

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Bless, O Lord, This Creature, Beer: A case study analysis of the adaptive reuse of historic churches as craft breweries

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The number of vacant religious buildings is rising due to powerful demographic shifts in American religious participation. Craft breweries are emerging as one of the most popular, if controversial, reuse options for historic churches. Existing literature addresses the complicated nature of adaptive reuse in preserving the integrity of a building through its transition into a new function. However, very little is written about the complicated nature of the adaptive reuse of religious buildings, despite the greater complications posed by their material form and the cultural values they embody. Using case study methodology, this study examined three former Christian worship spaces in the Rust Belt states of Michigan, Indiana, and Pennsylvania. Ultimately, the study determines that the case study adaptive reuse projects retain the architectural integrity of the buildings and follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, thus recommending craft breweries as a compatible use for historic church buildings.