

An aerial architectural rendering of a large, modern building with a curved, multi-level facade. The building is surrounded by lush greenery, including trees and grassy areas. A parking lot with several cars is visible to the right of the building. A road with cars and a pedestrian walkway are also shown. The overall scene is presented in a blue-tinted, semi-transparent style.

# Willow Creek North Shore

Glenview, Illinois

ADRIAN SMITH + GORDON GILL  
ARCHITECTURE

# Willow Creek North Shore Glenview, Illinois

AS+GG has designed the new Willow Creek North Shore, now under construction at the Glen, in Glenview, Illinois.

## SERVICES

Architecture  
Interior Design

## CLIENT

Willow Creek North Shore

## FUNCTION

Cultural  
Religious

## FACTS

6,689 sm

The 72,000 square-foot Willow Creek North Shore was designed to feature a large 1200-seat state of the art auditorium in the center of the facility with administration offices, adult ministry spaces, educational classrooms for all ages, a café, and a large sky-lit preassembly area surrounding the main sanctuary. There will also be several gathering points throughout the building. Additionally, two open landscaped, elliptical-shaped courtyard spaces will bring natural light into the sanctuary and to the corridors accessing the classroom and office facilities.

Local construction group Glenn H. Johnson began construction in June 2015. Several months were dedicated to site works, which elevated the church by 5-8 feet from its original grade, creating a gentle plateau with views of the surrounding community. A large retention pond was also constructed near the entrance of Shermer Road, as well as surface parking for over 700 vehicles, and access drives to and from the site.

The new church will be accessed by two main entrances, each arriving into a spacious pre-function lobby, making the facility easy to navigate and less intimidating for new visitors. The most important concept in the design is the gentle curve of the circulation paths that allows occupants to flow through the space, while enjoying views of the outside. It was critical to the design that the building established a welcoming feeling and a clear diagram that understandable for both the first-time visitor as well as those who attend on a regular basis

The design concept was inspired by the form of a mustard seed, a biblical reference that symbolizes the strong faith and fellowship of the congregation, as well as the connection of the building to nature. The building's elliptical shape was designed to strategically bring the experience of the outdoors, inside to the occupants.

A youth group worship room, located at the north end of the building and facing opposite to the auditorium, will strengthen youth ministry activities, while the Harvest Café, located in front of the auditorium, will be used for more casual meetings and as a gathering space on Sundays for those who wish to watch the service on video screens. The café will have direct access to two landscaped courtyards that can be used for weddings, funerals, and other functions.

The use of natural light was imperative to the success of the design. Floor-to-ceiling windows that face out toward the campus and inward to the intimate courtyard, provide views and daylighting to most of the spaces. The building faces directly south, with a 15' deep aluminum sunshade that protects the front of the building façade from direct sunlight.

Flexibility was also key in the design concept. For instance, administration offices will be used by the church's dedicated staff Monday through Friday but will be available on the weekend for adult ministry services and can provide additional opportunities for classes, workshops, and fundraising activities.

Set to be completed in the fall of 2016, the new Willow Creek North Shore will be an innovative architectural landmark for the Village of Glenview and form an important place of community for its residents for years to come.





