

CHURCH BUILDING FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE METHODISTS

Design and build a flexible, modern church in the green belt and mask an existing hall. At Nuthall Methodist Church, Pinelog turned a demanding brief into architecture that truly inspires.





The Problem

The primary functions of most Methodist churches are to be both a place of worship and a community resource centre. However, many churches were not designed to carry out these dual functions. A typical example is Nuthall Church, Nottingham, which although built in the 1970's, was thermally inefficient and over the years had been added to in an ad-hoc way. Even so it was still too small for its growing congregation.

The decision was taken to demolish and replace it. A Building Committee was appointed – they were looking for a radical, flexible new church, which could be used for everything from solitary contemplation to housing a wide variety of community events. They particularly wanted to project a modern image from the main road, so any new building would have to mask their existing assembly hall, which they wanted to retain. However as Nuthall Church was in the green belt, the district planning department advised that they



Flexible seating layout for the congregation

would reject any application for a new building. Not to be deterred, one of the committee knew that similar ecclesiastical and leisure design and build projects had been carried out by Pinelog and architects from the Bakewell based company were called in for advice.

The Solution

Using their experience of completing similar projects in environmentally sensitive areas, Pinelog's architects were convinced that the project could succeed. They therefore drew up plans for a multi-faceted, eye-catching building which would allow the congregation to carry out a variety of activities. These were then submitted to the planning authorities in the knowledge that as the new building was for community use, exceptions in green belt policy may be allowed. Following protracted negotiations, Pinelog's plans were accepted and building commenced.



Striking diamond-shaped side window





Sliding acoustic wall across the church



Main elevation seen from the roadway

The Benefits

An airy, brick faced timber building, the new Nuthall Methodist Church is relevant to all users being both a church and a community hall. It is constructed out of timber frames with glulam laminated trusses supporting the ceiling structure. This creates a vaulted roof for a spacious yet spiritual interior. Large diamond shaped windows are featured throughout to maximise daylight with the window behind the communion table being tinted to provide an attractive backdrop.

An open, welcoming entrance hall faces the street, drawing visitors in with progression into the place of worship via double doors. An internal split log finish provides a warm, pine panelled interior, which has an inviting feel. Sliding acoustic walls allow the church to be split in two to create an intimate area around the alter and communion table.

Other amenities in the tee-shaped building are an office, vestry, boiler room, kitchen and toilets. A long corridor links all the parts including the existing assembly hall, bringing together all the functions that had become disjointed as a result of the previous outdated buildings and extensions.

Client: Nuthall Methodist Church
Location: Nottingham