



## DIPLOMA PROGRAM FALL 2017

Diploma candidate:	Ragnhild Havåg
Institute:	FTH
Main supervisor:	Beate Hølmebakk
Second supervisor:	-
External supervisor:	-
Company cooperation:	-
Title of project:	Ulstein Church

# Ulstein Kirke

Student: Ragnhild Havåg  
Supervisor: Beate Hølmebakk

This Diploma project is about the building of a new church in Ulsteinvik. The project came into being after the local church council recently initiated an architectural competition for a new, bigger, and more modern church, won by Snøhetta Architects in 2015. The diploma will be an alternative project to the winning proposal “Excelsior”



*Ulstein Kirke today*



## 02 – THESIS:

The existing church in Ulsteinvik was originally built in 1847 and has been in its current location since 1878 when it was relocated to central Ulsteinvik, and is today a listed and protected building. It still holds a central position in the social life of the town, home to about 8000 residents and a thriving maritime industry.

My interest in designing a new church in Ulsteinvik lies in the possibility to work with church architecture in a concrete context while engaging with two cornerstones of Ulsteinvik's history, namely the church and the shipyards. As I grew up in Ulstein I have intimate knowledge of both, and I hope to build on my existing knowledge of the area and the congregation. The project will allow me to work with three things of particular interest to me:

First, as an architect I am interested in churches and how a religious program can be translated into a building, while the service requires particular architectonic solutions. A church is a place where people come together when life begins, changes or ends. This is both contrasted and enhanced by the church foremost as a solid and static place, where continuity and repetition, and a sense of community and belonging is very important.

Secondly, as the congregation already has a building, a part of my project is the relationship between the old and new church, using the historical building as a reference for the new one. As preservation considerations make it difficult to directly extend the old church or redesign it, I will search for a new site in the town.

Thirdly, the main industry in Ulsteinvik is the shipyards, with Ulstein Group, Kleven and Rolls Royce Marine functioning as a cluster. I want to appropriate materials, tools and tectonics from the shipyards in the church expansion, to anchor the church locally and historically and continue the sense of community within the congregation. Finally, the ship is an important image in the Christian tradition, giving the union of industry and religion symbolical significance.



*Interior of Ulstein church*



*The local shipyard industry*



### 03 – APPROACH:

The 2015 architectural competition was won by Snøhetta architects, with their proposal Excelsior. The reasons for designing an alternative to the winning project are as following:

1: I question the validity and relevance of the symbolism of the project, stating for instance that “The layered shape ... is a reference to waves in water or the year-rings of a trunk“. 2: I`m also missing an overall rigour and logic both techtonic and as an idea for a church. 3: While I understand the advantages of building close to the old church, placement and topography of this plot is very difficult for a church.

