

# **MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING DESIGN AND DEMONSTRATION – INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN CULTURE AND RELIGION**

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## **Abstract**

Understanding religious culture involves wide ranges of knowledge. Most religions are originated from Asia. In order to suit the need of Australian multifaith building concept that represent the faith available, namely majority of Christianity and other minority religions and philosophies namely Buddhism, Islam, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Bahai, understanding the architectural representation and symbol is necessary to help interfaith venue designer to better equipped with the knowledge that is required to integrate the identity of various culture into a single religious centre.

## **PART ONE : MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING DESIGN AND DEMONSTRATION**

### **PURPOSES OF PROPOSAL PRESENTATION**

Many multifaith members or groups that are faithful to the LORD believe that the main purposes of the Multifaith Centre are to attract as many people as possible to be part of the multifaith community and spread the love and words of God to those in need with special healing powers. Most emphasis has been placed on quantity – number of existing actively attending and participating members rather than quality – faithfulness, income and professionalism. For the construction of physical Multifaith Centre building, not all multifaith members in fact are qualified to be truly professional in multifaith building management but only certain groups of religious experts that are interested in the physical sections of Religious Study could manage the building properly.

One of the reasons for the presentation is to describe the importance of Multifaith Centre building for multifaith community that could serve as protection and case for expansion. Such physical property, although is not perceived as one of the important factors towards truly religiously wise network but building, as one of the basic necessity of life as accommodation, other than food and attire, could serve to provide strong financial foundation of certain group of interfaith network with more permanent base that could really reflect the visible social status and well-established conditions. Mere rental for conducting religious activities is not good enough in the perception of many religions where holy church or temple requires strong physical foundation as well as quality supporters where in such case this normally happen in most charismatic churches or temples that are still in the process of struggling towards maturity. Even if the proposal

presented are not fully accepted it could provide new insight for future directions of Multifaith Centre where additional physical facilities could be added. This could be referred to Bible – Haggai on the church building development process.

Other reasons for presentation are to look for sponsorships and other supports in term of financial and manpower to attract the sufficient and suitable resources for future.

#### STATEMENT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING [1]

The mission of the proposed Multifaith Centre Building is to promote harmonious and peaceful Multifaith Religious Study environment among the executives and members of Multifaith Centre from various religious background and denominations, particularly from Christianity - Catholic, Anglican, Uniting Church, Protestant, Jehovah W, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikism, Islam, Bahai, Judaism, Taoism, Confucian etc, through collaboration of holy activities via learning and practising of noble religious philosophies in Multifaith Religious and appreciation for the contribution of prophets towards the knowledgeable social environment.

The vision of the proposed Multifaith Centre Building is to produce quality and faithful multifaith religious fellows with calibre leading roles in respective faith groups in the Malaysian societies particularly in universities as background training space, promoting best cultivation of quality of noble religious leaders that are able to produce good activities in Multifaith Centre programs competitive to other multifaith religious organizations in the world via consistent research and development (R&D).

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRES FOR PROPOSED MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING [2]

The proposed Multifaith Centre Building, if available at the size of conventional social churches or temples, could be used and rented for various religious events, producing real impact towards contribution of spiritual development of the society via noble religions. The proposed Multifaith Centre Building in whatever scale will inevitably produce good impression about the caring multifaith community in the spiritual development of executives and members.

The Multifaith Centre Building as Religious Centre will be able to provide a space for various faith groups of different traditions and affiliations to interact especially among the executives and members of different races with same religious background and among the existing student groups with different background, through noble philosophical teaching and practising following the example of respective spiritual leaders or prophets. Multifaith group leaders do not have to compete with other groups in getting spaces for religious and typically religious discussions but special spaces will be allocated for individual caring multifaith groups to conduct various beneficial religious

discussions and activities in the proposed Multifaith Centre Building. Sufficient facilities should be available and ready for personal professional development especially for multifaith leaders and interested philosophical executives and members.

Table : Sample Routine Program in Proposed Multifaith Centre Building

Day	Sample Activities	Duration (in hour)
Sunday	Interfaith activities	6
Monday	Philosophical study	3
Tuesday	Social event & functions	3
Wednesday	Care session	3
Thursday	Scriptures study	3
Friday	Family gathering	3
Saturday	Service for Society	6

In order to ensure the developed centres are planned properly that could be able to benefit most members, specific plan should be available to cater the need of all faith groups. Specific petition (as in the attachment), informal interviews and meetings should be available to publicize the application of proposed Multifaith Centre Building so that the multifaith centre could be fully utilized by most faithful members. It is also proposed too that Building Setting Design and Logo Design Competition to be available to enhance the attractiveness of the Multifaith Centre Building but this proposal will only be applicable only if sufficient funding if available from the management of the multifaith centre central. Table above simplified the potential centre application rosters for Multifaith Centre Building.

#### POSSIBLE COLLABORATORS IN MONASH MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING DEVELOPMENT [3]

Name : Reverent  
 Position : Pastor / Patriarch  
 Email :  
 Contact :

#### Services

Name :  
 Position :  
 Email :  
 Phone :

#### Services

Name :  
Position :  
Email :  
Phone :

Units and Groups under Existing Monash Multifaith Centre

## PURPOSE OF INITIATIVE

For the establishment of a “Multifaith Centre Building” that provides for the religious/existential needs of all executives/members and facilities for Chaplains to operate and make readily available, all relevant resources that executives/members may access.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To persuade Multifaith Centre Executive Committee (EXCO) to establish a “Multifaith Centre Building” for the benefit of executives and members, in support of the pursuit of their religious and spiritual views, beliefs and practices in various faiths. The “Multifaith Centre Building” is intended to provide a place in the community where religious or spiritual activities for Multifaith Centre can take place, and as base of operations for groups and individuals with a focus on or interest in religious or spiritual matters.

The “Multifaith Centre Building” will operate in accordance with the rules and procedures outlined by the Interfaith Council.

## PURPOSES OF “MONASH MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING”

A first point of contact for executives and members in the community with religious or spiritual needs.

Providing pastoral and religious care at a person's point of need.

A network of contacts for referral and complimentary support for executives and members.

Assisting the community at times of celebration, mourning and transition.

Contributing to opportunities for personal and community spiritual enrichment.

Promoting understanding of diverse religious paths among various religious denominations and respect for those of other religious traditions and affiliations.

Ministering to executives and members of the chaplain's own faith, as well as providing support, regardless of faith.

Supporting those who are working for social justice, giving priority to the marginalized or disadvantaged.

Chaplains do not offer clinical counselling or the application of therapeutic interventions addressed to particular problems, but is available to "journey with" persons supportively through difficult times.

Provide facilities and storage to operate and provide service to their electorate/members or general executives and members.

## POSSIBLE MISSION STATEMENT

We see the space making an increasing contribution to the vitality of the community.

It is a space:

where we support, respect and learn from one another, in our common and separate paths  
where our spirits are lifted and faith nurtured  
available to support the disadvantaged  
that provides facilities for a variety of groups to offer their activities  
where we may explore what may be done together, for the future benefit of this  
Malaysian community and the world

## RESOURCES REQUIRED (TBC)

Pre-existing unoccupied building or spaces

Interim funding for the provision of associated start up costs

Pre-existing staff , i.e. Chaplains attached to pre-existing "Chaplaincy Department"

Appointment of a "Multifaith Centre Building Committee" to oversee administration

Furniture and other miscellaneous items

Funding Required (TBA): TBA

POTENTIAL MULTIFAITH RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS IN PROPOSED  
MONASH MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING (Reference :  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>)

### Christianity

Christianity is a monotheistic religion centered on the life and teachings of Jesus as recounted in the Gospels. Christians believe Jesus to be the Messiah, and thus refer to him as Jesus Christ. Christianity began in the first century as a Jewish sect, and therefore shares many religious texts and early history with Judaism—specifically, the Hebrew Bible, which Christians call the Old Testament. Like Judaism and Islam, Christianity is an Abrahamic religion.

### Denominations of Christianity

### Anglican

Anglicanism is the term used to encapsulate the doctrine, religious belief, faith, system, practice and principles of the Church of England and other Anglican churches. The term at its broadest includes those who have accepted the work of the English Reformation as embodied in the Church of England or in the offshoot Churches which in other countries have adhered, at least substantially, to its doctrines, its organization, and its liturgy.

### Catholic

The Roman Catholic Church or Catholic Church is the Christian church in full communion with the Bishop of Rome, currently Pope Benedict XVI. It traces its origins to the original Christian community founded by Jesus Christ and spread by the Twelve Apostles, in particular Saint Peter. The Catholic Church is by far the largest Christian church and the largest organized body of any world religion. According to the *Statistical Yearbook of the Church*, the Catholic Church's worldwide recorded membership at the end of 2005 was 1,114,966,000, approximately one-sixth of the world's population.

### Methodist

Methodism or the Methodist movement is a group of historically related denominations of Protestant Christianity. The Methodist movement traces its origin to the evangelistic teaching of John Wesley. It originated in 18th century Britain, and through vigorous missionary activity, spread throughout the British Empire, the United States, and beyond. Originally it appealed especially to workers, agricultural workers, and slaves. Theologically most Methodists are Arminian, emphasizing that Christ accomplished salvation for every human being, and that humans must exercise an act of the will to be saved (as opposed to the Calvinist doctrine of limited atonement); and low church in liturgy (although this varies greatly in individual chapels; the Wesleys themselves greatly valued the Anglican liturgy and tradition). There are also a number of Calvinistic Methodists in Wales. In 2006 Methodism claimed some seventy-five million members worldwide.

### Uniting Church

The third largest Christian denomination in Australia (the Roman Catholic and the Anglican churches are larger) the Uniting Church has around 243,000 members in 2,500 congregations. According to the Australian Census in 2001 there are 1,248,674 people identifying some sort of association with the Uniting Church. The National Church Life Survey (NCLS) research indicates that approximately 10% of these people attend a church worship gathering frequently.

### Jehovah Witness

Jehovah's Witnesses are governed by their understanding of Scriptural laws and principles based on instructions received from the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. is a legal organization in use by Jehovah's Witnesses for their ministry work. The religion was developed in response "to what they saw as compromise and corruption in mainstream Christianity." They dispute doctrines such as the Trinity, hellfire, immortality of the soul,

and clergy-laity divisions as illegitimate additions to the original Christian teachings. The name "Jehovah's Witnesses" is based on Isaiah 43:10, and was adopted in 1931. The Watchtower Society has been publishing religious materials since the late 19th century, its most widely known publications being the magazines *The Watchtower* and *Awake*

## JUDAISM

Judaism is the religion of the Jewish people with around 15 million followers as of 2006. It is one of the first recorded monotheistic faiths and one of the oldest religious traditions still practiced today. The values and history of the Jewish people are a major part of the foundation of other Abrahamic religions such as Christianity, Islam, as well as Samaritanism. Judaism has seldom, if ever, been monolithic in practice (although it has always been monotheistic in theology), and differs from many religions in that its central authority is not vested in any person or group but rather in its writings and traditions (known as the Torah).

## BUDDHISM

Buddhism is a religion and philosophy focusing on the teachings of the Buddha Śākyamuni (Siddhārtha Gautama), who probably lived in the 5th century BCE. Buddhism spread throughout the ancient Indian sub-continent in the five centuries following the Buddha's death, and propagated into Central, Southeast, and East Asia over the next two millennia. Today, Buddhism is divided primarily into three traditions: Theravāda (Sanskrit: Sthaviravāda), Mahāyāna, and Vajrayāna. Buddhism continues to attract followers worldwide, and, with around 350 million followers, it is considered a major world religion.

## ISLAM

Islam (Arabic) is a monotheistic religion based on the teachings of Muhammad as recorded in the Qur'an. Followers of Islam are known as Muslims. Like Judaism, Christianity, Islam is an Abrahamic religion. Muslims believe Muhammad to have been God's (Arabic: Allāh) final prophet.

## HINDUISM

Hinduism (Sanskrit - Hindū Dharma, also known as Sanātana (eternal) Dharma and Vaidika (Vedic) Dharma) is the religion based on the Vedas as well as the traditions and beliefs of other peoples and tribes of India. It is the oldest existent religion in the world. The term Hinduism is heterogeneous, as Hinduism consists of several schools of thought. It encompasses many religious rituals that widely vary in practice, as well as many diverse sects and philosophies. Many Hindus, influenced by Advaita philosophy, venerate an array of deities, considering them manifestations of the one supreme monistic Cosmic Spirit, Brahman, while many others focus on a singular concept of God, as in Vaishnavism, Saivism and Shaktism.

## TAOISM

Taoism (Daoism) is the English name referring to a variety of related Chinese philosophical and religious traditions and concepts. These traditions influenced East Asia for over two thousand years and some have spread internationally. Taoist propriety and ethics emphasize the Three Jewels of the Tao; namely, compassion, moderation, and humility. Taoist thought focuses on *wu wei* ("non-action"), spontaneity, humanism, and emptiness. An emphasis is placed on the link between people and nature. Taoism teaches that this link lessened the need for rules and order, and leads one to a better understanding of the world.

Other religions known could use the facilities in Multifaith Religious Centre too.

## TYPE AND SCALES OF MONASH MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING OR UNIT

There are estimated three possibilities for various faith groups in the current committee to successfully obtain one space to conduct religious prays and activities for spiritual requirement.

Proposal A : Space in a room of single office lot

This is the minimum available space that could be allotted for multifaith activities, particularly for existing groups. The selected site could be an office lot near the proposed where the proposed bigger multifaith building is located. One small office as a size of a master room in house of religious leader may be allocated particularly for the placement of tables, chairs and so on as the settings of most rooms in religious student house. Fridge, water heaters, air conditions, air heater and so on may be available with notice boards and pigeon box available in front of the Multifaith Office. This type of setting could be applied to other registered affiliated groups, for example, family, aged and unfortunate etc. The cost of this Multifaith Office setting will take the estimated cost whereas the location to construct the centre could be referred to the organizers.

Proposal B : Shared space

In certain circumstances, a series of individual rooms of a size of lecture or classroom as conventional family house, business lot or school offices could be used for permanent activity space. Normally one room could be shared by 2 groups, may be allotted for the uses as a secretariat or meeting place for groups of executives and members of the same unit. The size of the space allotted increase with the number of members and the frequency of activities available in the group. Example of setting for such proposal will look as below, that could be part of the future bigger Multifaith building.

Tables	90
Chairs	90
Communication (internet, phone, fax)	100
Lighting and environment setting	100
Maintenance	500
Other accessories	500
Total	1380

Table : Annual Cost for Keeping Up Sponsored Multifaith Offices (Estimated)

The cost of operating Multifaith Office of such type depends on the number of rooms allotted with similar facilities as in Proposal A.

