

Worship Space Renovation

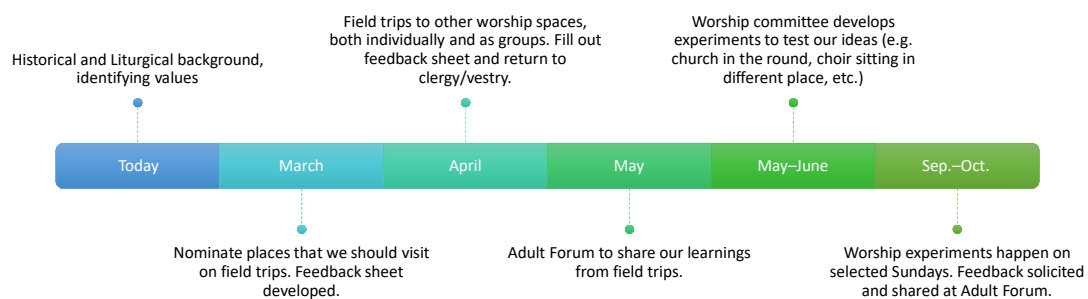
Where have we come from?

Where do we want to go?

Goals for today

- Shared understating of the timeline for our process
- Shared understanding of our historical and liturgical context
- Your feedback on the values and beliefs we want to express in our worship space

Timeline



Historical Context



Synagogue and Upper Room



Roman Basilica



Medieval clericalism



Return to our roots: 1st 5 centuries



Synagogue: Liturgy of the Word

Our Liturgy of the Word has its roots in synagogue worship.

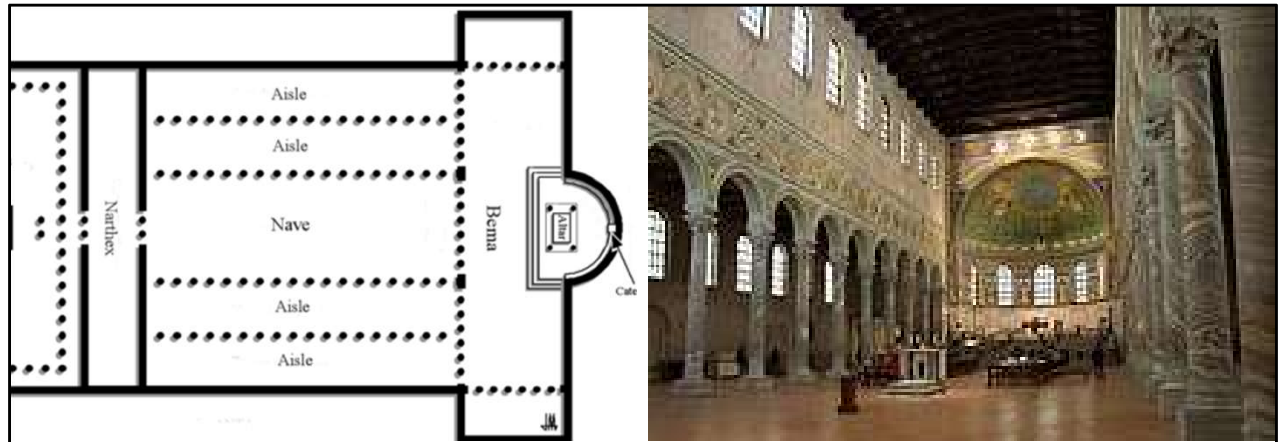
Left slide is synagogue at Masada, Herod's fortress, contemporary with time of Jesus.

Right slide is 18th century synagogue – note same layout of people sitting around the sides to listen to the reading of scripture.



Upper Room: Liturgy of the Table

Our Liturgy of the Table has its roots in the Last Supper.



Roman Basilica: Hall of King

When Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, this had good and bad implications. One change was that church architecture imitated Roman government buildings, such as the Basilica.

Medieval Additions...



