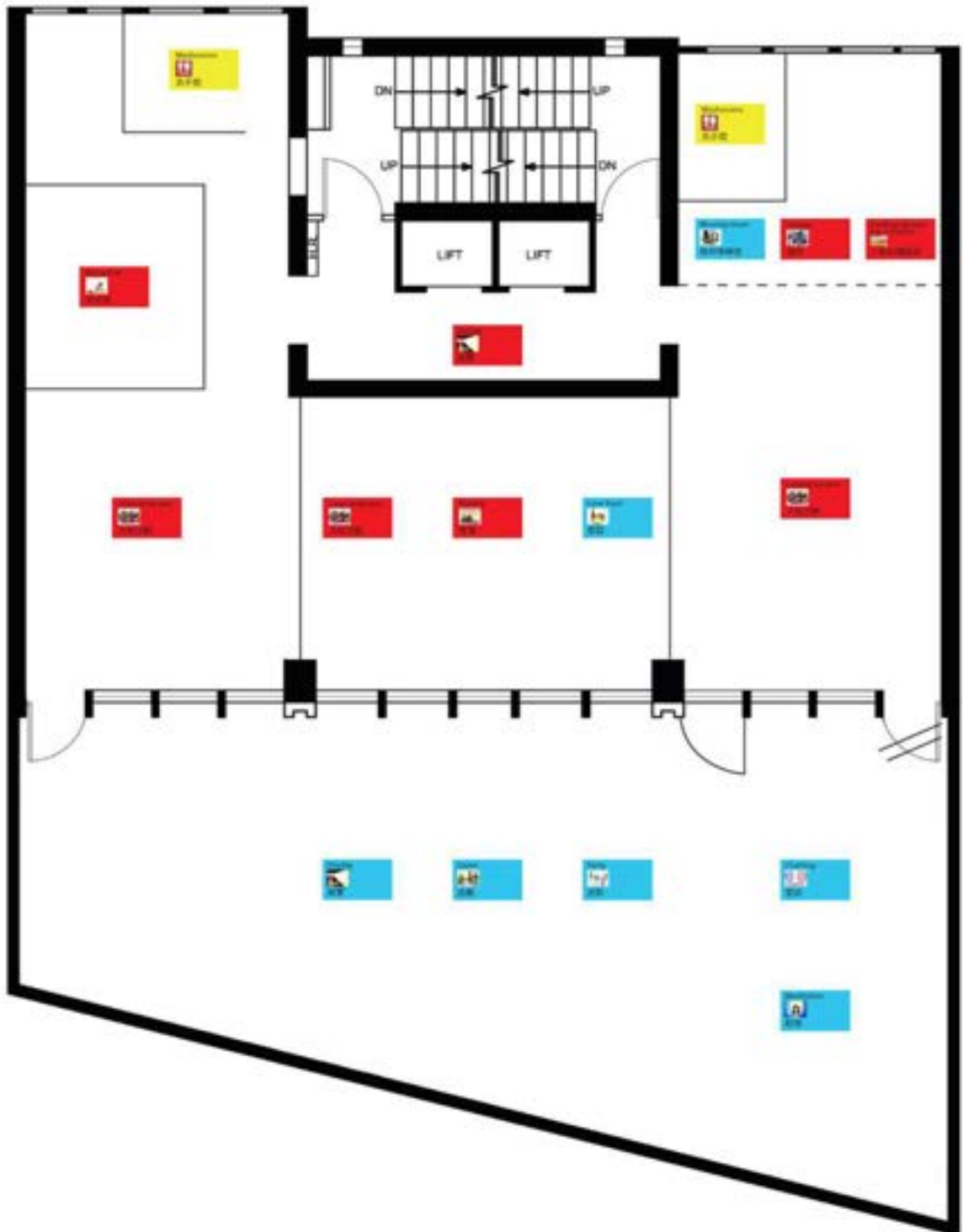
Group 2.3 Youth
3rd Floor
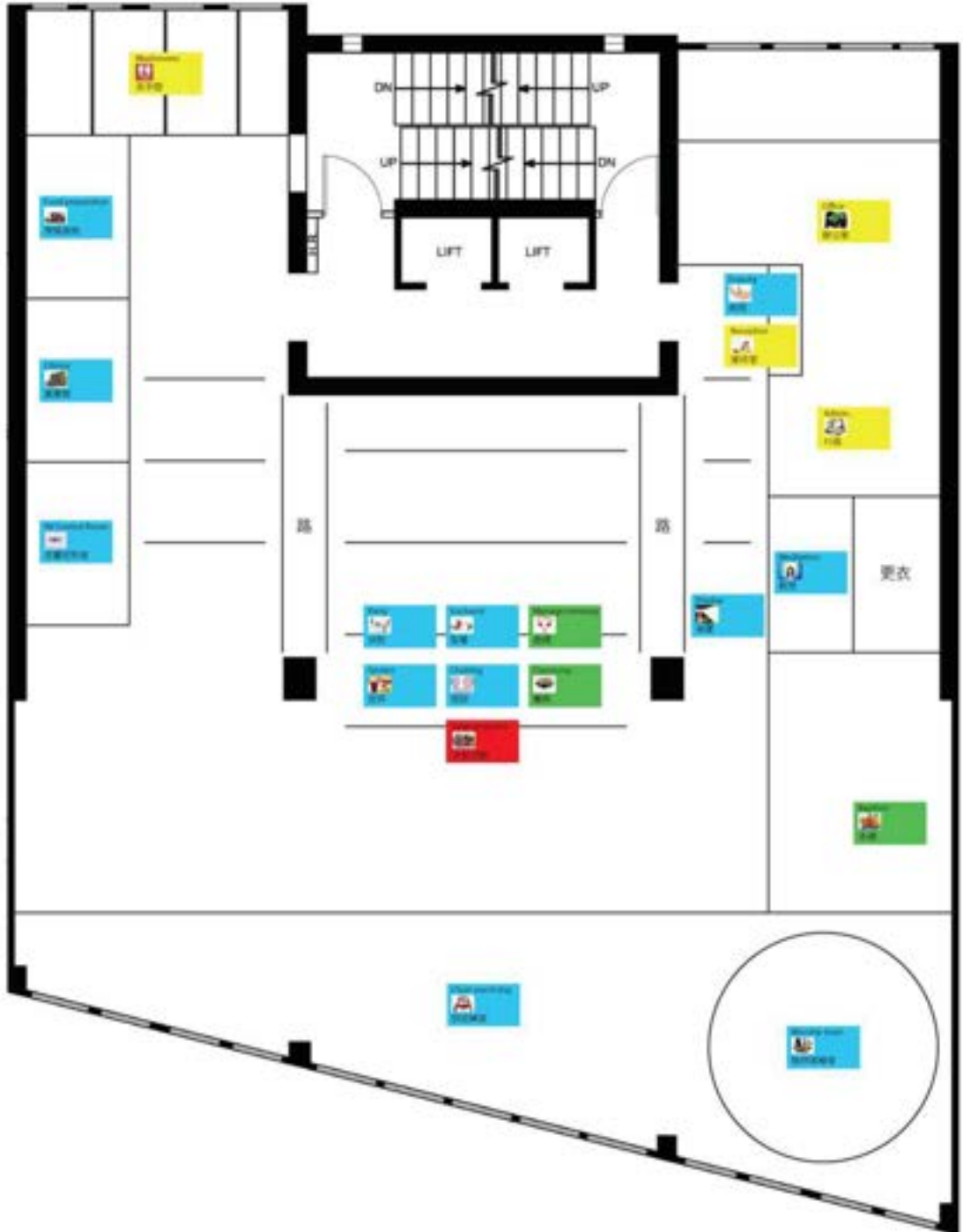
