



The transformation of Sdr. Asmindrup church has brightened up the room and makes use of light furniture

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Medieval church reinvented in Sdr. Asmindrup

The 900-year-old village church in Sdr. Asmindrup, 50 km west of Copenhagen, Denmark, has been reinvented and will serve as an example of how the church space can be brought into the present. The local church council of Vipperød parish and Arkitema Architects aim to create a space that conveys the Christian message to modern people in a more contemporary layout.

It is a big job changing the layout of a church that has very traditional shapes, like most churches in Denmark. Until recently, Sdr. Asmindrup Church featured a larger altar and altarpiece in the chancel, and a lot of heavy, dark

furniture. The pulpit still hangs on the right side of the nave, but it will soon be taken down. The local church council and the clergy want to create a 'clean' and flexible space in the 900-year-old church for innovative services in settings that encourage dialogue, co-ownership, and inclusion.

The very idea behind the refurbishment of the church space in Sdr. Asmindrup is that the church should act as a liturgical lab in the parish and in Holbæk deanery. Cooperation with the local theatre on, e.g., theatrical services has already been agreed, so the 900-year-old village church will provide a place for both concentration and serenity, and for surprises and new communities.

This wish was backed by the bishop in Roskilde, resulting in large changes to the small village church: Much of the equipment and furniture was removed, including all pews, the pulpit, and the altarpiece. Replacing it is a bright, warm, and vibrant space that is recognizable to regular churchgoers, but offers new opportunities for the future. A new, light Communion table, which can easily be moved, is located right at the entrance from the porch. The flexibility and aesthetics of the furniture highlight the innovation of the space functions, encouraging a much more versatile use of the church than before.

A large wooden floor now extends throughout the church room, which is a key detail, since it serves to tie the room together and boost the perception of the vault murals. The entire refurbishment is of a high standard: Underfloor heating; large drapes, which can divide the room; and light, elegant furniture designed by Nicolai De Gier, Associate Professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation, secure flexibility that allows the church to easily accommodate a variety of events.

"It was important for us to create a room with the warmth and room for both traditions and all the new initiatives that the future will bring. We've kept a few recognizable elements, which will be highlighted by the layout – from the limestone sepulchral tablets in the porch to the altarpiece, which has been relocated. In the future, you will be able to lie on the floor or enjoy a private conversation on a cushion in the choir. We don't know how the church will develop in the next 900 years, but Sdr. Asmindrup Church now has every possibility of rethinking traditions and putting the church to use in brand new ways," tells Poul Schüle, Partner with Arkitema Architects.

Several of the items removed from Sdr. Asmindrup Church, such as the pulpit, will be moved to Museum West Zealand.

Facts

Engineer: Øllgaard Rådgivende Ingeniører A/S

Furniture: Design by Nicolai De Gier, Associate Professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation.

Find more photos of the project, photos taken before the transformation, and sections and plans

here: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1aDJD56rXU6Almi9V47jN3U9s5weruwQD>

New photos: Jens Lindhe

Photos of the original interior from the Google drive-link: Arkitema Architects

Arkitema Architects is the largest architectural firm in Denmark, and the fifth largest Scandinavia with offices in Aarhus(DK), Copenhagen(DK), Stockholm(SE), Malmö(SE) and Oslo(NO). We employ more than 550 people that design buildings and landscapes all over the Scandinavian region, especially within office buildings, apartment complex's, cultural buildings, healthcare, learning, infrastructure and landscaping.

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