In Medieval times, the clergy became more and more hierarchical, and the people less and less relevant to worship. For example, the people didn't receive Communion, only the priest did, and the service was in Latin, which most people didn't understand. Structural evidence of this hierarchical separation and restrictive practices included chancel screens dividing the people from the clergy (right slide), altar rails (left slide), and choir stalls.



...are still with us

Altar Rail from St. James Episcopal, Accomac VA

Rood Screen from St. Paul's Episcopal, Dedham MA

Many of these architectural elements are still with us – here are two Episcopal American churches that currently use altar rails and chancel screens.

Getting back to our roots: first 5 centuries

Photo:
St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church,
San Francisco, CA



Thus in our Anglican tradition, we have focus on 1st 5 centuries, the time of the early, undivided, church. This was major value behind 1979 Prayer book revision and our worship ethos since then.. How they did it in the early church is our touchstone. St. Gregory of Nyssa church in San Francisco is one church that takes this very literally.

What the “Experts” say



Worship is a Journey



Font is symbol of initiation and abundance



Liturgy of Word is participatory and formative



Liturgy of Table: God’s Table and All are Welcome



No Clericalism



Whole congregation is the Choir

We don’t have to do what the experts say. But we should know what they say so we know when we are choosing not to follow tradition.



Worship is a Journey

Worship should have movement, and there should be space to move. What about a space to gather for services like Palm Sunday where we process? Early church ideal is to have Liturgy of Word in one space and then entire congregation (not just the kids) moves to altar for Liturgy of Table St. Gregory of Nyssa does this, pictured above (note right photo of altar space is not a worship service but a choir practice). Note how Liturgy of the Word space (left photo) is similar to ancient synagogue. You can see the Liturgy of the Word space in right photo at far right, through open archway.



Font is symbol of initiation and abundance

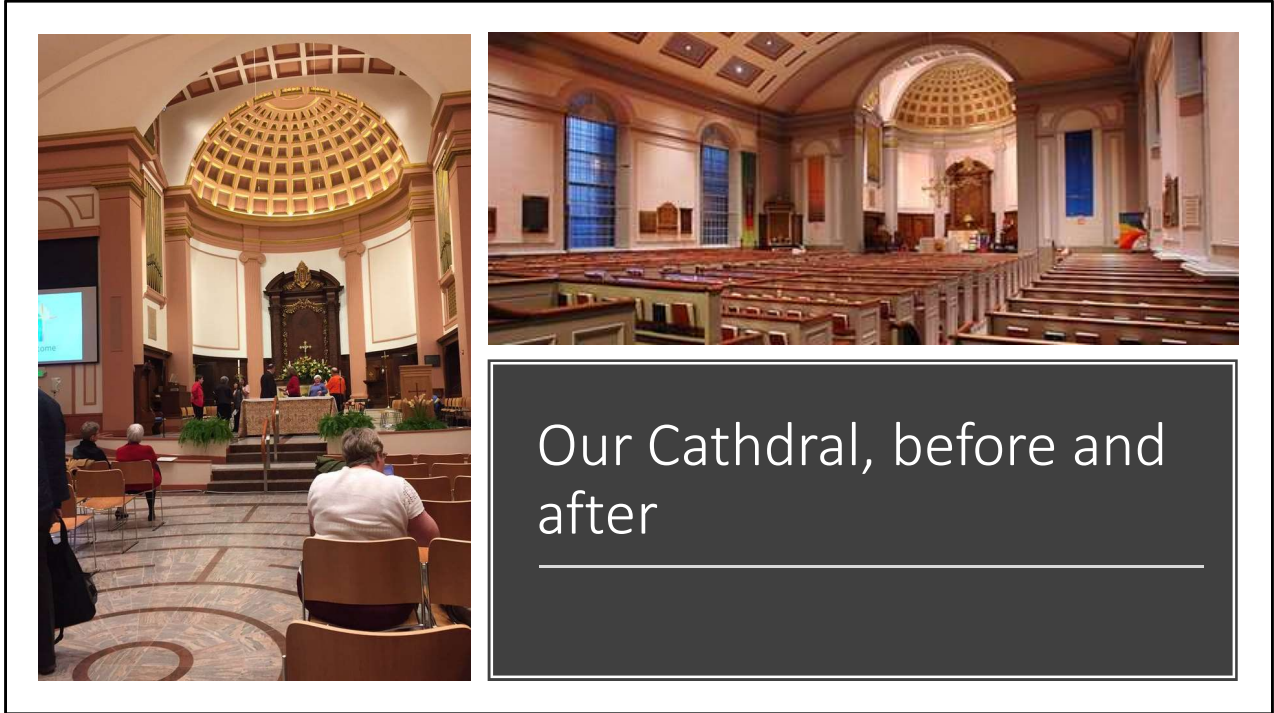
Baptism is a rite of initiation and giving of God's abundance grace. Therefore, baptismal font is a reminder of this. The font should be near entrance (symbol of entrance, initiation). It should be prominent, a visible reminder of our baptism every Sunday and every time we enter church. Symbol of water important, should be able to touch the water and engage with it. Font should be brimming with water, symbol of God's abundant grace