Cost of operating Proposal B = n (Cost of Operating Proposal A)  
where n = number of room allocated with similar facilities

Some Multifaith Building Committees may specially appoint typical room that is specific for the uses of multifaith activities out of the general office hours or special holidays. Normally cooperation with individual unit is required to avoid crashes with the other existing programs and no fixtures allowed to be placed in such shared space in conventional meeting rooms.

#### Proposal C : Complete Multifaith Building

This is most luxurious form of Multifaith Building that may cost the multifaith central management a lot if without external sponsorships. The setting may comprise of Chaplain Hall that can accommodate 150 guests, with smaller rooms of a size of a meeting room in conventional college office, used for the activity of known faith groups, particularly led by youth group, with supporting groups like family, student, unfortunate, kids, professional units etc. The facilities available may consist of kitchen, toilet as stated in the section of “Special Facilities Requested from Complete Multifaith Building”. The plan below depicts the reference setting that could be available for the proposed multifaith building, with reference to other more well-established multi religious centre.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGIOUS USED BUILDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Detailed screening is required to ensure the righteous and bold Multifaith Centre committees are selected to manage future building.

(a) Faithful in serving the Lord & God physically

Those who are really faithful in the protection of hardware and utilities in the future religious centre are in balance with spiritual fruitfulness. The building committee should be able to contribute the physical power to ensure convenience inside and outside the structure all the times

(b) Co-operative with existing sections

The members of the building committee should communicate with spiritual and other religious sections all the time to understand the requirement of other units as well especially through various suggestions and complaints especially related to certain potential hazards in the physical location. This will be helpful as guidance to attract righteous and religious members to the Multifaith Centre.

(c) Ensure proper building structure and conditions

Those committees should preferably possess technical and civil engineering background that could handle repair, maintenance and design at the lowest cost but suitable for the occupants.

## MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING COMMITTEE RULES

### Terms of Reference

To oversee the operation of the Multifaith Centre building, in accordance with the provisions contained in this document.

To allocate funds and resources, and oversee the administration of any funds or resources, made available for the general use of the Multifaith Centre building.

To facilitate the use of the Multifaith Centre building, and oversee the timetabling and allocation of space by any individuals or groups who may wish to use it, in accordance with the Rules for the Use of the Multifaith Centre building.

To receive reports from members (at each member's discretion) on activities or matters that may be of interest to the Committee.

### Membership of the Multifaith Centre Building Committee

#### Chairperson and Office Holders

a. The Multifaith Centre building Committee will elect from amongst its members a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary and other office holders as required, for a term of one year.

b. Nominations for the positions of Chairperson and other officers will be called, and an election held by secret ballot, at a meeting of the Multifaith Centre building.

## Membership

The membership of the Multifaith Centre building Committee will comprise one person each from any faith group, or religious or spiritual organization that regularly participates in activities within the Multifaith Centre building, or is otherwise a stakeholder in its operations, being either:

- a. A Chaplain, or a person holding an equivalent position; or
- b. a member or nominee of a group affiliated with Multifaith Centre where the group has been constituted primarily for religious or spiritual purposes; or
- c. An individual or a member of a group not otherwise represented by (a) or (b), and who has an ongoing involvement with the Multifaith Centre building; and
- d. Up to three other persons co-opted by the Committee.

3.1 The Chairperson will accept a nomination from each faith group that wishes to have a member appointed to the Multifaith Centre Building Committee. If more than one nomination has been received from a faith group, or the status of a nomination is unclear, the Chairperson will discuss the matter with the relevant parties and establish a process for identifying a nominee.

## Operating Procedures

The Multifaith Centre Building Committee will conduct its business in accordance with the Operating Procedures (Identified below as “Operating Procedures”).

## Amendment of this Document and the Operating Procedures for the Multifaith Centre Building Committee

This document, and the Operating Procedures of the Multifaith Centre Building Committee and any subsequent amendments, will be subject to approval by the Director of Administration, following consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

## Appeals and Complaints

An appeal or complaint concerning a decision of the Multifaith Centre Building Committee, or the behaviour of any person or group within the Multifaith Centre building, or any other matter relating to the use of the Multifaith Centre building will

normally be submitted, in confidence, to the Chairperson of the Multifaith Centre building Committee, who will take one of the following steps, as appropriate:

- a. Firstly seek to resolve the matter through discussion, having regard to the views and interests of all relevant parties; and
- b. where the matter involves a decision of the Multifaith Centre building Committee, and subject to all parties consenting, refer the matter back to the Committee for further consideration; or
- c. Where a matter may be of concern to the Multifaith Centre central, or where an appeal or complaint cannot be resolved after following the processes outlined in (a) or (b) above, inform the Chief Religious Leader about it and act in accordance with any directions given by the Chief Religious Leader.

An appeal or complaint of a confidential nature may be lodged directly with the Chief Religious Leader. Once the Chief Religious Leader has received a complaint, he or she will:

- a. Investigate the matter, or appoint a mediator or a panel to investigate the matter,
- b. Taking account of the views of all parties, and the best interests of the Multifaith Centre, decide an outcome.
- c. Where a complaint has been lodged and the Chief Religious Leader has reason to believe it is of a malicious or vexatious nature, he or she may dismiss the complaint, and where appropriate, reprimand or otherwise take action against the person or persons who lodged the complaint.

#### Booking of Rooms and Facilities

Rooms and facilities within the Multifaith Centre building, other than offices, may be booked in accordance with procedures established by the Multifaith Centre.

### MONASH MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING COMMITTEE OPERATING PROCEDURES

#### 1. Meetings

1.1 Meetings will be held at least once a month, in accordance with a schedule identified by the Committee.

1.2 Members of the Multifaith Centre Building Committee will be given at least two weeks notice of the date of any scheduled meeting, and a notice will be placed on the Multifaith Centre building notice board about the meeting.

1.3 An unscheduled meeting of the Committee may be called to deal with urgent matters, at the discretion of the Chairperson, in which case the Chairperson will ensure that all members receive as much notice of the meeting as is practicable in the particular circumstances.

## 2. Role of the Chairperson and Members of the Multifaith Centre Building Committee

The Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary and members of the Committee will have such responsibilities as are conferred on them by the Committee, to be carried out in accordance with the rules, principles and procedures of the Multifaith Centre building, and any directives provided by the Multifaith Centre building Committee, under the direction of the Chairperson.

All members of the Multifaith Centre building Committee must at all times act in the best interests of all persons who use the Multifaith Centre building.

The Secretary of the Multifaith Centre building Committee will maintain a register of members of the Committee, contact details for each member, and the church or relevant religious or spiritual group or organization with which they are affiliated.

### Meeting Procedures

The Chairperson and Secretary will prepare an agenda for each meeting, and ensure it is available within the Multifaith Centre building for perusal by all members of the Multifaith Centre building at least five working days before the date of the meeting.

Any member may put forward an item for inclusion on the agenda, provided the matter is within the Committee's terms of reference.

The Chairperson may accept items for inclusion on the agenda after it has been circulated, if:

In his or her opinion the matter will not directly be of concern to any person or group that is not represented at the meeting; and

A majority of the eligible voting members present at the meeting agree to the matter being considered.

A member who is unable to attend a meeting may appoint another person as a proxy to attend the meeting and vote on his or her behalf, and must inform the Chairperson or the

Secretary or provide written notification in advance of the meeting of the name of the person appointed. Where he or she is from a particular group or organization, the person appointed must be from the same group or organization.

Proceedings of the Committee will be open to observers.

### Voting

The Chairperson and each member will have one vote.

The Chairperson will not have a casting vote.

To have the approval of the Committee a matter must have the support of half plus one of the eligible, voting members present at the meeting.

### Quorum

A quorum will be half plus one of the eligible, voting members of the Committee.

A decision of the Committee will be valid only if a quorum is present at the time the decision was taken.

## 6. Powers and Responsibilities

A decision of the Committee on any matter within its terms of reference will apply to any person or group that uses the Multifaith Centre building.

The Committee will not enter into any financial commitments or legally binding relationships or agreements.

The Chairperson or another office holder, or a member of the Committee, may be removed from office or have their membership revoked, if a motion to that effect is moved and seconded, and supported by two thirds of the eligible members present and voting at a meeting, if in the Committee's view:

the person has failed to discharge his or her responsibilities; or  
He or she has behaved in a disorderly or disruptive manner.

### Dissolution of the Multifaith Centre Building Committee

The Head of Multifaith Centre may, at his or her discretion, dissolve the Multifaith Centre Building Committee if:

a. the Committee fails to discharge its responsibilities in accordance with the provisions contained herein, or fails to act properly in any matter; or

b. the Committee membership ceases to be broadly representative of the religious and spiritual needs of executives and members in the community; or

c. The Committee recommends that it be dissolved, and not less than two thirds of the eligible voting members support the recommendation.

## PREFERRED BUILDING LOCATION

There are many reasons that the location of the building should be selected correctly. First, it is because of the convenience of the existing members based on the initial oral survey where not all but only certain areas are suitable to be used as religious spaces where many people can get to the building location easily with accessible transport facilities whether via private car or public transport like buses or trains. Secondly, the prices of the property in the selected area should be affordable by current Multifaith Centre building committee in the minimization of cost. Thirdly, the desired structure of the selected building could only be found in certain area to meet the demand of the majority of the interfaith members. Other reasons could be geomancy and local weathers that could affect the location of new Multifaith Centre building.

## MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING CONSTRUCTION – TYPES OF ACTIVITIES RECOMMENDED FOR BUILDING COMMITTEE

There are many activities that are possible to be conducted by the Multifaith Centre Building Committee in the maintenance of the structure for the well-beings of the occupants, in order to meet the demand of all existing groups of the interfaith, ensure the spaces inside are fully occupied and utilized with routine cleaning and renovation. Programs designed for typical building committee should be holy in the physical aspects.

(I) Professional development – this will invite building contractors, civil engineers and designers to voluntarily demonstrate professional methods in properly manage the Multifaith Centre property and land, to be always nice-looking and convenient for multi-purposes.

(II) Concert and other fundraising programs

The building committee will assist in the building fundraising campaign in cooperation with other committee in food, entertainment and other funding units in the setting, planning and management of multifaith hardware as required by the program organizer's where additional facilities could be prepared for funding purposes.

(III) Cleanliness campaign

Roasters are prepared where cleaning is conducted on daily basis and more frequently on weekends and festive seasons. Normally cleanliness campaigns are conducted before special occasions with special design and infrastructure set-up.

Expected tasks for future Multifaith Centre building committees are:

(a) Sponsorships – sending invitation for donation and negotiation with long term constant benefactors about certain requirement and contract for continuation of funding in cash and in-kind, ranging from government, businesses, religious organizations, private celebrities and philanthropies etc. In kind service will include discounted purchase of building material, labour costs for renovation and facility improvement, food and beverages for fundraising, lucky draw relevant to Multifaith Centre building etc.

(b) Maintenance and upgrading – this will include cleaning of waste and rubbish after program and clearing of dusts, gardening and repair of electrical accessories and building structure like broken roof, furniture and pipes especially after seasonal festivals. Artists committee should devote themselves on painting and decoration.

Tentative usage of Multifaith Centre building will depend on the available capacity, facilities and types of programs to be performed based on the existing Multifaith Centre community that initially does not own the physical activity centre as part of the property of God. The existing multifaith group programs could possibly be modified to fit into the new Multifaith Centre building timetable where certain programs may possibly be conducted outside the main centre of the multifaith groups especially camping, outings and individual group functions that may not require fixed centre for convenience reasons. Multifaith Centre building in such instance could be more suitable to be used as a registered office of the Multifaith Centre. Tentative timetable for Multifaith Centre building usage is shown as below :

Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Sunday	Sunday Service in Main Hall, 9AM-12PM.	Kids of God in Classroom, 1:30-3:30PM	Non-English Service Evening in Halls, 6-8PM
Monday	VACANT	University Student Lunch in Playground, 1-2PM	Youth Group Meeting in Meeting Room, 8-9PM
Tuesday	Morning Pray Service in Garden, 8-10AM	Cleaning Service, 3-5PM	Adolescent Group Meeting in Meeting Room, 8-9:30PM
Wednesday	VACANT	VACANT	Uni Student function in orchestra Hall, 8-9PM
Thursday	Family Group Gathering in Playground, 8-10:30AM	Aged Healing Service in Medical Room, 1-3PM	Children Class in Classroom, 7-9PM
Friday	Morning Pray service in Garden, 8-10AM	Cleaning service, 3-5PM	Care functions in Hall, 8-10:30AM
Saturday	Weekly Forum in Hall, 9AM-12PM	Committee Meeting in Office, 1-3PM	Saturday Service in Hall, 6-8PM

## MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING MAINTENANCE SYSTEM

Each year huge sum of money is required to operate the Multifaith Centre owned with building. Most of the funding to the building or office lots will be allocated for the maintenance of the centres to ensure the centre is safe enough for a variety of religious studies related activities and comfortable enough to attract visitors to pray. Possible maintenance items required are :

- a. Building structure – for example, broken windows and doors, roofs, floors with hole or fracture

- b. Fixtures – replacement and repair of lighting systems, fan, temperature control items (heater and cooler), security system etc
- c. Utilities – kitchen items, toilet items, furniture for various guest functions
- d. Operating equipment cost – water, electricity, broadband internet systems, oil, van or bus of the centre etc
- e. Staffs – cleaner and security, chaplains, temporary staffs and partial volunteers

It is estimated initially and proposed too that funding at certain amount per cubic feet of the Multifaith Centre building is required for maintenance cost monthly.

#### PROPOSED NEW BUILDING RENTAL RATE FOR MULTIFAITH CENTRE ACTIVITIES

The utilization of new Multifaith Centre building is FREE for all existing faith unit to conduct various religious activities for group and community members. This will also include interfaith affiliates and partners that have negotiated with Multifaith Centre building committee about the uses that could benefit the collaborating parties especially in community welfare programs.

For certain external programs renting particularly for wedding functions and private ceremonies, nominal rate will be charged on hourly basis, normally for hall rentals. Rooms are available for conducting religious camps. Normally the rate is in the range of certain amount per day depending on the size of the rooms.

For internal fundraising or during services, 30% of the funds collected will be distributed for building maintenance purposes, whereas 70% will be used by organizing committee members to cover the cost of programs. For other types of external non-profit functions, normally 10% of the fundraising incomes will be given to the LORD of the building committee whereas the rest will be donated for public charity in the name of the Multifaith Centre office where the charity programs are located.

#### DESIRED BUILDING STRUCTURE

This will require initial survey on the building required by existing committee where petition could be signed as support towards establishment of physical multifaith centre in addition to questionnaires and survey conducted from time to time as referendum and information collection to understand percentage of Multifaith Centre building supporters especially among active committee members where desired building could be drafted with pray and guidance of God.