Group 2.3 Youth
4th Floor
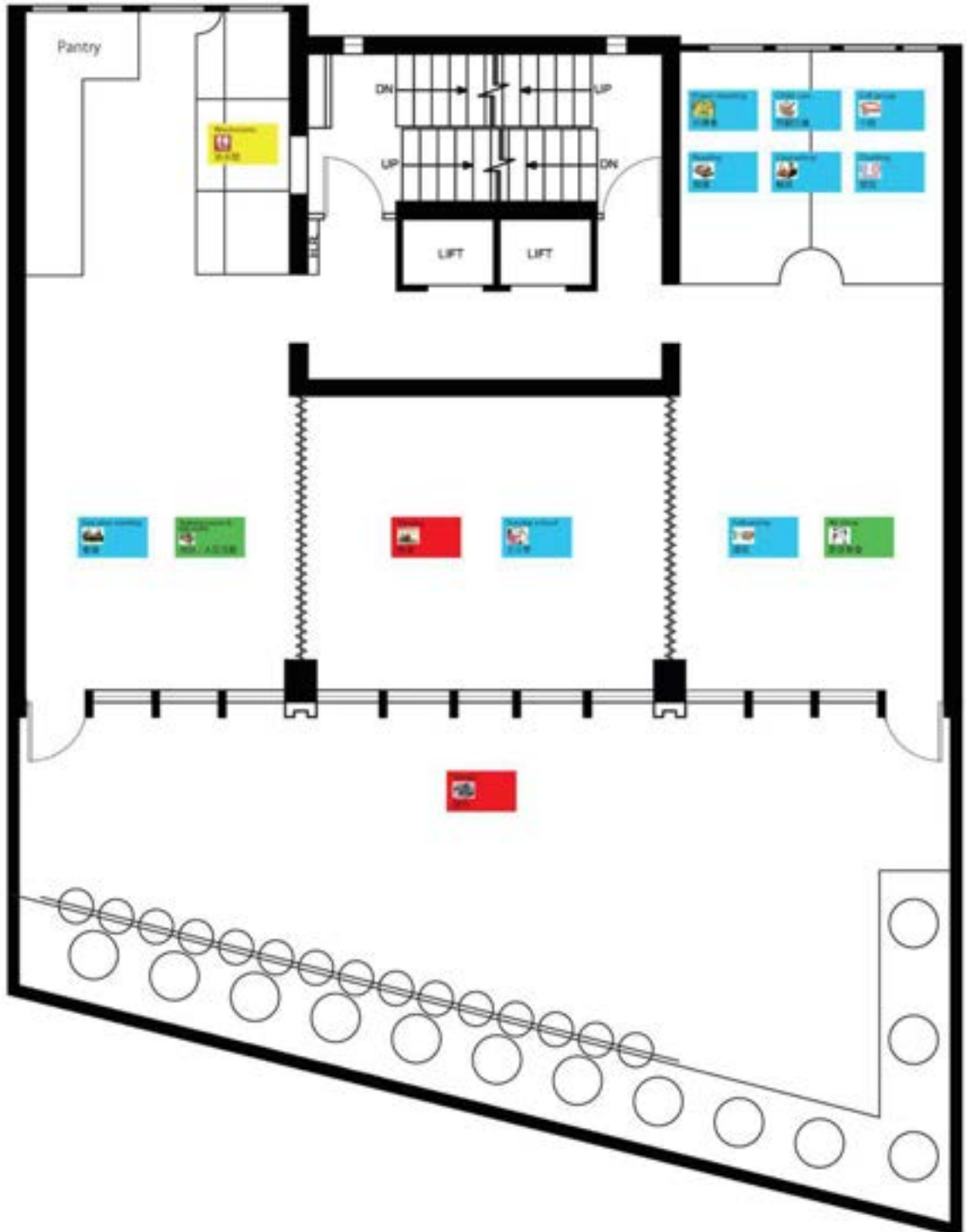
Group 2.4 Youth
3rd Floor