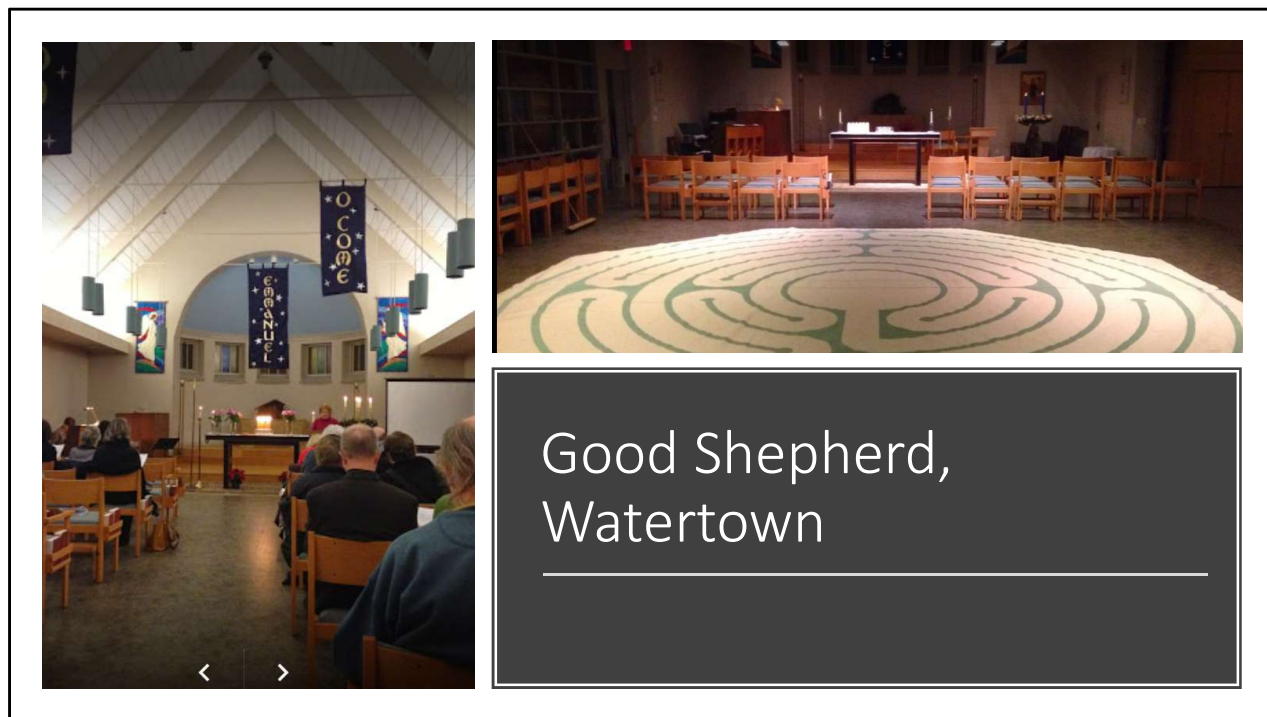
Liturgy of Word is Participatory and Formative

