

**CHURCH - THE MATERIAL STRONGHOLD OF MODERN MAN'S EXISTENCE
A DESIGN PROPOSAL FOR MANHATTAN CHINESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

by

JAMES LEQING ZHOU

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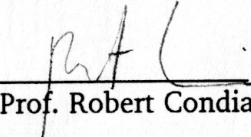
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Approved by:


Prof. Robert Condia, AIA

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Abstract



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As the East and the West are truly beginning to merge, the world becomes a "global village". We are living in an age with unprecedented privileges of this world view, in which diversity and pluralism are the most distinctive characteristics. We are experiencing the excitement of new ideas, as well as the anxiety and bewilderment which come with such diversity and pluralism. This thesis is an autobiography of a journey in search of the meaning of life in such a social, historical context. As a Chinese originally accustomed to an isolated, uniform and primarily homogeneous society, coming to the diversified and plural society of the United States of America, has proved to be an overwhelming adjustment.

Among all the disciplines known to the mankind, religion provides the most coherent and systematic approach in a search for life's meaning. Over the past five thousand years, the Chinese and the Western world developed different forms of religion which can be summarized as Chinese - individual contemplation which is inwardly directed, Western - collective worship which is outwardly directed. Architecture, as the product of deep cultural values, should keep abreast of social changes. The church design in this thesis is an attempt to reflect the existential need of human being through the act of building within the social and historical context of a global village. It is a search into the impact which our age may have on the design of religious architecture.

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In the whole process of my study here, my parents have made the great sacrifice at the expense of their own comfort and enjoyment. This work is dedicated to my mom and dad.

INTRODUCTION

As a student in architecture, there are thousands of topics that I can choose for a master thesis, why a church? I made the decision at a time when I was deeply entangled in a crisis of self identity and bewildered about the meaning of life, which was two years' ago. I was unable to explain the reason behind it at that time. Now as completion of my search approaches, the whole picture is coming together.

Man, as a social being, bears the influences of his society, his culture and his time. In order to understand my personal journey of a search for meaning, some social and historical background will be necessary. I will review this background with an emphasis on religion.

At the turn of this century, China was mainly a feudalistic, agricultural country. Idol worshipping and all kinds of superstition were prevailed, even though Buddhism and Taoism were the dominant religions at that time. In 1911, Sir Sun Yat Son led the revolution and overthrew the feudalistic empire and founded the Republic of China. This political revolution did not bring many changes to the religious situation in China, in spite of the fact that Sir Sun himself was a Christian. By 1949, when the People's Republic of China was founded under the leadership of Mao Ze Dong, all religious activities were banned and forbidden as the superstitious. This was because of the teaching of the communists' mentor, Karl Marx. He said that religion is opium by which the governing class manipulate to hallucinate the masses so that the oppressed will be obedient and not rebellious. Mao, the superman of that era, never went beyond the boundary of China in his lifetime (except a short visit to the Soviet Union). He was a nationalist rather than a

communist. His deep inherited sense of pride, which resulted from his patriotism and deep understanding of Chinese culture led in the early 1960's to the eventual split with the other major communist power, the Soviet Union. Thus, China was isolated from the rest of the world completely.

During this isolation (from early 1960 to late 1970), Chinese society was turbulent and chaotic. One political movement following another almost brought China to the brink of total destruction. People were turning against each other, even husband and wife, parent and children had to turn against each other, because of different political stands which were originally resulted from the class theory and communist ideology. There was no standard for good and evil, everyone had to do what he/she thought was the right thing for his/her own survival. Hypocrisy, conceit, distrust and even hostility were common everywhere. Total darkness clouded the vast land of China. The so-called 'Cultural Revolution' which started in 1966 and ended in 1976 at the death of Chairman Mao, was probably one of the most disastrous mass movement ever witnessed in the contemporary history of the mankind. The proud communist leader, who succeeded in the war with the Japanese and the following civil war with the nationalists, claimed that God does not exist. Ironically, Chairman Mao was proclaimed as the Savior of hundreds of millions of people from their endless suffering. Chairman Mao himself was raised to the position of God.

In late 1970's, under the leadership of Deng Xiao Ping, China opened her door voluntarily to the outside world for the first time in her 5000 years history. The emphasis of the nation was shifted from political ideology to science, technology and economic development. Science and money became the new idols of worship. As the door began to open and the

information came in from every direction of the world. Chinese people were shocked to see that the entire western hemisphere was leading a better life than they had. This was just the opposite to what the communist party had originally taught that the rest of the world was still struggling in the darkness, Chinese needed to "liberate" them. In the early 1980's, Chinese intellectuals focused on the works of prominent western philosophers, scientists, and politicians. They respected their works as the supreme truth, earnestly searching through them. However such humanistic writings could not lead them to the state of "enlightenment". The society's philosophical search for truth was abandoned for a pragmatic capitalism. Under the tidal waves of a market Economy, these works are left to the scholar's study, covered with layers of dust with their owner's soul still in restless search. Soon the Western world began to arouse the Chinese's strong curiosity and draws hundreds of thousands of them to go abroad. This is the first spectacular exodus of Chinese that ever happened in history.

Spiritually speaking, with the collapse of the communist world, the communist ideology has become outmoded. The modern Chinese are occupied with pragmatic pursuits. But material alone can not satisfy every need of a person, just as Moses taught the Israelites after he led them out of Egypt:

Man does not live on bread alone. but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. (Deuteronomy 8:3)

That spiritual vacuum in the Chinese mind, caused by the failing communist ideology, creates a hunger for spiritual truth.

I, as one drop of this big wave of the Chinese exodus, came to the United States in August 1990. Because of high expectations of myself formed at the early stages of my life, I was

extremely frustrated at the beginning, and was almost totally overtaken by stress and anxiety. At the time of academic pursuit, I was searching for wholeness, inner peace and the meaning for my existence. Through encountering Christianity, I have found not only my own salvation, but also greater implications for social reforms of the Chinese society.

My struggle for the meaning of existence can be summed up by a statement from Gerardus van der Leeuw:

He who has art and science both,
He also has religion;
Whoever does not have them both,
Let him have religion.¹

My way to realization through science and art seems to be closed, but the way through religion is widely open. My previous restless search for truth finally rests in a faith of the God with the Christian connotation.

Art, by definition, is the concretization of truth. Architecture, as a kind of art, has the same function. It is in that capacity of architecture that I am seeking expression.

My deepest desire is to blend the Chinese tradition which represents an introvert attitude (a spiritual energy directed inward to meditation and self-examination and a direct personal communion with an invisible world) and the western tradition which represents an outward attitude (a spiritual energy directed outward to rites and ceremonies and all the objective symbols of the same invisible world). To fulfil this task, I assume only a person who has a thorough understanding of both traditions could be qualified to take this task. The ability

¹. Gerardus Van Der Leeuw, Sacred and Profane Beauty, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1963, P.4.

to conceptualize the two traditions in an architectural language requires an enormous amount of information. It was with a feeling of humility and hesitation that I undertook this task.

Chapter 1, The Commission

Having the church design in mind, then who is the client?

In the whole design process, there has been a constant debate inside myself: Should I have a real client in the sense that he, the client (whether an individual or a committee) will provide a condition or a kind of framework within which I will start to work? The client will provide the necessary feedback to help me to justify each decision and provide a criteria as well. In the conventional sense, the client is the true generating force behind the realization of each project. The architect's role is to assist in the process. Unable to locate such a commission in the real sense, I proposed a hypothetical one for myself.

The Manhattan Chinese Christian Fellowship has been in existence for a decade. It was originally started by several Chinese Christians from Taiwan. They have a regular Bible study session on each Friday evening, making use of the facilities of Grace Baptist Church on Dickens Avenue, a Sunday worship ceremony on each Sunday afternoon, making use of the facilities of Crestview Christian Church on Turtle Creek Boulevard. Over the past three years, I have participated in their services periodically. Although not truly belonging to it in the sense of its weekly function, I feel that I am part of it. I know its needs. By proposing a church for this fellowship, I am allowed to blend both client and architect into one identity.

In the past several years, the configuration of this congregation's membership has changed. The majority has become mainland Chinese instead of Taiwan Chinese. Its membership has

increased from less than ten to more than thirty. At the present, proposing a church for them might seem premature as far as their financial capacity is concerned. But looking at its potential for future development, making such a proposal is totally legitimate. If designing for immediate construction is not the ultimate goal (hence I will not be subjected to financial and material restraints, I can more freely apply my imagination), then I would rather say that the real purpose behind this thesis is to explore the meaning of Chinese and Western architecture on a deeper existential level.

A comment made by Louis Kahn best explains my situation. Once in an interview, Louis Kahn was asked about his design of the Unitarian Church in Rochester, NY, he said:

I wasn't dealing with a personal place for somebody, but a place for many. Even when serving the dictates of individuals, you still have no client, in my sense of the word. The client is human nature. It makes no difference if you are serving one person or many. This church building is a little world within a world, just as a house is its little world within a world.

When asked who gave him the commission, he said:

Instead of saying the one who, let's say the way of life that gives you the commission (Italic original). Forget about who it is, whether it's a king or a simple man. You don't take a commission from a person. You take it from the way of life. That means that when you are designing a house you are designing it for the person, but you are designing it also for the person who will take it after this person. Otherwise, you don't serve architecture at all.

You can't make terrific castles which no one can afford, because the way of life won't let you; it tells you that you can't do it. There are no kings any more. Today, an ordinary person - a school teacher, for instance - can tell the architect what he wants. Now this is the way of life telling the architect this. So it really isn't a school teacher, nor the shopkeeper, nor the baker, but the way of life which commissions you. The expression of an era can come only from architecture, which has the way of life as its commissioner.²

Truly in the same sense, I am commissioned by human nature on one hand, the way of life on the other.

². Louis Kahn, What will be has always been - The Words of Louis Kahn, Rizzoli, New York, 1986, P. 192.

CHAPTER II. BACKGROUND RESEARCH

A. The sacred and the profane

If human life can be conceptualized in simple terms, the concept of the sacred and the profane as two modes of human existence fits it best. The simplest definition for the sacred is that it is the opposite of the profane. Eliade proposed the term hierophany to explain the concept of the sacred:

It is a fitting term, because it does not imply anything further; it expresses no more than is implicit in its etymological content, *i.e.*, that something sacred shows itself to us.³

The sacred presents itself as something "wholly other", something basically and totally different. It is like nothing human or cosmic; confronted with it, man senses his profound nothingness, feels that he is only a creature, or, in the words in which Abraham addressed the Lord, is "but dust and ashes"(Genesis, 18:27).

The sacred and the profane are two polemics as real and unreal, material and spirit, religious and nonreligious. The sacred as the opposite of the profane, pertains closely to hierophany. It belongs to another world. The profane, as the desacralized world, is a modern phenomenon which is unknown to the people of the antiquity. As Eliade implies, there are certain values which have been lost in the process of desacralization. In describing the difference between the religious man's perception of the world and that of nonreligious man, Eliade writes:

³. Mircea Elide, The Sacred and the Profane, Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc. P. 11.

Revelation of a sacred space makes it possible to obtain a fixed point and hence to acquire orientation in the chaos of homogeneity, to "found the world" and to live in a real sense. The profane experience, on the contrary, maintains the homogeneity and hence the relativity of space. No true orientation is now possible, for the fixed point no longer enjoys a unique ontological status; it appears and disappears in accordance with the needs of the day. Properly speaking, there is no longer any world, there are only fragments of a shattered universe, an amorphous mass consisting of an infinite number of more or less neutral places in which man moves, governed and driven by the obligations of an existence incorporated into an industrial society.⁴

(For the religious people,) life is not possible without an opening toward the transcendent; in other words, human beings cannot live in chaos. Once contact with the transcendent is lost, existence in the world ceases to be possible.⁵

In this writing, the importance to the human existence of a center and an orientation to the center has been stated clearly. In other words, an Axis Mundi has to be established in order for an individual to have the freedom to move from a lower to a higher state of realization.

The phenomenon of total profanity and a wholly desacralized cosmos is a recent discovery in the history of human spirit. Eliade describes how this process of desacralization happened:

The process is an integral part of the gigantic transformation of the world undertaken by the industrial societies, a transformation made possible by scientific thought and above all by the sensational discoveries of physics and chemistry.⁶

In this thesis, my inquiry is whether this secularization of nature is really final, or whether a possibility remains for nonreligious man to rediscover the sacred dimension of existence in the world.

Religious people yearn to live in the center of the universe; they desire to be saturated by the power of spirit. To make a place sacred, the key lies in the action of consecration,

⁴. IBID, P. 23.

⁵. IBID, P. 34.

⁶. Ibid, P. 51.

which includes three steps: setting a boundary, creating a center, followed by an orientation. To interpret it in architectural language, they equal an entrance, a path, and a center.

B. The Chinese Sacred Tradition

China, a vast land which is bigger than the United States including Alaska and Hawaii, is mainly isolated because of her geographical features. On the west is the insurmountable Himalaya mountains, on the east is the Pacific Ocean, on the north is the man-made barrier, the Great Wall. This was originally built for the purpose of defending China from invasions of the northern nomadic barbarians, On the south are the jungles that separate China from interaction with her southern neighbors.

Basically a rugged country, China has a few prairies at the delta area of Pearl River in the south, Yantz River in the central, and Helong Jiang in the north east. The western terrain has a higher altitude than the eastern. So the two great rivers, the Yellow and the Yantz, -- the cradle of Chinese civilization --- originate in the west, both flow from the west to the east. This flowing direction has a significance in helping Chinese to orient. However, an interesting thing to note is that it is common to see, in all major religious structures in China, south - north axis is more important than the east - west axis.

Because of the boundaries on four sides, the Chinese believe the earth is a square and the heaven a circle. China is located at the center. Even though there are more than five

mountains in China, the Chinese believe there are five which have special influence. Among them, four are evenly located on the four sides of the square with one in the center, the Dong Yue (literally means east mountain) is Tai Shan; Xi Yue (west mountain) is Hua Shan; Nan Yue (south mountain) is Heng Shan; Bei Yue (north mountain) is Hen Shan; Zhong Yue (central mountain) Song Shan. Believed to possess an auspicious or ominous quality, each direction is associated with an animal: east with blue dragon(symbolizing the great sea); west with white tiger (symbolizing the snow on top of the Himalaya Mountain); south with red bird (symbolizing the flower and the warm weather of the south); north with black tortoise (an ominous symbol representing nomadic invasion from the north). Based upon this understanding, the Chinese developed a commonly accepted rule for the layout of a complex. According to this rule, the building is open to the south and east, closed on the north and west.

Among the great Chinese sages, Laotz was regarded as the father of Taoism. He was a lover of beautiful natural landscapes. He revered mountains as no less than divine manifestation. Today this also reflects the general sentiments of Chinese intellectuals. By living close to nature, man can feel the Tao (literally means truth or law) in an existential sense and realize the ultimate meaning of his existence.

The Chinese believe that man can finally reach that state of enlightenment through contemplation, meditation, self-improvement and self-realization. Throughout history, many Taoist practitioners were also great poets, because their deep love of nature served as a constant source of inspiration. In comparison with other kind of artists or nobilities these poets are best loved figures by Chinese of generations after generations. The Chinese's love

of nature can be compared with a Christian's love of God.

Zhuang Zi, Laotz's disciple, furthered his teaching by imagining himself to become a butterfly, who is freed from man's physical limitation and is truly in union with nature. Harmony has the utmost value in Zhuang Zi's thought. His philosophy and attitude toward life provides an outlet or source of comfort for those who fail in the climbing of bureaucratic ladder.

Another great sage, Confucius, exerted great influence not only on Chinese society but also on the orient in general. Confucius' teachings focus on the order of the society, on the hierarchical relationship of society in general, and of governmental institutions and family in particular. Confucius' highest pursuit is self perfection. Through progress toward perfection an individual is qualified for a higher position of governmental service and finally is in oneness with Tian (heaven). Confucius never bothered about God. One of his famous teaching is that: if you can not know this life fully, how can you know life after death? So what he taught is to focus on this life, do the best you can. His teaching contributed much to the indifferent attitude of Chinese toward religion. His teaching of worldly oriented wisdom helped to establish the world's most sophisticated and ancient bureaucratic political system, rather than religious doctrinal structure and institution. So in an ecclesiastical sense, Confucianism is not a religion, because it has nothing to do with God. In the general meaning of religion as a system of belief or worship, it is a worship of human thoughts and institutions. Perhaps in this fashion, it prepared the way for the religion of communism in China.

In the eyes of Confucianist, Zhuang Zi's philosophy might seem other worldly. Truly, it represents another kind of value, which transcends all those earth - bound pursuits advocated by Confucius. The polarity of Confucius' teaching and Taoist philosophy forms the backbone of the Chinese Intellectual's mentality.

At around the Second Century A.D., Buddhism was introduced into China. The process of bringing in Buddhist sutras was legendized in a classic of Chinese literature called 'A Journey to the West'.

Curiously enough, Chinese were fascinated with the stories, personalities, and different encountering of the four earliest pilgrims. They took great pleasure in reading these stories, but were not really serious about the teachings those earliest pioneers brought back. Buddhism offered the Chinese a complete set of religious teaching, which is not produced on China's soil. Over the following centuries, it infiltrated into every corner of China.

Throughout the long history of China, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism were competing to be the dominant ideology all the time. Confucianism, as a set of moral teachings rather than a transcendental religion, does not have an obvious contribution to religious structures in China. There is only one prominent Confucius Temple. This is located in Confucius's hometown, Qufu, in Shang Dong Province. Taoism, the only native Chinese religion, is rich and famous in philosophical teachings, but weak in ritualistic aspects. For this reason, Taoist temples are scarce and less influential. The most numerous and magnificent temples are dedicated to Buddha. As Buddhism spread further inland, its doctrine was modified and localized to adjust to Chinese culture. Its architecture bears more Chinese characteristics

than its Indian prototypes.

Now, from my perspective as a Christian, when I look back on the history of China, God, as a Christian understands Him, seems absent from all important historical events in China's past. Only one man, the Emperor (using the title Son of God) was the ultimate authority. Chinese history is a cycle of decay and prosperity. This cycle was a direct result of the behavior and conduct of the emperor. From the underlying utilitarian perspective of the Chinese, religion only serves as an escape from the miseries and sufferings of the real world. The religious world and the secular world are totally segregated. This is why all major religious structures in China were built on famous mountains. The Chinese believe that God only resides in those famous mountains. By building temples on those mountains, it is easier to approach God. In comparison with the natural landscape, the man made temples took a humble form in terms of the layout and volume of space. They were expressing the builder and designer's desire of harmonizing with the nature.

The general characteristic of Chinese architecture is a sequence of spaces in an axial symmetry. This sequence is established upon the hierarchy of the deity in Buddhism, the man made order of social and family structures of Confucian thought, and the Taoist ideas of imitating nature and irregularity.⁷

One of the best examples to illustrate this characteristic is the Foguan Temple (figure 1,2,3,4) on Wutai Mountain, one of the four famous Buddhist mountains in China, in Shanxi Province. This temple was built in the Tang Dynasty, 857 AD. It is one of the earliest

⁷. Lawrence Liu, Chinese Architecture, Rizzoli Intl. Publications, Inc, P. 150.

wooden structures still well preserved in China. Because of its maturity in architectural form and boldness in structure, the Foguan Temple is a major monument that no student of Chinese architectural history can afford to neglect.

As seen from the plan (figure 1), it is located on an east-west axis, on a half slope. Outside of its rigid rectilinear spaces, a surrounding wall serves as a boundary separating this sacred structure from "unclaimed" territory. The compound is approached by means of a gentle slope on the west. A screen wall, intended to ward off any evil spirits, is put right in front of the gate-house. Past the gate-house, there is a courtyard which is defined by the Hall of Manjusri on the north, a raised terrace on the east, a low wall on the south, and the gate-house on the west (figure 2). The sutra pillar located in the middle of the courtyard serves as a liturgical element reminding pilgrims of the importance of the Gautama's teaching. The next space in the east-west sequence is a raised terrace or courtyard which is defined on three sides in U-shaped fashion by a series of small rooms displaying Buddha's works. Further along on the axis, a steep stairway leads to the climax of the sequence - the main hall in which the giant and elegant statue of Buddha sits on an elevated platform. The always peaceful and tranquil image of Buddha spreads peace and blessing to his believers. (figure 3,4)

In a word, Chinese understand the sacred as an objective power which is beyond human will. Deep in Chinese consciousness, they are looking inwardly for a union with the transcendent, through the pursuit of art and meditation. The highest ideal for the Chinese intellectual is the oneness between man and Tian (heaven). For an individual this means

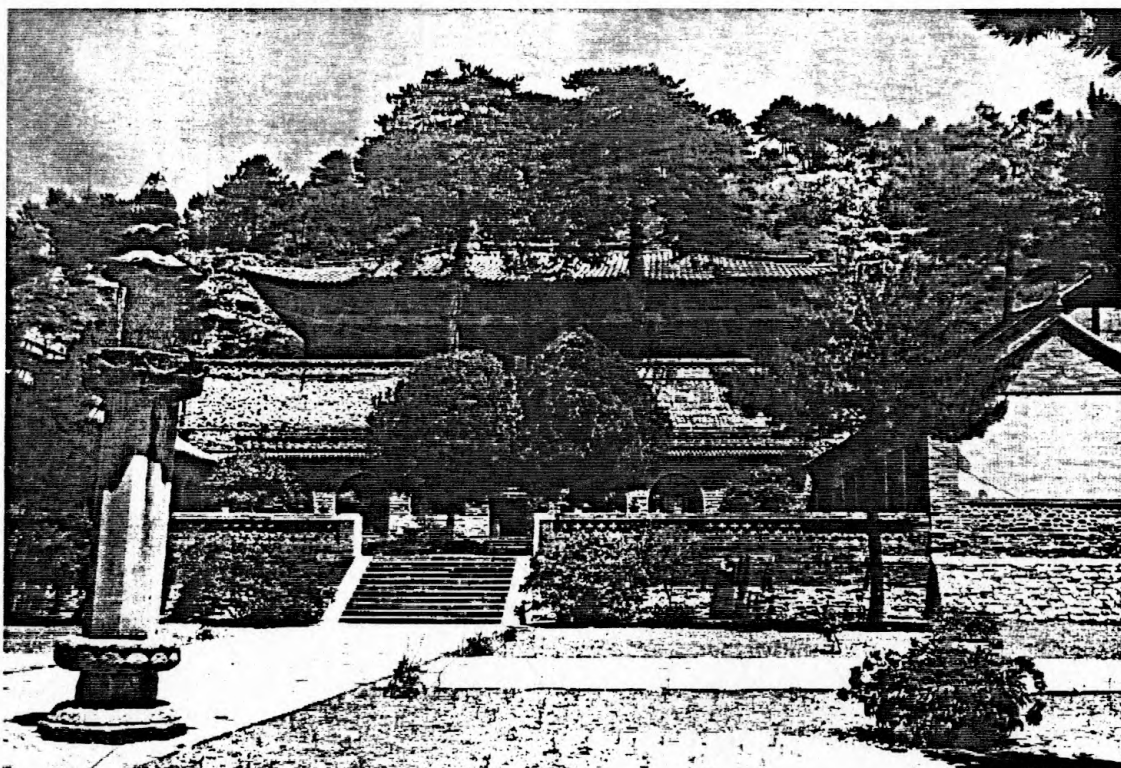


Figure 2. The Central Courtyard

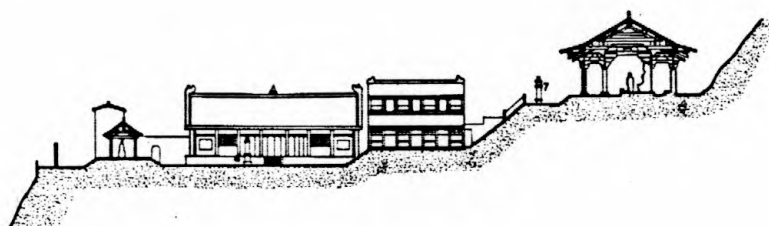


Figure 3. The Cross Section of Foguan Temple

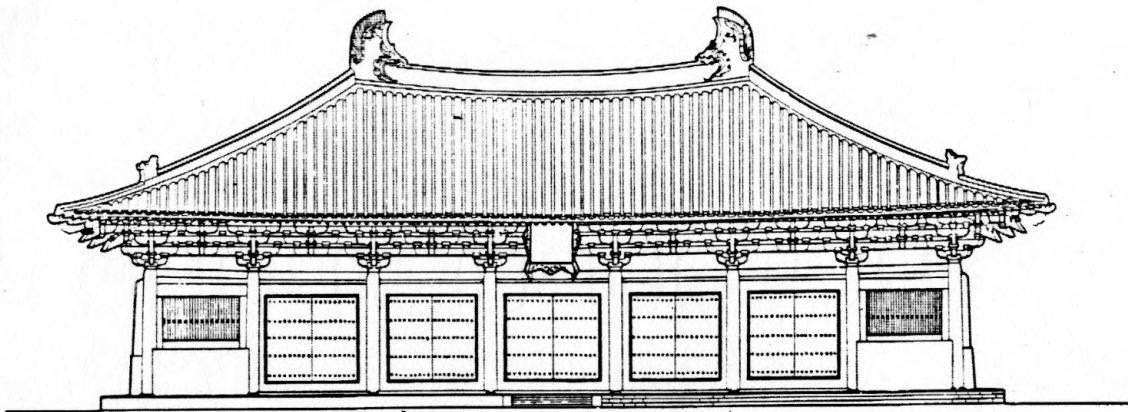


Figure 4. The West Elevation of the Main Hall

a thorough understanding of the laws governing the universe and a total submission to these laws. They view life as a process of self discipline, self perfection and self realization. Searching for the oneness is purely an individual matter, no collective worship has ever been formed.

