

Converting Space: Changes in the liturgical spaces of the Reformed Churches of Bloemfontein

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Abstract

This article aims to define the relationship between church building design and liturgical space. Since various Christian denominations are experiencing fundamental change in liturgy and expression of their faith, the buildings that house these institutions necessarily have to reflect this. In the city of Bloemfontein, this is also evident.

The correlation between the liturgical needs of the different denominations, the changes in these needs and in the space itself, is investigated. The various mainstream church buildings in Bloemfontein are compared in terms of original space and changed liturgical space. Restructuring has taken place in the services of specific congregations, especially in the Dutch Reformed Church. This has led to the most significant changes in liturgy and hence in liturgical space in the buildings of this denomination. This paper describes the extent of these changes in the space, the impact of the original design on the level of change (if any) and the result this has on the original design. Case studies are used to illustrate these changes in depth.

Key words: Church design, liturgical space, denominations in Bloemfontein, town planning

Opsomming

Hierdie artikel poog om die verhouding tussen kerkgebou-ontwerp en liturgiese ruimte te definieer. Omdat verskeie Christendenomi-

nasies fundamentele verandering in liturgie en die uitdrukking van hul geloof ervaar, moet die geboue wat hierdie instellings huisves, dit noodwendig ook uitbeeld. Hierdie verandering is ook duidelik in die stad Bloemfontein.

Die ooreenstemming tussen die liturgiese behoefte van verskillende denominasies, die veranderinge in hierdie behoeftes en in die ruimte self word ondersoek. Die verskillende hoofstroom kerkgeboue in Bloemfontein word vergelyk in terme van die oorspronklike ruimte en die veranderde ruimte. Herstrukturering het plaasgevind in die dienste van spesifieke gemeentes, veral in die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk. Dit het gelei tot beduidende verandering in die liturgie en die ruimte wat dit huisves in hierdie spesifieke denominasie. Hierdie artikel beskryf die omvang van die verandering in die ruimte, die impak op die oorspronklike ontwerp op die vlak van verandering (indien enige) en die effek op die oorspronklike ontwerp. Gevallestudies word gebruik om dit te illustreer.

Sleutelwoorde: Kerkontwerp, liturgiese ruimte, denominasies in Bloemfontein, stadsbeplanning

This article firstly aims to identify the changes in liturgy and worship in the mainline churches of the city of Bloemfontein, where this trend is recorded especially in the Dutch Reformed Church. Secondly, the impact these changes have had on the church buildings that house specific congregations is analysed through the use of various case studies.

1. Background

Church buildings have traditionally held specific requirements in terms of design, both functionally and symbolically. Changes in the Church through reformation, the founding of new denominations, changes in liturgy or fundamental philosophy lead to varying needs within individual congregations and from the spaces that house the institutions. Early Christian churches were adaptations of Roman basilicas and the Hagia Sophia first served as a Byzantine era church and was adapted to a mosque. Buildings have been changed throughout the ages and churches have always formed part of this phenomenon. This is also true in the case of Bloemfontein, in the Free State. The church buildings in this city are used to describe changes in liturgical space of the main denominations, the level of change and the reasons behind it.

2. Denominations in the city of Bloemfontein

The Anglican and Catholic churches are of the earliest denominations to have built churches in the city but have fewer members in comparison to the Dutch Reformed church or other Charismatic denominations. The Roman Catholic Church and mainline protestant denominations have largely dominated the religious scene throughout Africa, because of Western missionary endeavours (Ojo, 2006:1).

For the purposes of this study, the focus was restricted to specific buildings of the Dutch Reformed (*Nederduits-Gereformeerde*), Reformed (*Gereformeerde Kerk in SA*) and Restructured (*Her-vormde Kerk*) Afrikaans churches, including the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa and the Uniting Church, because these denominations represent the largest groups in Bloemfontein and the case studies that illustrate changes in liturgical space belong to these mainline denominations. Examples of change in the Methodist church are included as an indication of the influence of the change beyond the Reformed Churches.

