

August Update

Overview

Since our July 19 kickoff meeting, the Project Team has been fully engaged in master planning for the church and surrounding development. The building site has been selected, and preliminary design of the main building is underway. Land planners are developing the residential plan, and civil engineers have completed a topographic grid survey around the church as the first step toward a grading plan. We also continue working with the City on utilities, drainage, and roadways.

Design Theme — Homestead

One of the most exciting updates is the design theme. From the beginning, leadership's vision for a church-centered "town square" development has been about more than buildings. We wanted this project to add value to the community by reflecting three values that have guided every decision: faith, family and community.

The question became: How do we translate those values into the look, layout and feel of a place where faith, family and community can flourish?

Those same values are woven into the history of this area as the birthplace of Texas. As I researched that history, one word stood out: **Homestead**. From the 1840s through the 1880s, thousands of immigrants, many from Germany, settled this area. They brought strong traditions of faith and family and built homesteads that became the foundation of strong communities.

Those homesteads also featured several distinctive architectural elements that will inspire the design of our new facility and master plan.

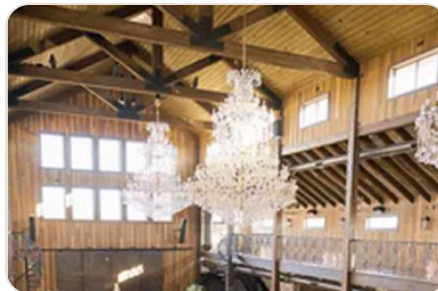
The Breezeway

Traditional homestead cabins often consisted of two living spaces connected by an open breezeway. Shaded from the Texas heat, the breezeway became a natural family gathering place. Our new church will feature a large, covered breezeway connecting the worship/Great Hall area with the main classroom area.



The Great Hall

Community gatherings often took place beneath the exposed rafters of a large barn. As communities grew, gathering places such as La Bahia Hall carried forward that tradition. Our central lobby will become a rafter-filled community gathering space opening onto the breezeway, large enough for small weddings and events overlooking the valley.

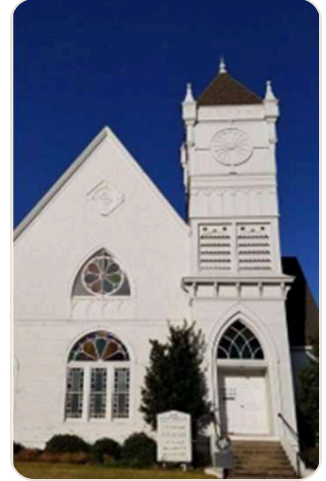


Nature and the Land

The land was central to homestead life—not only for livelihood, but also for its beauty. That relationship was rooted in the homesteader's gratitude to the Creator for His provision and care for the land. The Great Hall and Breezeway will overlook a central green space designed for outdoor events, amphitheater-style gatherings or simply enjoying the valley.

The Bell Tower

Perhaps the most exciting feature is the bell tower. Early communities used the bell towers to call people to worship, celebrate important moments and rally neighbors in times of danger. Usually associated with the church, the bell tower became a visible and audible center of community life. One of the area's oldest surviving examples stands at Independence Baptist Church c.1840. Our church will have a bell tower as well—the first thing you see, and hopefully hear, as you enter the development.



I can't wait to share design images when we get further along.

Blessings!
- Steve