C. Christian Churches in China

Records show that Christianity was introduced into China early in the Eighth Century, mainly in the west region of China. At that time, it had a different name in Chinese from the present one. It was favored by one emperor and disliked by another. Its presence was very short lived, there are no archeological or architectural evidences of a Christian church.

The earliest contact between the European missionaries and the Chinese began at the end of Eighteenth Century. Those early dedicated missionaries came to China on merchant ships,

sometimes they came with the military. Usually they lived in the enclaves which were granted by Chinese imperialistic government. The effects of their evangelical endeavors were greatly limited because the conduct of the imperialistic forces was contrary to Christian principles. Chinese were skeptical of what the western missionaries preached, and believed they were the running dog of the imperialists' interest. Hence the Chinese resisted Christianity as part of the "western devil".

By the mid and late Nineteenth Century, Christianity started to gain ground in several major cities like Canton (now Guang Zhou), Shanghai, and Peking (now Beijing). Several major protestant churches and cathedrals were constructed during this period. In Shanghai, China's biggest city, there are five large churches. Most magnificent are the Shanghai Cathedral which is located at the outskirts of Shanghai city (figure 8,9,10) and the Mu En Tang (literally means Full Grace Hall). Actually it is a baptist church located at the downtown (figure 5,6,7). Mainly serving those believers with European origins, architecturally these churches are pure replica of Western counterpart. The Shanghai Cathedral is in a style of Gothic revival, Mu En Tang is in a combining style of Gothic and early Modern.

Although Christianity has been present in China for about two centuries, the church buildings mainly have been commissioned, designed and built by Western missionaries and believers. This relatively new faith has not been "woven" into the cultural texture of Chinese society. Architecturally, Christian churches have not gone through the process of synthesis, that is absorbing Chinese tradition while adopting western guidelines, and thus acquire an identity on China's soil. Politically and culturally, if not to say pure religiously, Christianity is still alien to the cultural organism of China.

Now we are living in a historical juncture when China is meeting the west on an equal basis. This is a time when Chinese are embracing the western civilization on a deeper level and wider extent. This is also a time when Chinese society is facing an unprecedented prospect of change and new birth. Christianity, the spiritual core of the western civilization, whose cultural validity has been proven in history, will have equal influence on Chinese society as it had on the western society in the past 2,000 years. However, taking into account this fact that Chinese civilization has remained unbroken for five thousand years, this rendezvous with the west will not be simply adopting or absorbing, a long process of synthesizing both sides is inevitable. This design is an individual attempt of reflecting the synthesis in the field of architecture.

D. Western Christian Tradition

Christianity, formed on the basis of monotheistic Judaism, took advantage of the advanced transportational and political system of the Roman Empire. It spread at the beginning to areas adjacent to the Mediterranean Sea. Christianity blended the genius of Jewish religious insight with that of the rich mythology and science of Greek thought. With the help of the marvelous social organizational structure of the Roman world, Christianity moved rapidly into the Western world.⁸

In the beginning centuries of Christianity, there was no such building as a Christian church.

⁸. Ernest H. Short, The House of God, A History of Religious Architecture and Symbolism, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926.



Figure 5. The entrance to Mu En Tang, has a little courtyard as the transitional space from outside to inside. Very similar to Western counterparts.

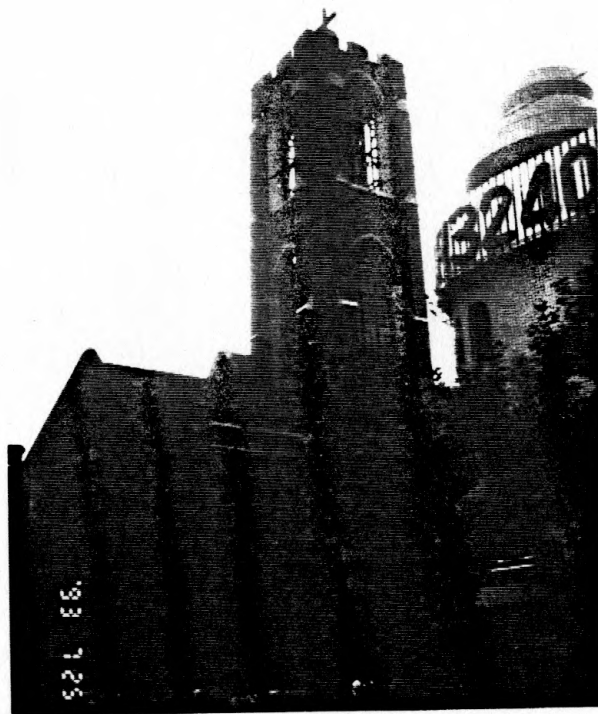


Figure 6. Its tower distinguishes it from its surrounding mundane structures.

Figure 7. Its interior is mainly Gothic, emphasizing on magnitude and monumentality rather than intimacy and mysterious atmosphere by special day-lighting effect.

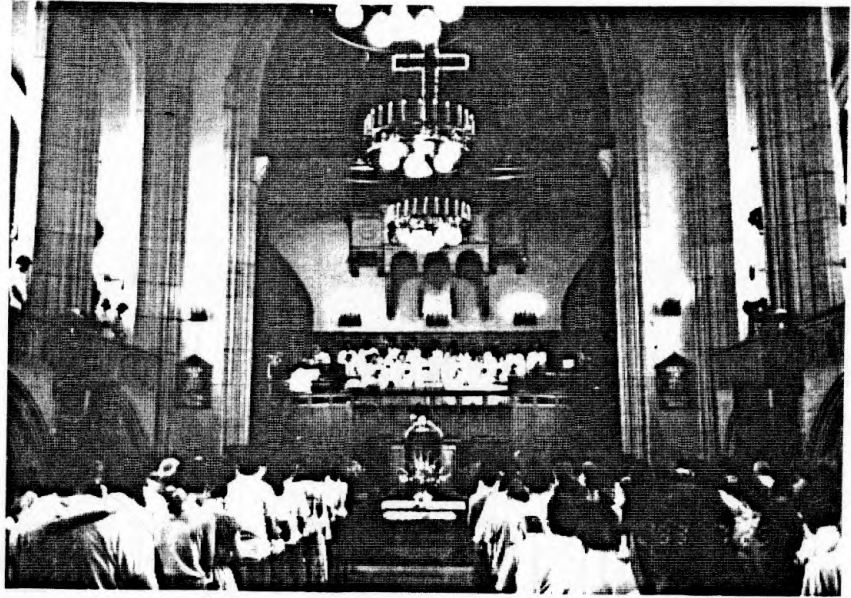


Figure 8. Shanghai Cathedral, is located at the outskirts of Shanghai. Its European steeples seem very unusual in the context. It Expresses the power, majesty and magnificence of Christ, but ineffective in bringing saving message to multitude of ordinary Chinese. Its image represents more of the privilege and prestige of those European immigrants, resembles a castle protecting a few, and refusing many.

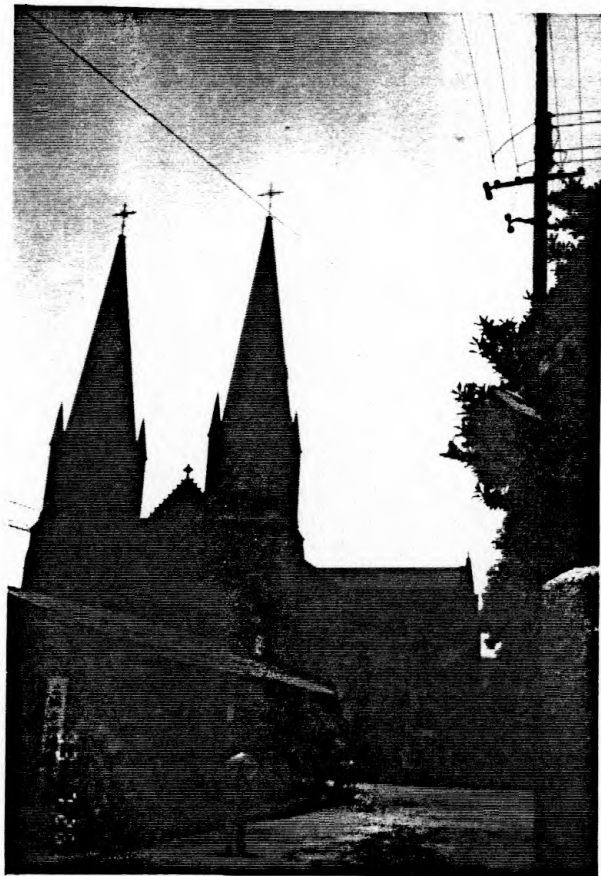
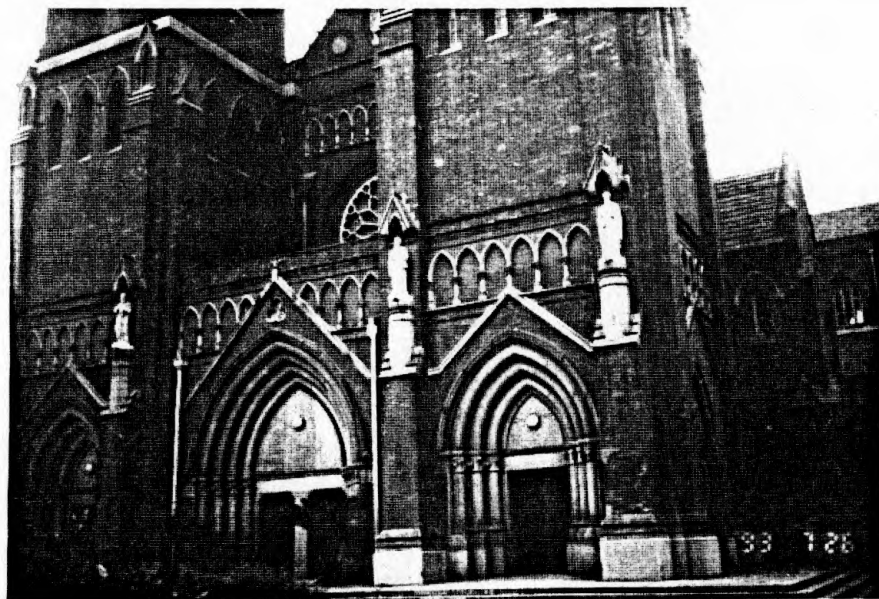
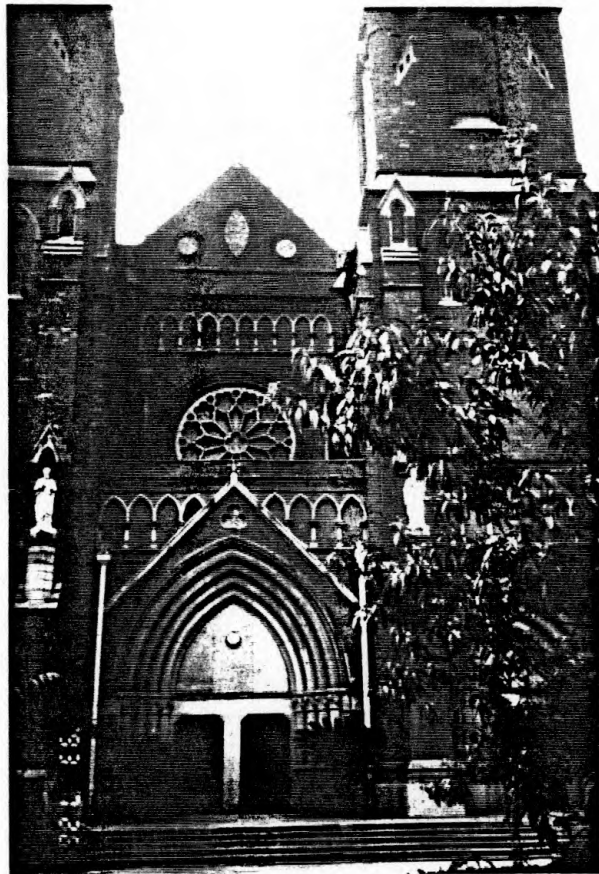


Figure 9, 10. Its image recalls those memories of humiliating history out of a Chinese mind. Its form is simply exotic to Chinese.



CHURCH 23

Early believers met in either a rich member's home or in some secret place like the catacombs. Two or three hundred years after Christ, with the number of Christians greatly increased, these homes and secret spots could no longer meet worshiping need. Early Christians found the Roman basilicas (originally built for public meeting) could serve well as a place of worshiping. They consecrated them and the basilica became the earliest prototype of Christian church. By the time of Constantine when Christianity was sanctioned as the official religion, Christian architecture emerged from obscurity to a prominent art form. It reached its maturity by the end of first millennium. For example, the First Church of S. Marco in Venice, which was originally built in 830, rebuilt in 1063 - 94.

By the fifteenth century, church architecture had reached its zenith. This was the glorious and splendid era of Gothic art. The Gothic cathedrals were marvelous achievements of human endeavor, showing the builder's dedication and faithfulness to the Almighty God. The cathedrals are enduring monuments of that era; they are the products of an era of faith, of the theology and the authoritarian political system of that era. The motivation behind the builders came from a vision of heaven on earth. Usually a cathedral was built for a whole city, it was not an intimate home for ordinary believers, but rather it created among visitors a feeling of awe and reverence for God. They are beautiful and magnificent, but they ought not to be the model of today's house of God. The architectural interpretation of the image of God expressed by the cathedrals is no longer appropriate to modern theology. Nevertheless their achievement in architecture, sculpture, and painting ought to be appreciated and admired forever. They are inspirations to all architects, hereafter.

In the 15th century, Martin Luther's reformation of theology changed the whole landscape

of Europe; and the Western hemisphere was molded by that influence too. The original authoritarian power structure of the church and the state which had created the magnificent cathedrals lost influence. The ultimate authority was given to the Word of God - the Bible. Every believer could communicate with God directly through reading the Word of God, not necessarily through priest, bishop or pope. This reformation brought a fundamental change to the building of churches. The grand scale collective nationalistic efforts of building houses of God came to a halt, while more diversified and individualistic expressions of the image of a house of God became possible.

From an architectural point of view, early Christian architecture was the consecration of the pagan structures at the beginning, and then a continued development. Romanesque architecture expressed the human aspiration of creating a dwelling place for God, but the heaviness of the structure and the limited natural illumination make their goal only partially fulfilled. During Gothic period, the lightness of structure of the cathedrals maximized natural illumination, its magnitude and splendor far exceeded its predecessor; then the mystery of trinity found full expression through architectural form.⁹ Its scale and dimension were based on the divine nature rather than human nature. It symbolizes the highest achievement that human being has ever fulfilled in a collective effort to build a place for collective worshipping. Architecture was at the center among all other art forms in expressing the collective consciousness and unconsciousness of that era.

With the dawn of humanism in eighteenth century, ecclesiastic structure receded from its central position, and never assumed the significance and importance that Gothic cathedrals

⁹. Christian Norberg - Schulz, Meaning in Western Architecture, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1975, P 221.

had in the history of architecture.

Before I conclude this section, I want to bring up a case study -Chapel at Ronchamp, designed by a great prophet of modern era - Le Corbusier. This Chapel served as an inspiration in my design.

Le Corbusier was a man who thoroughly understood the essence of Christianity, who was perfectly familiar with western architectural tradition, including the glorious Gothic cathedral. What was his vision of a modern house of God? How would he deal with liturgical requirements? How did he made this chapel a truly sacred place?

With the drawings (figure 11, 12) and the photos in front of me, I imagined myself to be one of these worshipers who come a long way. As I climb the hill, the first view I get is most dramatic and impressive (figure 13). There are no straight line in this view except the two at the corner. The curved line of the roof keeps ascending and diminishes into a sharp tip where it meets the ascending line of the roof from the other (east) facade. No familiar form has ever been seen before, my psyche is stimulated to the extreme. To me this form echoes the yearning of mankind of all ages to reach the hand of God, the yearning so eloquently depicted by Michelangelo's painting on the Sistine Chapel ceiling (figure 14). A sense of wonder, awe and reverence is created by the highly symbolic form of the Chapel at Ronchamp.

The slanting wall and irregularly placed windows create a strong curiosity to draw me in. As I walk in, the first dramatic impression is the light. Light enters in a completely

controlled way (figure 15, 16). The power of light is fully shown through the contrast with darkness, which is created by the solidness of the other three sides. The thick south wall and the detachment between the roof and the wall, give a sensation of being both protected and liberated. The altar is located on the central axis, pulpit is elevated but off centered (figure 17). Fixed pews take only one third of the nave, leaving space for other spontaneous arrangement. The mystery of the Spirit is expressed through a square window on the east wall, in which a stature of Saint Mary, an artifact from the original chapel destroyed in the war, is inserted. The design of the outdoor altar, making the earth and sky its sanctuary, is the product of the mind of a true genius (figure 18).

Throughout the design, no conventional symbol is used except the cross. Its imagery is unprecedented. The justification of the form, its seemingly arbitrary angle, scale and composition can not be explained through purely rational thinking. It is poetic.

E, Local Typology

Manhattan Kansas, a college town in the mid-west, is the 11th largest city in Kansas. It has only a population of 40-50,000 people when school is in session. With no major industrial presence, the cityscape is mainly composed of residential and commercial structures. In the midst of these structures, churches take a prominent presence. There are more than 50 churches in Manhattan, scattered around on major or minor streets. This fact may explain the role religion plays in the fabric of daily life of many small American mid western towns such as Manhattan.