Group 2.4 Youth
4th Floor
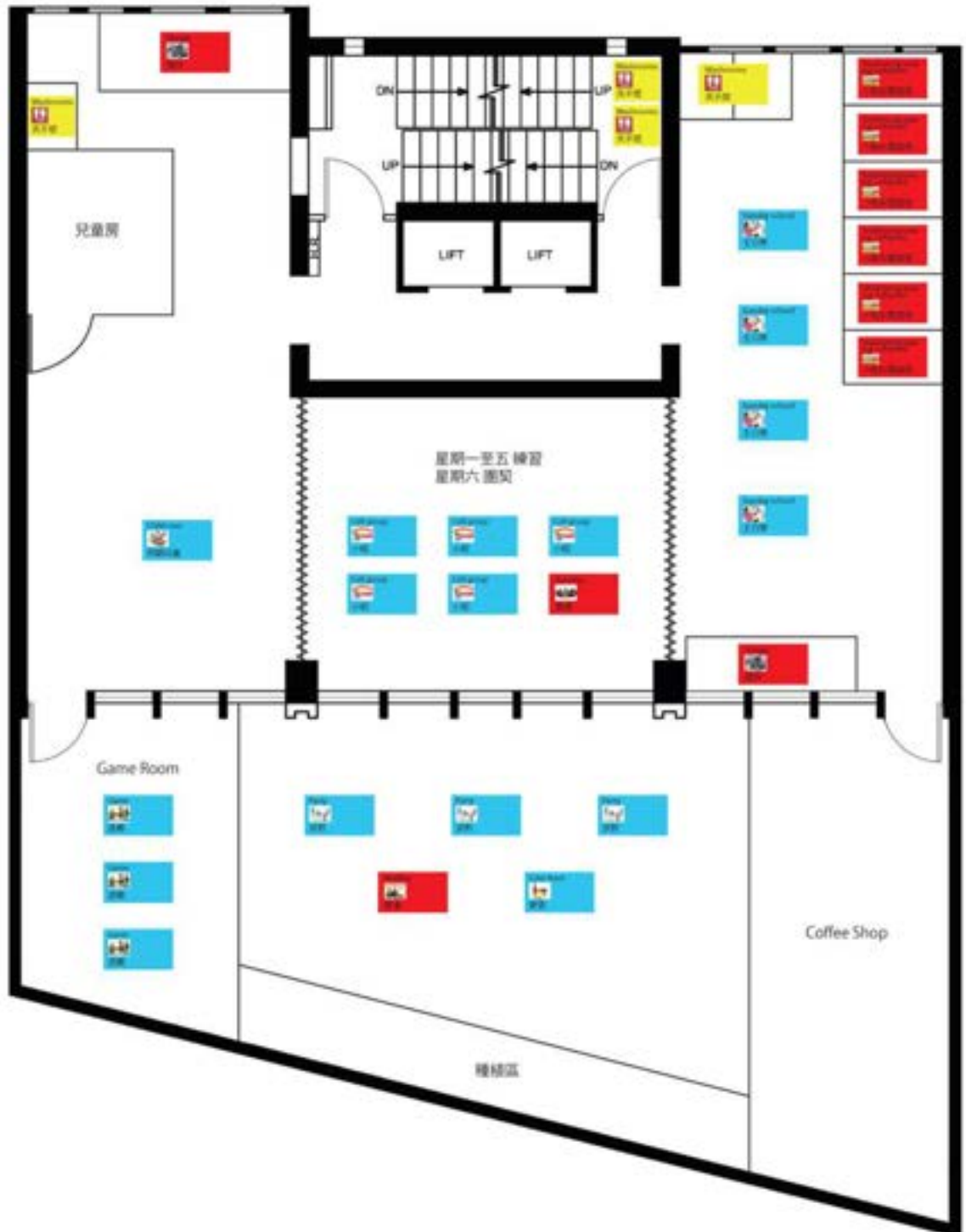
Appendix 12
Historical Development of the Models of Church (Dulles, 1987)

