

# B

# lateral thinking volume 12

## Studio B Architects

*The simplicity and clean slate benefits of moving into an industrial unit for worship can be refreshing, allowing leaders to focus directly on to mission. Being freed from the image of ageing buildings and the maintenance of Heritage architecture can be liberating. But what to do with this big open space?*

*What benefit does an architect bring to refurbishing an industrial building to become a church?*

## Architecture and the Warehouse Church

There is a myth that architecture is about external appearance, the photographed image. Architecture is about spaces; inside and outside, including how they work, how they feel and how people connect within them.

We all enjoy intimacy in a smaller space and we can be awestruck in an inspiring large space. There are many stages in between that suit different gathering sizes and activities.

A clear and obvious entry point to the building with a sense of transparency and welcome is vital to put people at ease; that they have come to the right place.

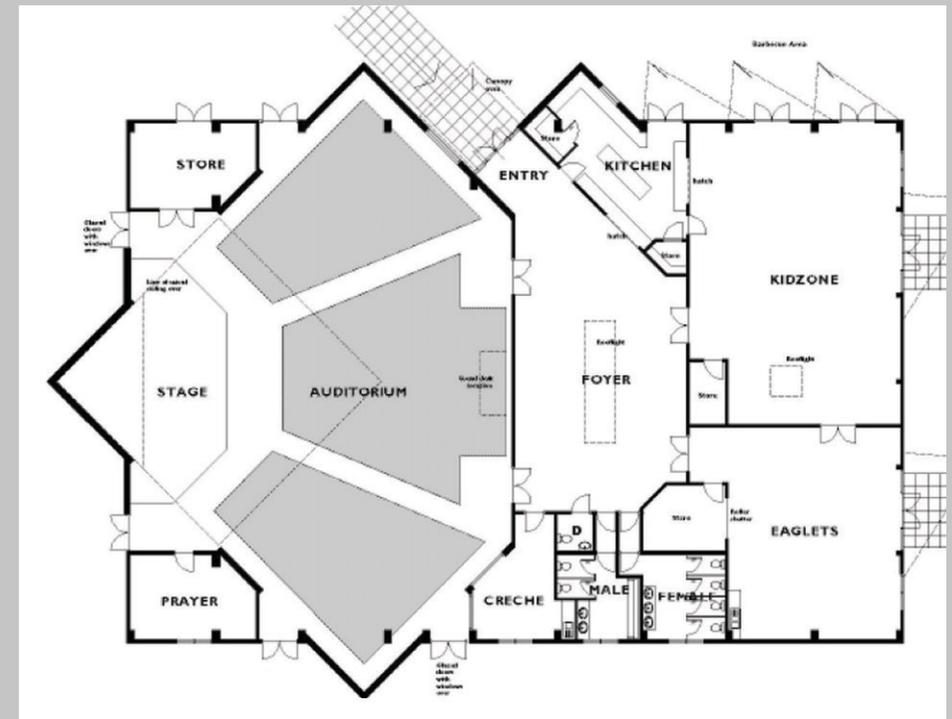
Transition from entry to the foyer and on into the other activities is also important. "Do the kids come with us into the church? ... is there kids program? ... do we have to leave them with someone else? ... will someone show us to a seat? ... do I fit in here? ... where is the loo?"

Then later, " ... do we just leave or is there something else?" So many churches speak of the need to capture people on the way out – to engage them in conversation over coffee and get to know them. The design of the internal layout can certainly help to make this easy.

The cost of building materials and labour will be similar for poor layout as is for effective and well functioning layout. The key is how the money is spent and that it should be spent wisely first time. Trial and error is more costly and can be wasteful. Virtually everything can be predicted by the architect and his team in terms of how the building layout performs.



*Studio B created The Wave for Ocean Grove Baptist by using a recycled steel structural frame from a redundant industrial building. This resulted in a very low cost building. The layout provides a clear focus on the platform with a generous hospitality foyer and carefully placed kitchen servery.*



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Permits will be needed, probably for planning and certainly a Building Permit will be needed. This will take into account essential issues such as fire protection and escape provisions that have serious implications for health and safety. Identifying the issues and dealing with all of these are part of the architects normal services.

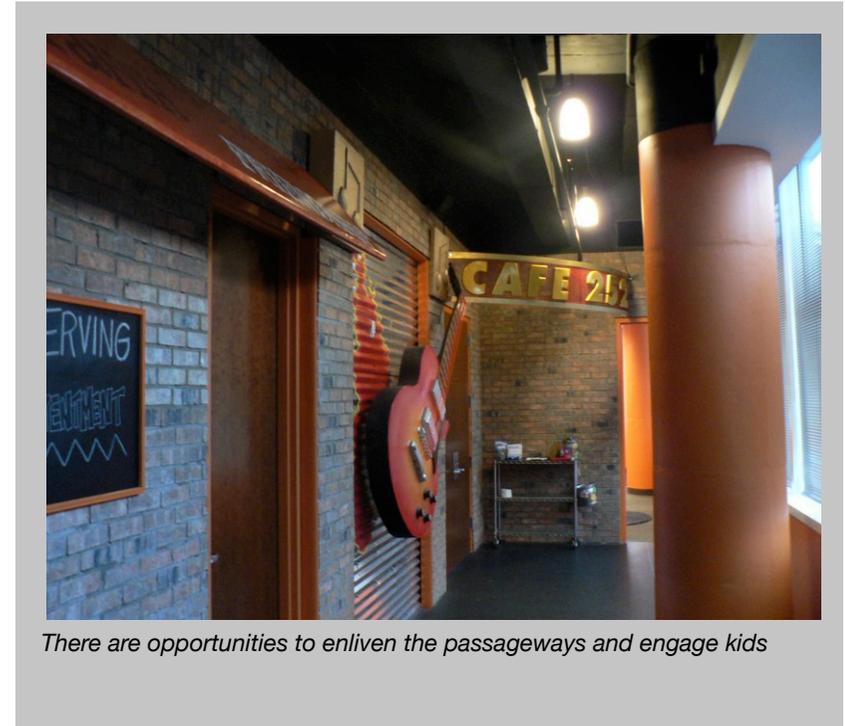
The acoustic performance of the worship space can either be so absorbent that the room feels dead with all sound being absorbed before it reaches the people, or more likely the hard surfaces will create a resonance that feels like you're in a railway station or a large cave. Careful acoustic design should enable music and speech to be clearly heard and enjoyed whilst also allowing worshippers to hear those around them participating with them. Architects coordinate the work of acoustic specialists to achieve the correct balance.

Many churches lead the service with words or images on screen, mostly using projectors but also incorporating

LED screens for remote areas. Both natural lighting and artificial lighting within the space needs to be carefully located in relation to the screens to ensure that they are not compromised by stray light. Studio B have always considered this thoroughly and ensure that natural and artificial light are directed on the people and away from screens.

Heating, cooling and ventilation need to be considered. What served a warehouse may not suit a gathered church or individual rooms. This is part of the co-ordination needed. Additional toilets are likely to be needed to satisfy building code requirements

Studio B can provide as much or as little of their time as you need to help make your building sing !



*There are opportunities to enliven the passageways and engage kids*



*Buckhead Church in Atlanta has created a special kids auditorium. The lighting is carefully organised to highlight the stage without compromising the screen.*

*Using our skills and experience can save money, create a better facility and free church leaders to continue with their ministry.*

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