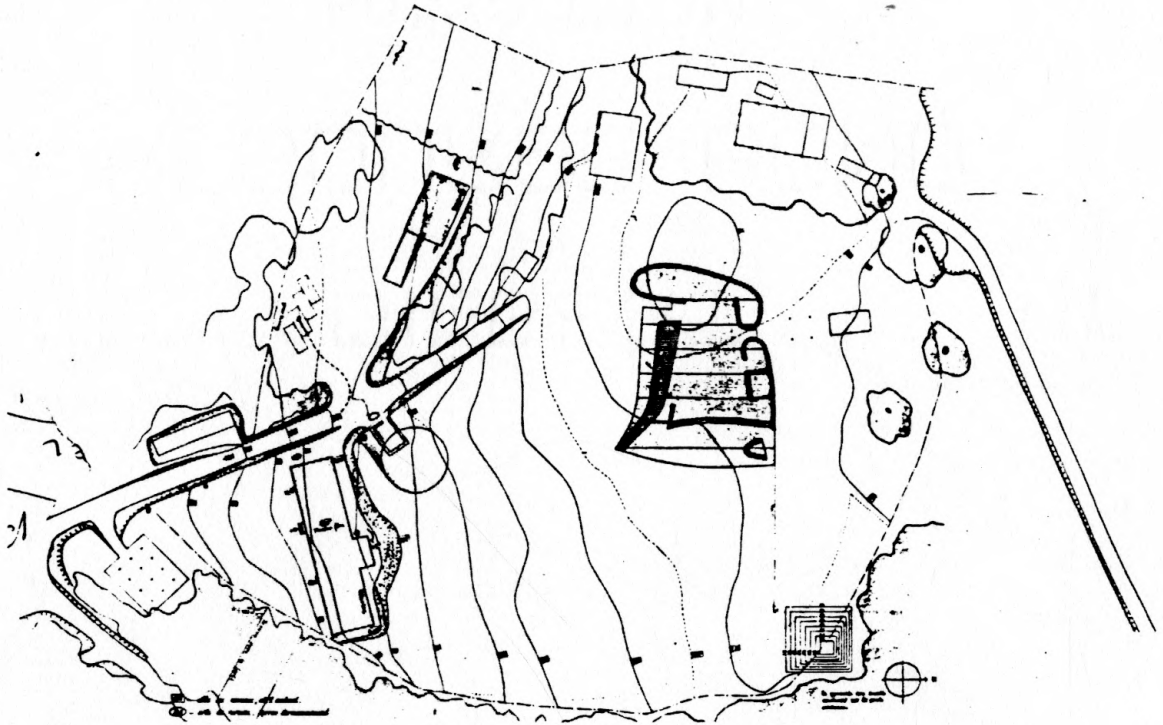


Figure 11. The Site Plan of the Chapel at Ronchamp

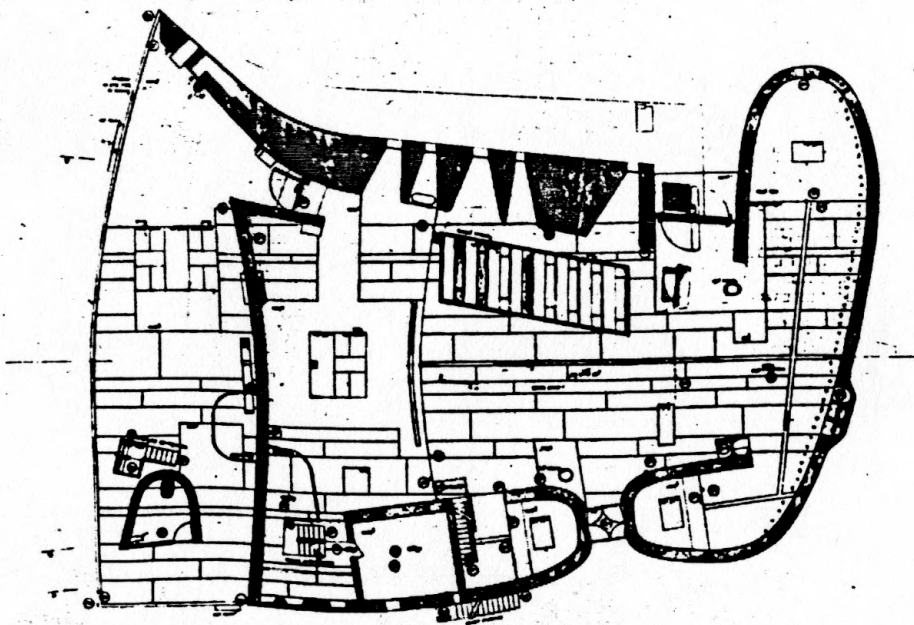


Figure 12. The Plan

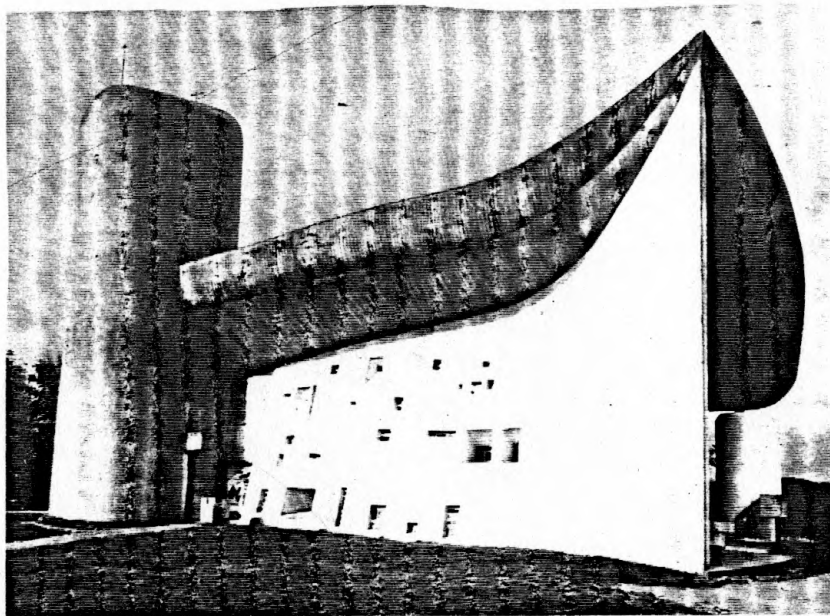


Figure 13. The South View of the Chapel



Figure 14. Painting on the Ceiling of Sisten Chapel by Michelangelo

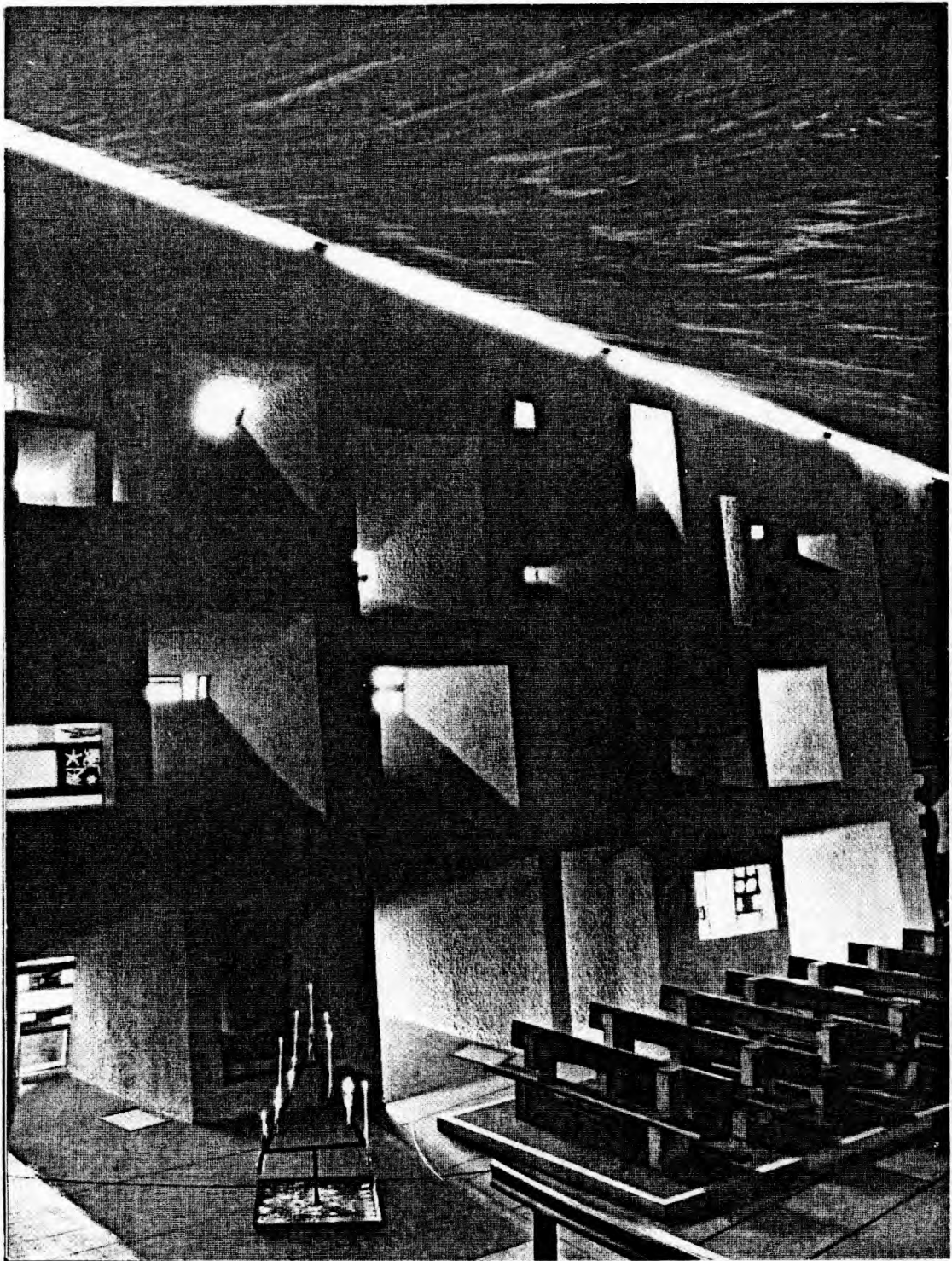


Figure 15. The Interior of the Chapel at Ronchamp
(Light is let in through an unusual way. It recalls early cave dwelling. The atmosphere is very mysterious.)

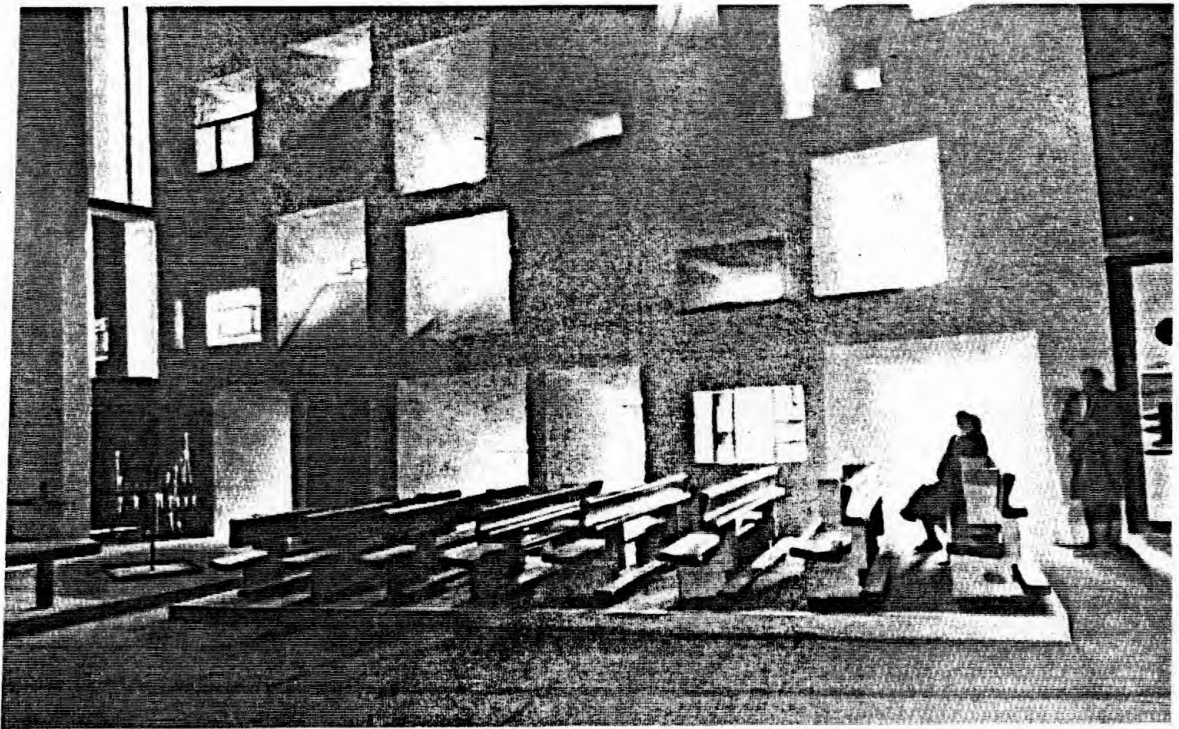


Figure 16. Another Interior View of the Chapel at Ronchamp



Figure 17. The View of Altar and Pulpit

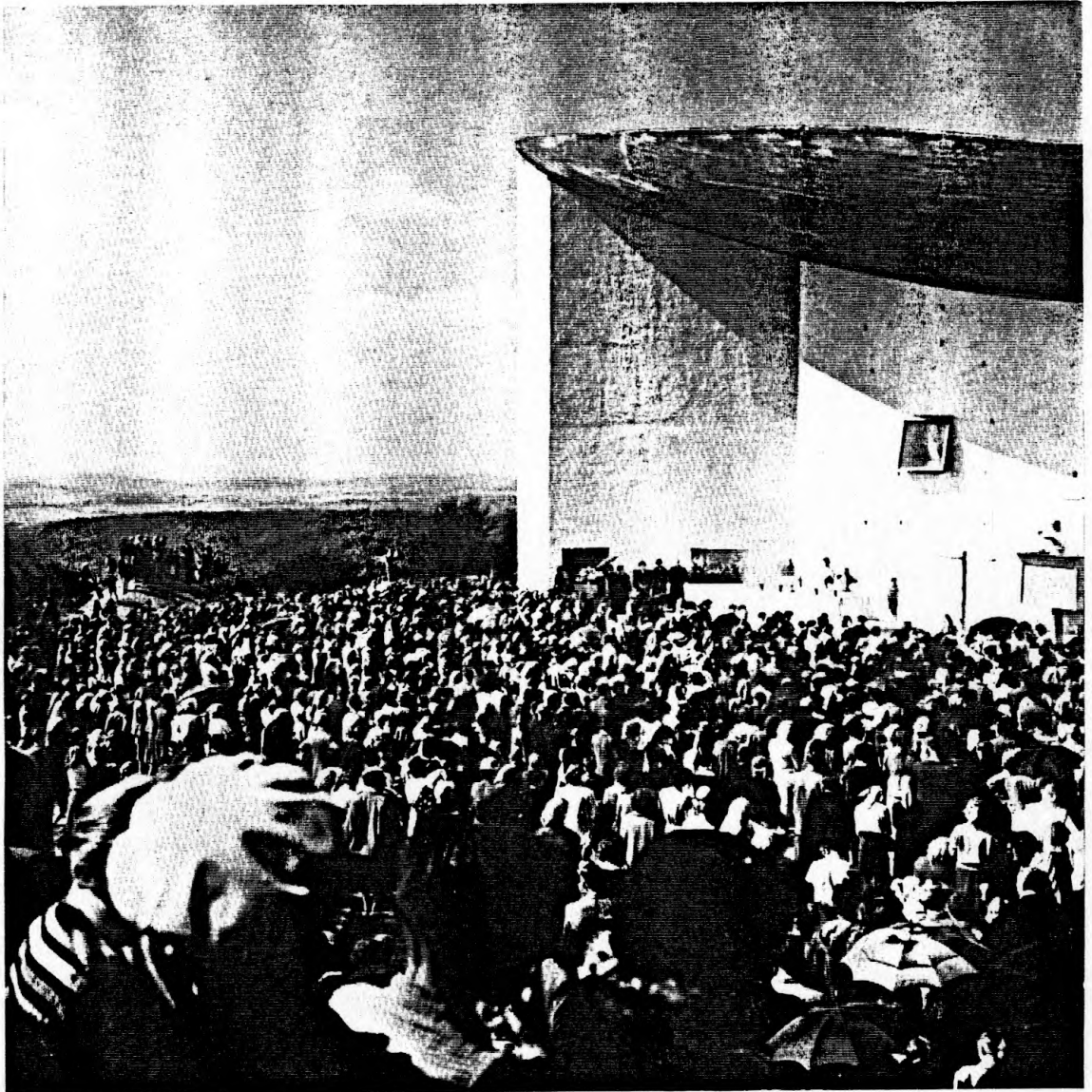
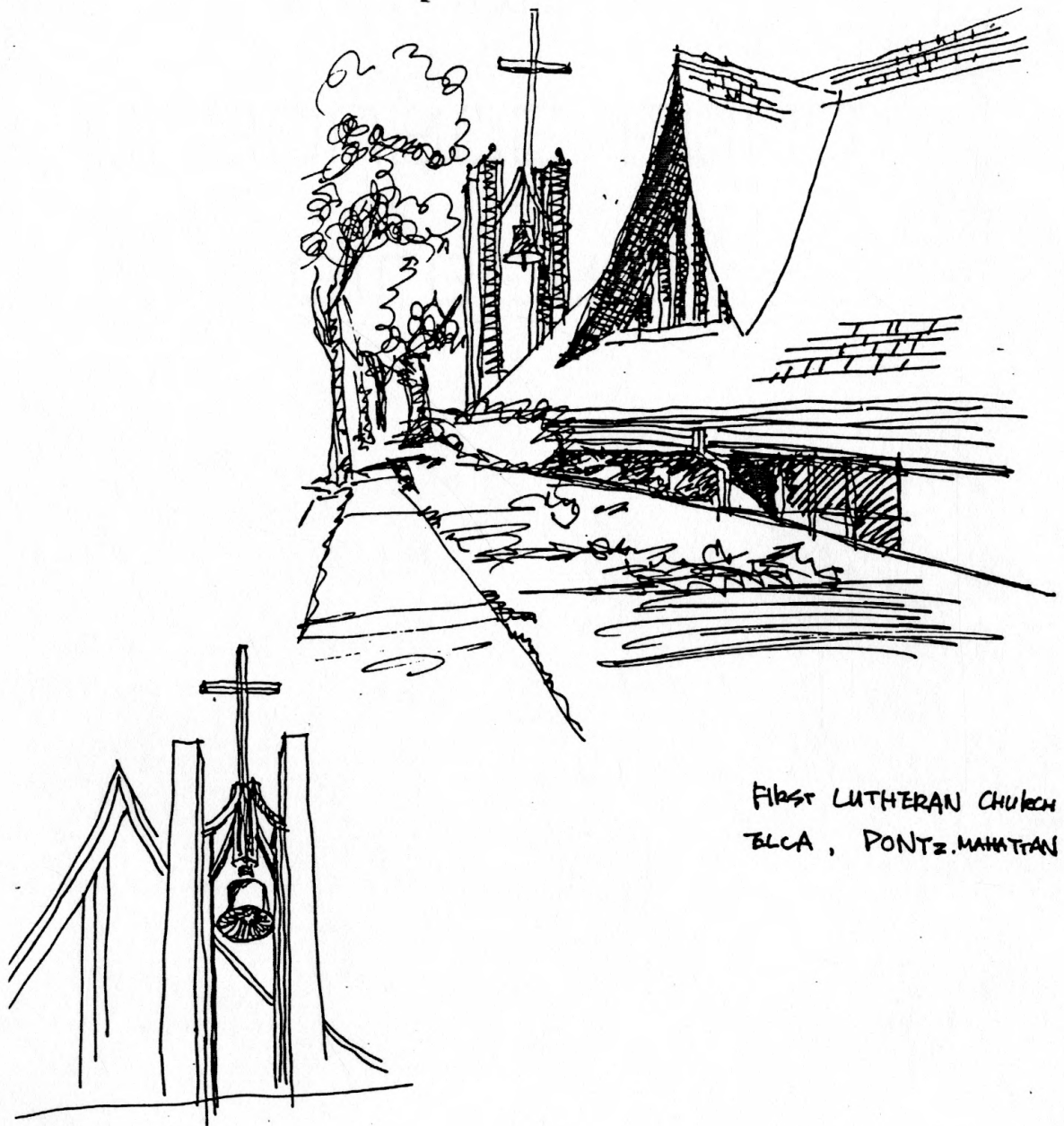


Figure 18. The Outdoor Sanctuary

These churches belong to different denominations. Likewise, they are diversified in terms of architectural expression. For the most part, the churches function principally on a local level, although some have closer relationships with their national organizations, and their activities are more subjected to a higher authority. There are differences in the ritualistic and dogmatic aspects of their worship, but there seems no exact rules that govern the design of church forms. The architectural differences result from different time of construction rather than from denominational differences. The design requires the individual architect's ingenuity to express that sense of deity that is the prevailing experience of each congregation.

Among these churches, the First Lutheran Church on Poyntz Avenue (figure 19, 20), Trinity Presbyterian Church (figure 21, 22, 23) on College Avenue, Peace Lutheran Church (figure 24) on Kimball Avenue, First Church of Christ Scientist (figure 25) on Westview Circle and St Thomas More Catholic Church (figure 26, 27, 28) on Kimball Avenue are particularly noteworthy.

Interviews with the pastors and secretaries of St Thomas More Catholic Church, First Baptist Church, Trinity Presbyterian Church helped me understand the relationship and function of different elements in a church. I want to mention some different features in each of these churches. In the back of the sanctuary of St Thomas Church a crying room, which is sound proof but not visually separated from the main sanctuary, is designed for the purpose of letting young fathers and mothers participate in the service without disturbing others. In the First Baptist Church, although the narthex is really small, the fellowship hall is adjacent to both narthex and sanctuary, so that both before and after service the fellowship hall can



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELCA, PONTIAC, MICHIGAN

Figure 19. FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, located on Poyntz Avenue, exaggerated the roof, created an earth-bound feeling rather than heaven ascending gesture. Its form provides a special sense of security, symbolizing God as the refuge and shelter of His believers. Bell tower is dematerialized into four thin columns.

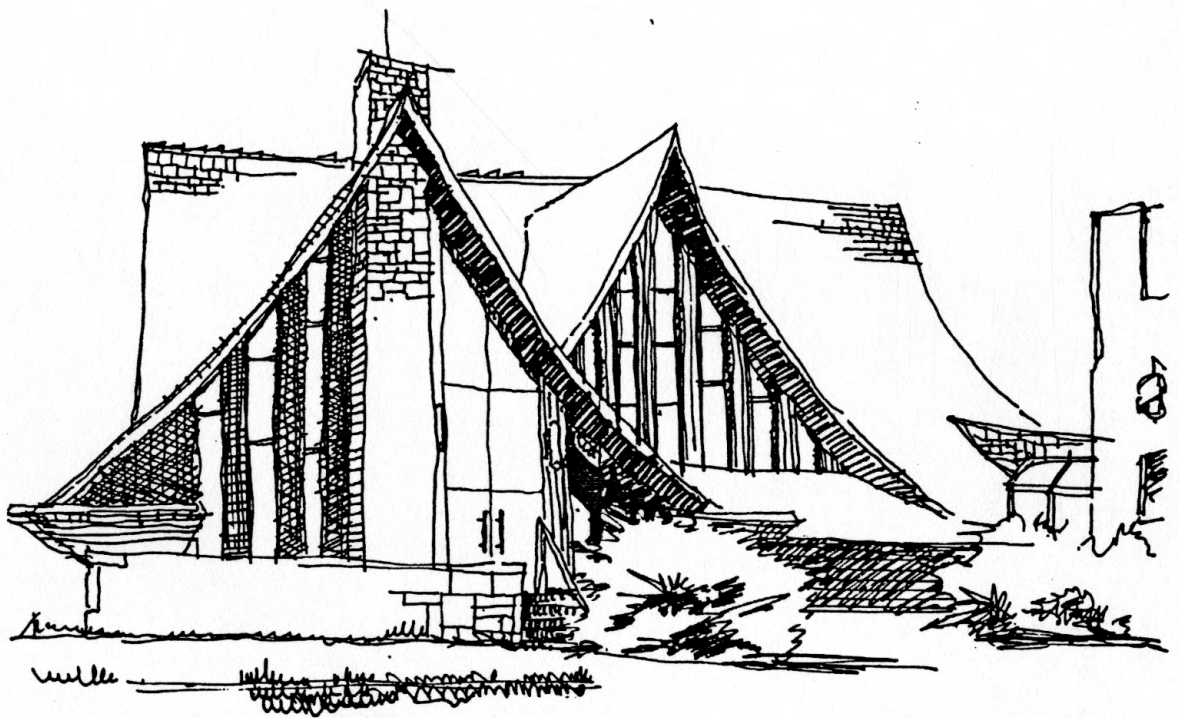
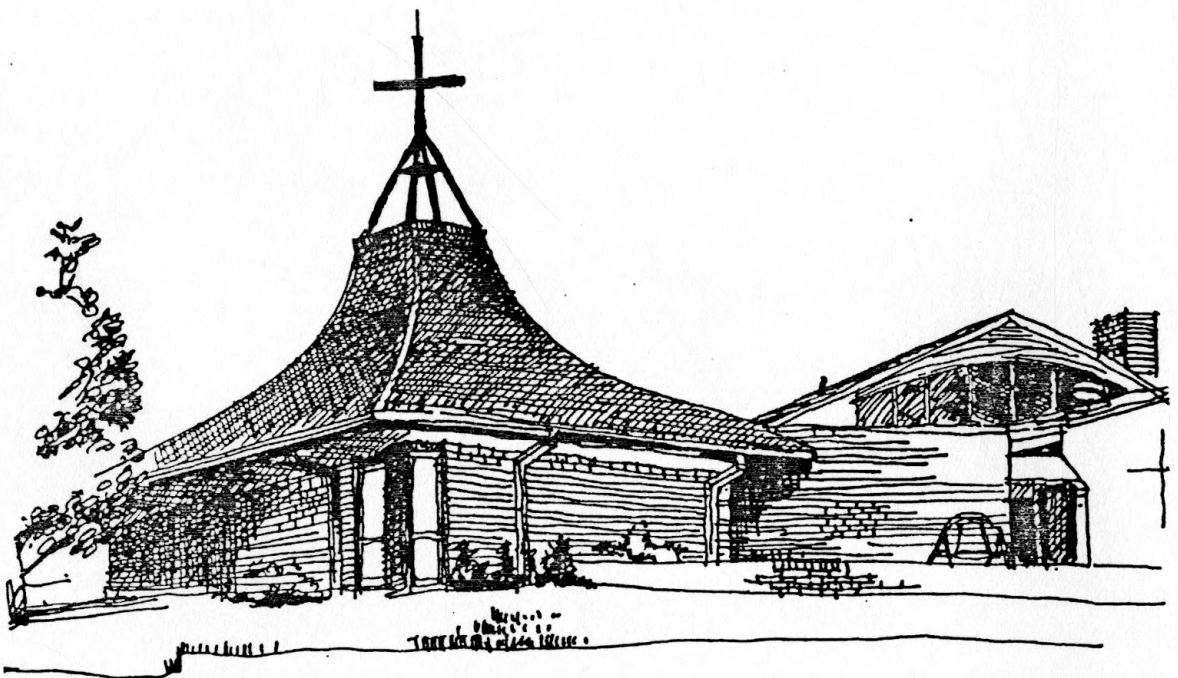


Figure 20. North View of the First Lutheran Church



TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

Figure 21. The TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH on College Avenue, view from west entrance.