Dulles analysed church in the whole historical development into five different models. 1) The Church as Institution; 2) The Church as Mystical Communion; 3) The Church as Sacrament; 4) The Church as Herald; and 5) The Church as Servant. His objective behind was to strike for a balanced viewpoint and tried to integrate all the strengths from five models in order to serve the life of believers and to outreach to the society. Dulles evaluated the five models from seven criteria. He reminded Christians that they could not rely on one criterion to support one's standpoint about a preferred model. The criteria stated were: "1) Basis in scripture; 2) Basis in Christian tradition; 3) Capacity to give Church members a sense of their corporate identity and mission; 4)Tendency to foster the virtues and values generally admired by Christians; 5) Correspondence with the religious experience of men today; 6) Theological fruitfulness; and 7) Fruitfulness in enabling Church members to relate successfully to those outside their own group." (Dulles, 1987, p. 191-192)   In this chapter "The evaluation of models", he tried to deliver a balanced view about the strengths and weaknesses of the models. He mentioned that each of them in his perspective has focused on some significant points. "The institutional model makes it clear that the Church must be a structured community and that it must remain the kind of community Christ instated… The community model makes it evident that the Church must be united to God by grace, and that in the strength of grace its members must be lovingly united to one another. The sacramental model brings home the idea that the Church must in its visible aspects – especially in its community prayer and worship – be a sign of the continuing vitality of the grace of Christ… The kerygmatic model accentuates the necessity for the Church to continue to herald the gospel and to move men to put their faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. The diaconal model points up the urgency of making the Church contribute to the transformation of the secular life of man, and of impregnating human society as a whole with the values of the Kingdom of God" (Dulles, 1987, p.194).

