

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church

Silver Spring, Maryland

Architect: Lawrence Cook Associates P. C. and Michael Cook Studio

Lawrence Cook Associates and Michael Cook Studio worked with The Good Shepherd Episcopal Church to create a new 299-seat Worship Space, Narthex and Support Wing for their congregation. The program also included upgrading the existing building to be handicapped accessible, code compliant and to convert the previous Worship Space into temporary classrooms.

The architect chose to create an entrance similar to entering a cathedral. The Congregation enters through a series of spaces along a single, straight axis from the existing parking area into a spacious, naturally lighted Narthex, sized for social interaction before and after worship; then through the small, low ceiling entry which invokes quiet thus arriving at the Worship Space with its high clerestory flooded with natural light.

The Worship Space focuses on the chancel with the congregation gathered around in fan shaped pews for a feel of permanence and community. The congregation is seated in pews on a sloping floor to afford good sight and sound lines. The Celebrant holds the traditional positions in the chancel (altar, ambo, and presider's chair) with the choir seated behind, in chairs for flexibility. The choir leads the community in singing but also performs during parts of the service, facing the congregation. The center isle serves for most liturgical processions, and ambulatory isles for seasonal processions. This arrangement enhances and encourages congregational participation.

Laminated wood trusses define the clerestory space and bear on four steel columns encased in exposed concrete.



Photos Courtesy of Kathryn A. Brown

This, as a symbol of strength, defines the space and axis. Red cedar ceiling boards above the choir and chancel are solid tongue and groove to reflect sound, and at the rear of the nave are separated with acoustic insulation to absorb sound.

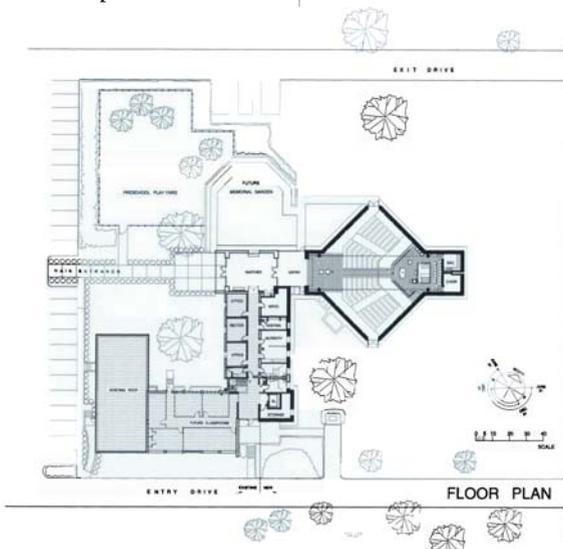
To achieve cathedral-like natural lighting, a 10-foot high continuous clerestory was created on all four sides of the center axis of the Nave. Windows in the walls were replaced with recessed niches to hold candles and artwork at certain liturgical seasons. Windows in the exit doors at both sides prevent claustrophobic reactions by some worshippers.

Five forms of artificial lighting are uti-

lized: suspended cans for reading; accent flood lighting; indirect up light at clerestory for ambiance at night and rainy days; circular wall sconces for processions around the perimeter isle; and candles in niches.

The acoustics of the Worship Space was designed for natural acoustics in plan and section; electronic amplification is not needed or used. Brick walls, slate isles and concrete floors enhance reverberation and thus render "live" quality coral and pipe organ music. Some areas of wood ceilings are hard to reflect sound while other areas contain soft insulation to absorb excess reverberation.

The architect custom designed the altar, pulpit, chairs, credence tables, flower stands and pews. The Good Shepherd Episcopal Church has won two regional design awards from *Inform Magazine*: the 2004 Honor Award for Interior Architecture and the 2003 Merit Award for Furniture.



MANUFACTURERS/SUPPLIERS

DIV 07: Insulation: Owens Corning;
Metal Roofing: Englert Inc.

DIV 08: Wood & Plastic Doors:
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