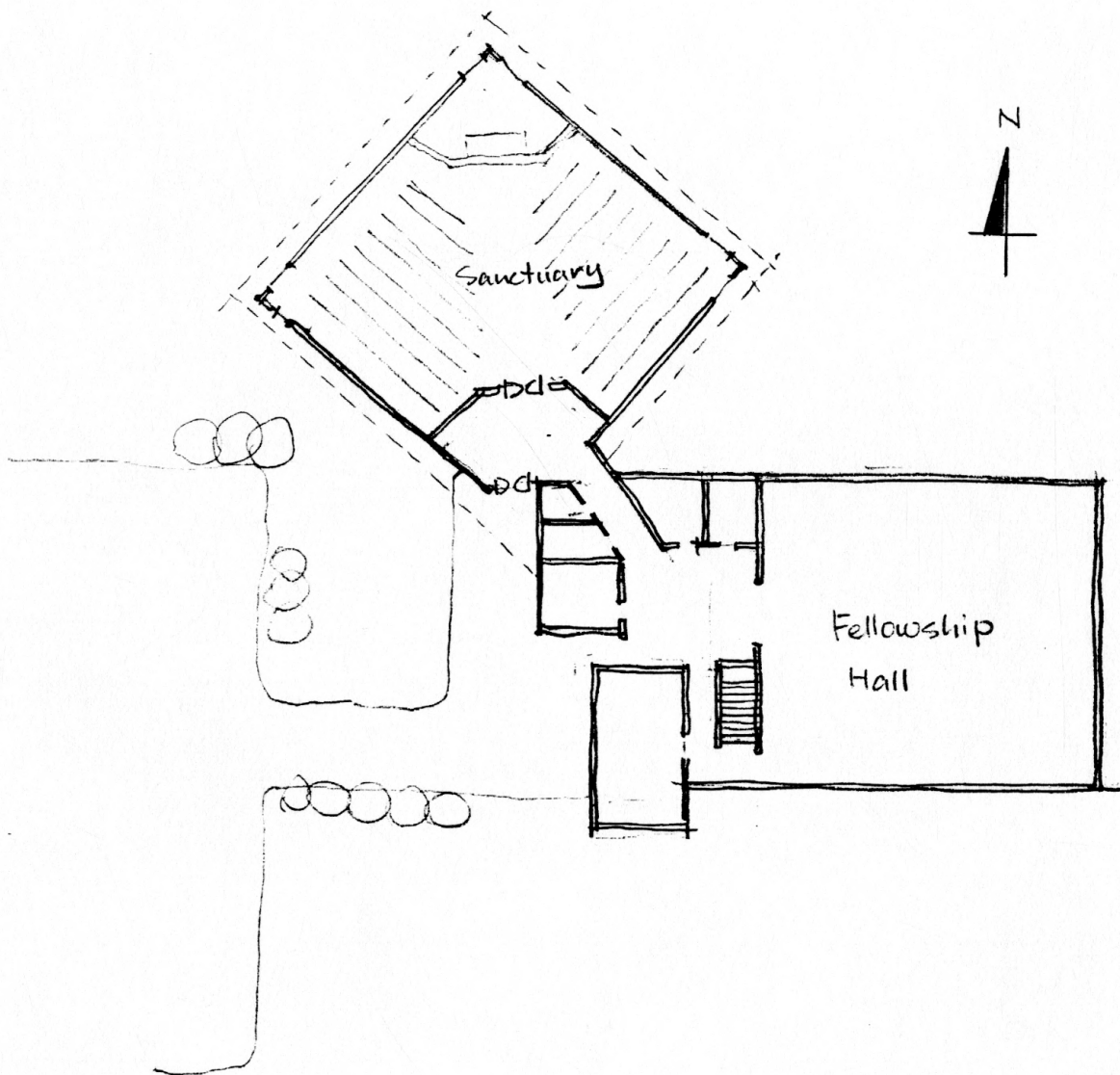


Figure 22. The sketch plan of the Trinity Presbyterian Church .

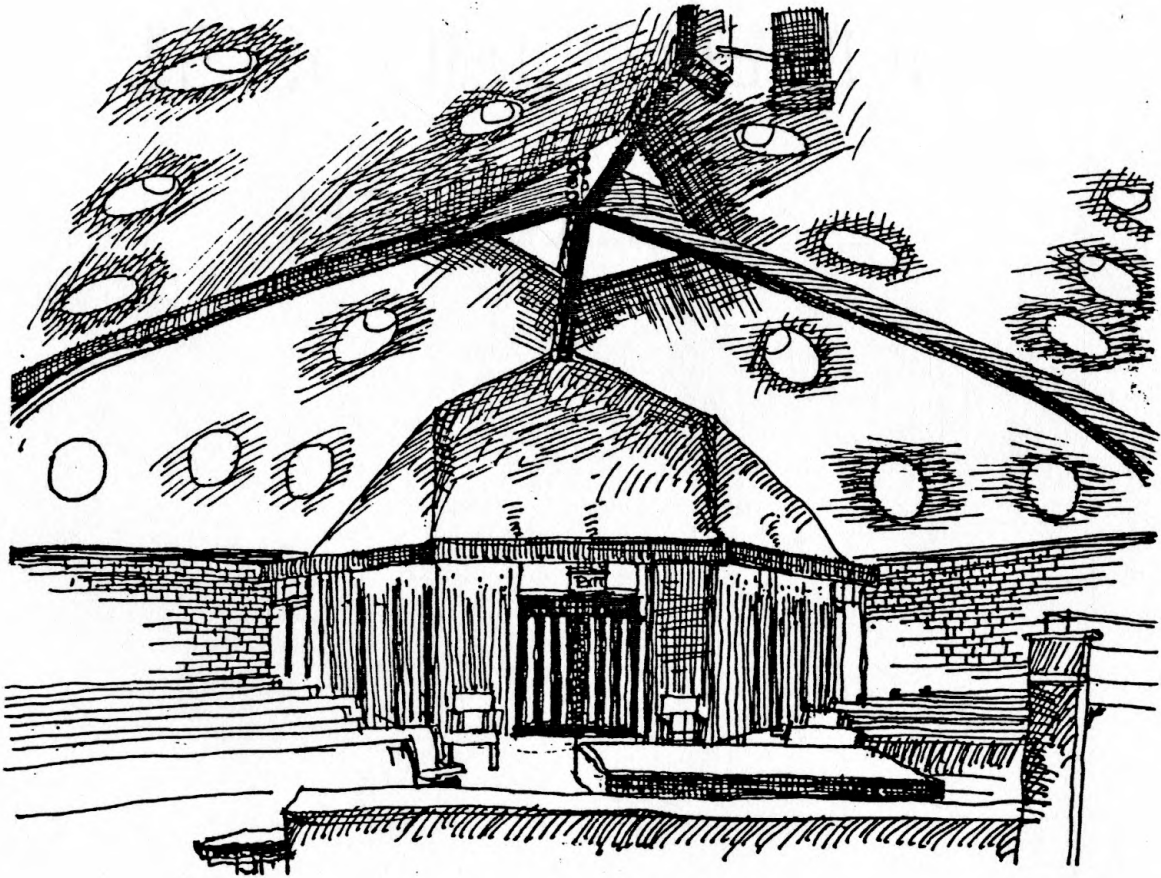
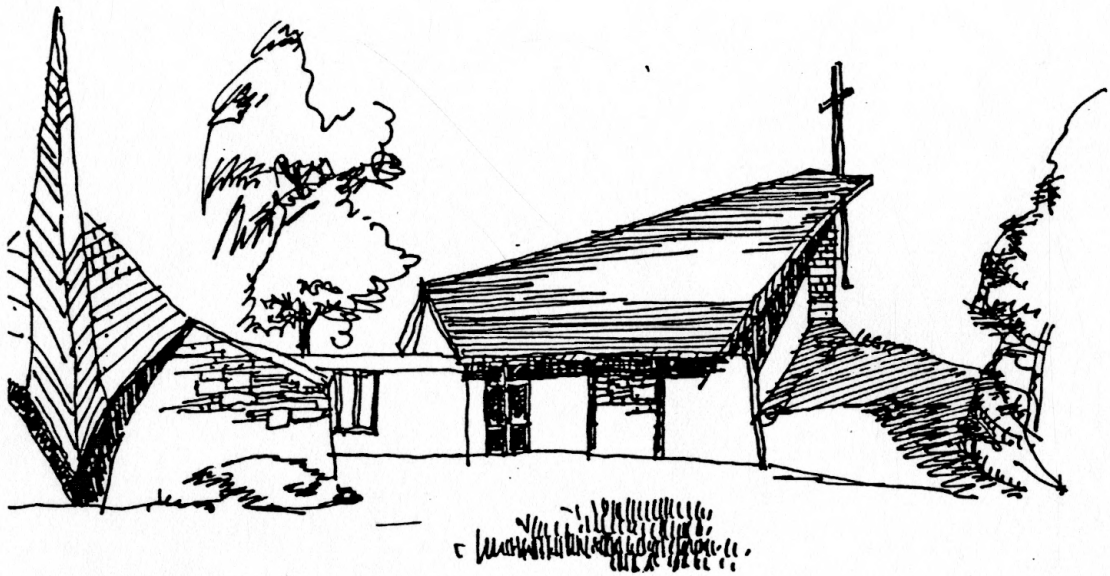


Figure 23. Interior view from the Choir. This church is typical of concentric design. It is successful in creating an intimate atmosphere, but the liturgical center - altar and pulpit, is left in a corner, and the central aisle is too short for ceremonial procession.



Peace Lutheran Church
 Kimball Avenue
 Oct. 5.

Figure 24. PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH located on Kimball Avenue, has a pigeon shaped fellowship hall and an ascending sanctuary by designing a man-made hill to create that ascending gesture.

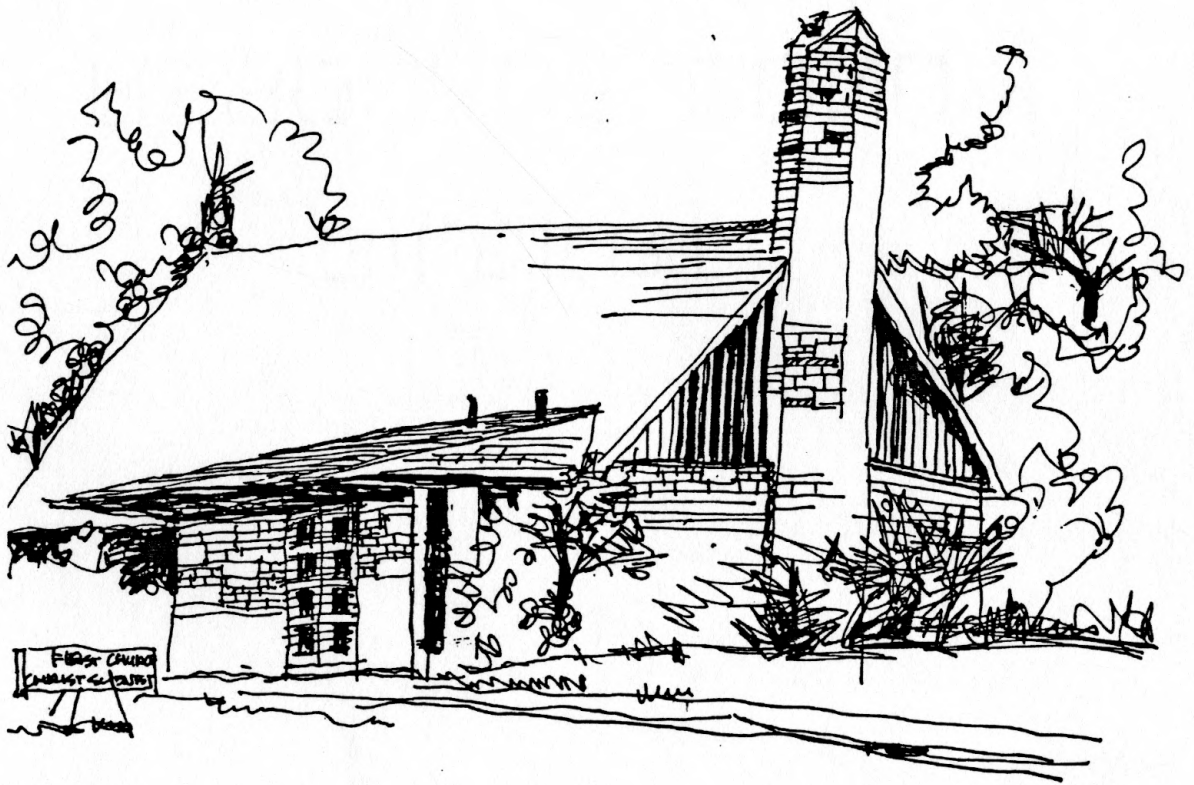


Figure 25. FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST, located on Westview Drive, is a modest structure with a simple design. The facade facing street has a nicely designed vertical element, distinguishing it from the surrounding houses in the neighborhood.



St. Thomas More
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Figure 26. ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH, located on Kimball Avenue, is the newest example of a congregation's vision of what a House of god should look like. In terms of architectural language, it directly adopts two traditional vocabulary: bell tower and rose window. It is an assemblage of masses, expressing the congregations's wealth rather than its creativity.

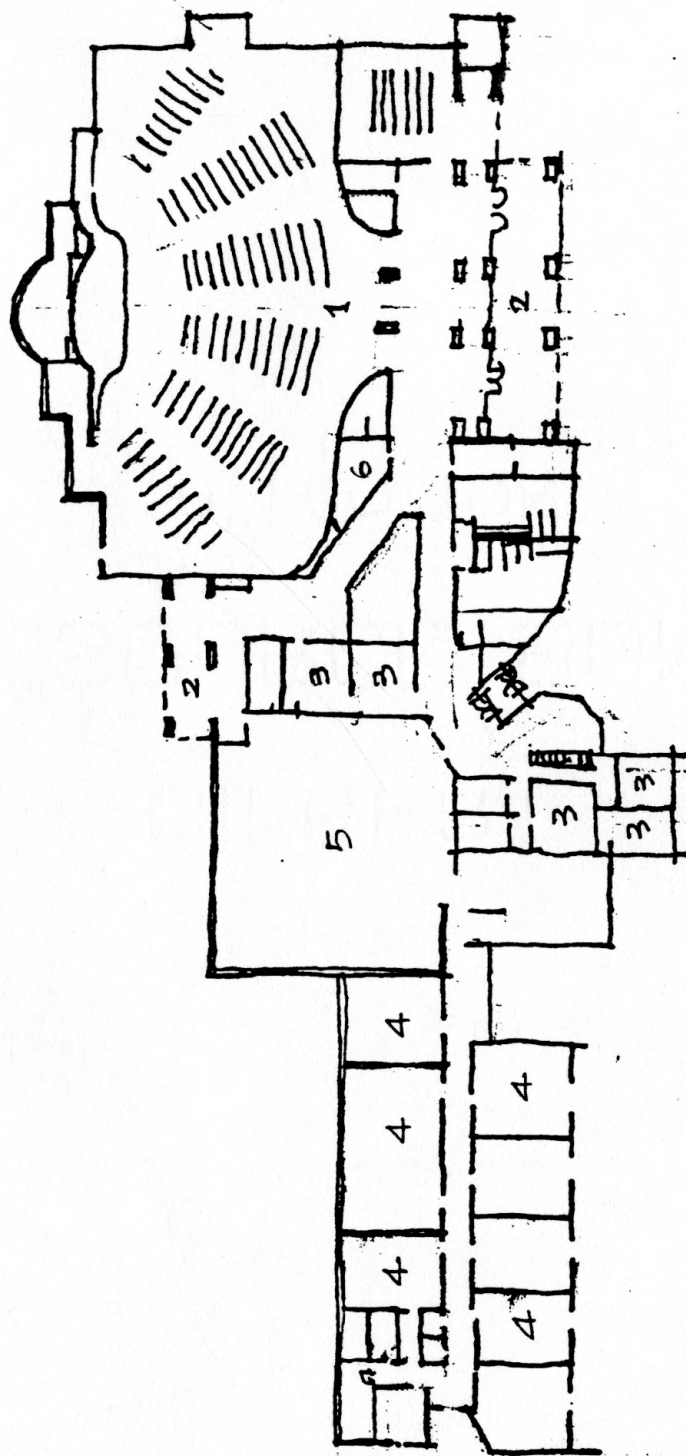


Figure 27. The plan of St. Thomas Catholic Church

- 1. Sanctuary; 2. Entrance;
- 3. Church Office; 4. Classroom;
- 5. Parish Hall; 6. Crying Room.

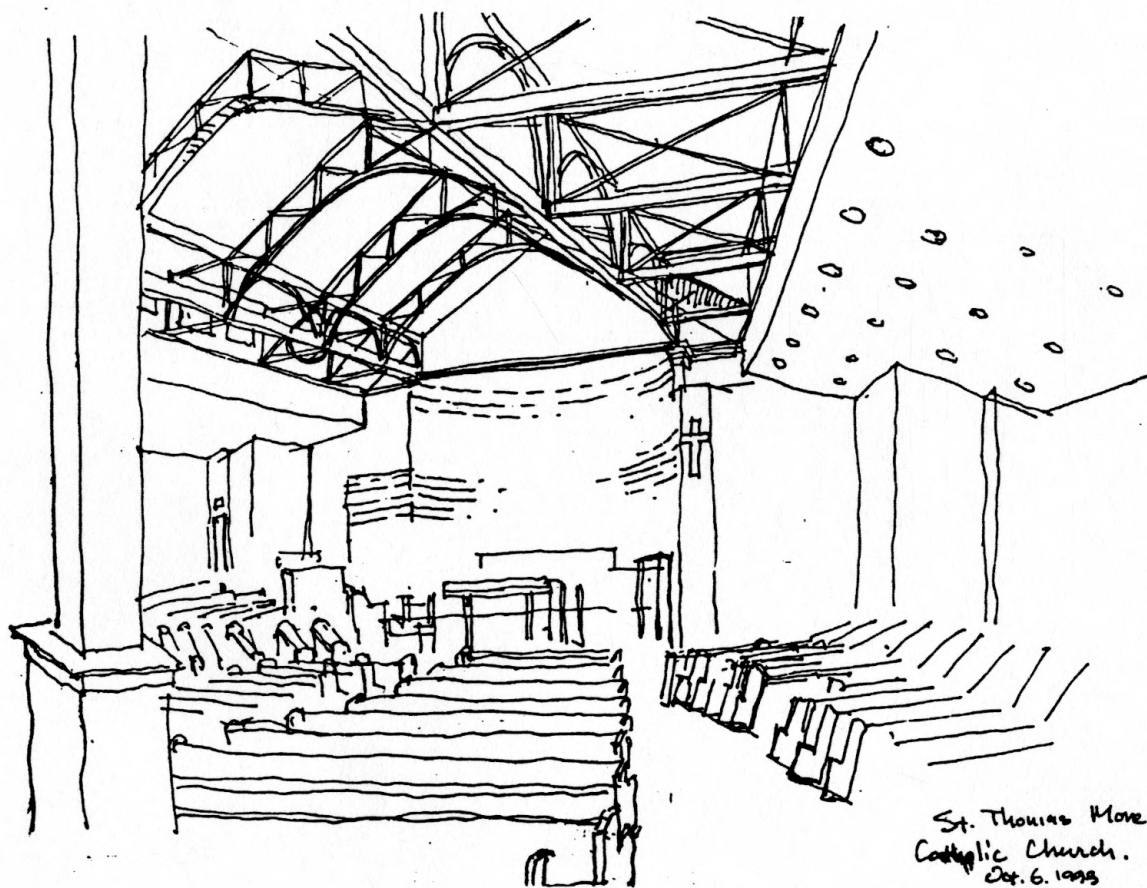


Figure 28. The Interior of St. Thomas More Catholic Church shows the designer's attempt to introduce day light into the sanctuary.

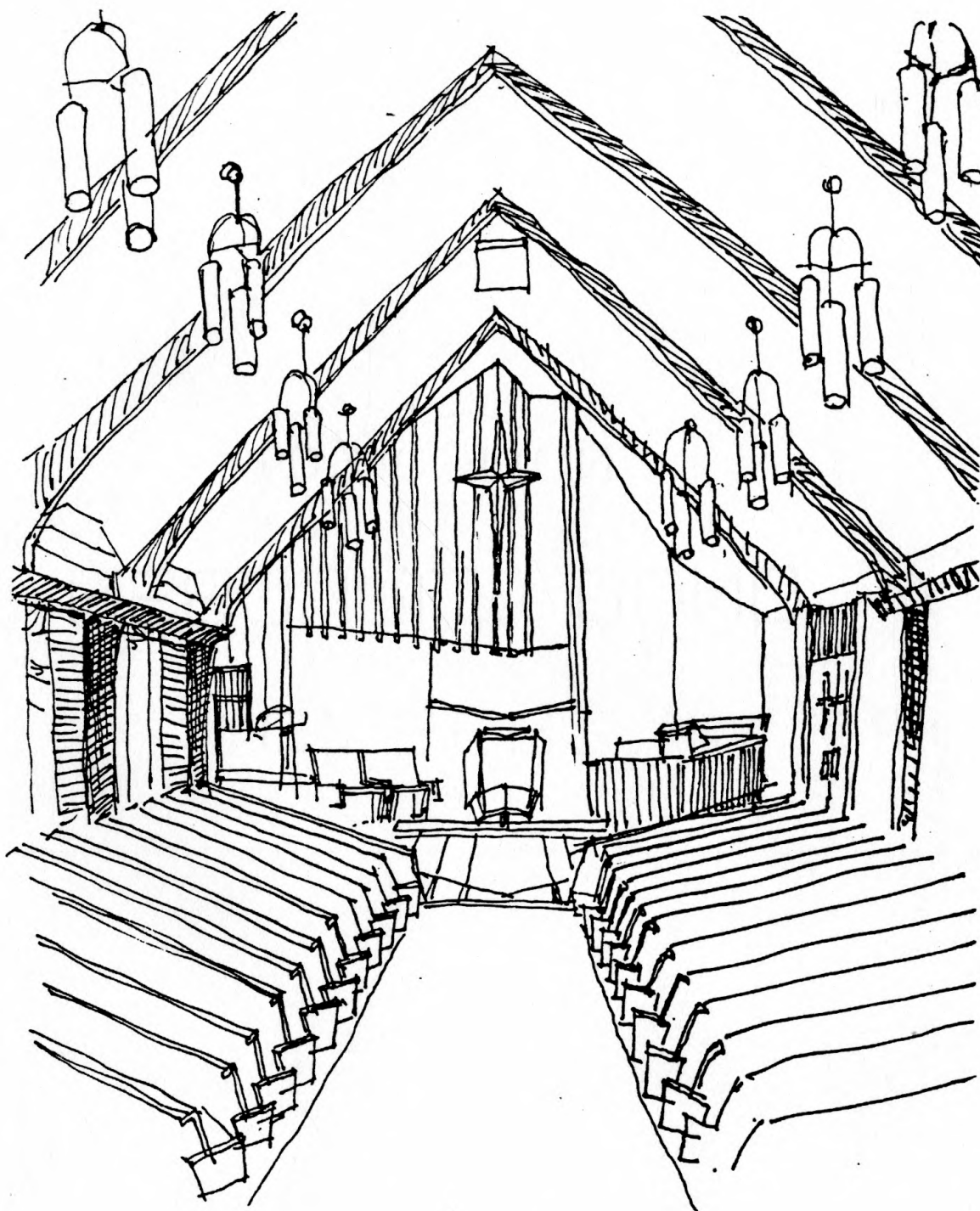


Figure 29. The interior of the FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, which was built in the 1950's, shows a conventional way of constructing a worshipping space typical in this region of America.

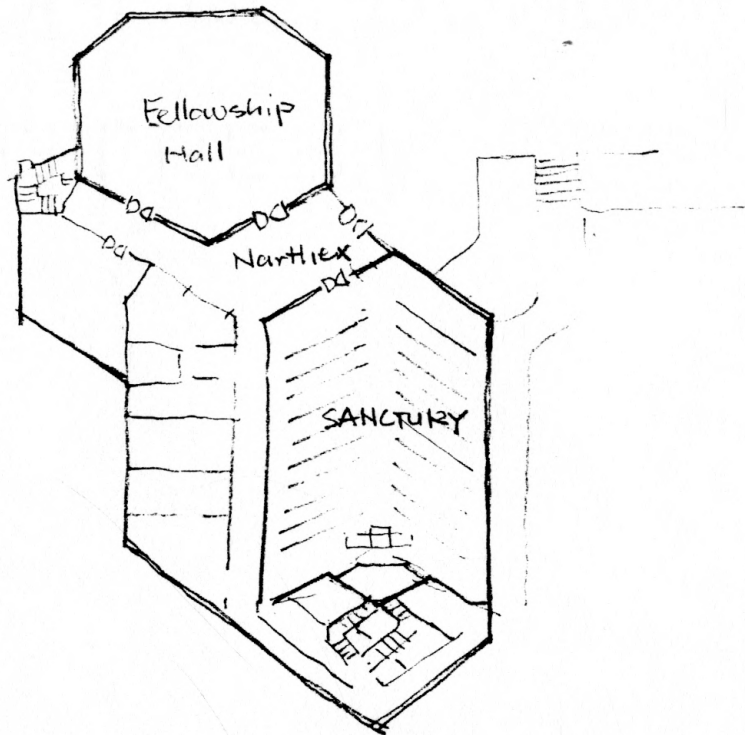


Figure 30. The sketch plan of the First Baptist Church.

offset the circulation pressure on the narthex and serves as a fellowship space for church members (figure 29, 30). The Trinity Presbyterian Church has a beautifully day-lighted sanctuary, and a close layout of pews, but the central aisle is too short for the procession in wedding ceremony (figure 21, 23).

My purpose of studying these churches is to increase my vocabulary of form language, and to gain a understanding of how a church functions and is made of. The research will provide a direct model for my design, especially in helping me formulating a program.

