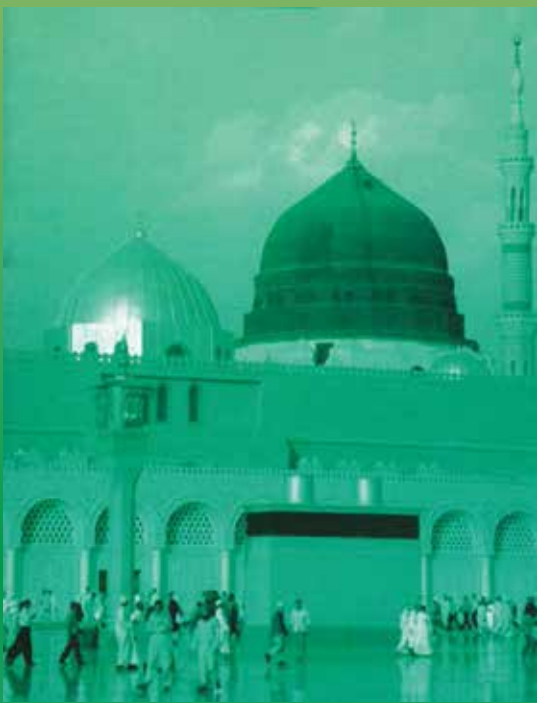


SACRED SPACES

The CHURCH in Christian Scripture is described as the *body of believers*. Christian church architecture can range from very elaborate to very plain and without ornamentation beyond a simple cross.

Some churches focus on the preaching of the *Word of God* and they also are contextually focused on the pulpit where the *Word* is preached.

Altars occupy a prominent place in *Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican*, and other highly liturgical denominations. They are used to hold and to prepare the bread and wine used in the Eucharist. In *Protestant* churches, a table serves as the centerpiece of the holy communion service, a remembrance of Jesus' death and resurrection.



A MOSQUE is a place of worship for followers of the Islamic faith. Muslims often refer to the mosque by its Arabic name, **Masjid** (pl. **Masajid**). The word *mosque* in English refers to all types of buildings dedicated for Islamic worship. The primary purpose of the mosque is to serve as a place where Muslims can come together for prayer, including the Friday congregational prayer, the *Jumma*.

They are not only places for worship and prayer, but also places to learn about Islam and meet fellow believers. Most mosques have elaborate domes, minarets for calling worshippers to prayer, and large open prayer halls. Mosques originated on the Arabian Peninsula, but now exist on all the world's inhabited continents.

TEMPLE, SYNAGOGUE, and SHUL all mean the same thing to followers of Judaism—they are all *houses of worship*. Distinctions between the three have to do with the traditions of faith and matters of ritual for *Reform, Conservative*, and *ORTHODOX* Jews, respectively. Each space is considered a place of worship and prayer, as well as a center of learning.

Jewish teaching also suggests that *any* space may be considered a space of worship, whether it is one's home or a public venue, because a commitment to Judaism is as much an individual endeavor as it is a call to a congregation.