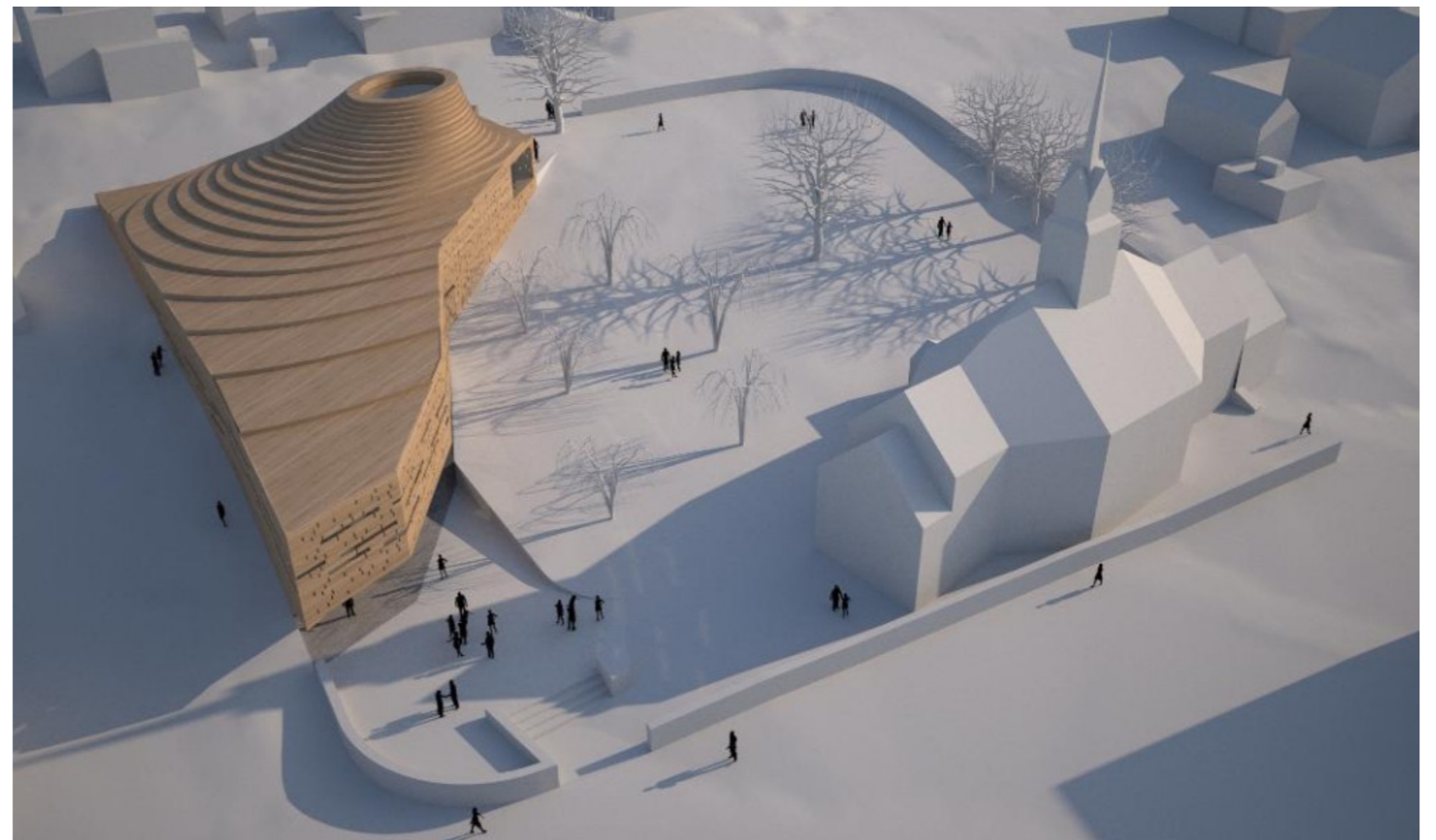
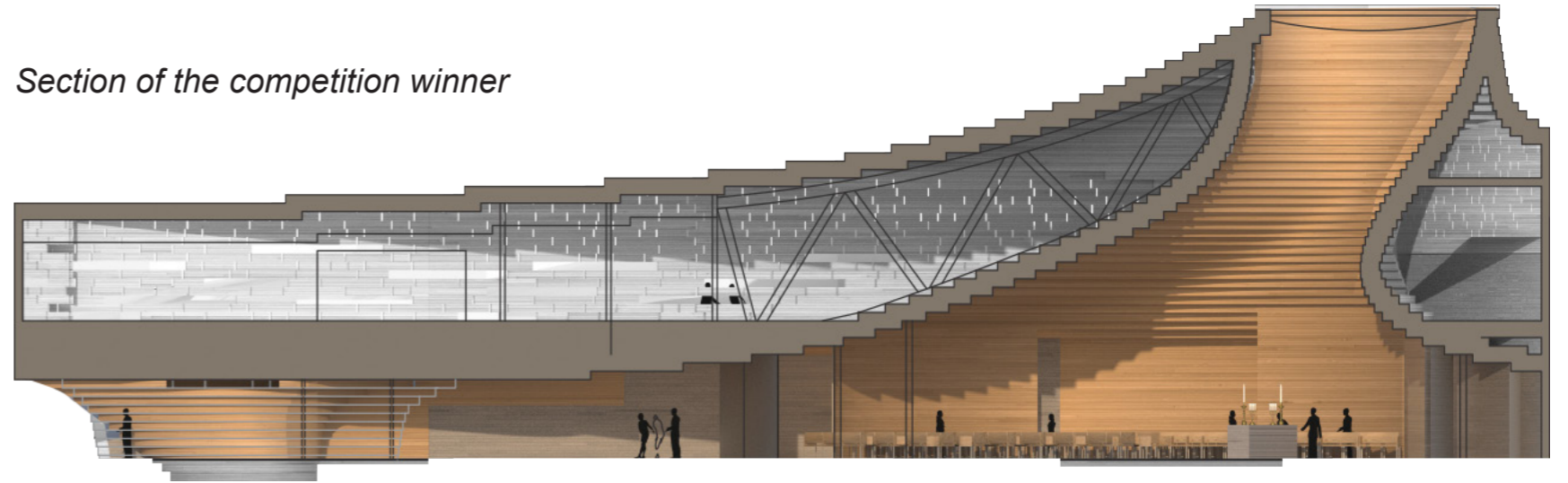
The aim of my diploma project is to conceive, design, and visualize a comprehensive church building through conventional architectural means, such as plans and sections, models, text and illustrations. I will try to work on all scales from the town-situation to the details of the possible steel techtonics. Along the way I will use the brief in the architectural competition from 2015 as resistance and framework in my project, and accept some key issues as presented there, such as the notion that the existing church is too small or lacks functionabilty.