F. The Program

Will God need a house to dwell on earth? Should building a house for God be the motivation of building a modern church? King Solomon made this statement in his prayer before the dedication of the temple he built for the Lord Yahweh:

The whole heaven and earth can not contain you, how much less is the temple that I built for you. (I King 8:27)

This statement alone nullifies the efforts made by cathedral, temple and grand church builders, who were trying to create a dwelling place for God. None of them can be compared with the magnitude of Grand Canyon, the beauty of Yellow Mountain which come from the hand of God and which is the best image of the incarnation of the deity of God. As the great Chinese paintings (figure 31, 32) show, The mountain and the water are the place where God resides, the house and temple that humans built take an insignificant position.

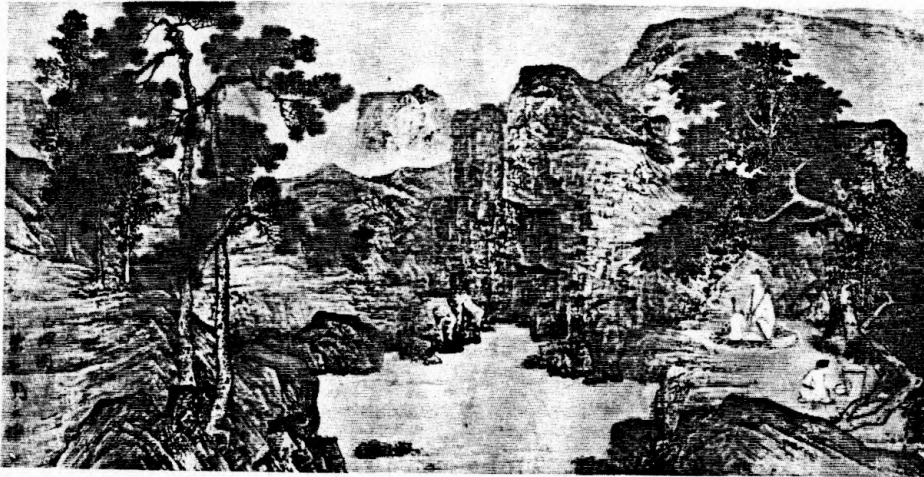


Figure 31. Chou Ch'en
The Clear Lake: Handscroll
early 16th century.



Figure 32. Wan Meng,
Thatched Lodge in Autumn Hills:
Hanging Scroll, 14th Century

Ernest Short, in his book, the House of God, quoted Hegel's understanding of religious architecture:

Hegel, in the *Aesthetic*, emphasized an abiding characteristics of religious architecture when he wrote that the building is only an environment of the image of the god. It does not possess its spiritual content in itself but through another thing. Hegel added: architecture levels a space and builds a fit place for the concentration of Spirit. Into this temple the God enters in the lighting flash of individuality which smites its way into the inert mass.¹⁰

As apostle Paul wrote in his epistle to the believers in Corinth:

Do you not know that you are the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you, and who was given to you by God. (I Corinthians 6:19)

In this sense, the body of Christ, which is the believers themselves, takes a greater

¹⁰. Ernest Short, The House of God: A History of Religious Architecture and Symbolism. Macmillan Company, New York, 1926, P. 77.

significance than the building itself. The building encourages the opening of the hearts of the worshippers to the presence of God within and among them and beyond.

What in particular are the Chinese believers for whom this church is designed looking for in the church? In my understanding, what Christianity can offer to the Chinese is the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. This salvation comes from the realization that Man is sinful by nature, Man falls short of God's glory because of sin; the price of redemption needs to be paid in order to be reconciled with God. And this price had already been paid by the crucifixion of Jesus. What a man needs to do in order to receive the salvation is to simply accept this knowledge as truth, to accept Jesus Christ as the ultimate mediator between Man and God.

How will these religious meanings dictate the design of a church? Before coming to any conclusion, let me do some analysis of religion. Whitehead, an authority in religion wrote:

Religion, as far as it receives external expression in human history, exhibits four factors or sides of itself. These factors are ritual, emotion, belief, rationalization. There is definite organized procedure, which is ritual: There are definite types of emotional expression: there are definitely expressed beliefs: and there is the adjustment of these beliefs into a system, internally coherent and coherent with other beliefs.

But all these four factors are not of equal influence throughout all historical epochs. The religious idea emerged gradually into human life, at first barely disengaged from other human interests. The order of the emergence of these factors was in the inverse order of the depth of their religious importance: first ritual, then emotion, then belief, then rationalization.¹¹

The interesting thing to notice in this insight is the relationship between emotion and ritual. To quote Whitehead again:

In this way emotion waits upon ritual; and then ritual is repeated and elaborated for the sake of its attendant emotions. Mankind became artists in ritual. It was a tremendous discovery-how to excite emotions for their own sake, apart from some imperious biological necessity. But emotions sensitize the organism. Thus the unintended effect was produced of sensitizing the human organism in a variety of ways diverse from what would have been produced by the necessary work of life.¹²

¹¹. A. N. Whitehead: Religion in the Making(Cambridge, 1926), P. 18-9.

¹². *ibid.*

Ritual generates emotion. Emotion reinforces faith. Faith has to go through rationalization in order to be truly integrated into one's self. Ritual not only generates emotion, but has a deeper meaning:

The main theme in ritual is the linking of the individual to a larger morphological structure than that of his own physical body.¹³

It is collective ritual that Chinese culture lacks. It is this kind of collective act that Chinese religion does not have (if not, at least we have lost this kind of tradition in modern time).

If collective ritual is the main factor to emphasize, then what kind of ritual will be appropriate for Chinese? Among all different denominations in America (ranging from the so called high church with ritualistic form of worship like Catholic or Anglican, to low church with emphasis on teaching and informal worship like the Baptist and the Wesleyan), there are two sacraments which are fundamental to all of them: they are Baptism and Holy Communion.

The ceremony of Baptism symbolizes by water the experience of receiving new life in the Holy Spirit. It is a farewell to a person's old self, old dreams, old ambitions and old patterns of behaviors. It symbolizes the beginning of a new life in Christ. For the ceremony of the Holy Communion, the bread and wine symbolize the body and blood of Christ, they signify the sacrifice of Christ for the redemption of all sinners. For these reasons, the Baptistry and Altar table from which the communion is served deserve the single most attention.

Besides the Baptistry and the Altar table, another primary liturgical center is the pulpit. For

¹³. Joseph Campbell, The Power of Myth, Doubleday, New York, 1988, P. 90.

most Protestants, the reading and preaching of the Word is the primary reason for the worship service. This emphasis makes it mandatory that the pulpit and its liturgical space be truly symbolic of the importance of the Word. According to Eugene Wendt:

The pulpit must be, first of all, of sufficient size to diminish the minister. Second, the pulpit should, ideally, be located at the focus of its liturgical space.¹⁴

My understanding of a church is: (1) It is a spiritual home for a group of believers who congregate to worship God to find peace and tranquility, as well as encouragement and spiritual nourishment; (2) it is an educational institution where the law of life is taught; not only to young children, but to all age groups as well; (3) it is a place where all the members can relax physically (not only mentally) through recreation, a place where all members can relate to each other more closely as a big family. In this sense, a church is an enlarged cellular family unit in a larger social context.

For these functions, a church is usually comprised of four parts: a worship area, an education area, a recreation or fellowship area and an administration area.

The proposed optimal size for the church in this design is 100 people with a maximum capacity of 150. In accordance with the Time Saver Standard for Building Types and my research on local Manhattan churches, the approximate square footage proposed for the church are:

¹⁴. Eugene Wendt, An Analysis of Symbolic Spatial Expression in Protestant Church Architecture, 1970. P. 76.

PROPOSED PROGRAM OF SPACES

Worship:

Sanctuary: 12 sf/person x 150 = 1,800

(Chancel and Nave)

Narthex: 900

(transitional space between entry and sanctuary)

Public Toilet: 300

Ceremonial Preparation Room: 180

Storage 200

Subtotal 3,380

Administration:

Pastor's Office: 300

Secretary's Office: 200

Library: 120

Storage: 120

Printing: 50

subtotal 790

Education:

classroom (80 people) 400 x 6 = 2,400

Recreation:

Multi-purpose Hall:	1,800
Chair storage:	400
Kitchen:	600
Janitor's Closet:	60
	<hr/>
subtotal:	2,860
	<hr/>
TOTAL	9,430
TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE @ 80% EFFICIENCY:	11,787

Chapter III. The Design

A. Site Analysis

1. Site Selection Criteria:

I used the following guidelines: (1) It should be on a high ground so that the church will have a good visibility and do not need to worry about flooding, (2) It should be close to campus within the walk distance, because the church will mainly serve the students.

I am aware of the necessity of a divine revelation in terms of choosing a sacred site. As Mircea Eliade pointed out:

"Man are not free to choose the sacred site, that they only seek for it and find it by the mysterious signs."¹⁵

Without getting any mysterious signs, I started to investigate the area surrounding the KSU campus. The chosen site meets the two guidelines.

2. The Location of the Site

This site is part of campus territory, its east boundary is Manhattan Avenue, North the Hoeflin Stone House now used as university's day-care center, south and west the parking lot (figure 33,34,35).

3. The Size

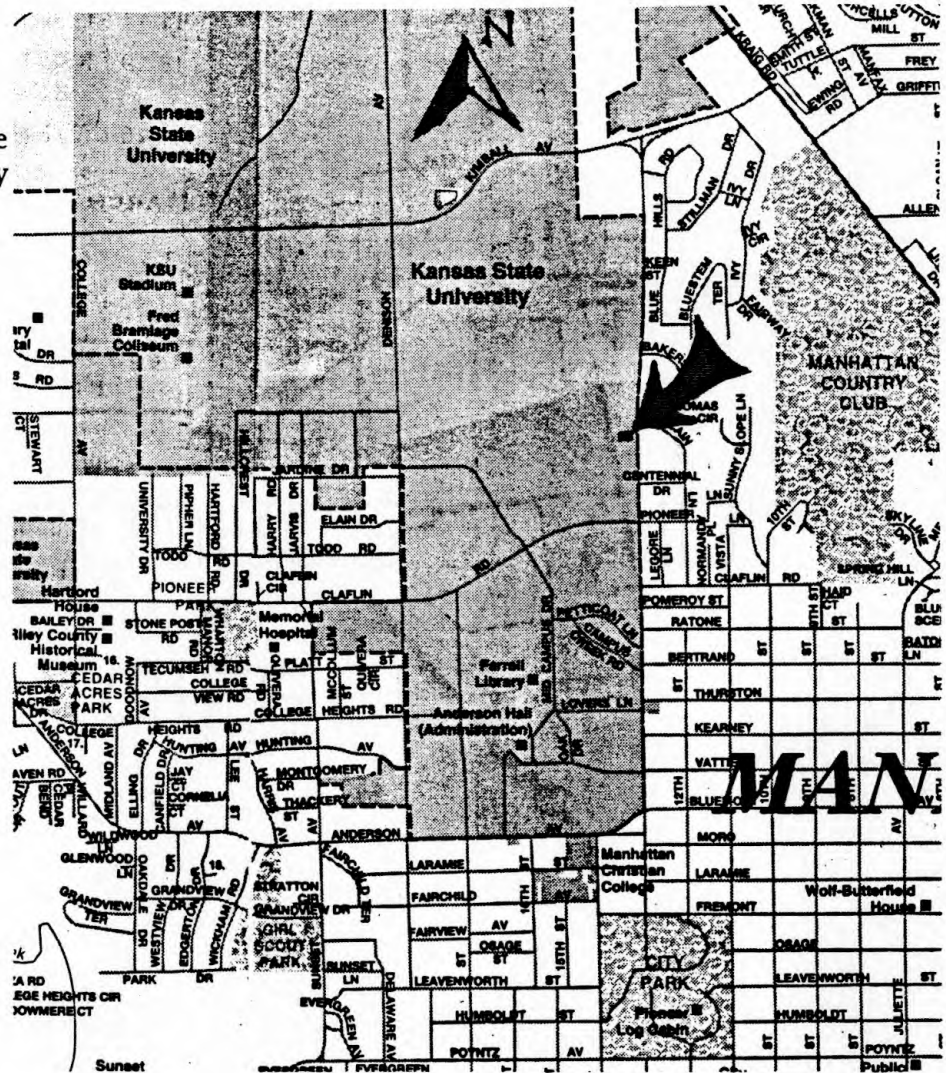
The site measures 350 feet long, 200 feet wide. Its total area is 1.6 acre.

¹⁵. Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, Harper & Brothers, New York 1961, P 28.

4. Building Context

Kansas State University was founded in 1865, most of the older buildings are built in a kind of Romanesque revival style, for example: Fairchild, Holton, Anderson and Dickens Hall characterized by small openings and heavy limestone walls. Later on, modern style buildings were added upon, like Durland, Throckmorton and the Student Union. Apparently there is no consistent architectural form language or style to follow, but the limestone as the exterior wall

Figure 33, The site in the city context



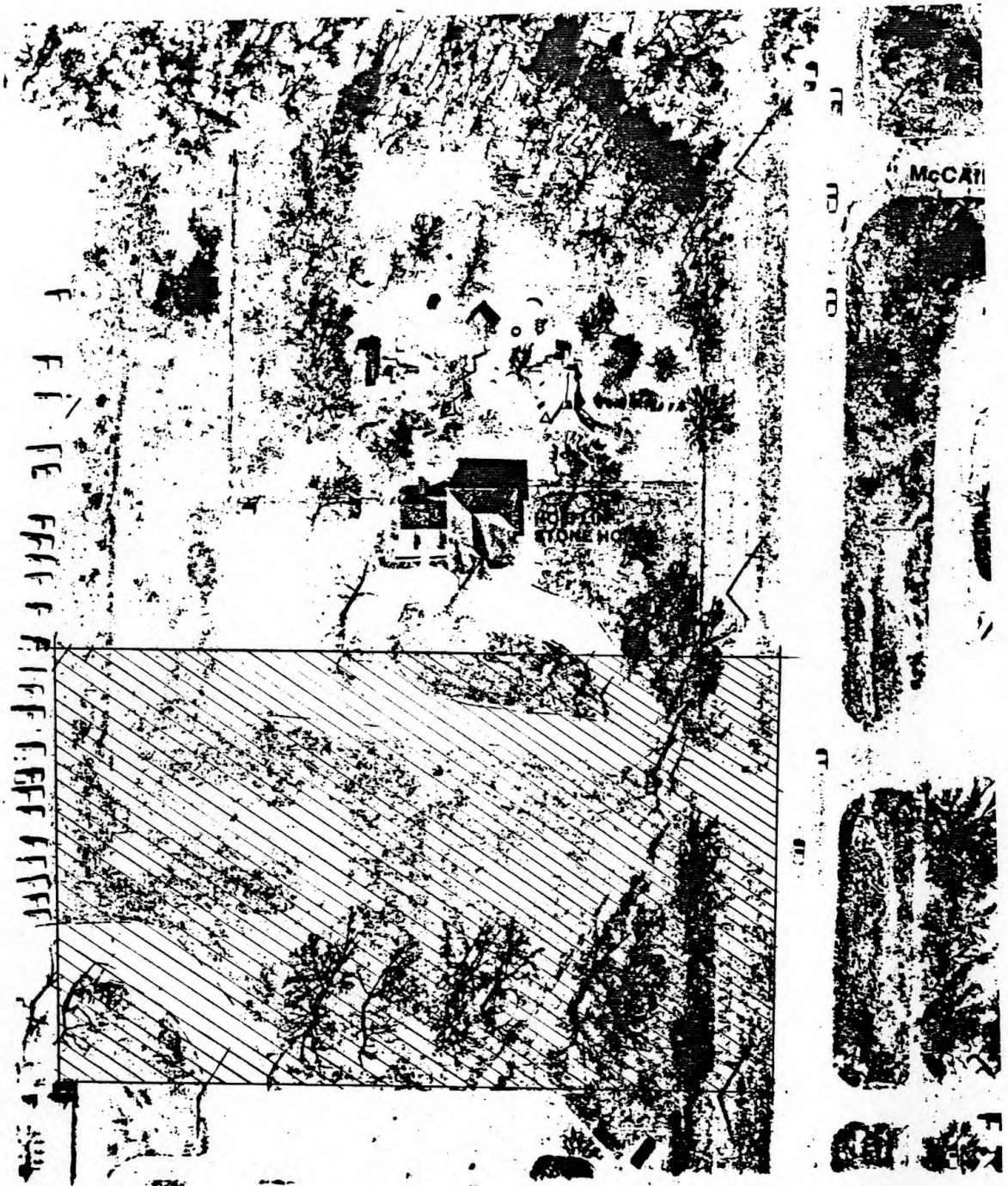


Figure 35. Aerial view of the site and its vicinity.

material is consistent. This factor should be considered in the design of the church.

B. Design Concepts

How would a professional architect view the commission of a church? Marcel Bruer had an excellent understanding:

A place of worship, simple as it may be, serviceable as it need be, is- or should be- different from a mere place of assembly. Something is happening there which is more than just existence, more than just a social event. An idea is there, an attitude toward faith, an attempt to solve life's problems. Should one consider a church, a temple (as small or confined as it may be) a part of infinite space? May we hope that its geometry could be a part of cosmic geometry? Will the planes of its structure point toward distance without end?

Modest as it may be, a place of worship seems to demand dignity and serenity as its birth-right. It is part of its function to reach beyond function. Its destiny seems to be to express in static material-stone, concrete, glass-man's drive towards the spiritual. The inanimate structure reflects the vibrations of his thoughts, of his emotions, of his beliefs. The sober science of building and engineering has to achieve more than a routine solution: the routine solution has to receive demonstrative and symbolic dimensions...¹⁶

Chinese architecture is horizontal, generally an axial symmetry, and reflects a longitudinal hierarchy in China. It is usually a complex which is comprised of a series of individual buildings. Each individual building has evolved through history and has reached a high level of sophistication. When combined together, the single buildings form a very coherent whole. The characteristics of each individual building diminishes into the whole. On the other side, Western architecture is vertical, diversified in terms of style. Its form is established on a vertical hierarchy expressing western man's constant desire of ascending into heaven. On the contrary, Chinese have always desired to be united with nature, to seek an existential foothold through a close relationship with nature. To a large extent, these different values determined the architectural traditions of the two civilizations.

¹⁶. Richard Meier, Recent American Synagogue Architecture, The Jewish Museum, New York, 1963.

Out of their independent development over such a great span of time and space, what can we distill from these diverse traditions for this immediate task of designing a church for the Chinese congregation? The Chinese believers, carrying with them a special cultural package, are facing new challenges and an existential dilemma that their ancestors never met. What will be the architectural solution? These challenges reflect the deepest needs of their soul - that soulful yearning of returning to home and resting. In my search for an answer, two men's understanding about religion has been especially meaningful to me.

Dr Daisetz T. Suzuki, a great master in Zen Buddhism, revealed the contrast of the Occidental and Oriental understandings of the God-man-nature mystery in his book "The Role of Nature in Zen Buddhism". Commenting first on the Biblical view of the state of man following the Fall in Eden, "Man," he observed, "is against God, Nature is against God, and Man and Nature are against each other. God's own likeness (Man), God's own creation (Nature) and God himself-all three are at war." Then, expounding the Oriental view, "Nature," he said, "is the bosom whence we come and whither we go." "Nature produces Man out of itself; Man cannot be outside of Nature." "I am in Nature and Nature is in me."¹⁷

Steven Rockefeller, great-grandson of the tycoon and philanthropist John D. Rockefeller, grew up in a Protestant family background and then became a Buddhist, made a related comment:

"I think that one of the great challenge to religion today is to become more articulate about the

¹⁷. Daisetz T. Suzuki, The Role of Nature in Zen Buddhism, in Olga Frobe Kapteyn, ed., 1953. P, 294.

relationship between the human and the nonhuman world."¹⁸

These two men's view strengthened my understanding about the rôle of both nature and Christ in the reconciliation of man with God, the ultimate sovereign of the universe. Nature, in today's post industrial civilization has been alienated from human consciousness. In modern man's mind, nature is somewhere remote, or some confined place called a national park. Modern man is living in the totally man-made environment which is completely profane. The sacredness once conspicuously revealed to antique man through nature has been lost in the process of the expansion of human power and intelligence. That picture of the intimate relationship between man and his creator has been blurred by his fellow human being's scratching or marring the picture through the worship of human power and intelligence. With this understanding in mind, I visioned a courtyard in which nature in miniature will be displayed is put in front of the worship hall in which collective worship ceremony will be held. This becomes the departure point for the design.

C. The Evolution of the Design

Oh, Lord, I do not know,
For how many times,
I vision myself to be an eagle,
whose wings have been injured.
Desiring to fly high,
But weeping in vain on the ground.

Will you heal me, Oh, Lord,
Will you enable me to fly high again?

¹⁸. Bill Moyer, A World of Ideas (II), Bantam doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc, New York, 1990. P. 171.

How deep is your mercy?
How high is your grace?

Oh, Great is your faithfulness,
Unmeasurable is your love.
All glory goes to you!
Unworthy is my praise!

I conceived this poem to express the mood with which I began the design.

As I come to the design stage, I had to communicate in another way - visual thinking instead of verbal. A design problem is a matter of inspiration. Where will I go to look for inspirations? As I said earlier, I am commissioned by a way of life and human nature. A good designer derives his inspiration from a much wider frame than solely architectural precedents.

A bug, a tree leaf, a sea shell, a fish, a bird, a mountain form, a rock, etc., can be possible inspiration. Today we are all surrounded by man made images, those natural image are not so easily accessible as they were to our ancestors. Past architectural styles, Greek, Roman, Early Christian, Romanesque, Gothic, Baroque, etc., all deserve consideration. Works designed by modern masters: Kenzo Tange, Kikutake, Arata Isozaki, Le Corbusier, Louis Kahn, Mario Botta, to name a few, all represent the higher level of achievement that I aspire to. Besides these people, poetry and literature could be inspiring too.

Lord you are great, and most worthy of praise; great is your worth and your wisdom beyond reckoning. And man, a fragment of your creation, desires to praise you - man, carrying round with him his own mortality, carrying round with him the witness of his sin and the witness that you 'resist the proud', yet desires to praise you, he, a fragment of your creation. You prompt him to take delight in praising you, because you made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it find rest in you.¹⁹

¹⁹. Aurelius Angustinus, The Confession of Saint Augustine, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1993. P 15.

The design starts with a diagram of functional analysis. These four parts: Sanctuary, Sunday School, Recreation and Administration are interrelated. Each has a different role in the work of the church. Only after information about each part "sank" in my mind, was I able to "manipulate" them, and able to conceive forms for them.

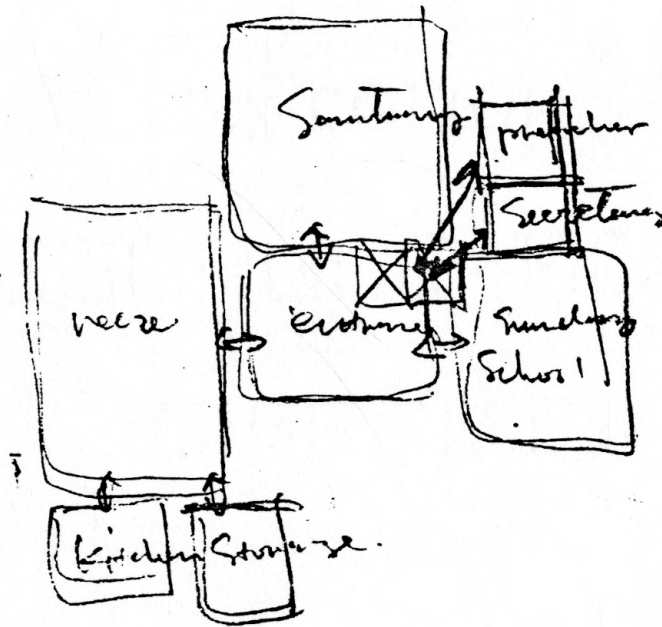


Figure 36. Programmatic Diagram of the relationship between the four parts of the church

At the beginning, my method of designing was "incubating" different forms primarily in my mind and through drawing sketches on paper. Later I started to use clay and knife, by using hands to shape and cut it into different form. Gradually these intangible and unmeasurable form and ideas become tangible and measurable through the channel of craft of my hands. The following is the record of my search for form.