Tentative characteristics of the Multifaith Centre building as desired by the committee so far based on rational and informal discussions are as below :

- (a) able to accommodate at least 300 people per assembly and contain minimum 5 bedrooms for camp purposes, twin-shared preferably
- (b) contain basic amenities like toilet, changing rooms, kitchen and hall for Multifaith Centre functions

- (c) convenience enough to run various social activities, like religious services, children classes, community charity fundraising events, festival feasts etc
- (d) prepared with medium size car park with extra spaces around the building for stopping the car during function
- (e) single and double storey will do based on the economic ability but preferably with disabled facilities in toilet and service rooms

Building should be completed with heater and air-conditioned facilities in all chambers. Children playground is preferably available where spaces could be altered anytime for the uses as party and camping sites, games in groups like football and basketball and other sports that could promote friendships among members.

## SPECIAL FACILITIES REQUIRED FOR COMPLETE MULTIFAITH CENTRE

For all faith groups will occupy the Multifaith Centre, particularly for family, aged and student groups, tentatively the facilities below need to be available from Multifaith Centre Building Committee for complete operation of proposed Multifaith Centre building.

### Kitchen

Kitchen may need to be supplemented with fridge (for clean and *halal* food storage), sink (for cleaning and dishwashing), microwave oven or stove (for cooking purposes), water heater (for preparing hot coffee and tea). Some food stalls, vending machines and visitor information booths may be allowed to be placed in the proposed Multifaith Centre building for convenience.

### Store room

Store room may be requested for construction that consists of cleaning detergent, mop, repairing and workshop accessories for centre maintenance. Several cupboards may be placed with stationery that could be used for all religious student groups and chaplains. Equipment lockers are to be available for storage of religious equipment for individual groups, PA facilities and so on.

### Main interfaith leader office

Main interfaith leader offices could be placed with special 24-hour internet broadband connections linking with the main office internet system, an internal phone and external fax machine. For convenience purposes, full time religious leader with diversified multifaith religious background and knowledge could be employed to manage the Multifaith Centre building, working slightly shorter on normal working days plus weekends servicing for members

and community in need. One pigeon box to handle mains of all faith groups could be available for communication with external organizations via postal methods. It is also proposed that specific e-mail account to be available for individual affiliated multifaith group, for example, username@monashmultifaith.org. Individual religious notice boards consisting of articles and events of registered affiliated groups should be placed near chaplain offices.

#### Function hall

Function hall, that may be a size of small religious building that is able to accommodate 150 people especially for members and community, is proposed to be allotted for special multifaith and multicultural seminars, especially as location for introduction to formal groups affiliated with the multifaith groups. Complete PA systems, LCD screen and projector, air heater and conditioner should be placed in the centre for comfortable religious lecture and talk at stated time. In order to fully utilize the hall, the social and university multifaith community and other relevant groups, particularly those interested in religious philosophies in various faiths, may be invited to conduct philosophical lectures and religious studies in the hall frequently. The space could be rented too for external organizations uses not only for religious functions but also for secular wedding functions, public events and so on. For multi-purpose uses reasons, timetable could be arranged by Chaplain Office for sports uses and social events in Multifaith Centre building.

#### Toilets and locker

In order to consider the requirement of disabled, the facility available in the proposed Multifaith Centre building, including the walking path and toilets, should be completed with special needs facilities. At least one male, one female, baby changing rooms and disability toilet should be available. Lockers for members and representative leaders may be allotted to keep religious clothes, wearing and small accessories especially during special religious occasions, functions and festivals.

#### Chaplain bookstore or bookshop

Chaplain has to determine the religious philosophies books that should be available in the interfaith library for the uses of Multifaith Centre that could be used as supplementary coursework material for philosophical courses and self-study module. Chaplain office may be used to store all major religious scriptures, including mostly Bible, Torah, Quran, Veda, Dharma, children reference books in religious study with small proportion of shelf allocated for other religious reference and so on, either in the form of systematically recommended websites, or CD / VCD, video cassettes and so on.

#### Transport facilities

Special car parks and chaplain bus should be applied and available to be used for multifaith religious functions, for example, visiting external churches and temples, group volunteering in noble welfare activities and social caring events. School kids, the disabled, old-folk house residents could be invited to use the bus to conduct religious services in the centre as well under properly arranged timetable.

## STAGES IN OBTAINING FIXED BUILDING FOR DEVELOPING PHYSICAL MULTIFAITH CENTRE

Physical structure, although is not a must for conducting multifaith activities, it is undeniable that the physical structure could provide additional shield for current multifaith community where addition of fixtures and designs that really belong to the interfaith groups could be installed in the fixed building that could really symbolize the identity and wealth of the Multifaith Centre committee. For the optimization of resource usage in getting physical building and at the same time attract sufficient members and committees to service for the multifaith centre and maintain the facility, thorough consideration and plan need to be conducted from time to time where the realization of getting a big house for LORD could be a big project that cold last for more than 10 years depending on directions and aims of the working committee. Tentative stage in the realization of obtaining Multifaith Centre building are stated as below but the progress and process might differ on case basis depending on the opportunity and threat that could increase and decrease the rate towards realization of the mission of obtaining physical structure, respectively.

### Stage 1 : Attraction of sufficient number of members with quality consideration

Preliminary screening is required to select the correct members to develop the building. Based on the usual practises of charismatic multifaith groups, not much emphasizes have been placed on building site but more on programs of evangelism where in certain extreme case the physical requirement to complete the body of Lord has been ignored totally. It is inevitable that as many people as possible should be invited to experience the teachings of holy scriptures but only with sufficient and specific manpower that could determine the successful establishment even one single building committee that specially target on property and basic infrastructure. The pastors and other unit heads should assist in the appointment of specific committee and leaders that are able to function in looking specifically on building where the coordination with other existing units are very important in choosing the building committee from huge pools of members that could really work together towards the objectives and visions of Multifaith Centre where physical property could hopefully catalyse the multifaith mission where the holy missions are towards servicing for society on well-beings but not on religious conversion merely.

### Stage 2 : Building committee members screening

Special building committee meetings could be conducted from time to time, initially estimated once a month to accumulate ideas from existing members, to formulate the best building

proposal suitable for the direction of Multifaith Centre, at the same time, to gain as much support from members and public about the new religious building construction, as possible, in the desired location. The long-term discussions and negotiations could take longer than 1 year depending on the suitable workforce gained, commitment, contribution and sacrifice of time in working out a more suitable plan for future Multifaith Centre building. Members interested to join the Multifaith Centre Building Committee could be invited to attend the meetings where publicity of such new committee could be conducted via announcement made in between multifaith services and functions, websites, brochures and via verbal invitation. Those truly interested members in assisting the establishment of physical building could retain in the building committee to further follow-up on the building development progress on voluntary basis whereas others are allowed to attend the meetings anytime if inputs are available to be included in the building plan wherever applicable and appropriate. Contact details are included in the publicity for Building Committee leaders where any form of suggestions and comment could be submitted to the Multifaith Centre building committee leaders via suggestion forms on paper or web format. Multifaith Centre Building Committee Directory could be updated from time to time based on individual functions where all meeting reports, minutes and documentation have to be approved by Multifaith Centre central committee that should always send representatives to the multifaith centre building committee meetings as follow-up from time to time.

#### Benefit of Good Building Plan and Management

(a) Retain and increase more members – thorough survey will be able to help to understand the actual necessity of interfaith members. Having own house means more independent and freedom in working out the settings of the House of LORD that could really reflect the social identity of the multifaith members where the buildings are fully owned by all multifaith members, managed by building committee with helpers and volunteers assisting in building decoration, cleaning, repair, settings and other forms of maintenance.

(b) Cost savings – where certain fixtures and equipment for proper interfaith function could be sponsored by the interfaith benefactors in cash and in kind. Certain professionals could assist in getting cheaper material for building maintenance and decoration with more convenience inner space designed suitable for the majority of the users while retaining the holy identity of the population. Wider land and bigger house could be found with discounted prices as a gift for God depending on chances availability that will determine future survival of the whole Multifaith Centre where the saved money could be used for existing program improvement for longer period.

(c) Wider publicity – where the building construction for Multifaith Centre will obtain better attention from key committee members from other units that could provide better program flexibility and convenience to conduct certain activities where high security is available to keep the instrument and manpower saving in moving certain equipment.

## Danger of Misplan of Multifaith Centre Building

The duration set to obtain such Multifaith Centre building is targeted for 30 years. Any inconsiderate plan that tend to rush for getting the religious building as soon as possible without referring to God will jeopardise the future of the Multifaith Centre survival and may destroy the base of interfaith group foundation, with reference to Christian bible, Deuteronomy 28 : 15-19:

“However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curse will come on you and overtake you : You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country. Your basket and your kneading trough will be cursed. The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. You will be cursed when you come in and cursed when you go out.”

### Danger One : Lose of financial resources and members

Inappropriate plan in obtaining physical religious building that against the majority of the key committees will result in loss of financial resources where the cost of building might exceed the fiscal ability of the interfaith groups, where such worries of financial problems will distract the performance of the interfaith in servicing for the members. The shortage of funding could reduce the quality of performance, leading to low attendance rate gradually.

### Danger Two : Instability of Multifaith Centre management

The building committee could be blamed for misappropriation of fund, leading to boycott of the usage of new Multifaith Centre building and quarrel in various related programs in the verge of bankruptcy. Rescue missions with great efforts have to be conducted to rebuild the foundation of religious centre to regain the control and confidence over all units.

### Stage 3 : Building Committee Proposed Tasks

Specific unit has to be available to specially target on new building search that truly belong to the Multifaith Centre. That is not possible for only the existing leaders of the units to run the multifaith building committees but should be assisted by additional members where some belong to the other religious units as well that could really understand the basic building requirement of individual units and gain more support towards the establishment of Multifaith Centre building with formal letter support, questionnaires and petition signing from Multifaith Centre units and community members as well. All the tasks conducted by building committee will have to be notified to the management of Multifaith Centre all the times via minutes filing in paper, voice and video recording that could be used as follow-up and updates all the times by the management, absent committee and new building members as well.

Tentative tasks that could possibly be performed by individual building units are as below :

(a) Publicity and preaching – Involved building committee members could go to the desired site to conduct pray and preaching especially among the community members to attend the church or

temple at present and also in future, at the same time, obtain guidance and initial impression from God about future appearance of Multifaith Centre building. Petition and survey could be conducted to enable the building committee members to approach wider range of population including existing members and new prospect committee in gaining more opinion and support towards the future appearance in Multifaith Centre building as desired by most members with faith.

(b) Building survey and contract – The central committee and Multifaith Centre building unit should preferably consist of professional surveyors and architects that could help to design the landscape and building structure as desired by the current Multifaith Centre building committee. Civil engineering members could be invited to attend the Multifaith Centre building meeting to understand the Multifaith Centre building requirement and assist in looking for more appropriate properties in the selected areas with affordable prices.

(c) Cost estimates and sponsorships – Normally treasurer of Multifaith Centre building committee will need to determine the funding opportunity available to earn extra income to support Multifaith Centre building maintenance, whether via charity fundraising of concert, building donation dinner and lunch etc. With the blessings of God then it is possible to obtain full sponsorships of Multifaith Centre building if the true building benefactors could be found by chance. If somebody is going to give the whole Multifaith Centre building to the interfaith committee then the issues raised will be the suitability of building for religious uses, the area of sponsored building and overall cost of maintenance in future, current building requirement for the multifaith groups and whether there is sufficient manpower to handle the Multifaith Centre building that need to be considered further where the success will alter the fate of the Multifaith Centre in future. Budget and cost estimates have to be planned financially by the treasurer based on various information provided where specific target will be based on the current property prices like land and building, material and facility prices, availability of in-kind sponsorships etc that could fluctuate all the times where building committee should analyse the potential minimum cost to obtain discounts for building and facilities whenever time is appropriate where true timing will decide the success of getting one house for the LORD with much against the desires of existing members. Accountants and financial planners could assist this.

(d) Legal requirement – Volunteers with legal and local governmental background could assist in getting approval to set-up Multifaith Centre building in the selected areas, legal documentation in dealing with local city council and other authorities like Monash Multifaith Centre building registrar etc that could help in the legalization of the building as Monash Multifaith Centre following the standard procedures of developing complete facilities in the selected site. Normally lawyer and government officers with local government experience, that are also members of the existing multifaith groups, could be requested to assist the tasks.

(e) Committee selection – The unit head of Multifaith Centre building committee will need to distribute the available workforce for different future tasks at plan first and updated from time to time:

Position	Brief Task Description	Total Required
Decorator	Design the external appearance of Multifaith Centre	2
Gardener	Planting trees and flowers according to landscape	2
Cleaner	Sweeping the floor and cleaning the toilets and kitchens	5
Facility keeper	Maintain the hardware like chairs, cupboards and instrumentations of music at safe place	2
Security	Ensure building free of thieves and gangsters	2
Office Secretary	Correspondences, mails and communication handling and documentation etc	3
Librarian	Keep the books, CDs etc in proper order	2
Technician	Maintain electrical, water and building utilities	5
Helpers	Special festive seasons and program assistances	Casual

Depending on the budget for Multifaith Centre building, some positions are volunteers and some are paid. The future Multifaith Centre building could hopefully be fully utilized and opened all the times where abandon of any building facilities will cause wastage of spaces as well. For such reasons, opening hours should fit with numbers of users and visitors.

#### OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony will be led by chaplain, expected to be the chief multifaith leader accompanied by representatives from community leaders, university religious study professionals, heads of multifaith groups from various denominations, existing members and general public etc. If the space is fixed for individual religious group usage, labeled will be available in form of the doors.

#### FINANCIAL RESOURCE FOR NEW MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING

Sufficient and strong financial supports have to be available to obtain such expensive properties especially for new Multifaith Centre that is still in the process of development and expansion, where maintenance costs of Multifaith Centre building is very high and not many interfaith groups could afford without sufficient fiscal support from the members unless benefactor are available that could fully in charge of the spending of the multifaith centre building facilities. Based on the informal survey on the preferable methods of obtaining such physical facilities, a few recommended methods towards the success of owning a religious building are stated as below :

##### Method 1 : Loan and installment

This is one of the usual methods for owning a religious centre where the Multifaith Centre building committee bear quite a heavy responsibility in supporting the physical building where portion of the cost could be overcome by loan from certain members or bank as installment. In

such case, Multifaith Centre building committee will have to pay monthly mortgage to the creditors that are willing to borrow money for the Multifaith Centre to own the building. Special bank account will have to be developed that allow donation and sponsorships in cash to be specifically used for Multifaith Centre building purposes where the monthly instalment, withdrawal and other transactions relevant to income as input and spending as output could be done via this bank account to allow direct deposit and payment via cheque, online transaction etc. The budget and financial position of building fund will have to be updated and reported to the Multifaith Centre building and central committee to look for more financial resources and reduce certain unnecessary spending on the building site whenever necessary where the cost of the maintenance could be controlled to prevent overspending on certain fixtures or additional facilities that might not be useful. Other Multifaith Centre units will have to report special facilities like furniture, chamber etc that might be required to look for more economically priced items with more choices and better quality. Vast amount of time has to be spent to reduce the cost of building without jeopardizing the mission of Multifaith Centre.