The Dutch Reformed Church has a strong presence in Bloemfontein even though its membership is declining. In 1974 there were 60 118 (NG Yearbook, 1974) members in Bloemfontein and in 2011, even with the addition of a new congregation (Woodland Hills), the membership all but halved to 27 337 (Van Renen, 2011:414) (see Fig.1). Historically, the DRC (as well as its two sister churches, the Reformed Church in South Africa and the Dutch Restructured Church of South Africa) had ties with the National Party. It is evident that most of these churches were built during the height of the apartheid era, from 1940-1970, with a decline being evident from the late eighties, as socio-political changes were also taking place (Fig 2). The church has 20 congregations within the city limits (Van Renen, 2011:414). Its sister churches, the Reformed Church and the Restructured Church have an additional 11 congregations. Although membership has also declined in these sister churches, the Afrikaans sister churches are still the most prominent in the city. The decline in membership may be ascribed to the change in identity these churches are facing, with the charismatic movement having a strong influence, as well as the disillusionment of political change after 1994. The charismatic churches feature strongly since establishing a presence through the CRC (about 30 000 members

in 2012), Doxadeo, Fountainhead and Shofar (2010) churches (Jafftha, 2005:24).

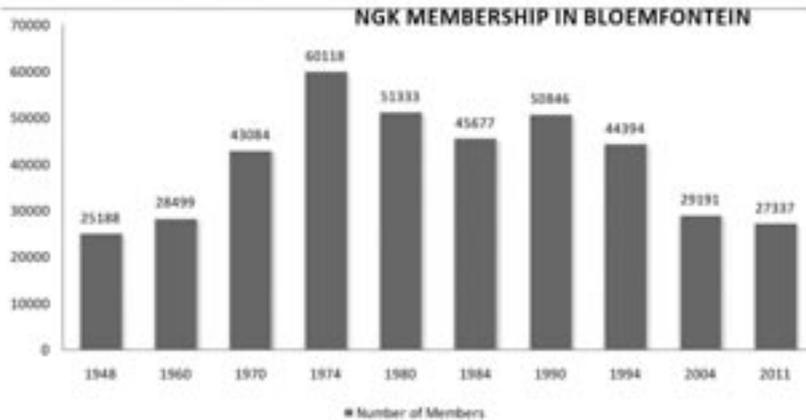


Figure 1: Dutch Reformed membership in Bloemfontein between 1948 and 2011 (excluding the DRC in Africa)

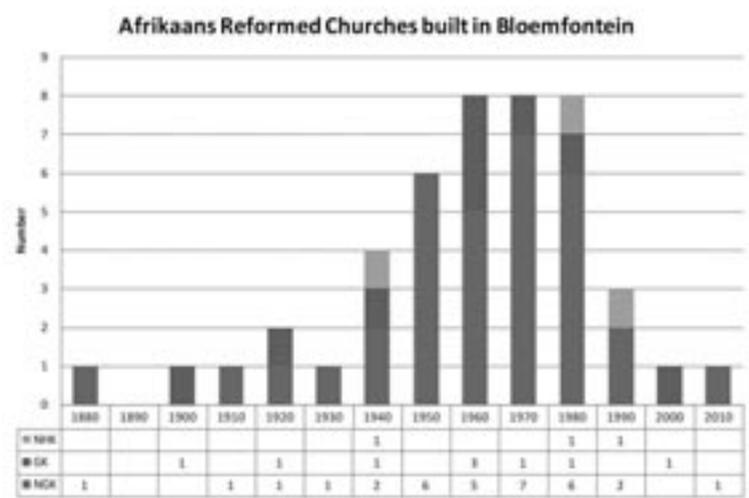


Figure 2: New church buildings constructed for the Afrikaans Reformed churches including the Nederduits Hervormde Kerk, Gereformeerde Kerk and Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk.

On the other hand the Protestant churches still do have significant support. The Afrikaans Baptist church has also grown considerably, a new congregation was established in Langenhovenpark in 2005.

3. Church distribution in Bloemfontein

Bloemfontein's current urban layout is based almost exactly on the segregated city model. The Group Areas Act (Nr 41 of 1950) was the key legislation that underpinned the segregation of the various racial groups. A sector plan (Fig. 4) was implemented in the 1950s in Bloemfontein whereby the distinctive living areas of each population group could extend outwards without any structural obstacles, earning the city the dubious title of having the model apartheid town plan.

The city was divided along the railway line that runs in a north-south direction, creating the 'white' suburbs to the west and the 'black' townships to the east. This buffer zone was reinforced by the cemeteries, shooting range, industrial area and the premises of the transport services (Rex & Visser, 2009:341). The city experienced growth between 1940s and 1970s with the outward expansion of several suburbs. The political ideology of the time is clear in the layout of these new suburbs. In this era 14 new Dutch Reformed congregations were founded in the city (Lamprecht, 1997:71).