Parameter with Physical, Social and Cultural Well Beings

Category / theme	Concept	Data

Spatial arrangement	● Spatial dynamics
	● Centering focus
	   ● Aesthetic impact
	   ● Symbolic resonance[1]
	   ● Multi-functional scheme[2]
	   ● Display scheme[3]
	   ● Elements of interior space[4]
	   ● Interior design materials[5]
	   ● Progression of space / path	

Physical well-being	● Comfort ● Security ● Safety ● Hygiene ● Mood such as warmth and intimacy ● Visibility ● Accessibility ● Privacy ● Efficiency ● Effectiveness ● Boundaries	
Social well-being	● Solidarity / Unity ● Variety ● Vitality ● Involvement ● Empowerment ● Interaction ● Opportunity for casual social gathering ● Enhancement / sustainability of mutual assistance among the members ● Assimilation	

	• Individual growth	
	• Achievement / recognition	
	• Sense of belonging	
	• Expected mutual aid	
	• Emotional support	
	• Ethic	
	• Hospitality	
	• Intimacy / warmth	
Cultural / religious direction (common ties and bond)	• Identity	
	• Unity	
	• Common value	
	• Expectation	
	• Transformation	
	• Representation	
	• Symbolic change and maintenance	
	• Power/ hierarchy	
	• Taste / distinction / class	
	• Rootedness	

Remarks:

1a. Symbols	1b. Media with symbols
Cross	1.Sculpture
Jesus	2.Relief
Biblical figure	3.Carving
Angel	4.Painting
Lamb	5.Poster
Dove	6.Wood craft
Eagle	7.Ceramic
Candle	8.Display gift
Flower	9.Lamp
Altar	10.Clothes
Large chalice and bread	11.Floor pattern
Small chalice and bread	12.Furniture
Biblical story	13.Metal craft
water	14.Logo
Nature	15.Signage
Water	16.Banner

Others	17.Light box
	18.Stainless glass
	19.Window
	20.Curtain
	21.Others
2. Multi-functional scheme	
Folding partition	
Folding chair	
Stackable chair	
Folding table	
Convertible device	
Storage	
Movable stage	
Multi-media	
Others	
3. Display scheme	
Display cork board	
Stick on windows	
Stick on doors	
Hanging from ceiling	
Stick on glass panel	
Stick on walls	
Hanging display rack	
Display rack	
Display cabinet	
Display shelves	
Others	
4. Elements of interior space	
Ceiling	
Wall	
Floor	

Furniture / Facilities	
Column	
Window	
Door	
Staircase	
Lighting	
Plant	
Artwork	
AV system	
5. Interior design materials	
Wood	
Synthetic materials such as Plastic laminate , acrylic	
Glass	
Metal such as stainless steel	
Concrete	
Stone	
Ceramic tiles	
Fabric	
Wallpaper	
Paint	

Appendix 14
Layout Floor Plan of Sheung Wan Baptist Church

Appendix 15
Visual Simulation Workshop

Workshop 1: Selection of Design Elements

Informants from Sheung Wan Baptist Church

Group 2: Leaders from Sheung Wan Baptist Church – pastoral team and social services workers

Group 3: Laymen from Sheung Wan Baptist Church – two groups (youth and adult including elderly and members of the renovation committee)

For group 2 and group 3, they belonged to the same church and they planned to renovate the existing church venue after purchasing the upper level. Hence, the task was more realistic and the ideas were more specific. Relatively, they were more enthusiastic in the workshop for they expressed ideas on a real project. They were eager to see the transformation from their contribution to the final design. Different age groups had different criteria and it was a challenge to bring all ideas into one design solution for this was a real project conducted by the researcher from initial research to design stage to final completion. Pastoral ideas hence had become the basic guidelines on considerations in terms of a balance between theology and practicality.