#### Method 2 : Fully-owned the building via direct donation

This will come by chance if somebody of very rich that owned extra properties are willing to donate the whole lot of land and building for religious uses. This will exactly help the Multifaith Centre to save a lot of money via direct inheritance from benefactors that are willing to contribute their wealth for the body of God. The only cost that required to be absorbed are the maintenance and upgrading spending that could be high or low depending on the condition of property gained and whether any modification and upgrading of certain facilities required in order to be suitable for Multifaith Centre uses. Certain extra conditions that may be imposed by the benefactors and building sponsors have to take into consideration and to determine such request could be fulfilled within the Multifaith Centre ability, for example, certain sponsors might request service or product publicity at certain Multifaith Centre building location, special individual sponsoring chambers and car park space, addition of private programs outside the scope of the Multifaith Centre, percentage of properties shared between sponsors and Multifaith Centre committee.

#### ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF FUNDING

External funding and donation is welcome through procedures set by chaplain for centre maintenance cost. In addition to support from the community, portion of the fund is possible to be collected from the organisers of the function, for example, wedding, meeting and others that rent the space for specific religious purposes. Certain advertisement from commercial and industrial organization in the form of banner, electronic boards and big notice boards could be used as funding sources where certain portion of money could be collected from advertisers. In such case, special facilities to attract visitors and extra sponsors that help to maintain the building are required. Volunteers from staffs and students may be allocated specific tasks, for example, via duty roster in cleaning, repairing, presentation items and Multifaith Centre community functions. The volunteers will be automatically the members of the preferred multifaith organizations or groups in the Multifaith Centre.

## ESTIMATED BUDGET FOR MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING (AVERAGE MONTHLY)

Income	GAIN (\$)	Spending	COST(\$)
Constant sponsorships	1,500	Building installment	1,500
In-kind contribution	100	Decoration & gardening	300
Renting for program	500	Utility upgrading	300
Advertisement	500	Part-time staffing	500
Public donation leaflet	100	Water and electricity bill	100
Governmental volunteering extra income	100	Rubbish management etc	300
Others	800	Miscellaneous	200
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3,600</b>	<b>Total spending</b>	<b>3,200</b>

The budget as in table above provided is a rough estimate of cash flow in Multifaith Centre building on monthly basis. The sum might fluctuate depending on the occasional situations below :

- (a) Festive seasons like Christmas, New Year and Easter where more frequent utilization is expected.
- (b) School holidays where less visitors from student groups, reducing the Multifaith Centre building usage.
- (c) Additional programs like wedding, funeral and camps where rooms could be fully occupied with restricted areas

Proper back-up fund of at least certain minimum is expected in the emergency for Multifaith Centre Building Committee during unexpected financial resources sanctions as a part of human-caused problematic situations and natural disasters.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTIFAITH CENTRE

The website of Multifaith Centre Building Committee has to be constructed in the website of the affiliated interfaith groups. Each individual faith group that formally affiliates with Multifaith Centre is compulsory to produce basic websites that are able to link with Multifaith Centre website, consisting the details of the chaplain, executive committee details, updated group contact details and activity plan in order to be eligible to receive funding from the main multifaith group.

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST FALSE PRACTISES

All sensitive issues discussed have to be handled carefully not only among the same religious groups with different affiliations and denominations but among other external religious groups. It is too reminded that nobody is allowed to criticize other groups in the proposed Multifaith Centre or serious disciplinary actions will be imposed by chaplains based on multifaith rules and regulations. Violence and disruptive political talks, non-scientific, illogical and superstitious religious belief will be totally prohibited in the proposed Multifaith Centre building.

## SPECIAL PRECAUTION IN THE USAGE OF MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING

Maintenance cost could be very high if no special precaution is taken to manage the religious building up to the standards. The owning of the building is totally different from rental where bigger and more complete responsibilities have to be supported by Multifaith Centre Building Committee.

- (a) Enhance security of the building structure and the content 24 hours a day to prevent theft, fire and vandalism etc, with constant invigilation
- (b) Ensure proper usage of Multifaith Centre utilities like electrical, music and decorative tools and instruments kept in safe places
- (c) “No entry” notice in certain office space that contains cash and important documents kept in private safety box
- (d) Reduction of public liability insurance with safer hall, kitchen with wider spaces to avoid congestions and emergency facilities for accidents back-up
- (e) Building maintenance management talks provided for Multifaith Centre Building Committee by voluntary building professionals and contractors, pre-screen the visitors to control the building occupancy

## EXPECTED NEUTRAL EFFECTS AFTER OBTAINING MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING

For charismatic interfaith groups, the quality and activity of multifaith centre will always depend on the existing faith groups. The building that is used to protect the groups of multifaith in praying services and relevant holy activities is called “multifaith centre”. Good locations and house settings are required where one group of faith members could afford to own a strategic activity centre that belongs to all members, managed by Multifaith Centre Building Committee. There are certain effects towards the existing faith group members that used to rent places of worships. Owning a multifaith building is like owning a house where various psychological and structural effects could not be simply neglected, that should be catered wisely in order to ensure proper operations of interfaith groups especially during transitional period where some members might not feel convenience when the existing interfaith activities are interrupted or changed to fit the requirement of the new building.

(a) Limitation in the Building Capacity

The allocated space might be too small or too big depending on the new building structure and settings. The size of the service space will depend on the financial capacity where there is maximum capacity limit to contain all audiences in special functions. Certain existing activities might not be suitable to be conducted in the new building due to lack of certain facilities or spaces at certain seasons. This will lead to program cost increment due to possible external rental when changes of timetable to avoid crash are impossible.

(b) Changes of Multifaith Centre Population and Quality

Vast psychological effects and pressure are expected when we move our house. This will be similarly experienced by Multifaith Centre committees and members when the activity centre and its operations changed suddenly to new site. Some members might not be able to attend to the service of new Multifaith Centre building, either due to inconvenience timetable or location of services, and also other personal reasons, if transportation is unavailable.

(c) Modification of Structure of Organization

New Multifaith Centre building will employ specific committee to handle the infrastructure that has not been available previously when shared or rented. The fully-owned Multifaith Centre building will require the establishment of specific unit that have to cooperate with other existing units to run various activities particularly in timetable setting and hardware resource distribution to ensure certain spaces are ready to be utilized at specific period and all fixtures are well-function. The owner of the building will be given special position in the Multifaith Centre building if the building is fully sponsored.

(d) Financial Resource Distribution Alterations

One special unit to cater the sponsorships and donations towards the proper building maintenance and upgrading is required. Although the Multifaith Centre could fully one big asset of God, the flow of account of interfaith group is always expected higher due to building keeping cost where additional considerations in cost-saving in certain utilities of multifaith centre like water, electricity, furniture etc will be needed. The decision of the Board of Director could be greatly affected by the Multifaith Building Committee that could hold the largest portion of multifaith centre asset, especially in certain operations of multifaith centre programs. Additional pressures in finance will be imposed towards pastors and other multifaith centre leaders in getting sufficient funding that could be distributed in balance to cover the building and internal program costs.

(e) Time and Energy Distribution

Thorough care on the safety will be stressed always against the theft, fire, vandalism etc, normally taking 24 hours, 7 days a week throughout the year of the time of the Multifaith Centre Building Committee to take care of the House of LORD. The questions of workforce will arise, whether there is enough time and energy allocated by the existing members to cater the exhaustive tasks of caring the building structure, members and visitors at the same time. This will require intelligent planning.

## **PART TWO : INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN CULTURE AND RELIGION**

### **CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [4]**

The advantages of good arrangement and preparation for the House of LORD could be referred to Christian bible, Deuteronomy 28 : 1-6

“If you obey the LORD and faithfully keep all his commands that I am going to give you today, he will make you greater than any other nation on earth. Obey the LORD your God and all these blessings will be yours : the LORD will bless you towns and your fields. The LORD will bless you with many children, with abundant crops, and with many cattle and sheep. The LORD will bless you corn crops and the food you prepare from them. The LORD will bless everything you do...”

If all the processes of obtaining the physical Multifaith Centre building are really fulfil the mission of God then all committee members in the building site will be blessed although some unpredictable problems might arise due to ignorance, insufficient knowledge and information about building management that could be solved patiently via continuous professional improvement in physical sections of religious studies especially related to building, fixture and facilities:

### **Scripture Reference in Multifaith Centre Building Construction Progress [5] [6]**

There are various verses of Christian Bible that could serve as reference in the construction of physical religious centre for Christianity purposes. The proposed universal methods in fact could serve as guidance even for any religious centres throughout the human civilization regardless of time, type of religions and locations :

#### **Ezra [7]**

##### **Ezra 6: 14-16**

They finished building the temple according to the command of the God of Israel and the decrees of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia. The temple was completed on the third day of the month Adariin in the sixth year of the reign of the Kind Darius. Then the people of Israel – the priests, the Levites and the rest of the exiles- celebrated the dedication of the house of God with joy.

##### **Ezra 3 : 8 – 9**

Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak and the rest of the people began the work, appointing Levites twenty year old and older to supervise the building of the house of the LORD. Joshua and Henadad and their sons and brothers – all Levites, joined together in supervising those working on the house of God.

Ezra 3 : 11

.. and all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid while many others shouted for joy.

Haggai

Haggai 1 : 2

This is what the LORD Almighty says :”These people say, “The time has not yet come to rebuild the LORD’s house.”

Haggai 1 : 7-8

This is what the LORD Almighty says:”Give careful thought of your ways. Go up into the mountain and bring down timber and build the house.”

Haggai 1:15

...They came and began to work on the house of the LORD almighty, their god, on the twenty-fourth day of sixth month.” (24 June)

Haggai 2:3

‘Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing? But now be strong...

Haggai 2 : 7-9

‘I will fill this house with glory,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘The silver is mine and the gold is mine,’ declares the LORD Almighty. ‘The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the LORD Almighty.

Haggai 2 : 18

From this day on, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to the day when the foundation of the LORD’s temple was laid.

King

King 5 : 2-10

The temple that King Solomon built for the LORD was sixty cubits long, twenty wide and thirty high. The portico at the front of the main hall of the temple extended the width of the temple, that is twenty cubits, and projected ten cubits from the front of the temple. He made narrow windows high up in the temple walls. Against the walls of the main hall and inner sometime he built a structure around the building, in which, there were side rooms. The lowest floor was five cubits wide, the middle floor six cubits and the third floor seven. He made office and ledges around the outside of the temple so that nothing would be inserted into the temple walls. In building the temple, only blocks dressed at the quarry were used, and no hammer, chisel or any

other iron tools were heard at the temple site while it was being built. The entrance of the lowest floor was on the south side of the temple; a stairway that led up to the middle level and from there to the third. So he built the temple and completed it, roofing it with beams and cedar planks. And he built the side rooms all along the temple. The height of each was five cubits, and they were attached to the temple by beam and cedar.

## BIBLE STORY REFERENCE FOR MULTIFAITH BUILDING DEVELOPMENT - GENESIS

Step One : In the beginning God created heavens and earth (1)

Those Religious Centre Establishment Committee, as if creatures in “heaven”, formed with reference to the existing ideas guided by God, select the proper location to construct the Religious Centre. Upon agreement from all “saints”, the tentative location for religious centre on “earth” has to be determined, might be using the existing empty spaces in the university.

Step Two : And the God said, “Let there be light” (3)

The Religious Centre will be supplied with electricity. The lighting could be seen under “light”, notifying the “enlightened” group with more ideas input. The duty roster and timetable of meetings are arranged accordingly

Step Three : And there was evening, and there was morning (5)...So God made the vault and separated water under the vault from water above it (7). Let water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let the dry ground appear (9)

The Religious Centre committee will ensure that the “water” space like toilet, sink, bathrooms and kitchen to be separated from other empty space for hygienic reasons under proper arrangement. The spacious empty space like “vault” or dry ground, suitable for activities and movement, should be available.

Step Four : Let the land produce vegetation, seed bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit (11)

The Religious Centre will require furniture “tree” like chair, cupboard and so on at available space on “land” that can accommodate people, with drinks and snacks and other “food” available for occupants.

Step Five : “Let there be light in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night. Let there be lights in the vault serve as sign to mark seasons and days of year” (13)

The light setting should be design suitable for various religious celebrations throughout the year in fulfilment of various holy environments. The public space and the private offices of Chaplain will be separated from other closed areas like store rooms, archive documentation store with internet facilities and so on.

Step Six : Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky (20)

Toilet, kitchen and other “water-related” accessories like plates, spoon and fridge have to be readily utilized for committees and workers that have been properly arranged and grouped. The

space should be washed with respective holy “water” or other similar methods. PA system, wire, amplifiers and sound-processing facilities like “birds” are readily tested are available.

Step Seven : Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds (24). God created human beings in his own image, in the image of God he created them (27).

The Religious Centre should be decorated with life and proper spiritual environment. Various “living” notices and holy paintings related to individual religions are pasted or constructed. All valid religious groups in the society are welcome to fill in the space of Religious Centre where new membership recruitment and renewal activities are conducted in Religious Centre as celebration.

Step Eight : On the seventh day he rested from all his work

The jobs of Religious Centre establishment Committee ceased as the centre is ready to be occupied. Future tasks will be handled by religious student groups.

## ISLAM RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [8]

Structure for human occupation; also an edifice dedicated to God. The house (*bayt*, *dār*, *sakan*, *ghurfa*, *ma'wā*, *mathwā*, *maskin*) is a key symbol in Islam. Its semantic field extends from ordinary dwellings and kin group, to palaces, mosques and shrines, regions of the world and realms in the hereafter. Drawing upon the heritage of house symbolism developed in the ancient Near Eastern civilizations and the Bible, the Qur'ān established the basic lexicon for Muslim domestic space and its meanings and it has served as a first order instrument for transforming ordinary human dwellings into sacred places.

### Domestic space in the Qur'ān

Four primary Arabic words are used to designate domestic space in the Qur'ān: *bayt* (pl. *buyūt*), *dār* (pl. *diyār*), *sakan* and *ghurfa*. There are three additional terms derived from other verbal roots: *ma'wā*, "shelter, refuge", (from *awā*), *mathwā*, "dwelling" (from *thawA*), and *maskin*, "dwelling" (from *sakana*). Together, these term occur in the Qur'ān 164 times, mainly in the Medinan *sūras*, but they also occur in about one-third of the Meccan *sūras*. In addition, there are a few references to palaces (*sarh* and *qasr*, pl. *qusūr*). Other terms that connote the idea of dwelling are forms of the verb *bawwa'a*, "to provide accommodations" and *mustaqarr*, "resting place" or "dwelling".