The Central Business District (CBD) forms the core of the city and the main roads and suburbs radiate outward from it. Since the demise of apartheid and the repeal of the Group Areas Act (by the Abolition of Racially Based Land Matters Act, (Act No. 108 of 1991) attempts have been made to overcome the planning of that era and to integrate the city. Many South African cities are experiencing rapid urbanisation, as there are no longer laws restricting racial groups from specific urban areas (Rex & Visser, 2009:335-336). Integrated Development Plans (IDP) has been put on the table and is focused around integrating the city past the previous buffer zones and stemming the sprawl toward the southeast. However, the majority of new arrivals to the area still tend to settle in the informal and peripherally located areas. These areas are more affordable and provide relative ease of access to the CBD. Unfortunately this aggravates the already crowded circumstances, whilst reinforcing and perpetuating the historical segregated urban plan (Rex & Visser, 2009:336).



Figure 3: The various suburbs in Bloemfontein.

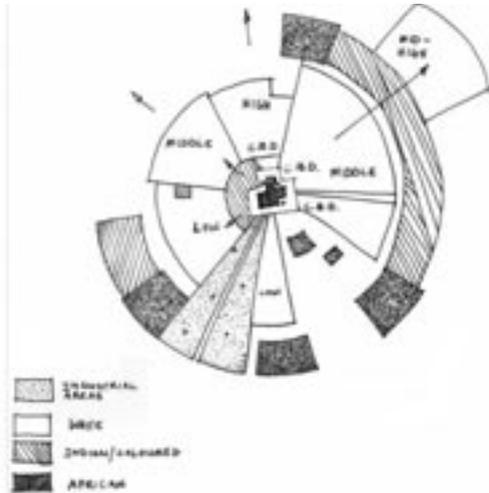


Figure 4: Sector diagram. Adapted from Musterd and Ostendorf (1998:227).



Figure 5: Bloemfontein as a segregated city.

The question of course is whether this inherent division in the city has an impact on church design and changes in the liturgical space.

“The religious ideology of the day did play a defining role in the placing, size and appearance of the specific place of public religious activity in a town or city.” (Lamprecht, 1997:36).

The concept of the neighbourhoods or suburbs as part of the garden city layout influenced South African town planning. Here the idea of the church seated in the suburb followed the same pattern that was occurring worldwide – especially in the Netherlands. Homogeneity in terms of the residents’ religious views allows for the workability of the neighbourhood church. Heterogeneity or a decline in participation in church activity on the other hand, hinders the on-going existence of the neighbourhood church (Lamprecht, 1997:61).

With the quick expansion of the city and the development of new suburbs in Bloemfontein many new neighbourhood churches were constructed.

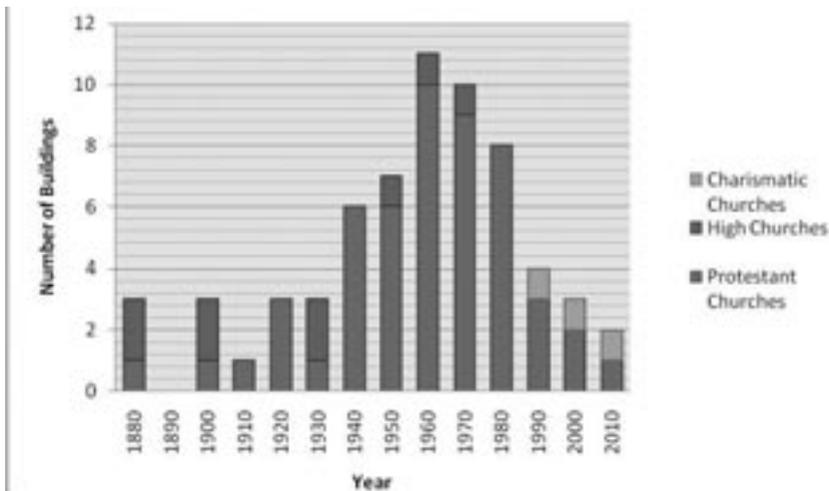


Figure 6: Graph indicating church buildings constructed in Bloemfontein between 1880 and 2010.

The graph of church building during the 20th century in Bloemfontein (Fig. 6) is grouped into three categories of denomination namely High, Protestant (including Reformed Churches) and Charismatic churches. This is an indication of new churches built

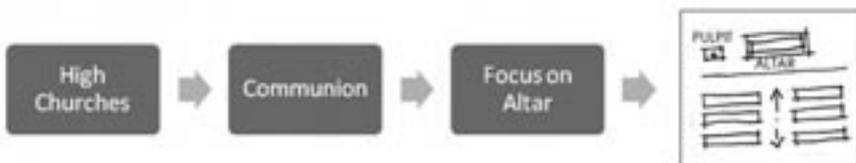
specifically for each of the denominational groups. Buildings that have changed hands, buildings that have since been demolished and temporary structures such as tents functioning as gathering spaces for congregations are not indicated.