Pastoral team and social services workers: Themes: Love; serenity; Immanuel; Holy; glory and suffering; intimate; helpful; utmost the highest; creation; peace; sacred and contemporary; solemn; relationship with the world; close to God; water spring; God is light.

Representation: Use of wood; use of light such as light coming out from darkness; use of glass to create the openness in entrance and reduce the gap between the community. (see Appendix 11)

Summary: The primary focus of the pastoral team and social services workers was to have a balance between different concepts such as contemporary and sacred qualities. They stressed the relationship with the world as well as relationship with God. The theology of creation was the related concept. In addition, the use of symbolic meanings was reinforced, especially the use of lighting. The concept of love from the presence of God as compared to the manifestation of the utmost and the transcendence was highlighted; and other contrasting concepts, such as glory and suffering, which were also mentioned.

Youth A: Themes: Trendy (in bigger font); sacred; warm; comfort; grand; crossover; mix and match; outstanding; awesome; home feel; peace, serene; love; through water to deliver energy, spread of the Good News and fruitful and enriching life; use of light to express the concept of God is light and hope.

Representation: Different light effect; use of glass such as glass door for entrance and glass with flowing water effect; artistic and classic touch up; use of tiles and stones; use of wood; lighter colour; use of art. (see Appendix 11)

Youth B: Themes: Contemporary style; darker mood, no white light, blue or green light; God loves everyone; God is glorious and almighty, just, sacred and kind; variety in our faith; use of light to represent the power of God.

Representation: The use of glass could let sunshine in and have views to the exterior; stylish design, such as black and white, curvy, three-dimensional effect of the wall, print images, glass table; wooden effect; colourful effect; with views to the exterior; brighter atmosphere (contradict with one of the themes: darker mood); artistic touch; a touch of classical mood; simple design; mystic effect. (see Appendix 11)

Summary: The youth groups were keener on contemporary and trendy look. They liked glass material with simple line and see through effect. They preferred more dynamic image such as interesting patterns instead of straight lines. They also considered the use of symbolic meaning, such as light, water and fish. However, when they came to the concept of sacredness, they still selected stone or wood materials. Basically, the youth preferred the space to be more colourful but simultaneously they expressed that plain colour, such as white colour, was more solemn. They even voiced out that they did not prefer traditional elements or features..

Adult including elderly and members of the renovation committee:

Adult A: Themes: Brighter; simple and practical; contemporary and traditional.

Representation: Use of wood and stone; mix with glass and natural lighting; Curve ceiling. (see Appendix 11)

Adult B: Themes: Mood: serene and awesome; light: bright.

Representation: Use of natural light; pictorial suggestion of the outdoor environment; curvy ceiling; entrance is traditional; use of art integrated with scripture; use of wood. (see Appendix 11)

Summary: The selection of the adult group also reflected a mixture of traditional and contemporary qualities. Some contemporary design such as communion table with all components in glass was selected to deliver a contemporary image. The use of natural lighting was vital; informants consistently mentioned about natural light entering the space and to create a bright environment. Basically, they preferred the use of natural materials with monotone background colour. Through the use of artwork such as

contemporary pattern stained glass, the adult group tried to enrich the space with dynamic colours.

Workshop 2: Area Relationship and Spatial Planning

Informants: Laymen from Sheung Wan Baptist Church – two groups (youth and adult including elderly and members of the renovation committee)

Summary: For the youth, (see Appendix 11) apart from creating a multi-functional open space, they preferred to create more rooms for different activities. It might indicate that they wanted privacy. The youth also highlighted more leisure activities such as game, party and playing table-tennis. From the quantity of icons relating to religious activities, they were thoughtful for the need of the church. They concerned about church activities more than social services activities. To create sacred space, they placed the altar in front of the windows to create a wider altar with the use of natural lighting as the background.