*Bayt* is used in fifteen instances to denote the house of God, which is described variously as "the first house", "the ancient house", "the sacred house", "the forbidden house", "the frequented house" and "my (God's) house". Only once, however, is it identified explicitly with the Ka'ba (Q 5:97) and twice in the "sacred mosque" (Q5:2, 8:34-5). Indeed, the Qur'ān uses the term *bayt* more frequently to designate a holy place than either the name Ka'ba or the term commonly translated as "mosque" (*masjid*). In several important instances, it links God's house with the figure of Abraham (*Ibrahim*). It is the first house created for the people", containing Abraham's place (*maqām*, Q3:96-7). It is

the place that was purified and dedicated for ritual purposes, particularly pilgrimage (*hajj*) rites, by Abraham and his son, who petitioned God to make them his submitters (*muslimin*) and to make their progeny into submitting community (*umma muslima*, see Q2:125-8). This story about the origin of the shrine and its rites probably first served as a claim by Muhammad and his followers to the *haram* area in Mecca after the emigration (*hijra*) in 622 C.E. - a claim contested by the Meccan opponents. The existence of this opposition is expressed in the Qur'ān itself, which in its polemics promises a place in hell for disbelievers and those who would debar the pious from the sacred mosque are (see Q8:34-6).

The existence of ordinary human dwellings and even their furnishings are attributed to God's creative action: "God made a dwelling place (*sakan*) for you from among your home (*buyūt*). He made homes for you from animal skins, so that you will find them light when you travel and when you camp. [He made] furnishings and conveniences [for you] out of their wool, fur, and hair for a time...Thus does he bring his grace upon you to completion so that you submit" (*tuslimūn*, Q16:80-3). On the other hand, the Qur'ān states that God abstained from creating for people luxurious houses with silver roofs (*saqf*, sing. *saqf*), stairways (*ma'ārij*), doors (*abwāb*), beds (*surur*) and gold ornaments (*zukhruf*), lest everyone become too worldly and disbelief in God (Q43:33-5).

The Qur'ānic conception of the creation of human domestic space is congruent with a wider set of discourses about the sacred histories of the ancestors and the fates of their house. In these narratives, having houses and wealth is not always a sign of blessing nor is lacking them a sign of divine ire. The crux of the matter rests on people's belief and their moral comportment. The people of 'Ād, Thamūd, Sheba and Midian all had houses and prospered until they rejected God and his messengers or committed evil. Consequently, they were each destroyed and their houses abandoned or ruined (for example, Q7:74-9; 27:45-52; 46:21-5; 34:15-6; 7:85-92). In one instance God brings the house roof (*saqf*) down upon the heads of the plotters (Q16:26). In such accounts the Qur'ān implies that a similar fate awaits unbelievers in Muhammad's own time, a threat that became a reality for unbelieving People of the Book mentioned in Q59:2-4, whom most commentators identify with the Banū Nadīr, a Jewish clan forced out of Medina in 4/626.

Believers, on the other hand, enjoy divine blessings at home, as indicated in Q16:80-3. Situations may arise, however, when they should be prepared to give up their homes and possessions and emigrate. Emigration, too, has its rewards as stated in Q4:100: "Whoever emigrates in God's way will find many a road and open opportunity in the land. Whoever leave his house (*bayt*), emigrating to God and his messenger, and then death overtakes him, his reward is incumbent upon God."

There are several rules in the Qur'ān that are concerned with the houses of God, ordinary believers and the prophet. Occurring only in Medinan Sūras, these rules commonly invoke distinctions between belief and disbelief and concepts of purity and impurity, but they constitute neither a detailed architectural code nor a rabbinic system of ritual prescription. Rules pertaining to ritual actions conducted at God's sacred house (Q2:125-

7, 196-203; 5:2; 22:26) also include a prescription for pilgrimage itself: "God requires people to perform a *hajj* to the house if they are able to do so. If anyone disbelievers, God can do without his creations" (Q3:97). Rules pertaining to Muslim homes in general treat matters of everyday social life as religious practises; ideas about God, right and wrong, purity; and blessing are conjoined to statements concerning visitation, eating and salutations (see Q24:27-9, 61). Believers, for example, should obtain permission to enter a house and greet its inhabitants or they should leave if so told. This is of greater purity (*azkā*) for them. They are encouraged, however, to enter unoccupied dwellings (Q24:27-9). These prescriptions for visitation occur together with statement about adultery, covering the body and marriage, which suggests that Muhammad and his followers recognized a linkage between the house, the body and sexual relationship, all were immured by ritual taboos, not unlike God's sacred house (see also Q4:22). In divorce cases, the Qur'ān states that the woman shall remain in her house or where her husband resides for a prescribed period to see whether she is with child unless she is guilty of adultery. She shall neither be evicted nor leave the house during this time. These are said to be "God's limits" (*hudūd Allāh*). Those who transgress them to wrong against themselves (Q65:1,6), implying an unfortunate destiny in the hereafter.

About one-third of the house terms in the Qur'an are used to describe the abodes of the blessed and the damned hereafter. Paradise is called "the house" (*al-dar*) and also "house of residence" (*dar al-muqam*), "house of permanence" (*dar al-qarar*), "house of god-fearing" (*dar al-muttaqin*), "the final house" (*al-dar al-akhira*), and "house of peace" (*dar al-salam*). That paradise is conceived to be an actual home for the blessed is conveyed by passages such as those in Q13:20-4, which describes families living in the paradisiacal gardens being visited by angels, who come through their doors and bless them. Individual dwellings in paradise are referred to by terms such as "shelter" (*ma'wa*), "lofty apartment" (*ghurfa*), "dwelling" (*maskin*) and simply house (*bayt*). Wrongdoers, on the other hand, are consigned to hell, which is also called "the evil house" (*su' al-dar*), "the house of perdition" (*dar al-bawar*) and "the house of eternity" (*dar-al-khuld*). More frequently (in twenty-nine instances), the Qur'an uses terms for "shelter" (*ma'wa*) and "dwelling" (*mathwa*) for their abode. This is evident in verses such as Q3:151: "We shall cast terror into the hearts of those who denied God by associating partners with him... Their shelter (*ma'wa*) shall be the fire. How bad is the dwelling (*mathwa*) of the wrongdoers!"

Lastly, the Qur'an preserves traces of ancient Near Eastern cosmologies, wherein the created world was conceived as a large palace. It is said to have a heavenly ceiling (*samk* or *saqf*) raised by God, held up by invisible pillars, beneath which stretches an earthy carpet (*bisat*) upon which his creatures roam (see Q 13:2; 21:32; 71:19; 79:28). These notions, however, are not elaborated as a mythic narrative as they are in ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian texts.

Hadith literature continued to build on the foundation of many of the domestic discourses that had been set forth in the Qur'an. It used the same Arabic terms and added *manzil* to them. Hadith elaborated upon the idea of human being as a sacred enclave, provided more details on how to perform pilgrimage to the house of God in Mecca and furnished

more particulars about the dwelling of the blessed in paradise. The grave itself was described in one tradition of the house (*bayt*) of exile, loneliness and maggots but the qur'anic practice of using domestic terms in describing hell was discontinued.

### The Qur'an in domestic space

The Qur'an is of central importance as an instrument used by Muslims to sanctify their home. Hadiths speak of the benefit that accrue the dwelling and inhabitants when particular verses, chapters or even the whole text is recited. Al-Tirmidhi relates hadiths stating that Satan and other malevolent beings will not approach houses where Surat al-Baqara (Q2 "The Cow") and the Throne Verse (Q2:255) are recited (Tirmidhi, *Sahih, Thawab al-Quran*, 3). Al-Suyuti cites a Hadith from Anas b. Malik that asserts "good fortune increases in the house where the Qur'an is recited and decreases where it is not" (*Itqan*, ii, 193). The Prophet's wife, Aisha bint Abi Bakr, is reported to have said that houses where it is recited appear to the people of heaven as stars do to the people of earth (Suyuti, *Itqan*, i, 137). In cultural practice, passages from the Qur'an are recited during the house foundation rituals or when a new dwelling is occupied. Householders may arrange to have a complete recitation of the Qur'an performed at home when someone dies or on other unusual occasions. The uses of qur'anic inscription in Muslim homes has become perhaps as ubiquitous as it ever was in mosque. The house and palaces of medieval and Ottoman Cairo, which were until recently the best-preserved in the Muslim world, contain bands of Qur'an inscription and poetry in their reception areas and great halls. The Throne Verse was the most widely used as was Surat al-Ikhlās (Q 112, "Sincerity") and *basmala*. Today, even in common homes, it is not unusual to find the *basmala* or the exhortation "Enter it securely, in peace!" (Q 15:46) written over thresholds. The latter phrase affirms the symbolic relationship between the home and paradise, an idea that was used in early Islamic monumental architecture. Sitting room walls, where guests are received, are often decorated with individual verses or a framed poster of the entire text of the Qur'an in miniature. A widespread practice among Muslims today is to place a finely rendered copy of the printed Qur'an on a stand or in a velvet box for display in the guest room or living room.

The most highly developed use of the written Qur'an in the sanctification of Muslim domestic space has emerged in Egypt and adjacent regions, where colorful mural consisting complexes of epigraphs, depicting of the Ka'ba in Mecca and the Prophet's mosque in Medina, human and animal figures, boats, trains and airplanes are painted on the houses of Muslims who have performed the *hajj*. This practice is attested as early as the sixteenth century. Mural epigraphs commonly include verses dealing with *hajj* itself (Q3:96-7; 22:27) but they can also be stock qur'anic phrases concerning god and the prophet Muhammad that have entered popular speech such as the *basmala*, praise for god (Q1:2) and his Prophet (Q 33:56) and statements invoking divine blessing and protection (e.g. Q 2:172; 3:160, 11:56, 88; 27:40, 48:1, 49:13). Thus, the Qur'an participates in the transformation of the Egyptian pilgrim's house into a sacred place and helps articulate his or her individual experience in term of powerful Islamic beliefs and symbols. (Chapter author : Juan Eduardo Campo)

## HINDUISM RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [9]

Heaven on Earth : “This is the temple of him who became the divine fish, tortoise bone, lion and dwarf. He became Rama in there in three forms, he became Kanna, and Kalki he will end [these world]. This is Srirangam, where the Swan and its mate swing on the lotus blossoms, embrace on flower beds and revel in the red pollen strewn around the river. [Periyalvar Tirumoli, 4.9.9 (C.9. 9<sup>th</sup> Century CE, Tamil), translated by Vasudha Narayanan.

Temples were built according to strict regulations, facing specific auspicious directions. These temples and shrines display the embodied cosmologies of Hinduism, and some were built with precise astronomical coordination. The temples were centers of piety and power; they were also economic hubs and a nexus for cultural activities. Almost every holy place is associated with a "Sthala purana", a text that details the site's antiquity and sacredness. The temple itself is like a "port of transit", a place from where a human being may cross over ("tirtha") the ocean of life and death. In fact, many temples and holy places are also located near the sea, a lake, a river, or a spring. When such a body of water is not close by, there is usually an artificial ritual well or pool, a feature that may date back to the time of the Harappan civilization - the "Great Bath" of Mohenjo Daro resembles the pools that are attached to hundreds of Hindu temples in South India today. Pilgrims cleanse themselves physically and spiritually in these pools before praying in the temple. When temples are consecrated in Hindu communities outside India, water from Indian sacred rivers is mingled with water from rivers in the host country and poured onto the new temple, physically and symbolically connecting it with the sacred motherland. Temples were major religious, cultural and economic centres and were constructed according to elaborate rules to represent the whole cosmos. Some of the larger ones have seven enclosures, representing the seven layers of heaven present in Hindu cosmology. A typical temple may have separate shrines for the deity, his or her spouse, other divine attendants, and saints. Temples in the diasporas generally cater to a broader community of worshippers and have images of Shiva, Vishnu, the goddess, and other deities enshrined under one roof. Most Hindus attend their local temple or other holy place that has been important to their families for generations, or they may save for an extended pilgrimage to a famous distant sacred site. Émigrés and other devotees who cannot physically go on such a pilgrimage may watch the rituals that take place there on specially commissioned television programs or videos. At all times, Hindu can worship at home, where a special area will often be designated as the domestic worship space. However, some Hindu traditions, such as the Virashaivas, a community organized ca. 1150 CE, denounce temple worship and revere every human as the temple of the supreme being, Lord Shiva. Other traditions, for example South Indian community that worship Vishnu and Lakshmi, uphold the practices of temple worship, but also think of the human body as divine. An eighth-century CE poet Periyalvar declared in one song that "build a temple in your heart. Install the lord called Krishna in it. Offer him the flower of love". This has indirectly implied that Hindu has to treat their spirituality well, so as the physical body represented by the equivalent term of temple.

## Aspects in Temple Construction [10]

There are many aspects involved in constructing a temple. Acarya, director for the temple construction and shilpi (sculptor) play major role in the construction of a temple. The temple's acarya is expected to know silpa sastra although not in as much detail as a shilpi. Temple construction begins with search of a proper site. Soil and location are examined by acarya and shilpi. This is called Bhupariksha.

This is followed by nagara/grama nirmana. Here, the layout of town, its size, breadth of different levels of streets, locations and sizes of facilities like water tanks are determined based on the size of town. There are different names for different sizes of towns, like grama, kheta, kharvata, durga, nagara. Then the location of temple (brahma sthana) in the town is decided. Temple is usually in the center of village so that every villager has access to it. The entire arrangement is called grama vinyasa.

Then the size of temple is determined. For this, size of the image of main deity is to be known, since the size of a temple is always a fixed multiple of the size of image of main deity. Then wood/metal/stone is selected for the image. The icon has three parts, main icon (vigraha), pedestal (peetha) and platform (adhithana or upa peetha). The tests to determine quality of stone are prescribed by the Agamas. There are three kinds of stone, male female and neuter. When hit with an iron rod if the stone produces good sound and spark, it is male and should be used for the main icon. If it produces sound but not spark it is female and should be used for pedestal. If it produces neither, it is neuter and should be used for platform. There are various standards for the relative proportions of image, gopura, prakara etc. and also the relative proportions of various parts of the vigraha. The units for measuring vigraha are tala, angula and yava. Tala is a multiple of angula and angula is a multiple of yava. More than the specific size of each unit, the multiplicity and relative sizes are important. The proportions of Head-Trunk-Arms-Legs of images are specified. The finer specifications like nose, nail, ears and their shapes are also mentioned. Generally the standard is to use dasatala (ten talas) for the height of image of male deity, navatala (nine talas) for His consort and astatala (eight talas) for bhakta.