The High churches include Roman Catholic and Anglican. Protestant churches for the purpose of this study include the Dutch Reformed, Dutch Reformed in Africa, Reformed Church, Dutch Restructured Church, and Baptist churches. Charismatic churches include Shofar, CRC and Fountainhead.

4. Traditional liturgy and space

The liturgy of the Episcopal reformed and protestant churches differ most in terms of focus. In the High Church the focus is on Holy Communion and in the liturgical space the altar is the main area of focus. The pulpit is secondary and is often placed to one side.

In the Reformed Church the focus shifted from Holy Communion to *sola scriptura* (or the Word alone). In the Protestant Churches (especially the Afrikaans Reformed churches) the first view is described by Le Roux (2008:21) as that of the pulpit with the Bible open on it. Because of this ideal the buildings are organised in a way that the congregation can easily see and hear the preacher. The pulpit is seen as a stage for the understanding of the sermon. There is a shift in focus in the liturgical space as well in that the focus is centred on the pulpit and the person delivering the Word to the congregation. In the most recent shift towards the charismatic, the focus is on the emotional experience of the Holy Spirit and a stage has replaced the pulpit or altar in order to facilitate this engaging emotional experience.



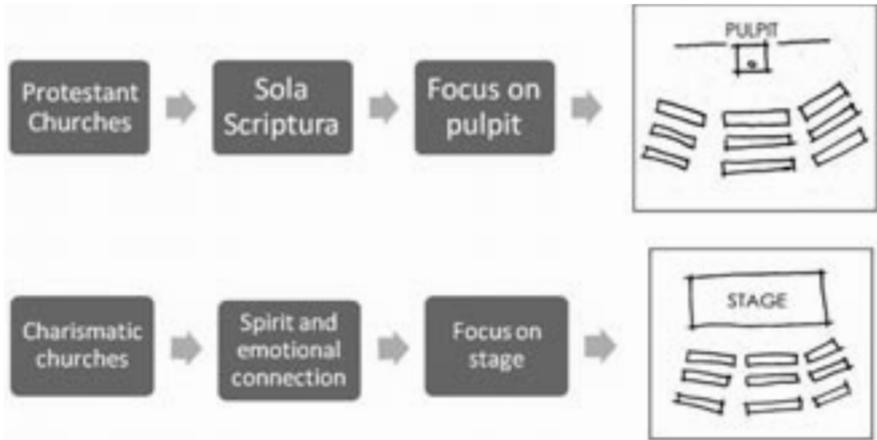


Figure 7: The relationship between liturgical focus and building layout.

5. Changes in Worship

The Church has not been exempt from the major political social, scientific, economical and demographic shifts of the 20th century; these changes are paralleled in the church and raise the questions of the relationship of the institution and the world wherein it is set.

Fenwick and Spinks (1995:2) are of the opinion that the changes should not be overemphasised, even though they are clearly evident. There have been marked shifts in the dynamics and expectations of worshipping Christians. This is often expressed through changes in texts, concepts and music. This leads to a need for new styles and settings and in turn to changes in buildings (1995:9).

David Goodhew (2000:363) also indicates that a factor influencing the decline of certain denominations and the growth of others is changes in the religious structure. This can be further subdivided into zeal, theology, liturgy and the competence of the religious bodies themselves. In this sense the African independent churches and charismatic churches showed great energy in propagating their message, much more so than the mainline churches in South Africa. Many of the mainline churches were (and some still are) characterised by formality, borrowed from European models that limit spontaneous participation.

In theology the mainline churches offered a more sophisticated set of ideas, which took account of socio-political developments often ignored by other churches. But it can also be argued that the mainline churches have been relevant to the overall picture at the expense of failing to connect with the day-to-day life of many South Africans (Goodhew, 2000:363).

The changes in service have been especially noticeable in the Dutch Reformed Church, being influenced by the liturgical changes in the Pentecostal and Evangelical churches, but this varies from congregation to congregation. The mainline congregations that are growing are most strongly influenced by this movement (Goodhew, 2000:363). The change in service may also be related to the larger trend of secularisation. According to the Win-Galup International religiosity and Atheism index, the number of South Africans that see themselves as religious has decreased from 83% of population in 2005 to 64% in 2012 (Jackson, 2012:6).