For the adult, (see Appendix 11) they understood the limitations of the site and they try to build multi-functional areas such as when the seating capacity was not fully occupied, they would like to leave a corner for library. No matter in large or small areas, more than one icon was placed to indicate the multiple dimensions of the space usage.

For the adult, they were more realistic and drill into details such as when the location of the pantry was close to the entrance, they found solutions in order not to disturb the image of the entrance of the church. Formerly, their altar was facing wall with windows on the right side. They preferred to make use of the windows as the back wall of the altar and allocated meditation space in front of the windows. They allocated more social services icons on the fourth floor to differentiate between sanctuary and social services centre. As a whole, church activities dominated the usage of the whole area.

Analysis of the Field Research Findings

In order to establish the design concept, the researcher analysed from the interview with the representing pastor, meeting with renovation committee, survey of the whole church and workshops to understand their attitude towards different aspects such as transcendence and immanence; sacred/solemn atmosphere and secular/ approachable atmosphere; contemporary and traditional qualities; and the use of symbols. From the workshops, through the selection of themes and representations, one could understand their expectations in building their ideal churches. It was reminded that the diversified ideas from different groups must be resolved tactfully. Ideas from different groups had to be incorporated into the design to indicate that their contributions were valuable.

The concept of constructing a sacred and contemporary church identity was not only recognised by the representing pastor and one of the the professors, who was the consultant of this church but also affirmed by the findings in the workshops of all groups. Furthermore, it was acknowledged by the survey with a balanced viewpoint and endorsed by the discussion with renovation committee. The idea of sacred representation through transformation of traditional elements into contemporary representation was reassured. About the expectation of the theme, the symbol of light was commonly delivered from workshops.

Through Workshops to Reveal the Expectation of Church Design

Expectation of Contemporary Representation in the Ideal Church Design Workshop

From workshop one about the selection of images, the design output of every group including theological students, pastors, renovation team members and other laymen such as adult and youth created designs with contemporary quality such as the use of glass for the pulpit. It was obvious that the youth group expected a contemporary image to reflect their identity; however, other groups also expressed their concern about contemporary quality.

From workshop two about area relationship and spatial planning, basically, both the youth and the adult expected to create a multi-functional space to tailor for many different activities. It meant that a systematic time management was required. It was challenging that the youth wanted more private spaces such as small rooms with designated activity than the adult. For Sheung Wan Baptist Church, the space was limited and the desire for more rooms was difficult. They concerned the practical issues more than the theological subjects.

Expectation of Sacred Identity in the Ideal Church Design Workshop

In workshop one, the focus was about design of each church area and the use of design elements; when informants made decision on their ideal sacred space, they could focus on their ideal expectations without detailed concern about the realistic constraints. (see Appendix 11)

The analysis was to understand whether the findings would match the assumptions of this study such that to create a church which would reflect both sacred and contemporary identities; and whether the traditional values were treasured by informants or not. From the findings, the spaces they designed contain both contemporary and sacred qualities which matched with the hypotheses of this study. Every group

mentioned about these qualities. They also agreed to highlight the use of symbols and different kinds of symbols were described as elements to deliver the sacredness. The most popular one was the use of lighting. Lighting was an essential element which was kept in line with traditional values. They also preferred simple design but use of art works was significant as well. We could find different themes in bible or theology to put into the design briefs; they preferred to create both the transcendent and immanent natures such as to deliver the awesome and intimate atmosphere. It indicated that progression of space was the solution to create diversified atmosphere for church and we could also think of creating a transformable space to match with the required mood for different activities.

In workshop two, both youth and adult groups liked to use natural lighting through the windows as the background of the altar to symbolise the power of God. Hence, they wanted to meditate in front of the windows. It meant that the design of the windows was an important element to enhance the spiritual quality and to block the business of outdoor environment. Relating to the discussion in the interview concerning the view of the exterior, it was expressed that views to the outdoor environment meant that Christians were not confined inside a comfortable environment and accessing to the chaotic exterior environment was their primal concern as well.

Chapter 9: References

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