Duties of temple administration are also specified in the Agamas - organizing festivals, encourage art forms and conduct shows to encourage artists, create accommodation for pilgrims from other towns, run hospitals, regularly conducting religious discourses etc.

Town planning, engineering, architecture, fine arts, civics, and many other subjects are dealt in the agamas, which relate to the various interests of people and involve them at different capacities and also direct their work towards a higher goal.

## Steps in Temple Construction

The procedure for building a temple is extensively discussed, and it could be expressed in short as "Karshanadi Pratisthantam", meaning beginning with "Karshana" and ending with "Pratistha". The details of steps involved vary from one Agama to another, but broadly these are the steps in temple construction:

**Bhu pariksha:** Examining and choosing location and soil for temple and town. The land should be fertile and soil suitable.

**Sila pariksha:** Examining and choosing material for image

**Karshana:** Corn or some other crop is grown in the place first and is fed to cows. Then the location is fit for town/temple construction.

**Vastu puja:** Ritual to propitiate vastu devata.

**Salyodhara:** Undesired things like bones are dug out.

**Adyestaka:** Laying down the first stone

**Nirmanā:** Then foundation is laid and land is purified by sprinkling water. A pit is dug, water mixed with navaratnas, navadhanyas, navakhanijas is then put in and pit is filled. Then the temple is constructed.

**Murdhestaka sthapana:** Placing the top stone over the prakara, gopura etc. This again involves creating cavities filled with gems minerals seeds etc. and then the pinnacles are placed.

**Garbhanyasa:** A pot made of five metals (pancaloha kalasa sthapana) is installed at the place of main deity.

**Sthapana:** Then the main deity is installed.

**Pratistha:** The main deity is then charged with life/god-ness.

Before the temple is opened for daily worship, there are some preparatory rituals to be done, like: **Anujna:** the priest takes permission from devotees and lord Ganesha to begin rituals . **Mrit samgrahana:** Collecting mud

**Ankurarpana:** Sowing seeds in pots of mud collected and waiting till they germinate

**Rakshabandhana:** The priest binds a holy thread on his hand to take up the assignment.

**Punyahavacana:** Purifying ritual for the place and invoking good omens

**Grama santi:** Worship for the good of village and to remove subtle undesired elements

**Pravesa bali:** Propitiation of various gods at different places in the temple, rakshoghna puja (to destroy asuric elements) and of specific gods like Kshetra palaka (devata ruling the town) . **Vastu Santi:** Pacifying puja for vastu (this happens twice and this is the second time) . **Yagasala:** Building the stage for homas, along with vedika.

**Kalasasthapana:** Installing kalasam

**Samskara:** Purifying the yaga sala

**Kalasa puja, yagarambha:** Woshipping the kalasa as god and propitiating deities through fire . **Nayanonmeelana, Pratimadhivasa:** Opening eyes of the god-image, installing it and giving it life.

Then specific worship is done to deity, as prescribed. For instance in the case of Siva, this is followed by astabandhana and kumbhabhisheka.

## Temple Design

From the proportions of the inner sanctum to the motifs carved into the pillars, the traditional temple takes its first form on the master sthapati's drawing board. The architect initially determines the fundamental unit of measurement using a formula called ayadhi. This formula, which comes from Jyotisha, or Vedic astrology, uses the nakshatra (birth star) of the founder, the nakshatra of the village in which the temple is being erected matching the first syllable of the name of the village with the seed sounds mystically associated with each nakshatra and the nakshatra of the main Deity of the temple. This measurement, called danda, is the dimension of the inside of the sanctum and the distance between the pillars. The whole space of the temple is defined in multiples and fractions of this basic unit.

The Shastras are strict about the use of metals, such as iron in the temple structure because iron is mystically the crudest, most impure of metals. The presence of iron, sthapis explain, could attract lower, impure forces. Only gold, silver, and copper are used in the structure, so that only the most sublime forces are invoked during the pujas. At especially significant stages in the temple construction (such as ground-breaking and placement of the sanctum door frame), pieces of gold, silver and copper, as well as precious gems, are ceremoniously embedded in small interstices between the stones, adding to the temple's inner-world magnetism. These elements are said to glow in the inner worlds and, like holy ash, are prominently visible to the Gods and Devas.

The ground plan is described as a symbolic, miniature representation of the cosmos. It is based on a strict grid made up of squares and equilateral triangles which are imbued with deep religious significance. To the priest-architect the square was an absolute and mystical form. The grid, usually of 64 or 81 squares, is in fact a mandala, a model of the cosmos, with each square belonging to a deity. The position of the squares is in accordance with the importance attached to each of the deities, with the square in the center representing the temple deity; the outer squares cover the gods of lower rank. Agamas say that the temple architecture is similar to a man sitting - and the idol in garbagriha is exactly the heart-plexus, gopuram as the crown etc.

The construction of the temple follows in three dimensional form exactly the pattern laid out by the mandala. The relationship between the underlying symbolic order and the actual physical appearance of the temple can best be understood by seeing it from above which was of course impossible for humans until quite recently.

Another important aspect of the design of the ground plan is that it is intended to lead from the temporal world to the eternal. The principal shrine should face the rising sun and so should have its entrance to the east. Movement towards the sanctuary, along the east-west axis and through a series of increasingly sacred spaces is of great importance and is reflected in the architecture. A typical temple consists of the following major elements

- an entrance, often with a porch
- one or more attached or detached mandapas or halls
- the inner sanctum called the garbagriha, literally 'womb chamber'
- the tower build directly above the garbagriha.

## Significance of the number eight in temple design

Vastu Shastra describes the inner sanctum and main tower as a human form, structurally conceived in human proportions based on the mystical number eight. According to Dr. V. Ganapati Sthapati, Senior Architect at the Vastu Government College of Architecture, the vibration of the space-consciousness, which is called time, is the creative element, since it is this vibratory force that causes the energetic space to turn into spatial forms. Therefore, time is said to be the primordial element for the creation of the entire universe and all its material forms. When these vibrations occur rhythmically, the resultant product will be an orderly spatial form. This rhythm of the time unit is traditionally called *talam* or *layam*.

Since every unit of time vibration produces a corresponding unit of space measure, vastu science derives that time is equal to space. This rhythm of time and space vibrations is quantified as eight and multiples of eight, the fundamental and universal unit of measure in the vastu silpa tradition. This theory carries over to the fundamental *adi talam* (eight beats) of classical Indian music and dance. Applying this in the creation of a human form, it is found that a human form is also composed of rhythmic spatial units. According to the Vastu Shastras, at the subtle level the human form is a structure of eight spatial units devoid of the minor parts like the hair, neck, kneecap and feet, each of which measures one-quarter of the basic measure of the body and, when added on to the body's eight units, increases the height of the total form to nine units. Traditionally these nine units are applied in making sculptures of Gods.

Since the subtle space within our body is part of universal space, it is logical to say that the *talam* of our inner space should be the same as that of the universe. But in reality, it is very rare to find this consonance between an individual's and the universal rhythm. When this consonance occurs, the person is in harmony with the Universal Being and enjoys spiritual strength, peace and bliss. Therefore, when designing a building according to vastu, the architect aims at creating a space that will elevate the vibration of the individual to resonate with the vibration of the built space, which in turn is in tune with universal space. Vastu architecture transmutes the individual rhythm of the indweller to the rhythm of the Universal Being.

## The Vastu-Purusha-Mandala

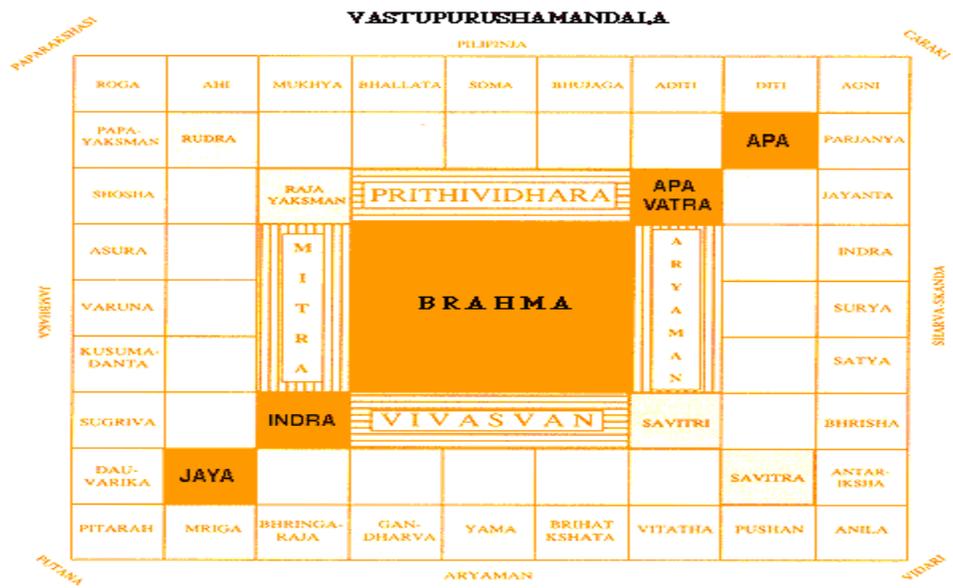
The goal of a temple's design is to bring about the descent or manifestation of the unmanifest and unseen. The architect or *sthapati* begins by drafting a square. The square is considered to be a fundamental form. It presupposes the circle and results from it. Expanding energy shapes the circle from the center; it is established in the shape of the square. The circle and curve belong to life in its growth and movement. The square is the mark of order, the finality to the expanding life, life's form and the perfection beyond life

and death. From the square all requisite forms can be derived: the triangle, hexagon, octagon, circle etc. The architect calls this square the *vastu-purusha-mandala-vastu*, the manifest, *purusha*, the Cosmic Being, and *mandala*.

The vastu-purusha-mandala represents the manifest form of the Cosmic Being; upon which the temple is built and in whom the temple rests. The temple is situated in Him, comes from Him, and is a manifestation of Him. The vastu-purusha-mandala is both the body of the Cosmic Being and a bodily device by which those who have the requisite knowledge attain the best results in temple building.

In order to establish the vastu-purusha-mandala on a construction site, it is first drafted on planning sheets and later drawn upon the earth at the actual building site. The drawing of the mandala upon the earth at the commencement of construction is a sacred rite. The rites and execution of the vastu-purusha-mandala sustain the temple in a manner similar to how the physical foundation supports the weight of the building.

Based on astrological calculations the border of the vastu-purusha-mandala is subdivided into thirty-two smaller squares called nakshatras. The number thirty-two geometrically results from a repeated division of the border of the single square. It denotes four times the eight positions in space: north, east, south, west, and their intermediate points. The closed polygon of thirty-two squares symbolizes the recurrent cycles of time as calculated by the movements of the moon. Each of the nakshatras is ruled over by a Deva, which extends its influence to the mandala. Outside the mandala lie the four directions, symbolic of the meeting of heaven and earth and also represent the ecliptic of the sun-east to west and its rotation to the northern and southern hemispheres.



The center of the mandala is called the station of Brahma, the creator of the universe. Surrounding Brahma are the places of twelve other entities known as the sons of Aditi, who assist in the affairs of universal management. The remaining empty squares

represent akasha or pure space. The vastu-purusha-mandala forms a diagram of astrological influences that constitute the order of the universe and the destinies of human lives. When placed on the building site, along with astrological calculations, can the auspicious time to begin temple construction be determined.

### The ground breaking ceremony

From the diagram of the vastu-purusha-mandala the architect proceeds to develop the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the temple. The plotting graphs of the temple are divided into two main sections-the ground plan and the vertical alignment. The square, the rectangle, the octagon and the pentagon are fundamental patterns in the horizontal or ground plan. In the vertical alignment the pyramid, the circle and the curve are most prominent. The subdivisions of the ground plan include the *brahmasthana* (the main shrine and smaller chapels) and the *mandapam* (balconies, assembly halls and auditoriums). The vertical plan consists of drawings for the *gopuram*, entrance ways, the *vimana*, the structure above the main shrine, and the *prakara*, walls.

The brahmasthana is the principal location in a temple and is where the seat of the presiding Deity will be placed. At the base of the foundation of the brahmasthana, located at the station of Brahma on the vastu-purusha-mandala, a ritual called the *garbhadhana* is performed called. The ritual invites the soul of the temple to enter within the buildings confines. During this ritual, a golden box is placed in the earth as part of the ground-breaking ceremony. The interior of the box is divided into smaller units exactly resembling the vastu-purusha-mandala. All the units of the gold box are first partially filled with dirt. In the thirty-two units representing the nakshatras, the units of Brahma, and the twelve sons of Aditi, the priest places an appropriate mantra in written form to invoke the presence of the corresponding Devata.

The sanskrit mantras chanted by the priest are as important as the actual mandala. The mantra infuses the mandala with spiritual powers. The mantras are the subtle form of the mandala and therefore the two are inseparable.

In the unit of Brahma, Ananta, a golden serpent with many raised hoods is placed. It is then surrounded with nine precious jewels or navaratna. Ananta represents the energy of God in which the universe rests in space. The nine jewels invoke the astrological influence of the nine planets and are composed of a diamond, emerald, ruby, pearl, yellow sapphire, blue sapphire, red coral, cats-eye and jade.

A gold lid with the seven continents of the earth engraved on it is placed on top of the box following which the agni-hotra, or sanctification ceremony. During the agni-hotra the priest offers clarified butter, the symbol of religious principles, into the fire, which represents the mouth of the Cosmic Being. Along with the offering of clarified butter five types of grains-rice, wheat, barley, rye and dhal, are also offered with the chanting of mantras.