The services have become less formal and more charismatic. There is less reliance on the organ and the pulpit is used to a lesser extent or even removed in some cases. Charismatic worship is also seen as a reaction to the perceived dryness of the public worship of mainline churches and South Africa is part of the wider shift in religious belief, reflecting the rise of the Pentecostal movement (Goodhew, 2000:366; Fenwick & Spinks, 1995:110). However, the movement has influence beyond the congregations that would call themselves charismatic. The need to move towards this type of service is felt in many other denominations, even though the experience of Pentecostal worship may be at odds with the ethos and liturgical practice of the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Protestant Churches (Fenwick & Spinks, 1995:106).

Church music often becomes the centre of disputes in congregations where a more charismatic service is adopted. The replacement of the organ as the sole musical instrument by guitars and keyboards has caused much controversy and opposition (Fenwick & Spinks, 1995:173). These changes also lead to suggestions of changes of the liturgical space or sanctuary and lie at the heart of why a building is changed. This is no small matter; changes in the way music is used may lead to changes in the liturgy. Liturgy expresses what Christians and specific denomi-

nations believe. To change the liturgy runs the risk of changing doctrine – or at least those doctrines which worshippers regularly hear and absorb and which form the foundation of their identity within the church (Fenwick & Spinks, 1995:169).

In the DRC, the shift is away from *Sola Scriptura* and the focus on the pulpit toward a more inclusive space where the focus is spread to accommodate a band or stage. Examples of these changes are discussed in depth with the case studies of the DRC in Africa Bloemfontein-West (1), DRC Bloemfontein-North (4), DRC De Bloem (2), DRC Fichardtkruin (5), DRC Heuwelsig(7) and the DR Student Church (8). These examples represent different levels of intervention, from low to significant and are all Reformed congregations.

6. Township and suburb

There is no clear cut example of a suburban ‘white’ church or a typical township church. Even though certain denominations are more prevalent in certain areas, the only clear distinction being that The Dutch Reformed Church in Africa, VGK and traditional ‘African’ churches are situated in the townships and the Dutch Reformed Church in the previous white suburbs. The most significant differences are clearly based on finances. Congregations that were in areas of economic affluence necessarily have buildings that prove this. In the townships or informal settlements, these economic influences are clearly evident as well, but some buildings such as the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa Bloemfontein North are very similar in scale and material use to those in the northern suburbs of the same era. This is due to the fact that the building was funded by mission actions undertaken in the 1960s (Crafford, 1982:577).

These suburban churches often have an additional hall, offices and Sunday school facilities that are not present in most township churches. In terms of the liturgical space the churches in the northern suburbs are designed according to the denominational preference either for a focus on the pulpit or altar. In the churches of the townships these are decidedly more modest and the presence of pipe organs is not observed as it is in all the Dutch Reformed case studies in the northern suburbs. The focus is also either on the altar or pulpit but the surrounding design is modest and basic.

This is clear when one compares the ornate pulpit in the DRC Bloemfontein-North or De Bloem with the NGKA Bloemfontein-West for example. These buildings are all of the same Reformed denomination and exist within a few kilometres of each other.



Figure 8: The pulpit of NGK Bloemfontein-North. Note the addition of screens and the band below the organ loft. 2012.



Figure 9: The liturgical space of NGK De Bloem. Note the screen to the right as the only addition.



Figure 10: The pulpit of Bloemfontein West NGKA, 2012.

The churches to the south-east (townships) often have linear plans and in most cases the materials used are face brick or fibre cement panelling, and are not ornate in plan or design. The most significant example of deviation from these basic church typologies is in scale. The material use and plan type do not differ greatly but the scale may be significantly enlarged, for example if one compares St Rose and Christ is King Catholic churches, there is a definite difference in scale even though the materials are similar. In the case of the Methodist church that also houses an HIV/AIDS clinic, it is also vastly larger than other buildings of the same denomination in the city.

The liturgical spaces in these buildings are functional and are rarely changed, on the one hand because the charismatic movement experienced in the Dutch Reformed church has not yet become as evident in the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa or VGK. Since sound systems and building work require a large investment in communities where survival and maintenance of the building are of greater concern, changes to the liturgical space are not seen as a priority.

7. The extent of changes to a building

Typically four levels of intervention can be identified: No intervention, Low level intervention, Mid-level intervention and High

to severe intervention. The level of intervention is influenced by socio-economic conditions as well as liturgical concerns. The structure of the space also plays a role in the level of intervention that is possible or acceptable. The National Heritage Resources Act (Nr 25 of 1999) recognises the need for protecting heritage and valuable historic structures and the value of a building as described by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) must also be considered. All buildings older than 60 years must be assessed to determine their value and what level of change will be permissible.