I will also interview sources close to the building process such as the local priest, people from the church council and the ongoing funding campaign to build the winning proposal from the competition, and persons who have studied the case such as an earlier diploma student, and a local historian.

*Text gathered from the Ulstein church web-page, describing Excelsior:*

*“Konseptet for “Excelsior” kan forklarast med tre ord: Steinen – Treet – Romet. Steinen eller klippa er fundamentet som den nye kyrkja vert bygd på. Den representerer det evige, det solide, fortida og alteret som eit møte med Gud. Det nye kyrkjebygget i tre etablerast som eit nytt landskap. Treverket representerer vekst, skaparverk framtid og berekraft. Den lagdelte forma lyfter seg opp i eit overlys over kyrkjerommet, og har referanse til ringar i vatn, og årringar i tre. Romet vert lik eit holrom i treet. Det representerer notida, livet og vandringa. I kyrkjerommet finn vi både den horisontale aksen i fellesskapen og vandringa inn, og den vertikale aksen i forbindinga mellom himmel og jord i overlyset.*

*Section of the competition winner*



*Rendering of the competition winner in the context of the old church*



## 04 – PROGRAM:

The church is a place for both very sacred and mundane tasks. The program was defined in the 2015 competition. It includes the building of a large capacity space with the following functions:

- A church assembly hall with sacresty and porch
- A youth department, lecture hall, nursery, and “kirkekaffe”
- Offices and administration
- Storage facilities and technical rooms
- An outdoor space in front of the church



*Confirmation ceremony*



*“Julenattine” Christmas concert*



*Local priest Margit Lovise and Kirkeverge Christfried Kaul*



## 05 – SITE:

A part of the project will be to find a new site within central Ulsteinvik. Ulsteinvik is a small town of around 8000 inhabitants and the center of the Ulstein municipality, on the west coast of Norway. Church activities still play an important role in the local community.

Old Ulstein church was completed in 1847, in a location even closer to the sea, where a medieval church was hit by lightning and damaged beyond repair a few years earlier. The timber church was moved to its current location in 1878 and today appears only with minor changes, such as the clock on the spire. The church is still in frequent use by the local congregation, and is listed and protected.

The existing church is a typical timber church from the mid-nineteenth-century, when political circumstances and strong population growth resulted in the building of new churches in almost every municipality. This imprinted the image of the white wooden church as the stereotype of the Norwegian Church.