## BUDDHISM RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [11]

In the Buddhist traditions, spaces become sacred by their association with the Buddha or with other sacred persons. Historically, the prototype of a Buddhist shrine was a stupa, or funerary mound, that contained the relics of the Buddha's cremated remains. A design of a Zen Buddhist temple garden at Daisen-in, Kyoto, Japan that used white gravel that represents the purity of the mind, with tree represents the Buddha's awakening. In the final instruction of Buddha to the disciple as recorded in the Pali Mahaparinibbana Sutta, the Buddha of Sakyamuni requested that his body should be cremated and the remains enshrined in a series of stupas, or funerary mounds, to serve as a focal points for worship and meditation. The basic form of a Buddhist shrine replicates one of these early stupas, with a large central mound surrounded by a railing and topped by a square structure with a central post holding a series of parasols. In the earliest stupas, the relics of the Buddha were housed in the square structure, but later they were enshrined inside the central mound. More evolved forms of stupa may allow the mound came to be decorated with representations of the Buddha, events of his life, or important stories from Buddhist texts. In different lands the basic stupa could be elaborated in many different ways. In China, Korea and Japan, the soaring shape of a pagoda is derived from the graceful parasols that used to adorn the top of stupas in India. Shrines commonly retain the low, rounded shape of a traditional stupa in Southeast Asia, whereas the structure has been elongated vertically into the shape of temple building following Hindu style. The earliest Buddhist temples were created in cave where the cave entrance led into a large open space where worshipper could sit or stand in front of a small stupa or an image of the Buddha but sometimes the Buddha's image was in a separate room similar to the *garbha-grha* or "womb house" of a Hindu temple. The holy space created by Buddhist sacred architecture can be understood on a cosmic scale. For example, the central dome of a stupa stands for Mount Meru, the Buddhist cosmic mountain that marks the central of the world, and the parasols that rise above the gods in ancient Indian tradition. The formless realm attained by Buddhist "saints" in the highest levels of meditation, and the "Buddha-fields" - the dwelling places of celestial Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of Mahayana tradition, is lied in the empty space of the sky above the parasols. Thus, the purpose of the ritual circumbulation of a supa performance is not merely to recall and venerate the life of the Buddha, but also to orient oneself firmly at the centre of the cosmos. According to the Buddhist tradition, the bodily relics and physical images of the Buddha that are venerate in shrines constitute his "Form Body". The object of veneration includes also the "Dharma Body" or the teaching of Buddha as literally described. In classical Indian writings, shrines are described as places where a copy of a Mahayana scripture is set up with great pomp and ceremony to serve as the focus of worship. According to some of the early Mahayana sutras, any place where the Dharma is expounded should also be treated as a "shrine" (*Chaitya*) of the Buddha. Sacred texts have also been placed in the relics of the Buddha in many Indian stupas. Copies of the Mahayana sutras are relied on or around the altar of many Tibetan temples for the reverence of the physical scriptures. Major architectural monument is not truly necessary to be the major features of Buddhist temples and shrines, a place that was sacred on account of its association with the Buddha.

Guanyin's Home on Mount (From : The Journey to the West, Volume 1, translated by Anthony C. Yu. University of Chicago Press : Chicago 1977, page 185)

"With brows and new moon shape And eyes like two bright stars, her jadelike face beams natural joy, And her ruddy lips seem a flash of red. Her immaculate vase overflows with nectar from year to year, Holding sprigs of weeping willow green from age. She disperses the eight woes; lives in the South Sea. She saves the good, searching for their voices, Ever heedful and solicitous, Ever wise and efficacious. Her orchid heart delights in great bamboos; Her chaste nature loves the wisteria. She is merciful ruler of the Potakala Mountain. The Living Guanyin from the Cave of Tidal Sound.

## TAOISM RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [12]

According to Taoism that represents the Chinese worldview, the cosmos is a sacred place that is interrelated, holy and complete fundamentally. The cosmos evolves and decay in a ceaseless pattern. Due to the self-creating and self-sustaining feature of the universe, all the individual manifestation within our nature are structured according to the ceaseless pattern. For the establishment of Tao temple, the builder who follow the Tao can align themselves with the flow of cosmic power and strive to cultivate and purify the universe within the body temple where the physical entity, similar to the nature of human body, is perceived as a sacred microcosm. Temples and shrines of Taoist are often erected on or near the sacred places especially those with geographical features like rivers, mountains and caves. In order to understand the basic concepts of Taoist temple, the basic qualities and modes of interaction are used as a highly abstract framework to explain the workings of virtually everything, from the physical towards the spiritual wellbeing of everything existed in the universe. The material and effort used to construct the temple, from spirits to rock, are made of the same material *qi*. From the chaotic but fertile Tao comes *qi*, or "vital matter", in its primordial state. The *qi*, as the main constituent of Tao temple, could be divided into *yinqi*, which is heavy and sinks down, and *yangqi*, which is light and ascend. From the basic binary relationships of *Ying* (negative) and *Yang* (positive) the temple as a part of the universe is created, manifest in a variety of groupings and divisions. The pentads, or groupings of five, have played important role, with the "Five Phases" (*wuxing*) becoming a powerful organization principles in the building design and set-up. The "Five Elements", "Five Phases" or "Five Agents" articulate *qi* as greater and lesser *yang* (fire and wood), greater and lesser *yinqi* (water and metal) and a balanced centre (earth) where these phases are related through the mutually destructive pattern like fire-water-earth-wood-metal and mutually engendering pattern like wood-fire-earth-metal-water. The temple is always recommended to be built in the places where *qi* can be found in great quantity and with exceptional quality that flows through channels and grids in the earth, giving life and energy to all creatures in the universe. Tao temples are usually recommended to be built on mountains that are reputed to be the homes of immortals, because mountains are always deemed to be the sacred places where the deities, human and divine could meet together. The ritual altar and the human body have also been conceptualized as mountains in Taoist ritual practises. The other sacred geographical sites are grottoes, literally "cave heavens", have also been considered as sources of vitalizing energy, places of the deities, and were deemed as sacred microcosm,

worlds within themselves. the sacred temples that built in grottos could be connected by subterranean passageways. usually the Taoist designated and mapped ten great grotto heavens, thirty six smaller grotto heavens and seventy-two blessed realms in the temple design concept in grottos. These ideas of holy Taoist temple design are based on the ancient art of *feng-shui* (literally "wind" and "water"). This is the art of fixing the most auspicious space for temples and many other infrastructure like grooves, buildings and cities etc, as another means of accessing cosmic power and also to make the most of the *qi* present in the environment and to live harmoniously within the natural orders, otherwise conflicts and disturbances to the beings living in the structures and the beings connected to the structures may arise if the wrong *qi* is accumulated. The auspicious of the site of Tao temple building may be determined by a special type of compass to take the bearings on the site and on visible features of the surrounding landscape, such as prominent rocks, mountain peaks, paths, watercourse etc. The optimum usage and access of a natural channel of energy could be through *feng-shui* , where the *qi* could be manipulated in order to take advantage of the natural *qi* for prosperity of them temple with same structure and feature to the cosmos. The natural appearance and drawings available inside and outside of the temple may influence the *qi* of the building. By knowing the true form of various structures of power sources of energy, adepts have control over these sources of power. Diagrams show the true shape of grottoes, mountains and other geographical features may be able to protect the adept from any danger that might exist within the vicinity of the Tao temple, such as demons or evil spirit.

The temple may be managed by lay persons or Taoists. The temple may house images of Taoist deities, such as Three Pure Ones, Eight Immortal, Guandi, tutelary gods and figures from the Confucian and Buddhist traditions that may have separate chambers for each deity. Some popular temples and abbeys may have received imperial patronage where the shrines and monasteries were established on numerous peaks and at sites where famous Taoist has "obtained the Way". the ideas of the Tao temple establishment were in accordance to *Tao Te Ching* a book of Tao philosophy written by Laozi the founder of Taoism.

### **CONFUCIANISM RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [13]**

In Confucianism, the temple and ritual spaces are deemed as sacred, that may be ranged from simple sites where small offerings are made, to grand imperial spaces where complex rites are conducted. Whether they are temples and shrines, or nature in the world at large, the distinction between the sacred and profane was not defined. Confucian temples are designed based on human orientation with general lack of images and statues. The temples are not to serve Gods but more as monuments to human beings to honor worthy scholars through the ages, inclusive of Confucius and his disciples. Inside the temple there exist the names of Confucius, his disciples and illustrious followers on tablets which act as the focus of veneration. Confucian temples were not private dwelling but function as public spaces that were usually used for training in ritual and music, results of civil service examination posted in them. The temple, based on the middle path concepts of Chinese philosophy, are built on a square base with symmetry

internally, where the order associated with Confucian thought could be conveyed by the arrangement of each wall a mirror-image of the one opposite. The architecture in the important halls of Confucian temple is located on the north-south axis, echoing the architecture of the emperor's palace. The Confucian's birthday, also known as "Teacher's Day" on September 28 in Taiwan, is celebrated in Confucian temples as a grand event in addition to twice-yearly events on the equinoxes traditionally. The first Confucian temple was built in Qufu in Shandong province of China in 478 BCE, the year after the decease of Confucius. The home of the direct descendants of Confucius was built adjacent to the first Confucian temple from the first century BCE, known also as the Kong family mansion during the Han dynasty in China. Other than Confucian temples schools and academies were established, that were the centre for moral formation and the locus for many rituals honoring the Great Sage, inclusive of the philosopher Zhu Xi's that stresses in the "investigation of things". Latter the Confucian school, supported by Confucian scholar were established gradually in China, Korea and Vietnam. Scholars attached to a Confucian academy might be assigned a room and a stipend. The home is the basic unit of Confucian practice, where the family altar and the ancestral shrines are placed. The altar is usually situated in the main living space of the house. There exist Confucian manuals that outline the correct placement of spirit tablets that include the names of the individual ancestors with birth and death dates, often described with number of sons. The tablets were transferred from the family house to the ancestral shrines when three to five generations have passed. Confucianism affirms the universe sacrality where the spiritual power is believed to be possessed by certain landscape features like rivers, caves and mountains that may have influence on the Confucian temples and shrines. Confucian thoughts also stresses the linkage between heaven and human kind, where the responsiveness of Heaven to human affairs were manifest in nature. The harmony and regular rhythms of the natural and human world, inclusive of the temple building, would be disrupted, with portents of chaos, for example, earthquake, drought, famine, flood, uprising etc, when the Heaven is not satisfied with the human community, affecting the foundation of Confucian temple as well. The Natural Academy of Confucianism (From : Singjung Tongguk yoji Sungnam, translated by Yongho Ch'oe, cited in Sourcebook of Korean Civilization, Volume 1, edited by Peter H. Lee, Columbia University Press : New York, 1993, page 523-24. "At daybreak each morning, with a beating of a drum, the headmaster along with the instructors of the academy assemble the students in the courtyard...the students enter the hall where lectures and discussions on the classics take place. They study, deliberate, counsel, and assist one another to reach a full understanding of the relationships between ruler and administrator, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother, and friend and friend. for days and months, together they work and rest as one body to train themselves...It is from these students that the future loyal ministers and the future filial sons are produced in prolific number to serve the state and their families. Some people object that since the sage's teachings are many, there is no reason why this hall alone should be called the Hall of Illustrating the Cardinal Principles. To them I say : "The relationships between ruler and minister, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother, and friend and friend are rooted in the heavenly principle, and they are unchanging and everlasting. How can there be anything more important than this?"

## SHINTO RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [14]

The focal point of worship according to Shinto is the *jinja* that enshrine one or more *kami*. The *jinjas* could be varied in size and importance, from tiny enclaves on the roof of modern high rise buildings. Shinto temple is distinguished from *otera* or Buddhist temples, by the presence of *torii* or sacred gateways. An example of grand Shinto temple is the massive *Meiji-jingu* specially dedicated to the spirit of Emperor Meiji in Tokyo that reigned from year 1867 to 1912. Natural landscape like Fuji-san, or Mount Fuji, is considered as a sacred landscape that is also being revered as a deity of its own right. At a typical shrine of the rice god or *Inari* situated near Kyoto at Fushimi of Japan, the fox figures serve as the Inari's messenger and guardian. The shrine of Shinto or *jinja* has been dedicated to countless spirits or *kami*. Tiny *jinja* could be located on the roofs of domestic structures, perhaps also under a few trees shading an urban open space in natural settings. Typical huge Shinto *jinja* could be a complex of several buildings. The earliest *jinjas* could be very simple outdoor altars that allow offerings to be laid in the temple often carved from local rock. The enclosed shrines, resembling the ceramic storehouses of the Yayoi culture, were modeled on the thatched rice storehouses for the veneration of rice deities. The enclosed *jinja* is a modern form of Shinto shrines that reflect the evolution of Japanese history and technology. An example of distinguished Japanese Shinto shrine is the Grand Shrines at Ise that is completely torn down and then rebuilt every twenty years in order to renew the enshrined divinities. Two major divinities are *Amaterasu* or the sun goddess located at the *Naiku* the "Inner Shrine" that holds the sacred mirror, and also *Toyouke* or the goddess of the harvest, situated at the "Outer Shrine". The other frequently rebuilt grand Shinto temple is the *jinja* at Izumo region that dedicated to the "Great Land of the Country" or Okuninushi, which is built of wood and thatch. Latter in Nara Period between 710-94 CE, many Shinto temple adapted Chinese design, for example, elaborated ornamentation, upturned gables and bright vermilion paint instead of natural wood, due to the influence of Buddhism. Thereafter the Buddhist *otera* and Shinto *jinja* looked alike, with the former recognizable by pagoda and latter by ceremonial *torii* or sacred gateway that is festooned with paired strips of paper, or *gohei*, that torn into four places to symbolize the presence of *kami*. *Torii* serves to mark the boundary between the outer, secular world, impure and the sacred confines of the shrine. The simplest form of *torii* consists of a pair of posts topped by two crossbars, one of which extends beyond the uprights. Fundamental standard layout of *jinja* is composed of two principal elements : the *honden* ("sanctuary") and the *haiden* ("oretory"). The visitor to *jinja* usually passes through the *torii* before entering the Shinto temple. At the outer building before the worshipper pray there contains stone trough with pure water in one or more storehouses, to cleanse oneself before ventures near the image of *kami*. *Honden* is rarely visited by layperson. However, *haiden* is usually approached for visitors to make small monetary offerings. The bell attached to a long rope is used to attract the attention of *kami* when clapped twice. Public meeting hall is usually available in larger shrines for ritual performances. The storehouses are used to keep "portable shrine" or *Mikoshi* between festival. Small *jinja* is generally managed by *sodai*, a lay member of the *Sodaikai* or "shrine elders association", often without full-time *guji* or priest. All Shinto shrines are managed by groups of laypeople that oversee the affairs of

the shrine. The head priest and other priests or *guji* and *kannushi* are paid by the Shinto temple management. *Kamidana*, or literally "god-shelf", is located in every traditional Japanese family home. This miniature shrine is placed with small cups of rice wine or *sake*, and a few grains of rice and vegetable dishes, as offerings to *kami* who are named according to family ancestors situated in the small replica of *honden*. Shinto pilgrimage usually climbs Mount Fuji to worship at the small shrine at the summit. Some "Fuji cult" erected small replica of Mount Fuji at local Shinto *jinja* to enable those unable to climb the real mountain to worship as a symbolic act of pilgrimage. Due to the syncretism between Buddhism and Shinto, almost every major Buddhist *otera* includes at least one small Shinto *jinja*. Under the fusion of Buddhist *bosatsu* or "enlightened beings" and Shinto *kami*, the spirits under the movement of Shugendo or "Way of the Mountain" is practiced in sacred buildings that are once *jinja* and *otera*. The Sugenda was spread by Yamabushi (literally "the mountain warrior") since Heian period (794-1185 CE). Reference literature for The Holy Place of *Ameratsu* could found at : Nihongi, Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to AD697, Volume 1, translated by WG Aston, Kegan Paul, Trench, Truner & Co Ltd : London, 1896, page 176.