No intervention

In the churches of the townships financial concern is paramount and changes to the liturgical space are not a priority. A further consideration is that in the Episcopal churches in all areas of the city there is no evidence of this type of intervention such as in St Joseph's (1) a Roman Catholic Church.

Low level intervention

This is often seen in the additions made to the original liturgical space, in the form of basic improvements at adaptations such as the addition of sound systems, screens or more satisfactory pulpits.

Examples of these types of conservative interventions can be seen in DRC De Bloem (2) and in the Trinity Methodist Church (3). See Figure 13 and Figure 15

Mid-level intervention

Mid-level interventions occur where the space requires some limited structural changes to provide the required flexibility a congregation may now need. This is done in the form of the removal of permanent seating, the addition of stages or moveable pulpits. Examples of these cases are DR Bloemfontein-North (4), DRC Fichardt kruin (5) and DRC Fichardtpark (6).

High level intervention

In these cases the structure of the building may be adapted to provide for the change in spatial needs. The most significant

example is the DR Student Church (8) (Figure 24) or DRC Heuwelsig (7) (Figure 24) where the existing pulpit was removed and replaced by a stage, to facilitate a service that no longer requires a strict adherence to the liturgical ritual.

8. Case studies

(1) Dutch Reformed Church in Africa: Bloemfontein West – No intervention

The congregation was founded in 1947. The building is red face brick, as are many buildings of the area and time period. The material was economic and readily available. The plan is a basic linear block with an addition to form the vestry behind the pulpit. The pews are arranged along the linear plan usually seen in Episcopal churches and do not follow the auditorium arrangement seen in the DR congregations of the northern suburbs such as De Bloem (2) or Bloemfontein North (4). The only deviation from this arrangement are the pews for the choir and deacons that are turned on an angle, however, they are not fixed and could easily be moved to accommodate different needs.



Figure 11: Dutch Reformed Church in Africa – Bloemfontein West. 2012 (Western facade).

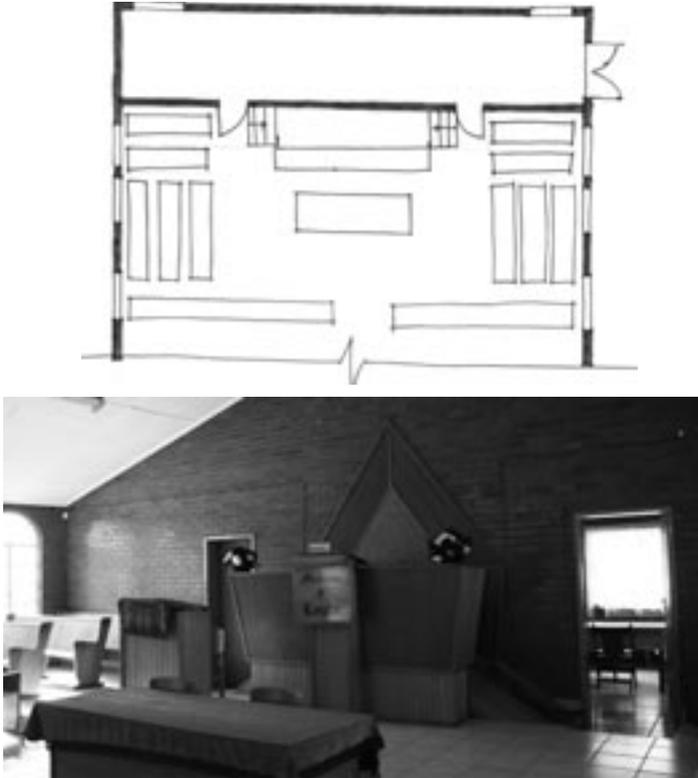


Figure 12: The liturgical space of DRC in African Bloemfontein-West.

(2) Dutch Reformed Church De Bloem – Low level intervention

Built in 1940 and designed by Wynand H Louw the church has an auditorium plan typical of the time and made popular by Gerhard Moerdijk. It is similar in design to the Reformed Church Bloemfontein also by Louw, built in 1928 and which faces demolition. The organ and pulpit are the main focal point of the liturgical space and are integrated with the gallery. Because of both the historic nature of the church and the more conservative views of the congregation the only internal changes have been to add a screen and overhead projector to the space and the inclusion of a sound system. The organ remains the main musical accompaniment.



Figure 13: Dutch Reformed Church De Bloem 2012 (Northern facade) and internal space; note the addition of the projection screen.