The existing church resembles the church typology popular with architects like Hans Ditlev Linstow and Christian Grosch. Grosch, who was one of the most important figures in Norwegian architecture at the time and who drew over 80 churches, most of them built, also made drawings for Ulstein church. His drawings were however not realized as the church for logistical reasons was already begun when the drawings finally arrived to Ulsteinvik.



*Ulsteinvik seen from Hasundhornet (the old church marked in red)*



*Ulstein Group shipyard*



## 06 – SUBMITTED MATERIAL:

Situation plan 1:500

Situation model 1:500

Plans 1:100

Sections 1:100

Building model 1:50

Working in steel 1:1 ?

Illustrations, model photos

Text

## 07 – SCHEDULE:

Mid-August: Start of Diploma semester

September 20: First pin-up

October 18: Second pin-up

November 22: First test presentation

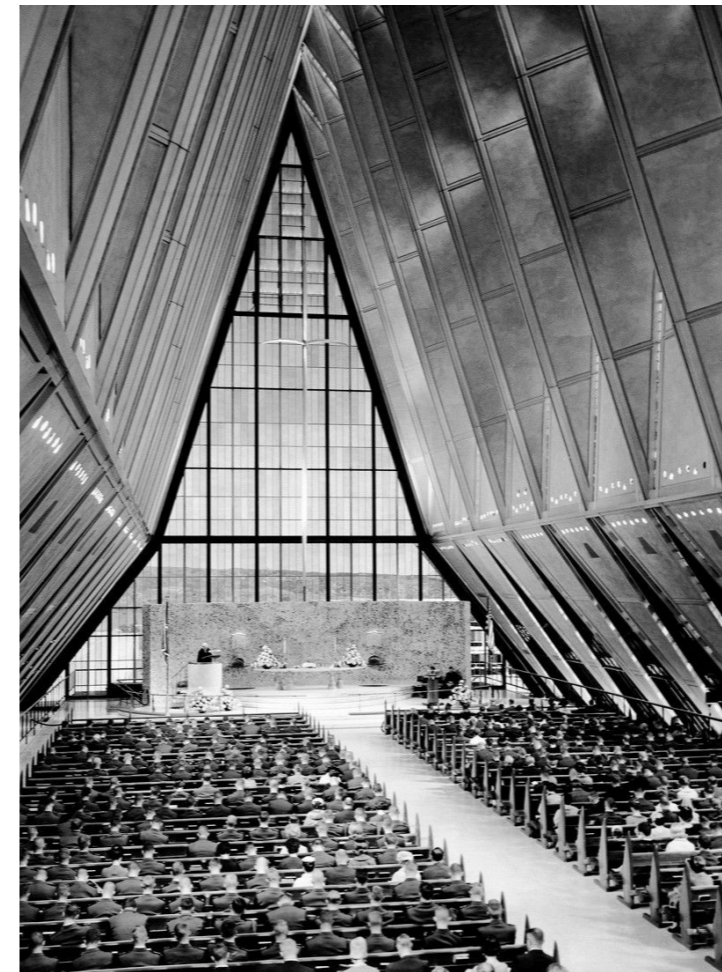
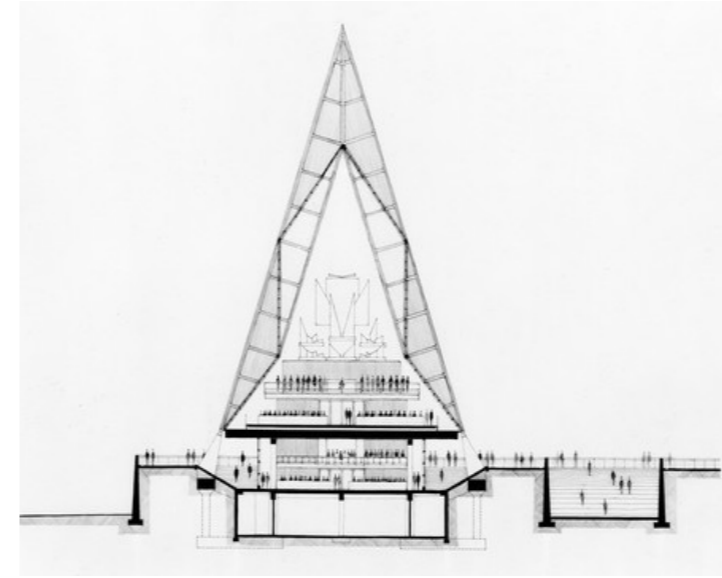
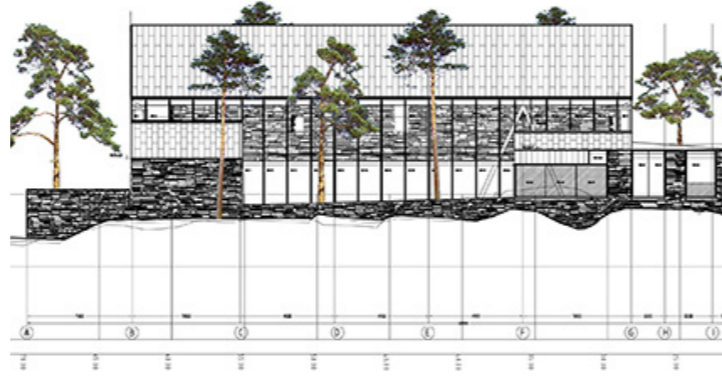