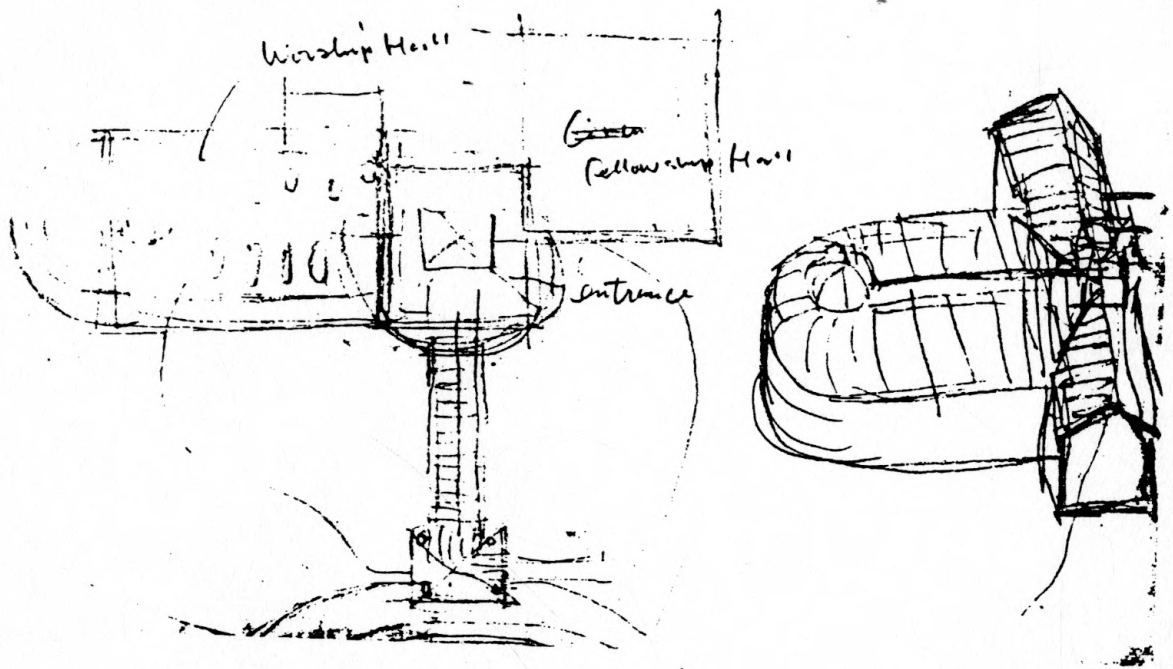
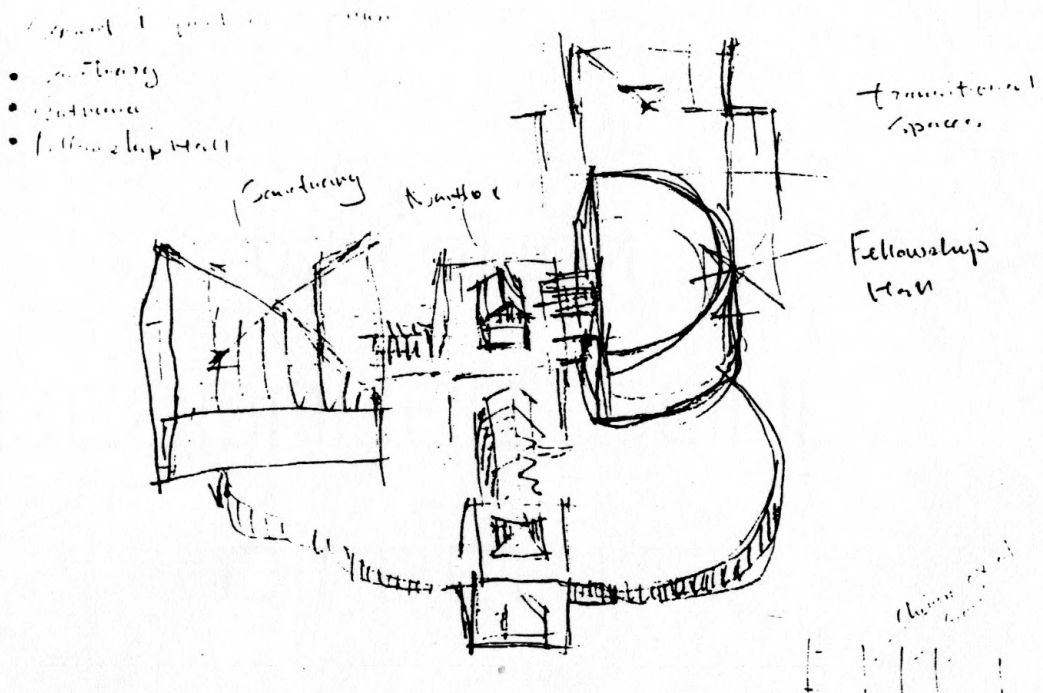


Figure 37,38. Schematic conceptions. At the beginning, everything is indefinite, what will it be like if we let the two traditions meet at their crudest form?



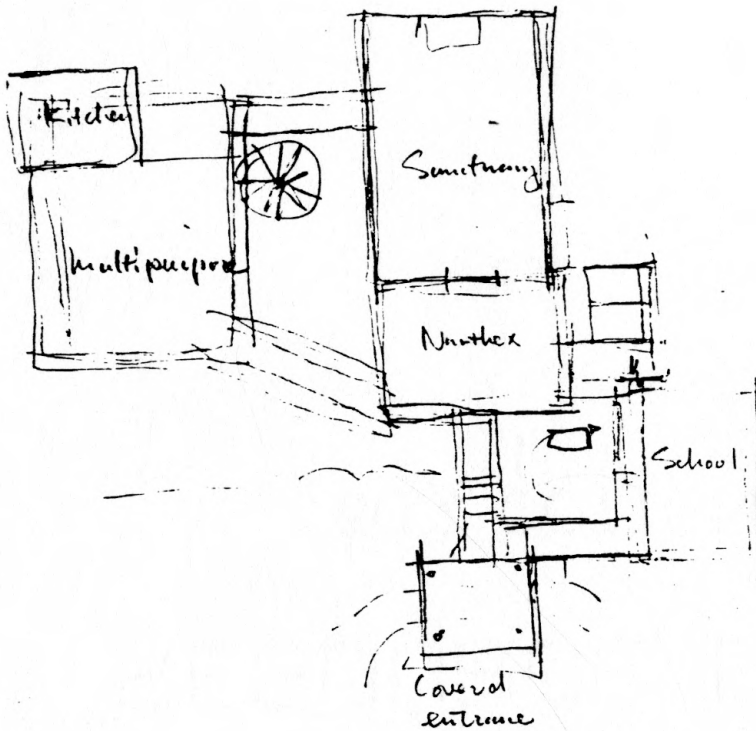
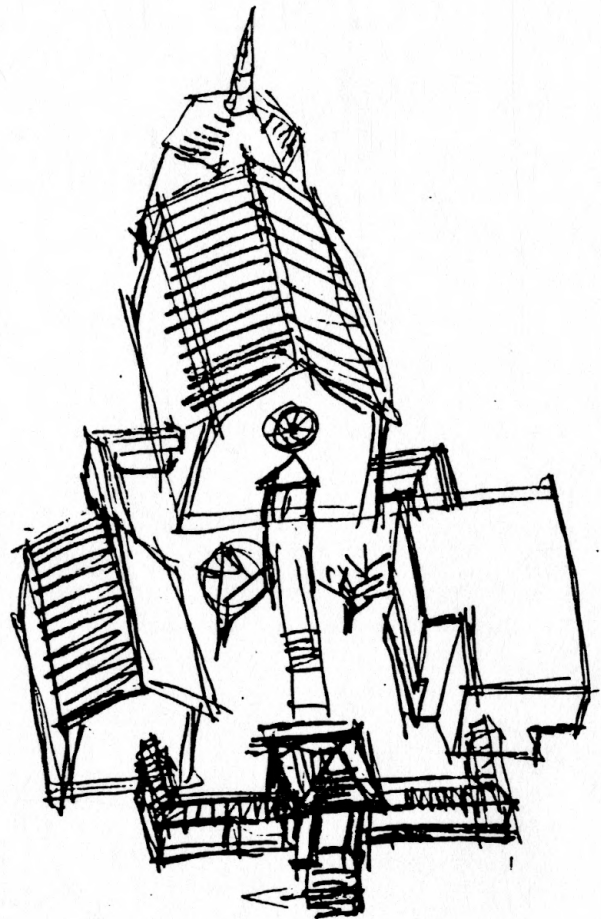
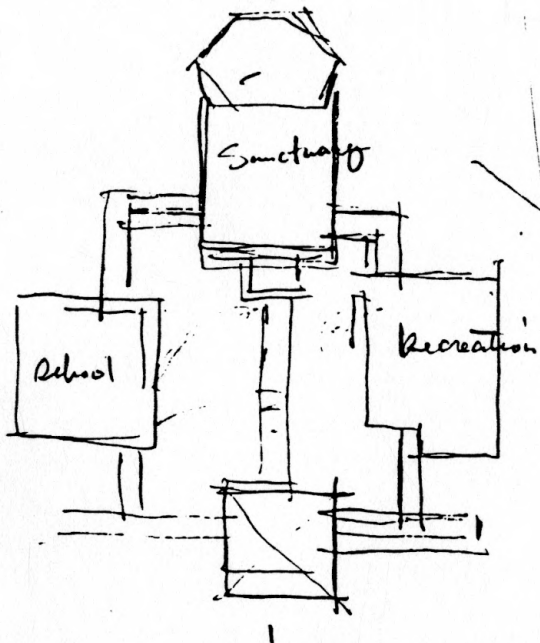


Figure 39, 40, 41, Combining courtyard with a Basilica?
Two earliest ideas showing my intention of blending the two traditions.



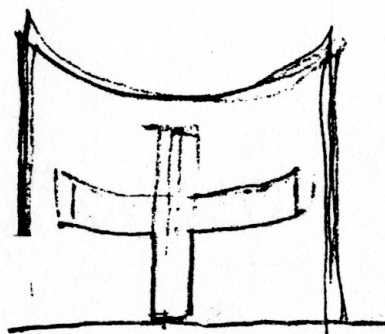
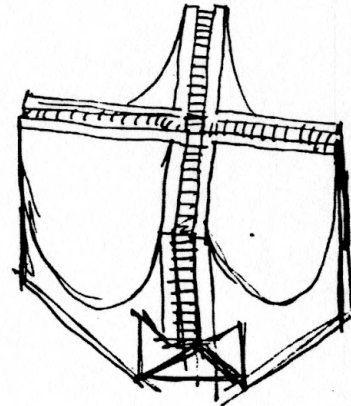
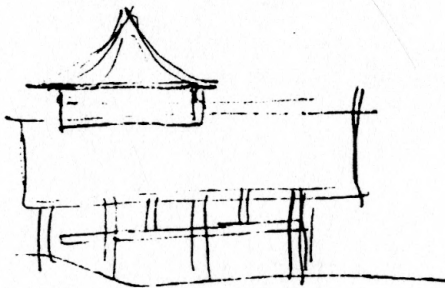
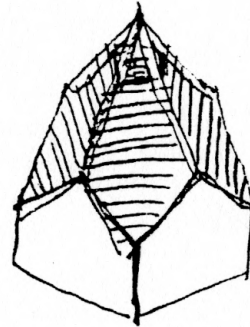
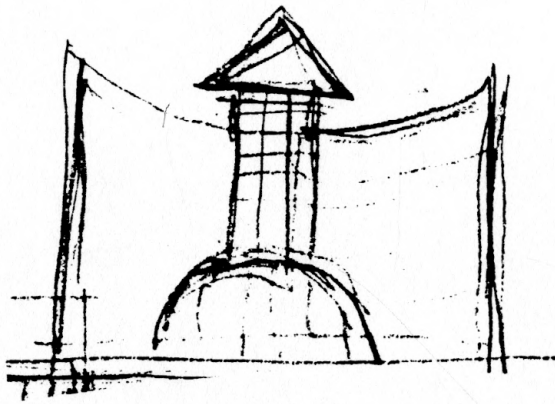


Figure 42-6. Sanctuary is the most sacred part of the church. it should embody most symbolic meaning. What will it desire to be?

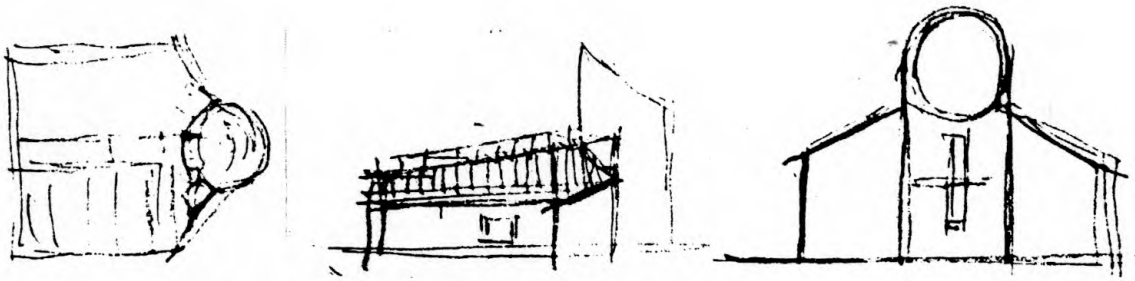


Figure 47-9. When I have these three sketches on paper, I was certain about what the church will be. Having made the long awaited discover, I started to make this model immediately. The final design is the elaboration of this scheme.

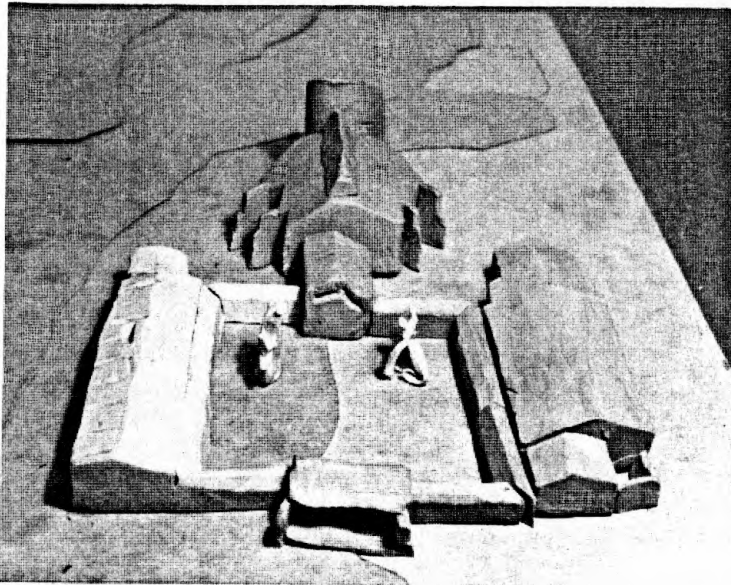


Figure 50. The earlier work model of clay

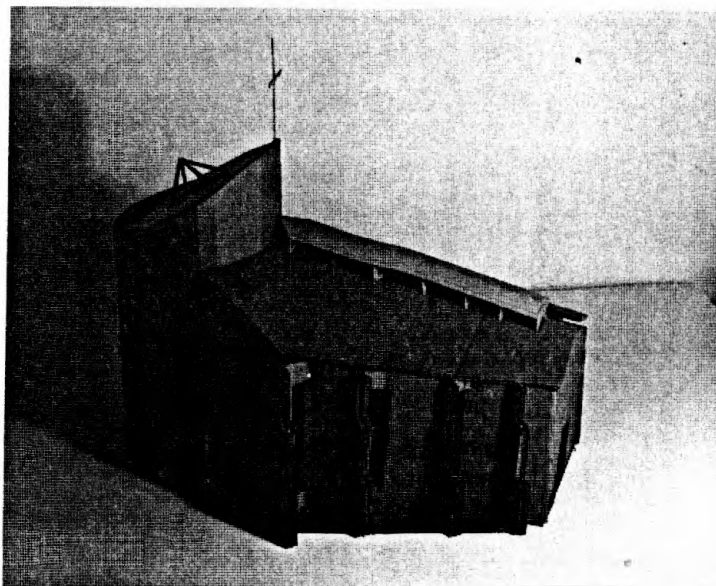


Figure 51. The work model of the sanctuary. The space of the sanctuary is expanded in two directions from the entrance, intending to draw worshiper closer to the center - the cylindrical space where altar is centered.

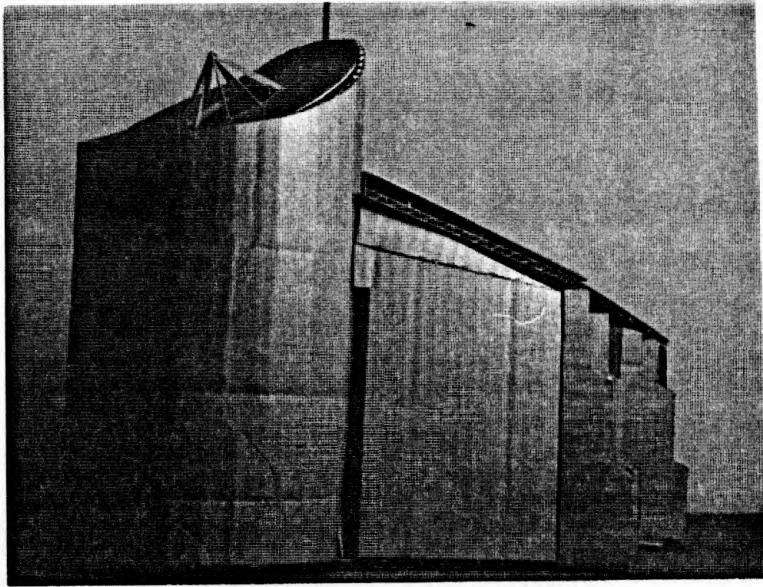


Figure 52. Study model of the sanctuary. The form of the column is imitating Gothic architecture. It is an expression of the designer's desire to establish a connection with the past by borrowing certain architectural vocabulary.

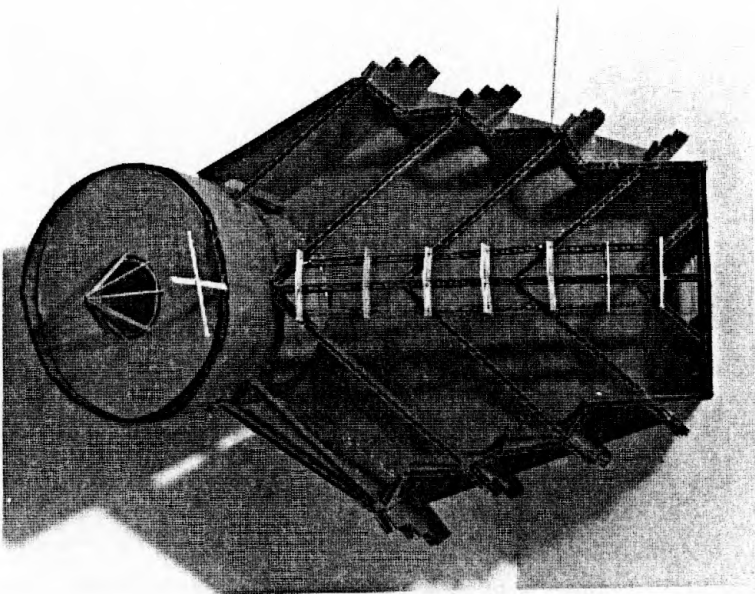


Figure 53. Study model of the sanctuary. The beam is arranged at an angle, intending to strengthen a gesture which signifies Christ is the center.

D. THE FINAL DESIGN

Whereas music is an art which exists solely in the dimension of time, architecture is an art which exists in the dimension of both time and space.

By applying the formula of creating a sacred space, which is an entrance + a path + a center, the design became a complex (figure 58) instead of a singular building. The complex is laid out as three layers. The site dictates the compound to be arranged on an east - west axis (figure 65), with the sanctuary on the end of the axis.

The first layer is a square garden (76 feet on a side) which is enclosed by a low wall (3 feet) on three sides (figure 65). The pylon - a traditional Chinese architectural element, signifies the boundary between the sacred and the profane. The landscape design which includes slight contour changes, bushes and trees, serves as a buffer separating the church from the surrounding mundane environment.

The second layer of the entry sequence is another square garden of the same dimension, which is more formal and articulated. With the Chinese concept that the earth is a square, the heaven is a circle in mind, I conceived this square garden as a representation of the earth (figure 54). The true function of the Chinese garden is to recreate nature symbolically in miniature, this physical environment will allow the human imagination to transcend its immediate limitations, and achieve a union with a higher plane of reality. The central walkway is elevated to reinforce a sacred feeling. It divides the square into two halves, with one side Chinese, the other Japanese (figure 64). The intention behind the design of the

Japanese garden is that the Japanese garden possesses a better meditative quality, in addition to its symbolic meaning. The carefully selected sand and rock carry a quality of purity and absoluteness. It is a territory that has been set aside or consecrated as being sacred. It can only be viewed at a distance but not entered. On the other hand, the Chinese garden is more playful, it is not only aesthetically appealing, but practically useful. It can serve as an outside living room for the congregation.

The sanctuary is the third layer. It is the center, the most sacred part (68, 69, 70). After passing the two courtyards, a worshiper's consciousness is turned inward. The small narthex provides a place for briefly encountering other church members. The narrow gate, which is formed by the crying room on one side and the stairway on the other, symbolizes Jesus Christ as the bridge connecting each sinner and the creator (figure 64). Just as Jesus claimed: "No one comes to the Father but through me." After passing the gate, the space expands in two directions: vertical and horizontal, and ends at the circular form - a cylindrical space in which the altar is centered. Flanking the altar, the two alcoves provide a setting for two sculptures, depicting the Holy Family, thus creating a theatrical setting for worship.

Baptism, another major sacraments in the Christian worship, deserves special attention in the design of the church. Sprinkling and full immersion are the two forms of baptism. In light of practical considerations, sprinkling will be more feasible way of baptizing. It will take the space in front of the pulpit by using a water basin. Spatially, the baptistery will not have a conspicuous presence.

The choir is located on the very back of the sanctuary on the balcony, the performance of the choir, organist and pianist will not be viewed directly by the congregation (figure 70). The purpose behind it is to create an effect that this music is a celestial music, which comes from God, and thus fundamentally different from any secular performance.

As the plan shows, the daylight is let in through a controlled way, all the openings are designed in such a way that no direct visual contact will be possible between the inside and the outside. (Stained glass is applied to all windows except the skylight on top of the altar so that only the altar is highlighted.)(figure 55)

Design, as an act responding to practical needs, requires the involvement of the client in order to be carried further. This design is based upon my personal experiences. I have brought the design to this point, at which I realize it is not a conclusion, but rather a starting point for my career.