Place for liturgy of the Word: Primary area of formation and learning, where we break open scripture and prepare ourselves for Eucharist. Furniture is lectern and pulpit. Where should they be in relation to people? Seating plan is important – this is where congregation is for majority of service. How can seating plan show that worship is participatory and not an entertainment or performance?

Photo on left is of Old South Meeting House in Boston. Note very large central pulpit (it has full sized door in the side). Does this feel participatory? Right photo also centers the pulpit and the preacher, but in a modern context.



How other churches in our area have tried to create participatory space for Liturgy of the Word: Our cathedral.



And our sister church in Watertown. Chairs can be re-arranged to accommodate temporary labyrinth.

Liturgy of Table: God's Table and All are Welcome

Christ Church, Plano TX

St. James, Seattle WA



The altar table should be accessible to all and visually central. Some experts say it should be square, to show there is no back or front, no “right” or “wrong” side, it is not a counter across which you are ordering take-out. It should be on same level as people to make point about equal access



No Clericalism

Where should the clergy sit? Should not be far separated from people or elevated above. Clergy chair should not look like a throne (as in left photo). If people stay in same seats for whole service (both word and table), then clergy should, too.

Clergy should only move from one place of leading worship for Word to another place of leading worship for Table if the entire congregation moves as well. Otherwise, getting too close to clergy performing worship while people merely watch.



Whole Congregation is the Choir

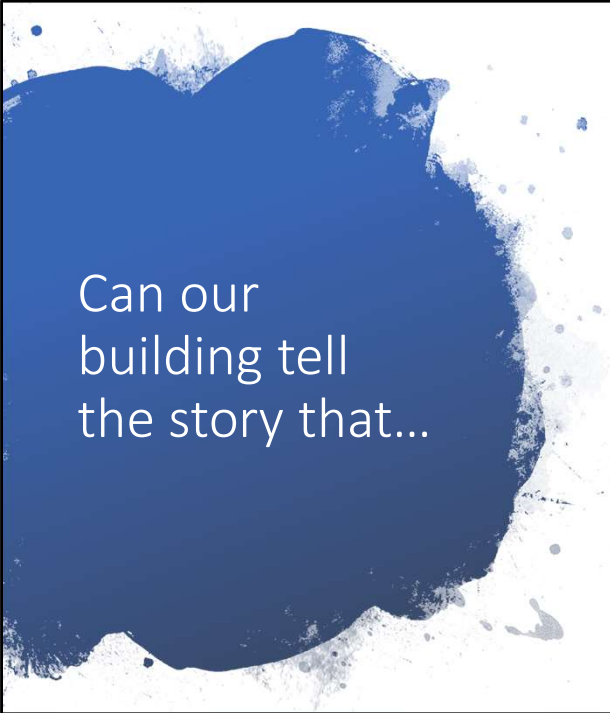
The choir are music leaders, but the whole congregation should consider itself the choir. Choir should be able to be part of the community, part of the assembly, not separated in a different area (as in left photo) but with the people (as in right photo).



What does worship space say
to us?

What does worship space say
about us?

What kind of building do you like to go in? shops, cafes, museums? Which kind of things are inviting and engaging? Does our space say that what we do here is important? Does it help us attune ourselves to God?



Can our
building tell
the story that...

- We are a community, not a collection of individuals?
- We are called to participate, not just be an audience?
- We are a creative and celebratory community, not a penitential or guilt-motivated one?
- That we welcome all people, including children, elders, and the differently abled?
- What do you think our worship space should say?