(3) Trinity Methodist Church – Low level intervention

The red face brick church close to the city hall was built in 1929 with a typical linear plan but more ornate than St Joseph's, which was built later but with much less ornamentation, especially on the exterior. The internal changes in the building are very slight in that the additions are technology in the form of a screen and sound system. No structural changes were made to the liturgical space or sanctuary.



Figure 14: Trinity Methodist, 2012.



Figure 15: Liturgical space of Trinity Methodist. Note the monitor at the pulpit and the screen on the wall.

(4) Dutch Reformed Bloemfontein-North – Mid level intervention

This Dutch Reformed church designed by the partnership of Gerhard Moerdijk and Hendrik Louw was built in 1923 a few years after the

founding of the congregation in 1918 and is typical of the early 20th century Dutch Reformed plan type. A modified Greek cross plan is used with the pulpit integrated into the design on the corner.

As the pulpit is so integrated into the design it could not be removed in favour of a stage. The fixed pews in the north wing were removed in 2006 to create space for the band that has largely replaced the organ as the musical accompanying to services. The use of electronic equipment such as amplifiers, keyboards, etc. requires more space than would be available without the removal of these seats. As in other congregations screens and sound systems have been added.



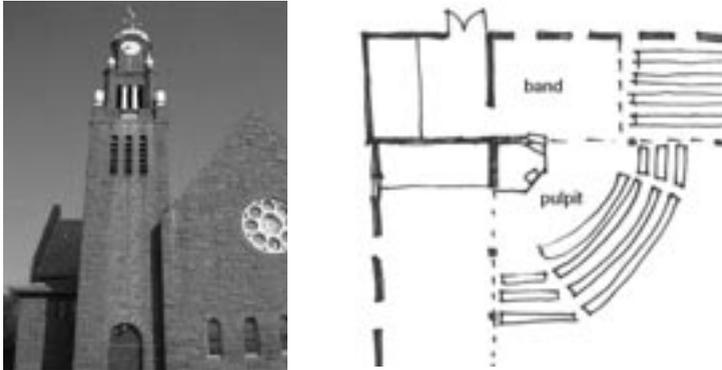


Figure 16: Dutch Reformed Church Bloemfontein-North (Eastern facade 2012).

(5) Dutch Reformed Fichardtkruin – Mid-level intervention

The organic plan and morphology of DRC Fichardtkruin is unique in the Free State. Designed by architect Koos Reyneke it was completed in 1982. The unorthodox spatial arrangement requires that the seating on ground level is tilted on an upward angle in order to view the pulpit and retain the focus on the delivery of the Word as prescribed in Reformed liturgy.

A stage was designed and built with some difficulty to create a space for the church band that has become a fixture in especially Dutch Reformed churches.

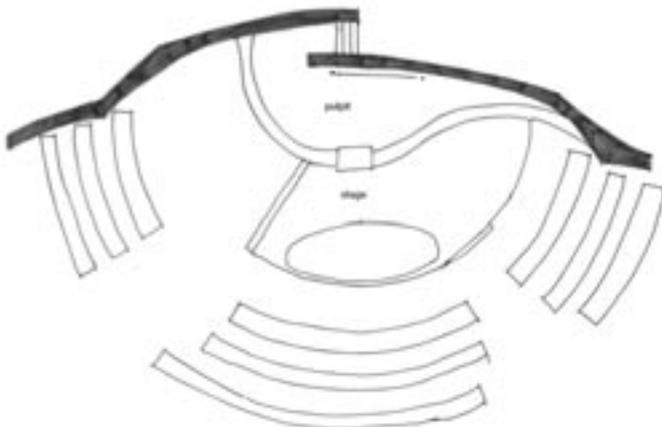




Figure 17: Plan of pulpit and stage of Fichardtkruin.



Figure 18: Dutch Reformed Church Fichardtkruin, 2012. North-eastern facade.

(6) Dutch Reformed Church Fichardtpark – Mid-level intervention

The church was designed by Jan Coetzee and built in 1976. It is late modernist in its design but has linear and central themes. The changes are mainly focused on accommodating the church band and this involves removing pews that seated the deacons. The pulpit is a fixed element integrated into the structure of the northern

wall and would be very difficult to remove. The stage for the band had to be accommodated around this and the removal of pews proved the only solution, similar to the DRC Bloemfontein North where the inherent design of the building does not easily allow for changes to the liturgical space. See Figure 20.



Figure 19: Dutch Reformed Church Fichardtpark shortly after completion in 1976 (DRC Synod archive photo-Fichardtpark folder).



Figure 20: The pulpit of Fichardtpark 2012.