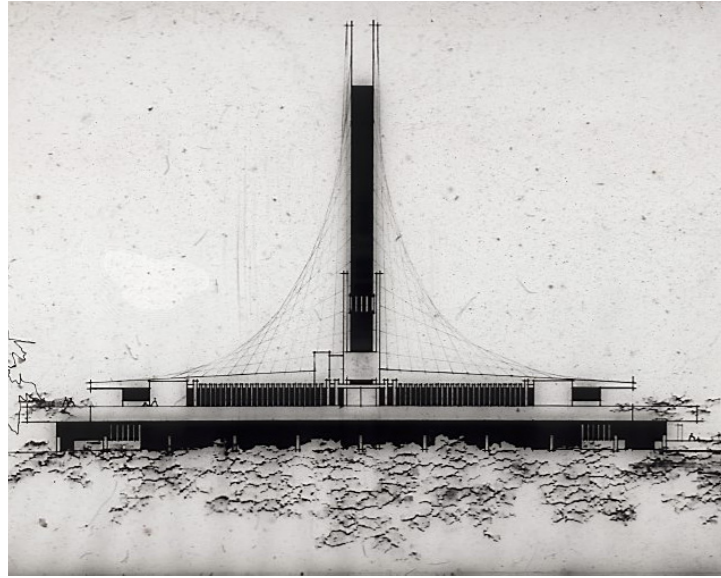
Mid December: Deadline diploma

Start of January: Test of presentations

Early January: Diploma reviews



08 – REFERENCE PROJECTS:



*SLETTEBAKKEN KIRKE*

*Completed in 1970  
Architect: Tore Sveram*

*MORTENSRUD KIRKE*

*Completed in 2002  
Architect: Jensen og Skodvin*

*US AIR FORCE ACADEMY  
CADET CHAPEL*

*Completed in 1962  
Architect: Netsch, Skidmore,  
Owings and Merrill*

*MARTIN LUTHERS KYRKA*

*Completed in 1970  
Architect: Engstrand och Speek*



## 09 – REFERENCES:

### INTERVIEWS AND CONVERSATIONS:

Margit Lovise Holte	local priest
Christfried Kaul	kyrkjeverge
Øystein Ekrol	Archiologist and Ulstein historian
Harald Nordal	Member of the church council
Espen Surnevik	Architect specialising on churches
Aslaug Nordal	Student doing her diploma on Ulstein church

### LITERATURE:

Sunnmørskyrkjene (Øystein Ekroll, Per Eide (Foto)) Bla.no, 2012.  
The house of God (Edward Norman) Thames and Hudson, 1990  
Books on the materials wood and steel  
Books on the Ulstein shipyards