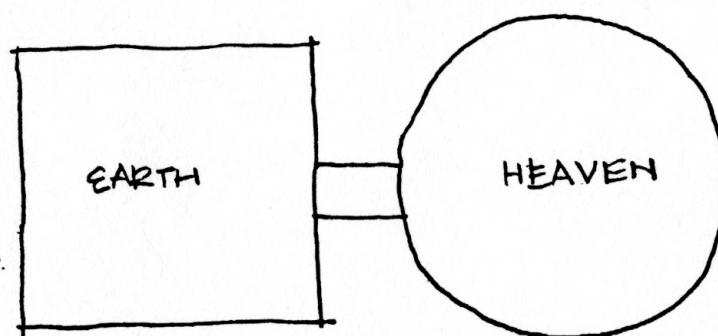


Figure 54. Chinese understanding of cosmology

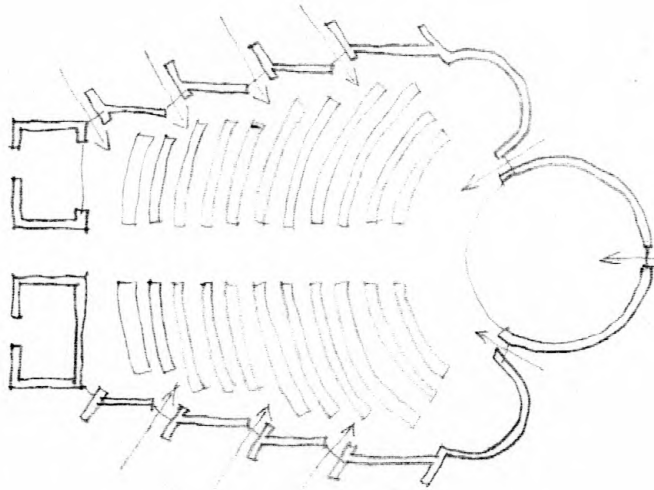


Figure 55. The daylighting design

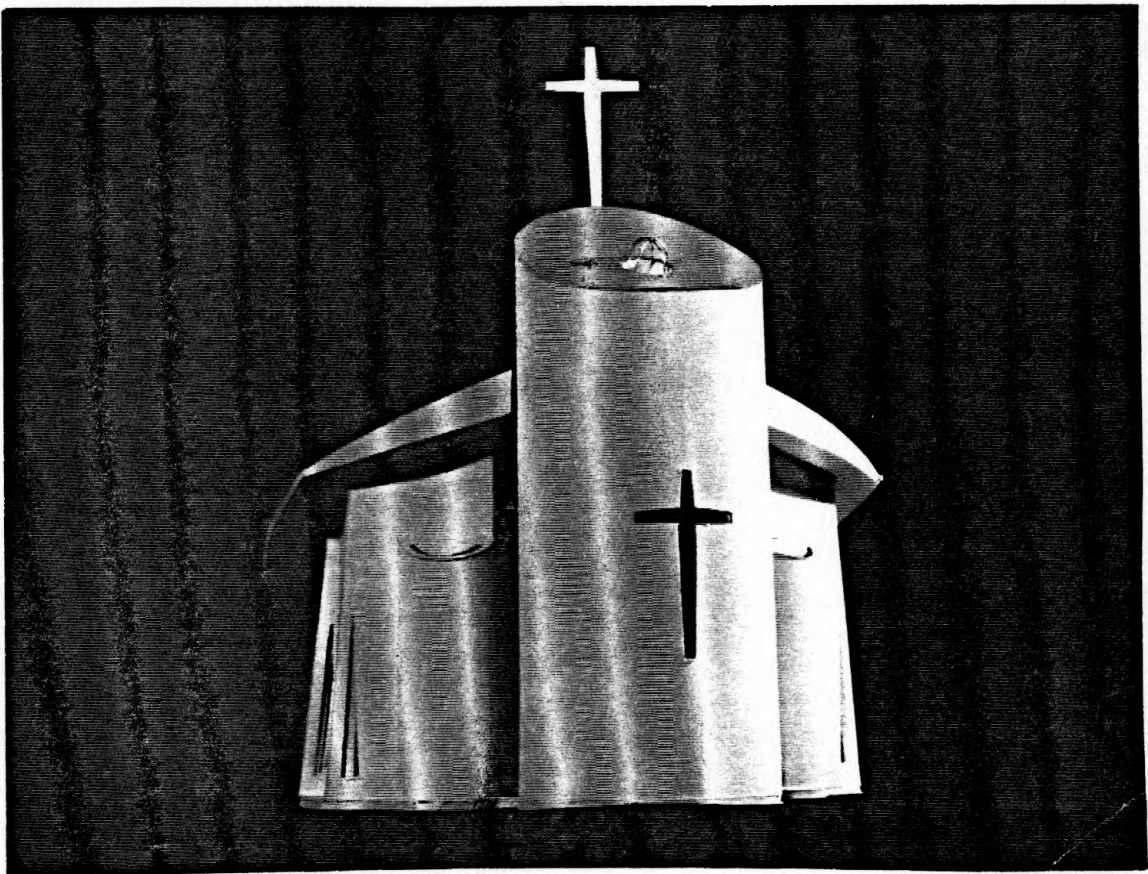


Figure 56. The East View of the Sanctuary

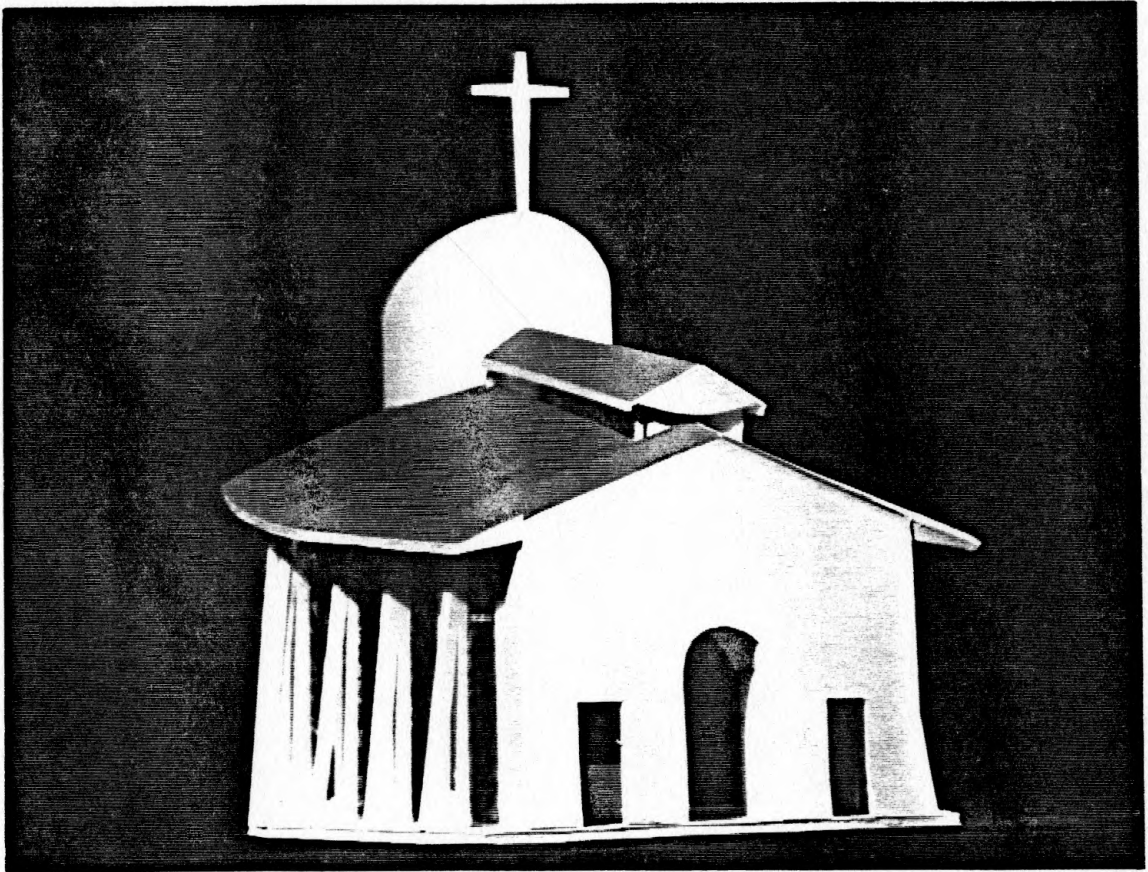


Figure 57. The North West View of the Sanctuary

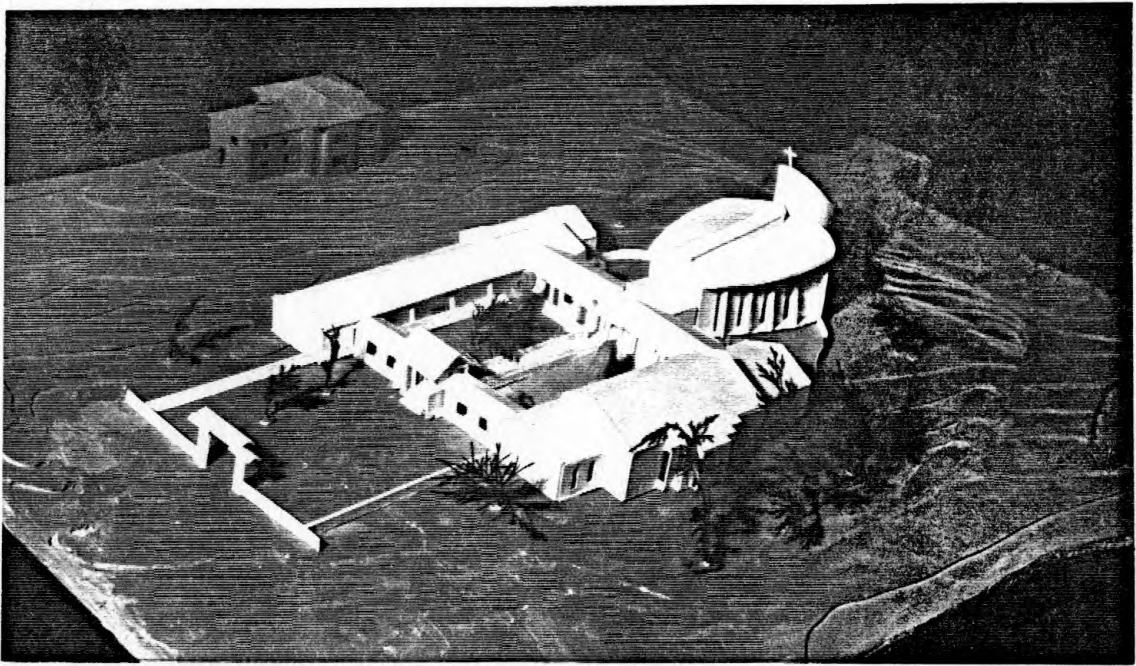


Figure 58. The Aerial View of the Complex from the South West.