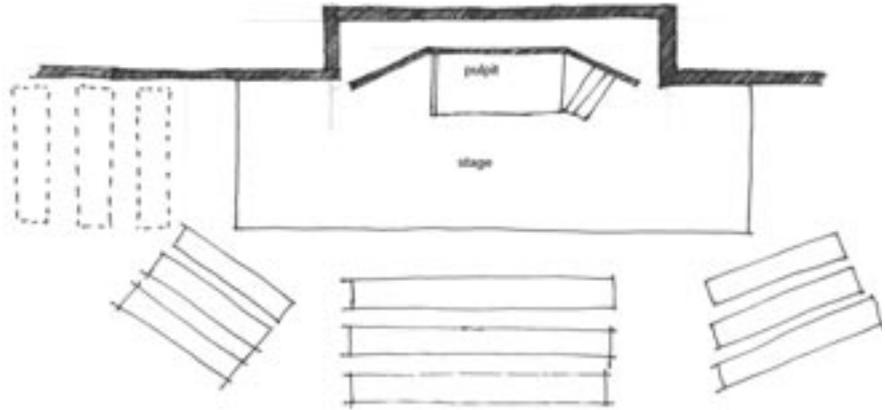


Figure 21: Plan diagram of the pulpit and stage. 2012.

(7) Dutch Reformed Church Heuwelsig – High level intervention

This church was originally designed by Hans Koorts. The liturgical space is not specifically defined and the pulpit was a separate element in the form of a basic lectern. Koorts (1974) is specifically adamant that the pulpit and organ should not both form the focus of the liturgical space and that the pulpit should be a basic element. This creates a space specifically for *sola scriptura*. This building was adapted in 2013 by Smit Architects. The main space has been extended as the congregation has grown. The pulpit has been replaced by a stage as in other examples.



Figure 22: The interior of DRC Heuwelsig 2013 [online].

< <http://www.facebook.com/pages/NG-Gemeente-Heuwelsig/136620273030784>>

(8) Dutch Reformed Student Church – High level intervention

The Church for the student congregation in Bloemfontein was built in 1981 and designed by local architect Nico le Roux. He designed the seating as to give the preacher direct contact to the largest number of people in front of him. The form of the building is due to the needs of the congregation for a large space that was also simple with a strong character. (*Die Volksblad*, 3 August, 1981:2) The original brick pulpit is seen in Fig. 23.



Figure 23: Dutch Reformed Student Church, 3 August 1981 (Volksblad 1981:2).

This pulpit was removed and replaced with a stage in 2010. As is the case with other congregations the changes were gradual, taking place over a period of about 12 years, starting with overhead projectors, a new sound system, fixed screens, later data projectors and so on (Smit, 2012:interview).



Figure 24: Dutch Reformed Student Church interior views 2012.

9. Results

From the case studies it is clear that when changes occur in the type of service, the building necessarily needs to adapt as well. The

level of intervention is related to the design of the building. In the cases where the pulpit is removed in favour of an open, multi functional liturgical space (such as a stage) the design of the building lent itself to adaptation. In the cases where the pulpit is no longer used but still in place, the inherent design of the building would have problematised the removal of the element. In the case of churches such as Bloemfontein North or Fichardtpark the pulpit is so integrated in either the design or structure of the building that removal would be costly, both financially and in terms of the integrity of the design. However, the building is not the only influencing factor. The denomination plays a significant role in whether change is needed in the first place; with the influence of the charismatic movement, more Protestant churches have undergone changes in how they conduct services especially and most noticeably in the Dutch Reformed Church, this may be indicative of a move toward koinonia away from Sola Scriptura and warrants further research.

The divide between churches that undergo change and those that do not cannot be linked specifically to the location of the building in a previous white or black neighbourhood. The divide is financial and denominational rather than racial.

10. Conclusion

Buildings are not static. They need to change, adapt or be destroyed as their users demand. Buildings are constructed with specific functions in mind but can and do outlive these functions (Dubois in Velthuis & Spennemann, 2007:45).

The life cycle of any building has different stages, that of design, construction and use. If the needs of the community or users change, the building is either changed internally, abandoned, re-used by another community, recycled with a new function or demolished. Demolition is not a desirable outcome, it requires expenditure of both energy and finance and replacing it with a new structure requires more investment.

As with the aforementioned case studies it is clear that when a building can be easily adapted it is often the best solution. When a building does not lend itself to adaptation it will eventually become impossible for its owners or users to retain it as is, and it will be handed over to other users, of a different faith community, but also for secular use and may ultimately be demolished.

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