## SIKHISM RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [15]

Gurwara, or the House of God, is a Sikh temple or shrine. Guru Granth Sahib is the most essential element for the temple of Sikhism. Sikhs believe that the prays to God can be offered anywhere and anytime. However, congregational worships are usually conducted at Gurwara. The important shrines of Sikhism are great centres of pilgrimage that are connected with the ten Gurus. Everybody is equal in the house of the Lord that is open to all castes, without "purdah" and irrespective of the social status outside the holy spaces. The items prohibited to enter the Sikh temple are shoes, liquor, and other intoxicants like cigarette with smoking. The head of a visitor to Gurdwara should be kept covered, and symbol of respect to the Granth Sahib. Priests of the Sikh temple or Gurwara are called *granthis*, that are employed to upkeep the temple. Gurwara was important in the earlier days, as a venue to make many decisions that affected the political and social life of the community through a consensus of the "sangat". The decisions made, or "Gurumattas", seldom be violated by any member of a community due to the binding character. Gurdwara usually functions as a spiritual knowledge and wisdom training centre that may also serve as a welfare centre to provide care for the aged, sick and poor offers food and shelter for needies. There is no particular design or plan for the building of a Gurdwara that allow any style of architecture. Activities that are usually conducted in Gurdwara are martial arts training for the defence of the downtrodden, physical culture and literacy promotion, food sharing and hymn-singing. In foreign countries outside Pakistan, the Gurdwara may serve as a Sikhism-based community centre to settle down with the services like weekends congregation, "Kirtan" classes, publication and distribution of Sikhism literature, financial assistance of grants or stipends to aid the needy, assistance and immigration information in getting social security benefits, youth services with indoor games, sports and hobby activities, foreigner Sikhism information, clinic or dispensary, old persons day centre or senior citizen's club, local police and prison contact points, employment centre and congregation for ladies and needy women, part-time

library services, Punjabi language classes, Sikh religious seminars and discussion groups etc. Special Sikh flag or Nishan Sahib usually hangs from a high pole of a Gurdwara. Grand Gurdwara can even establish schools, colleges and hospitals for public benefits regardless of race and religions. Simple forms of Gurdwara can be built on a common congregational main hall and adequate places for a dining hall, toilet and kitchen. The first Gurdwara was known as "Dharam-sal", established by Guru Nanak in year 1521 at Kartarpur. Latter another four historical shrines were established with the status of Takhts or thrones that made the decisions of "sangats" with great importance. These shrines are Keshgarh Sahib (Anandpur), Hazur Sahib (Nanded, Mahara Sutra), Damdama Sahib (Talwandi Sabo) and Harmandir Sahib (Patna).

## JUDAISM RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [16]

The earlier centre of worship for Jewish people was a movable temple, called the "mishkan" or Tabernacle, which was instructed by Moses to build when the Jewish people wandered for forty years in desert after being rescued from Egypt. An elaborate, symbolic pattern of worships was conducted. There were three temples of Judaism at the early stage. The first temple was first erected in Jerusalem with permanent structure after the Jewish entered the land of Israel with initial mobile temple, that was destroyed by Babylonians. Second Temple was also built in Jerusalem after the destruction of Jewish nation, taken into captivity in Babylon, which was also destroyed by the Romans in the year 70 of the Common Era. Thereafter there are no prophetic signs concerning the restoration of the Third Temple. However, Temple Mount in Jerusalem is still considered by the Jews as the holiest place in the world. Within the Jewish temple precincts, cattle, goats, sheep and pigeons, together with flour, oil and incense could be brought or sacrificed depending on the specific requirements of the Torah, where such item of offering is termed as "karbon" or specific act that allowed everybody to draw close to God, opening windows of divine connection that allow the expression of atonement, joy, thanksgiving and the fulfilment of promises to be performed in the temple. The "karbon" that could be sacrificed, eaten or burned was limited by time and place in temple. That means effective and a divine connection was made when the "karbon" was consummated within these windows of opportunity, otherwise the sacrifice could paradoxically or contrarily defile and harm. Although the institution of temple worship and sacrifices are no longer available after the destruction of the Second Temple, Talmudic tractates dealing with temple sacrifice are still alluded to in contemporary ritual in modern synagogue. Current modern Jewish synagogue is considered as a place of worship rather than as a "temple" of old definition even the word "temple" is still applied by the non-orthodox communities. The Temple destroyed in Jerusalem was replaced by the temple within a person – the heart being the altar. The modern Jewish synagogue is specially built for communal worship or study although religious services could take place anywhere. If Jewish community is established then there is a duty upon them to erect or dedicate a special place for religious activities. The eastern wall houses the ark that may contain many scrolls of the "sefer" Torah, donated to the synagogue by individuals to commemorate special events. The ark is often elaborated and screened by an ornate curtain or parochial. There are two different traditions relating to writing,

housing and reading the “sefer” Torah in Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities. Although the texts of both comprise of identical 304805 letters, there is an exceptional one letter which is in dispute. The religious service is led by “ba’al t’fila” that stands in front of the ark, sometimes on the “bima” itself to the right of it. Within the synagogue eternal flame or light is burnt. In larger synagogue a separate upper balcony for women is available that allow men and women pray separately, sometimes forming a dividing screen or partition especially in Orthodox tradition. “Synagogue” literally means a place of assembly. The vibrancy and future of Jewish communities are not dependent in the splendour of the architecture of the synagogue but measured by the level of activity in the synagogue. The basic design of “mishkan” and Temples in Jerusalem can still be recognized in modern Jewish religious centre, that is able to retain the underlying architecture requirement of the Torah and the “mitzvot” even the contemporary Jewish communities are challenged to develop pattern of living which are relevant, meaningful and inclusive.

For religious Jewish community, it is all too easy for the Jewish synagogues to become a beautiful shell while the synagogue has a level of sanctity and holds a focal point of life, as can be visited in many different Jewish communities throughout the world. The location of “sefer” Torah in Jewish synagogue could be different for two main Jewish traditions – Ashkenazi tradition and Sephardi tradition. In Sephardi communities, cylindrical, richly painted and lacquered wooden case is used to house the “sefer” torah. This case is placed upright on the “bima” and opened, allowing the reader the reader to read and exposed vertical columns of the text at the time of reading. However, the Torah, according to Ashkenazi tradition, is covered with a velvet mantel on which is placed frequently a crown of silver and a breastplate. A pair of wooden roller, with protruding ends of which are usually covered with silver decoration, is used to attach the “sefer” Torah. The reading of “sefer” Torah in Jewish religious synagogue is universal where the “sefer” Torah is taken up onto the “bima”, placed on a table, latter uncovered and read. The synagogue officials will distribute coveted privileges and “aliyot” for those who assist the taking out of “sefer” Torah and returning it to the ark at each stage as an honour. The centre of Jewish synagogue is occupied usually by the reader of “sefer” Torah that stands on the elevated stage after the “sefer” Torah is taken out from the ark and carried through the congregation to the “bima”. The architectural detail of the synagogue may vary in different culture and geographical locations, reflecting the ambient culture, that testifies to its three-and-a-half thousand years of development, with diversified internal furnishing. Jewish in Western and Central Europe communities decorated the Jewish synagogue with rows of polished pews in ecclesiastical Gothic facades. Local tiny synagogue in Israel containing floor covered with carpet and stone benches, duplicates the old laces of prayer of Jewish people in Morocco, Iran and Iraq.

## BAHAI RELIGIOUS CENTRE BUILDING [17]

The temple or houses of worship of the Bahai Faith or religion are open structure, being designed to demonstrate the principle practicality about Bahai's commitment to unity in diversity. The temple is also filled with light, as a part of expressive of the attitude the Bahai religion takes towards its relationships with all parts of the human based civilized society. The houses of worship are not only serve for Bahai community services but also opened as places where anybody with any faiths or no faith meet to worship in a building with a side and a dome, symbols of the acceptance of all religious traditions. The services inside Bahai sacred spaces are non-denominational without any sermon or other attempts to cast these teachings in a mould of Bahai interpretation specifically. The service participants may enter the temple by any door to experience the readings and prays from world's faith scripture in assemblies to recognize one Creator. The spirit of optimism of Bahai temple could be proven in the integration of diversified architectural traditions, design openness with Bahai services free from sermons and ritual. Temple has played a central role in Bahai community life, where other agencies, such as colleges or schools, hostels, home for the aged and administrative centers will be constructed in time around the Bahai temple. The music inside Bahai temple are selected with set of music sung by a trained Capella choir. An example of typical Bahai temple, located in Wilmette, Illinois in United States of America (USA), named "Mother Temple of the West", is able to integrate several major architectural traditions and wove together various religious symbols in a single building. According to Louis Bourgeois in *un Homme et son oeuvre* : "...When man-made beliefs are rooted out of all religions, we find only harmony. Today, however, religion is foundering so such in superstitions and human theories that it has to be defined in a new form in order to become pure and spotless once more. It is the same in architecture... Now, in this new concept of the Temple is woven, in a symbolical form, the great Bahai teaching of unity, unity of all religions and all mankind. We find these combinations of mathematical lines symbolizing those of the universe and in their complex merging of all religions into one."

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**APPENDIX B :  
PETITION TO SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTIFAITH CENTRE  
BUILDING**

Name : Optional -  
Phone : Course :  
E-mail : Student ID :  
Postal Address :  
Faith and Religious Denomination : Christian / Muslim / Buddhist

*“I wish to support the Multifaith Centre Building Establishment”*

Signature : Date :

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*RECEIPT OF PETITION : THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN PHYSICAL MULTIFAITH CENTRE  
CONTACT PERSON : ..... PHONE : ..... E-MAIL : .....  
VOLUNTEER MAILING ADDRESS : .....*

**PETITION TO SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTIFAITH CENTRE  
BUILDING**

Name : Optional -  
Phone : Course :  
E-mail : Student ID :  
Postal Address :  
Faith and Religious Denomination : Christian / Muslim / Buddhist

*“I wish to support the Multifaith Centre Building Establishment”*

Signature : Date :

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*RECEIPT OF PETITION : THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN PHYSICAL MULTIFAITH CENTRE  
CONTACT PERSON : ..... PHONE : ..... E-MAIL : .....  
VOLUNTEER MAILING ADDRESS : .....*

**APPENDIX C : FORMAL LETTER TO REQUEST EXTERNAL SPONSORSHIPS FOR  
MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING**

Dear sirs,

**REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIPS OF LAND AND BUILDING FOR MULTIFAITH  
CENTRE**

With reference to the matter above, as a volunteer to develop Multifaith Centre Building, I would like to request sponsorships for the building of physical multifaith centre that could help the multifaith organization to conduct various activities that could benefit mainly your organizations and the community.

2. The purpose of the sponsorship for the building particularly for various faith groups is to promote the understanding of the concept of religious philosophies through various holy activities organized by the religious groups where one physical building is required such as Multifaith Centre Building. The type of activity organized will be suggested by your organization to meet with the objective of your organization as a building, land and utility sponsor, at the same time, to meet the objectives of the interfaith religious organizations. The proposed Multifaith Centre Building will try to suggest program that could mainly suit the need of your organization, at the same time, ensure the program that funded by your organization is suitable for the needs of the multiracial, multicultural and multireligious community and consistent with the aims and objectives of societies.

3. Kindly please contact me if your organization would like to donate cash or cash-in-kind, volunteering services, beneficial ideas and constructive directions that could be helpful mainly for your organization to expand your business opportunity among the religious community via physical Multifaith Centre Building establishment program.

4. At the same time, your organization is welcome to request further details on the issues and content of sponsorship proposal that need to be addressed before proceeding into formal discussion progressively. Please inform us your requirement and the multifaith groups will try to fulfill the wishes of the sponsors to make the application of physical religious centre sponsorship successful.

5. At this stage, I would like to express my appreciation towards your concern for the society via reviewing and supporting the social events organized by the Multifaith Centre Building via physical religious building sponsorships.

Thank you!

With Blessings,

Name, Volunteer for Multifaith Building Committee

Address :

Mobile / SMS :

E-mail :

## **APPENDIX D : COVER LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE TO CONSTRUCT MULTIFAITH CENTRE BUILDING**

COVER LETTER FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF INTERVIEWS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTIFAITH CENTRE

Dear interested interfaith members and committees,

I would like to appreciate your effort and commitment in the participation of the short interview to complete the questionnaire for the initial survey on the establishment of Multifaith Centre Building, a centralised religious centre.

The purposes of the proposed Multifaith Centre Building are to provide a fixed and self-owned religious space for the interfaith community members to conduct various religious service that will bring profits to the fellow faith groups in the society in spiritual practises and increase the marketing values of the educational and religious philosophical outputs of the Religious Studies. This is a long term project, so serious consideration and efforts has to be placed on it. As an initial step, this survey has to be conducted to research on the best direction in the establishment of the Multifaith Centre Building that suit the objectives of the interfaith community, at the same time, relevant to the activities of the religious and faithful executives and members.

This survey will take approximately 15 minutes. It could be completed online and submitted to the organisers. The interviewer will appreciate if you could spent some time to present your comment and ideas that will be forwarded to decision maker for the Multifaith Centre Building Committee to provide better facilities to all the future Multifaith Centre executives and members.

With thanks,

The Interviewer





## **ATTACHMENT E : RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR MULTIFAITH CENTRE – BUDDHIST SITE BUILDING AND PHYSICAL FACILITY MANAGEMENT**

### Purpose of Documentation

Under proper facility documentation and management for Buddhist site of Multifaith centre, specific religious procedures as mentioned below will need to be followed by Buddhist committee that occupy the space allocated.

### Types of Activities

Due to the limitation of space and in consideration of neighbourhood multifaith partners from other religious groups, the preferable activities, recommended for Buddhist executives and committees are as below :

- (a) Committee and unit meeting and discussion of philosophy
- (b) Mini snack party and refreshment
- (c) Singing, poem and chant renunciation with soft and peaceful nature

Types of activities NOT encouraged in Multifaith Centre Buddhist site are mentioned but not limited to the followings as recommended activities:

- (a) Peace and absolute quite meditation except weekends, in order to prevent theft of possessions and body of Buddhist members during sitting meditation
- (b) Burning of candles and incense that could disturb fellow neighbours and causes fire hazard

### Duty Roaster

Buddhist Executive Committee (EXCO) will have to assign specific teams assisting the EXCO representatives to manage the property kept in the Buddhist multifaith site, prepare roaster of duty for cleanliness and decoration of the building to ensure convenient, peaceful and welcoming environment suitable for Buddhist philosophical practices.

### Attached Rules

Buddhist philosophical multifaith site will be managed in accordance to Multifaith Centre Facility Management Committee and contract among different faith groups occupying the similar area.