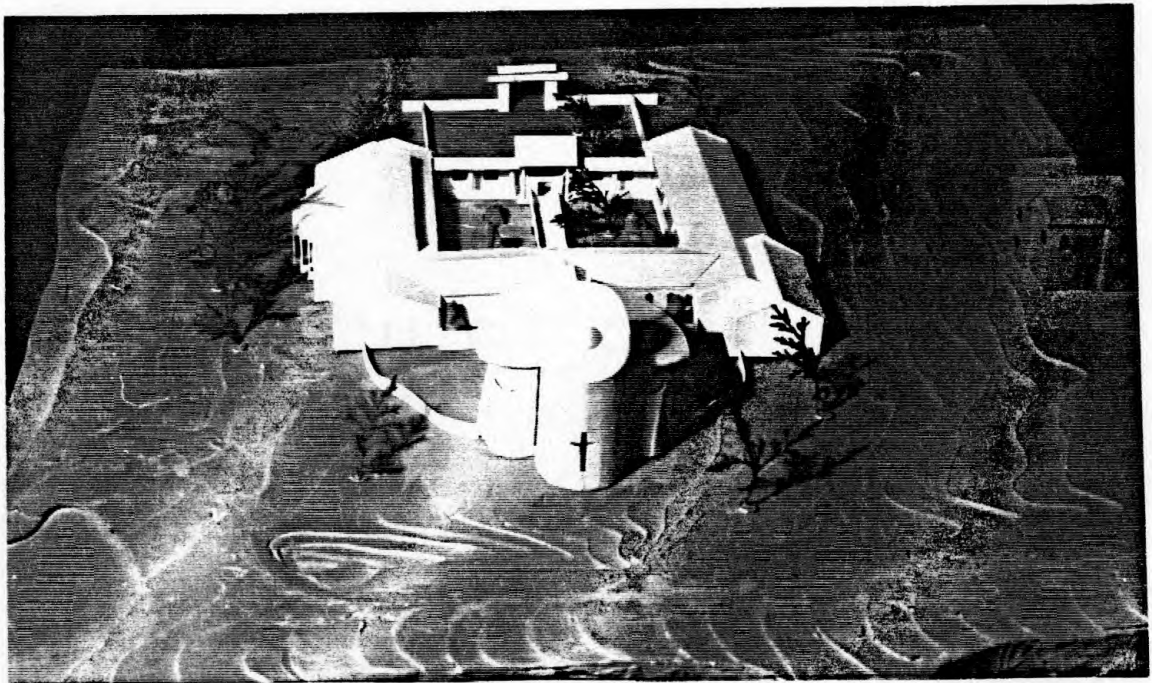


Figure 59. The Aerial View from the East

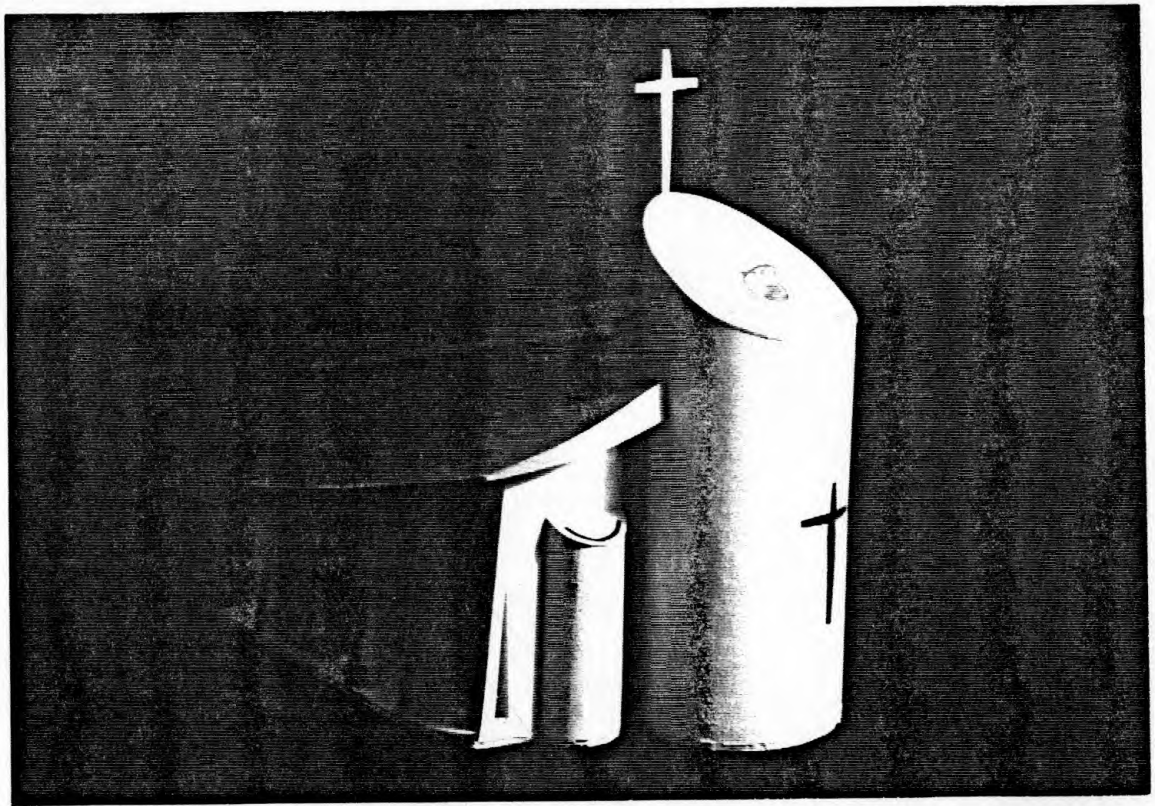


Figure 60. The South East View of the Sanctuary

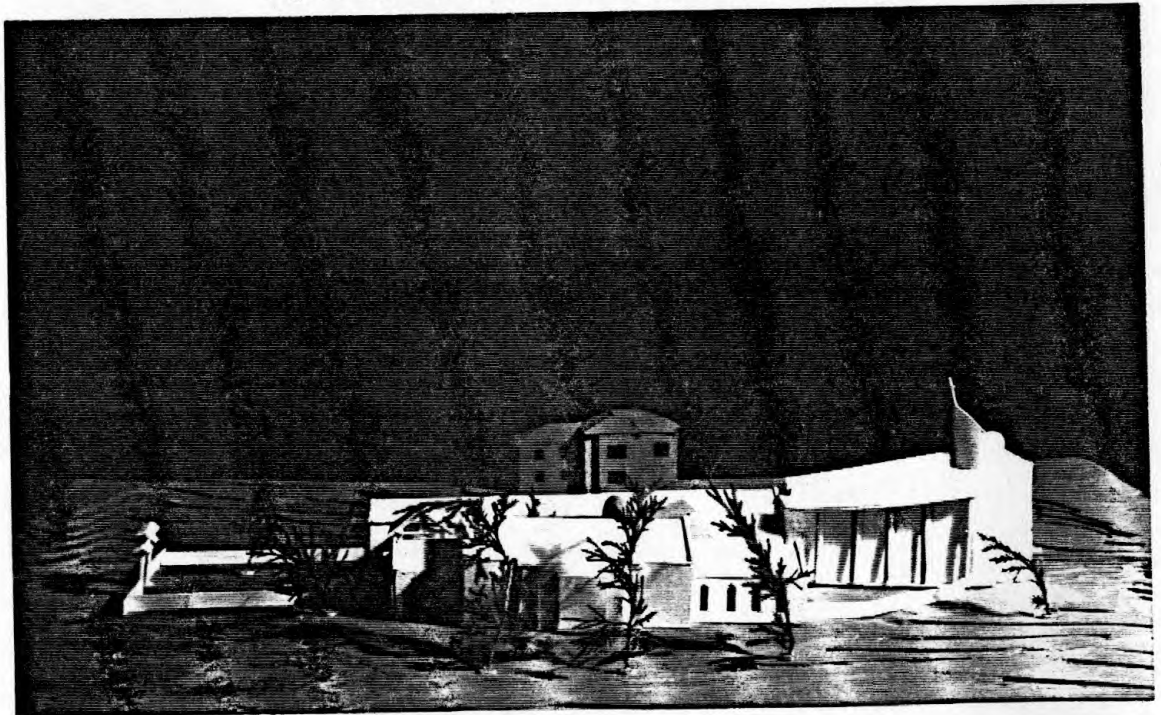


Figure 61. The South Facade of the Sanctuary

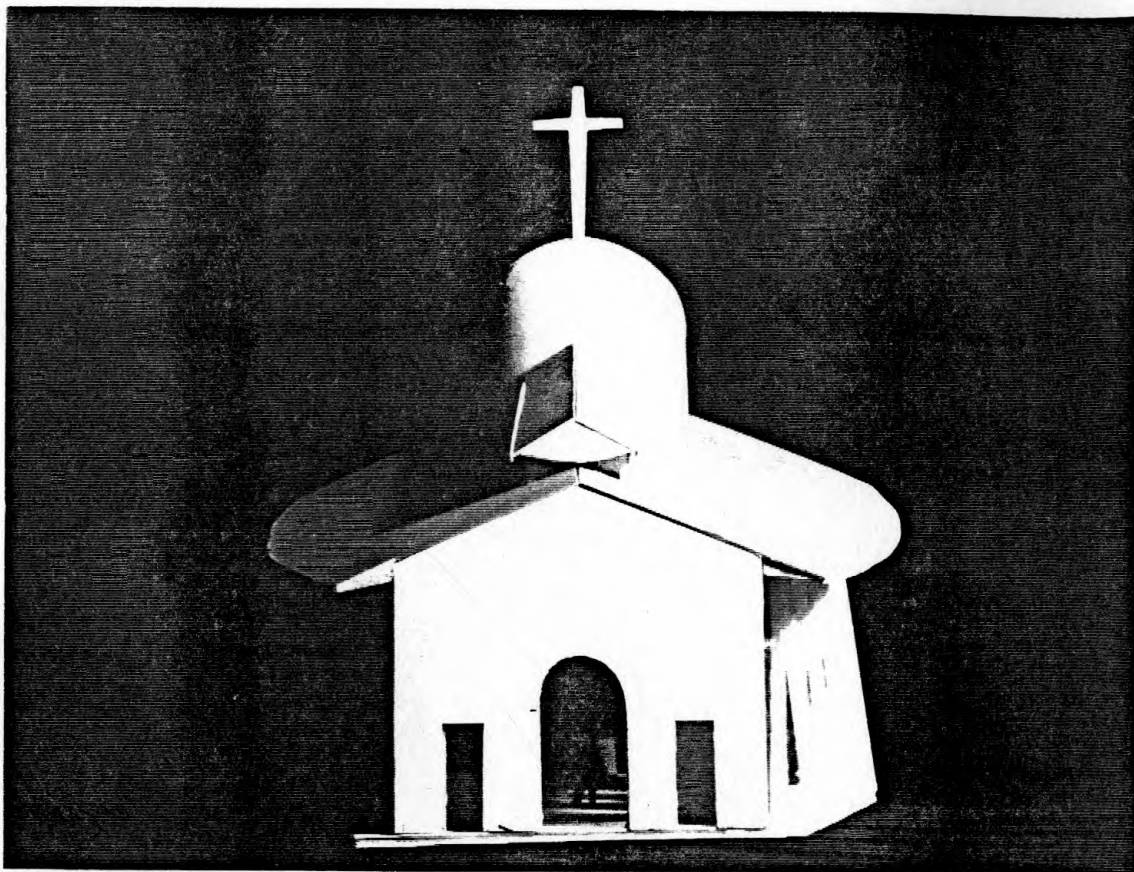


Figure 62. The West Facade of the Sanctuary

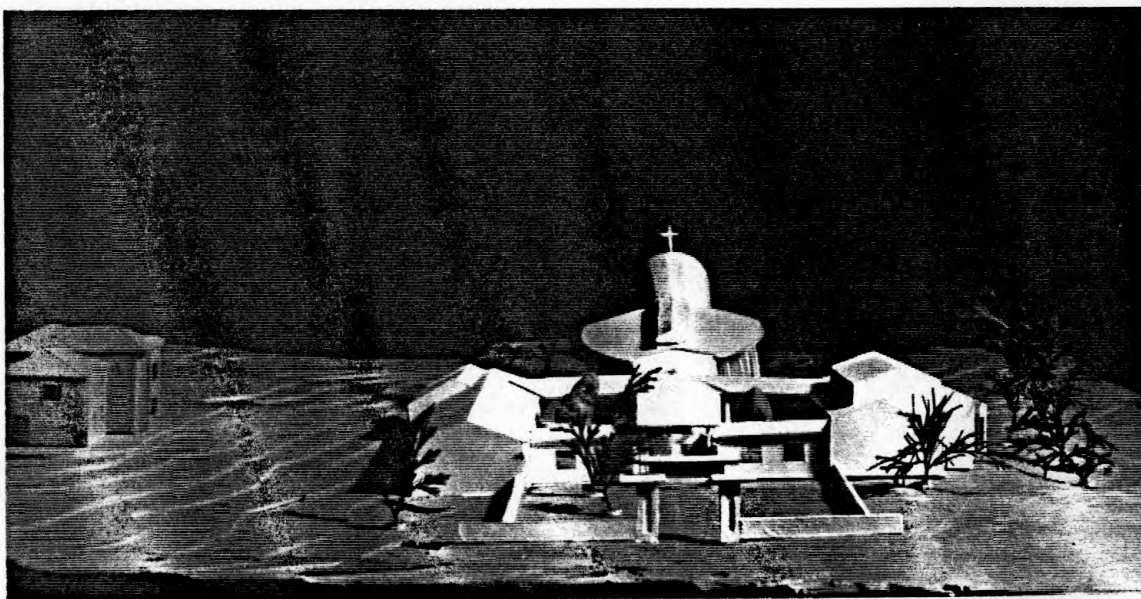


Figure 63. The West View of the Complex

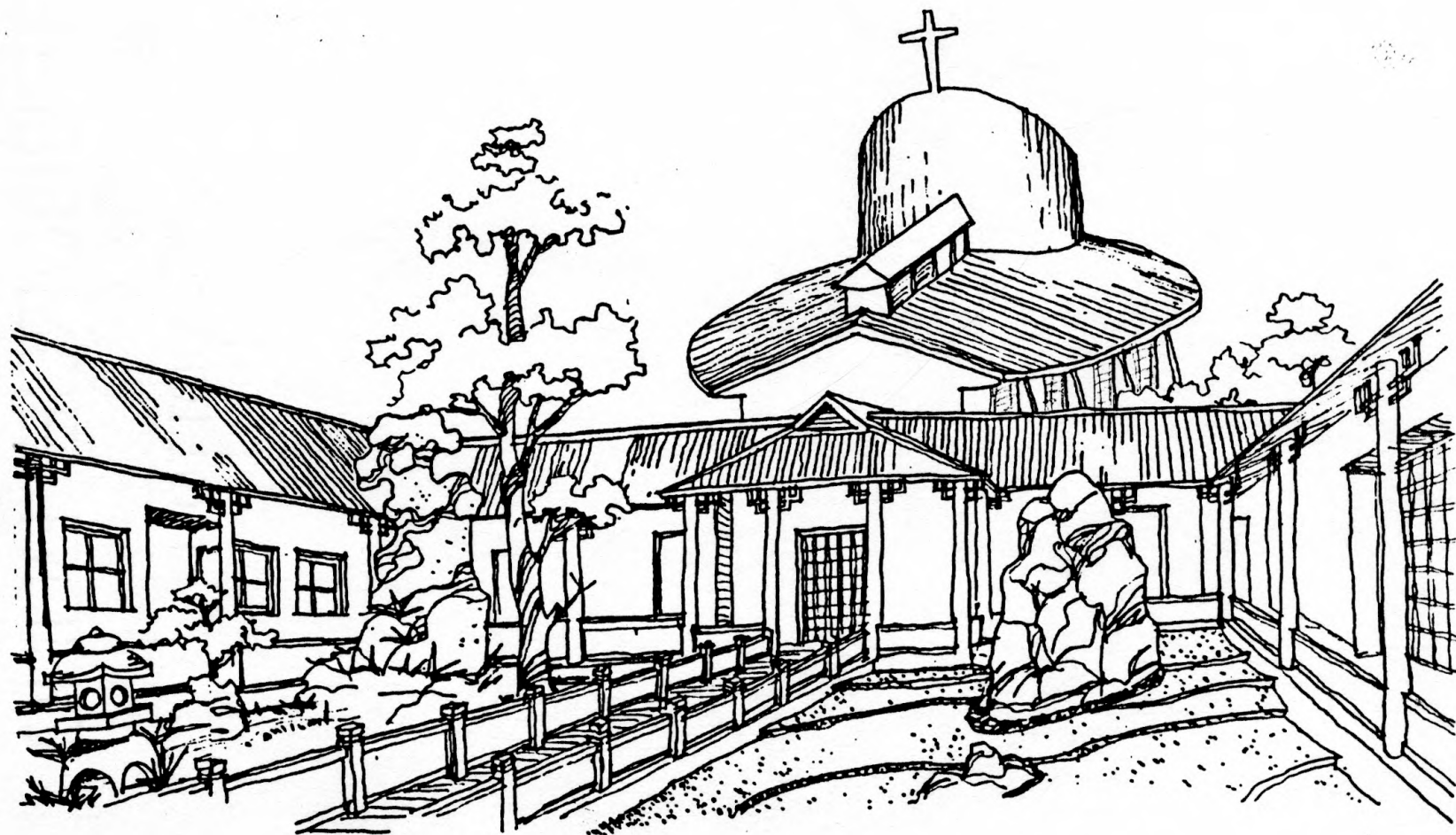


Figure 64. Perspective of the Central Courtyard

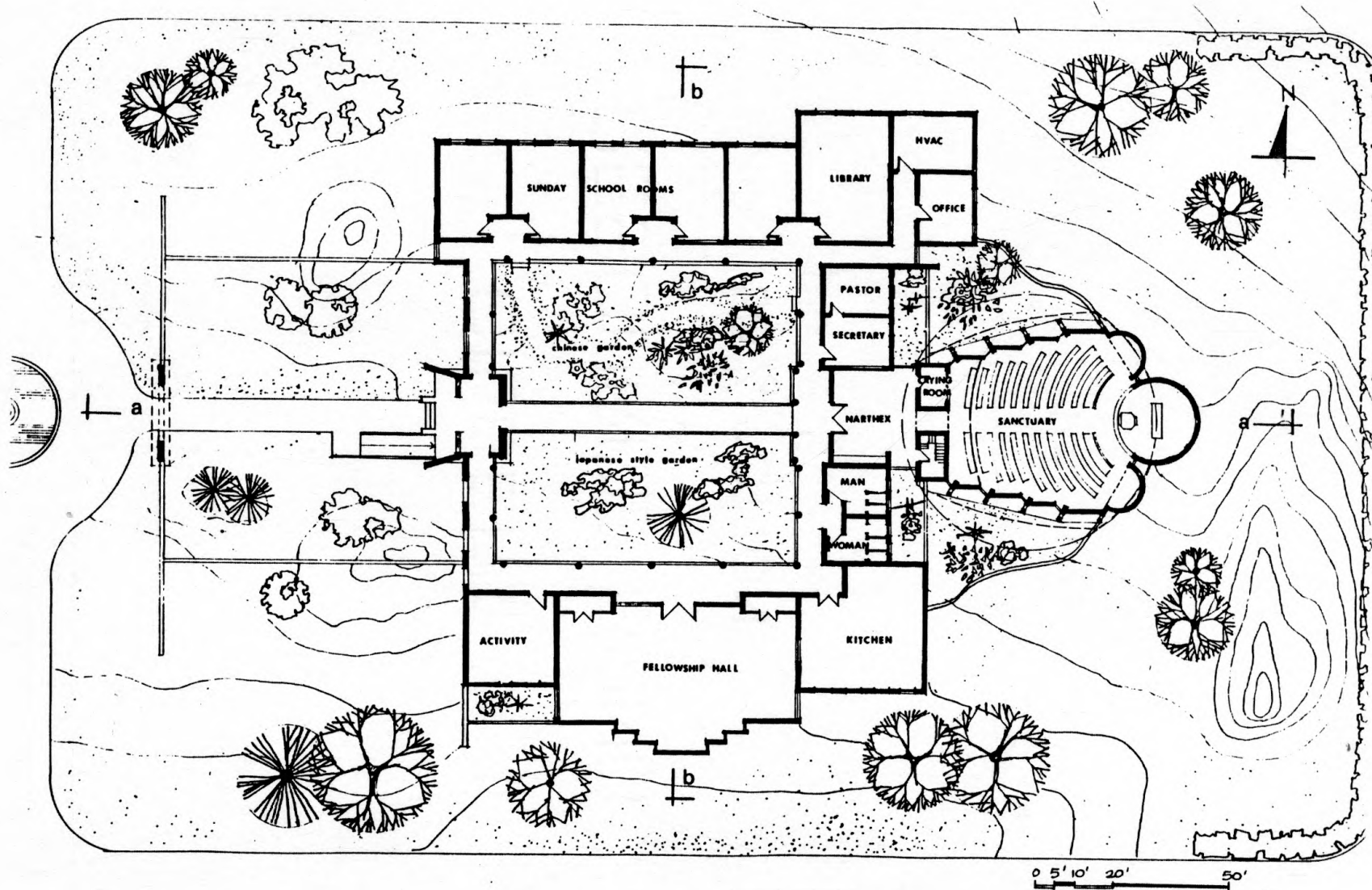
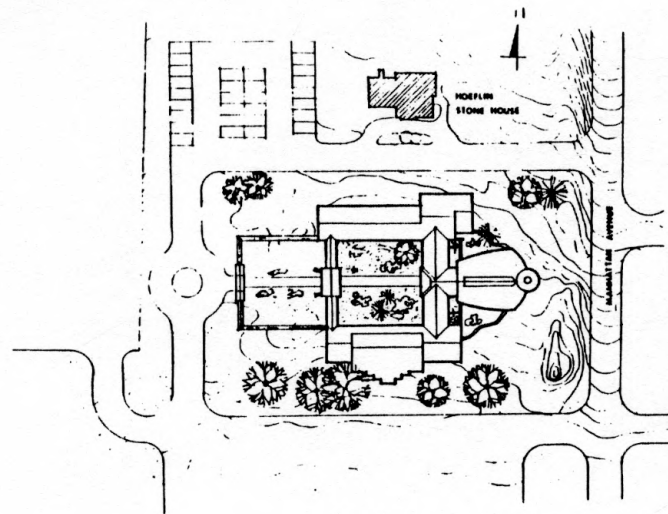


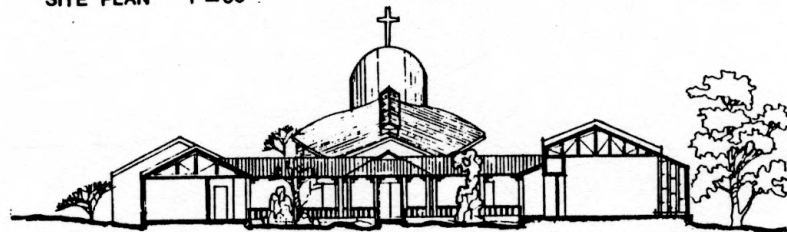
Figure 65. The Floor Plan.

Figure 66. The Site Plan and the Sections.

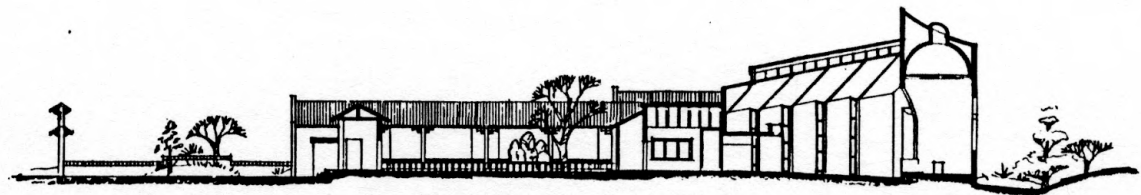
CHURCH 77



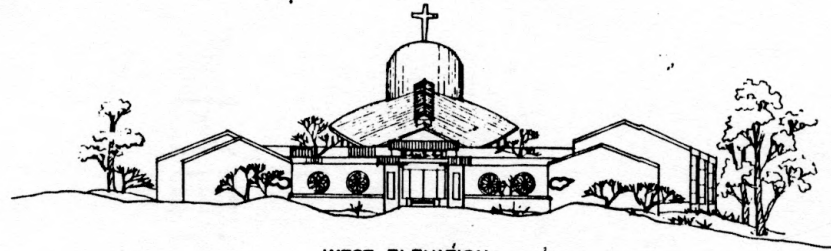
SITE PLAN 1" = 50'



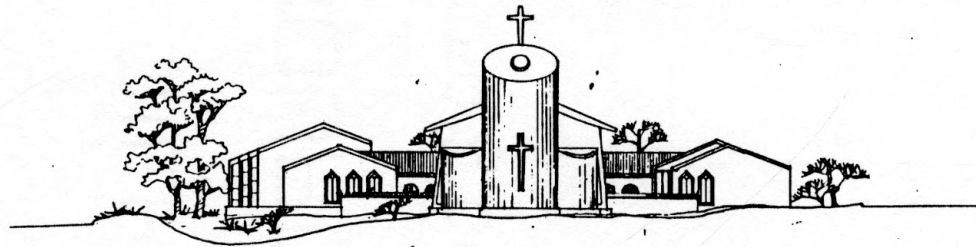
B-B SECTION 0 5' 10' 20' 70'



A-A SECTION 1/16" = 1'

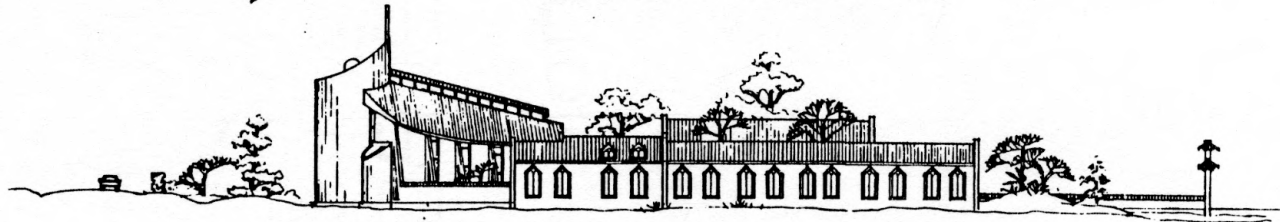


WEST ELEVATION

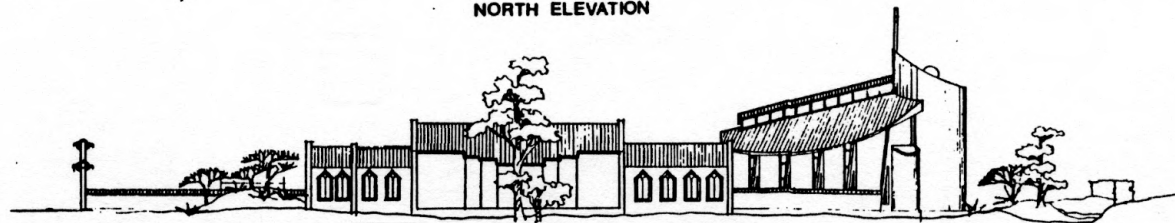


EAST ELEVATION

0' 5' 10' 20' 50'



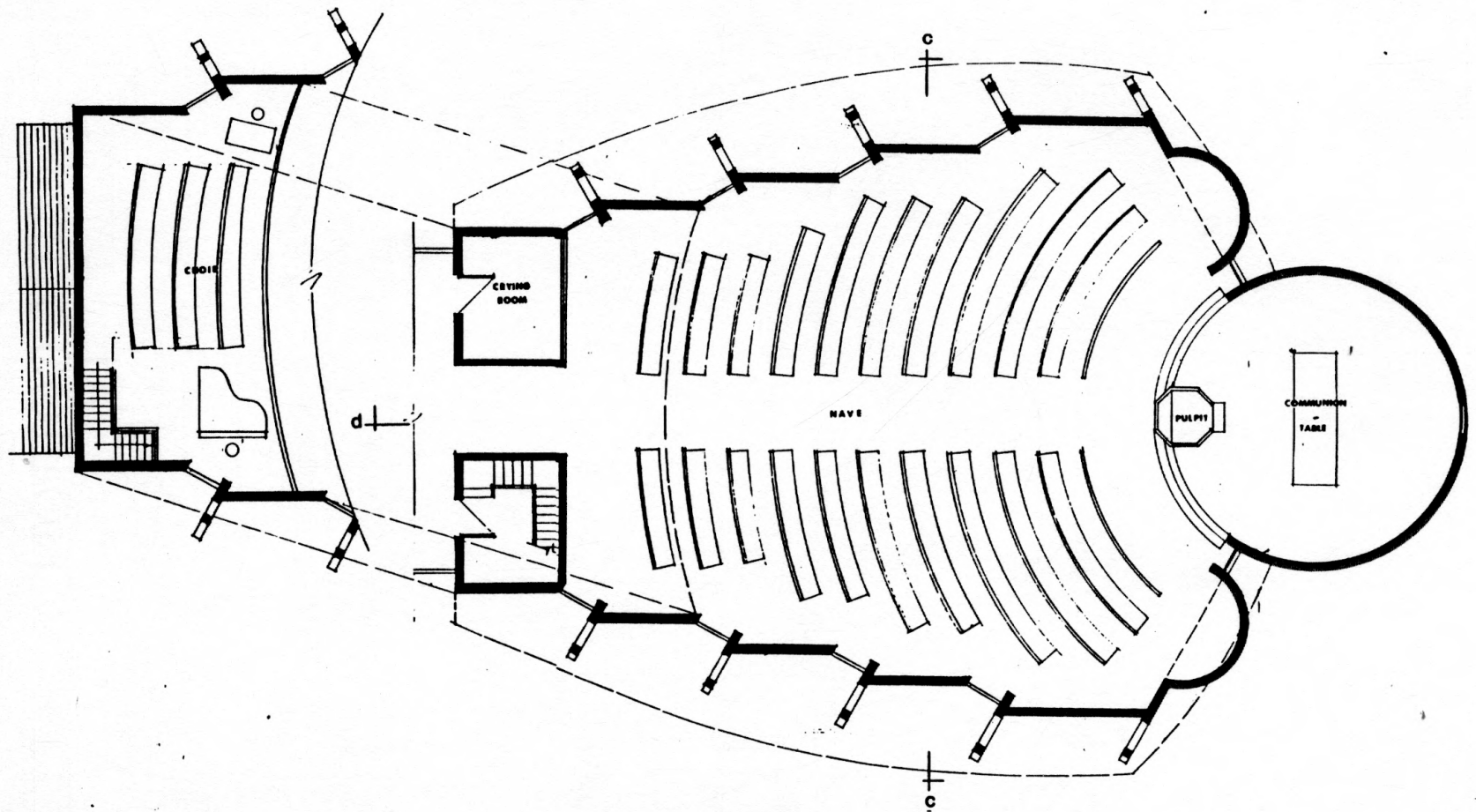
NORTH ELEVATION



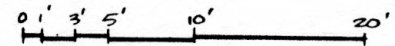
SOUTH ELEVATION 1/16" = 1'

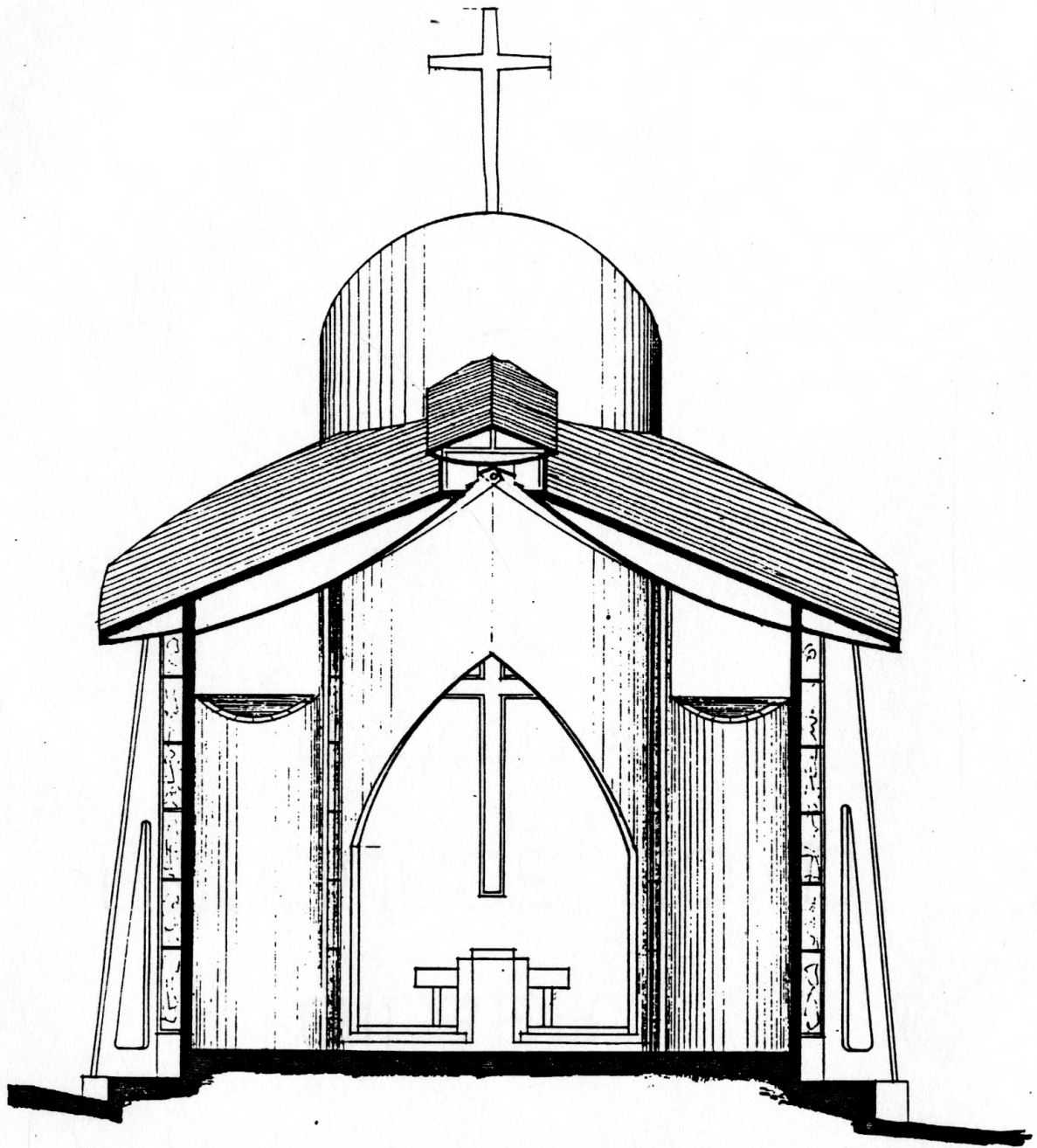
Figure 67. Elevations.

CHURCH 79



ENLARGED SANCTUARY PLAN $1/4" = 1'$





C-C SECTION — 0' 1' 3' 5' 10' 20'

Figure 69. Enlarged Sanctuary Section

CHURCH 80

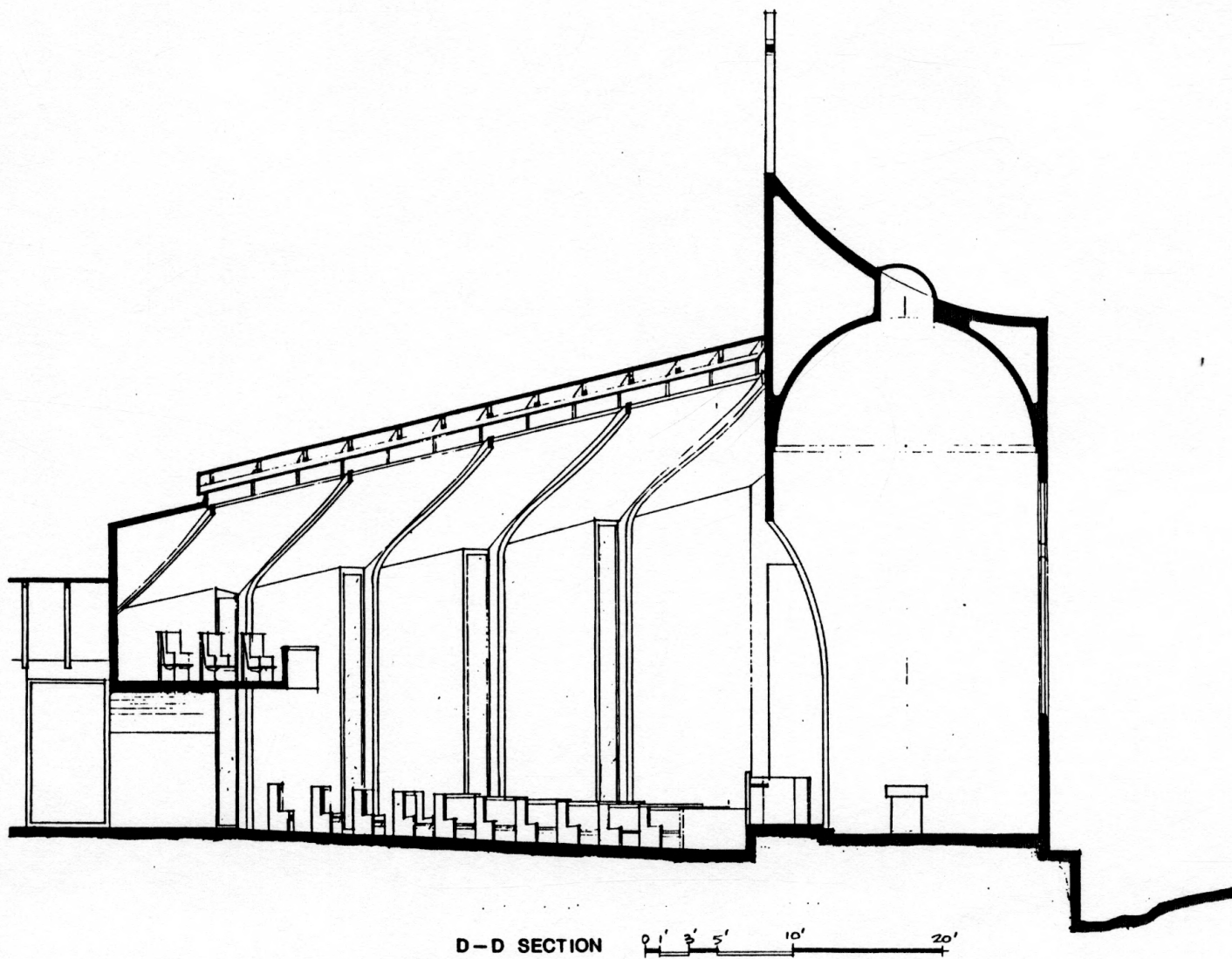


Figure 70. Enlarged Sanctuary Section

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