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# Worship

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Photo courtesy of Harvestime.



# Fulfilling Destiny

**A central Texas church attracts families from a local military base and surrounding**

By Dawn Allcot

## ▼ A VISION FOR OUTREACH

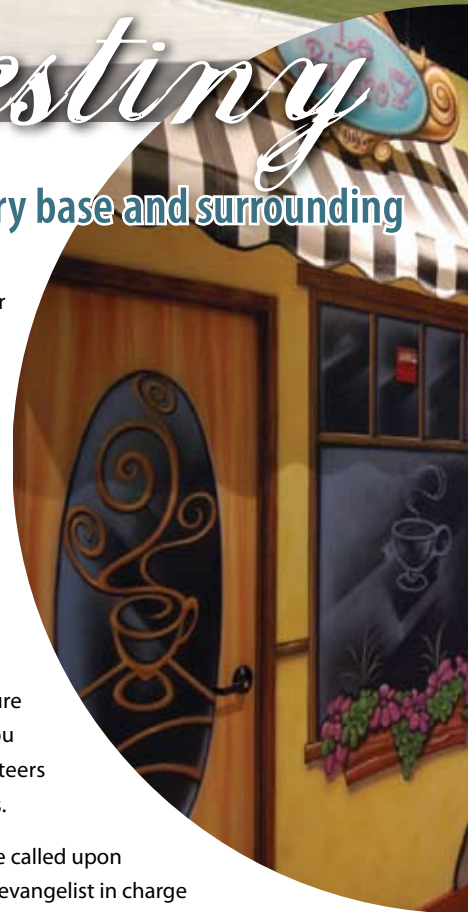
Destiny World Outreach Center (DWOC) built a new 33,000-square-foot facility designed to attract and minister to the age 20-40 demographic. The facility was designed by Larkspur, Colo.'s Harvestime and architect Patrick Morgan, along with audio-visual and acoustics designer Audio Ethics Inc., Charlotte, N.C. Pastor Chad Rowe and wife Marla (pictured below) wanted to bring design elements from the secular world to reinforce the church's mission to create a welcoming, come-as-you-are environment for the community.



During a visit to Universal Studios, Destiny World Outreach Center (DWOC) Pastor Chad Rowe and his wife Marla first conceived the idea for the Killeen, Texas-based church's children's ministry. One of the theme park's exhibits, which explores the wonder of moviemaking, takes park guests through multiple rooms to showcase different aspects of how to create a movie. "It was a progressive experience, and it came to us to organize our children's ministry the same way," Chad Rowe says.

Marla Rowe also notes parallels to school systems, where children rotate to different classes for different topics. "The children stay engaged for a longer period of time, and I wanted to translate that into Destiny's children's ministry. It takes pressure off the volunteers to keep children engaged for long periods. You need more teachers for a rotating curriculum but, overall, volunteers don't get as frustrated and they stay connected longer," she says.

With this idea in mind, Rowe and the church's building committee called upon Worlds of Wow of Argyle, Texas, and developer Brad Oaster, chief evangelist in charge of really big ideas at Larkspur, Colo.-based Harvestime, along with architect Patrick Morgan of Colorado Springs, Colo. Together, the team executed the Rowe's vision for a children's ministry that



All interior photos this page courtesy of Audio Ethics Inc.



## areas with a dynamic children's ministry and a custom-designed sanctuary

would take the under-12 set on a journey to learn about Christ. At the same time, they created a new 33,000-square-foot home designed for church members and visitors of all ages.

### Reaching the Age 20-40 Demographic

"Outreach" sits at the heart of DWOC's mission. The church's website notes that its ministry program focuses "on the lost at any cost by reaching our city one neighborhood at a time through outreach crusades, seminars, dramas, special events and, most importantly, an effective discipleship program."

"We wanted a facility that would be welcoming to the churched and the unchurched alike," Marla Rowe notes.

From the easy-to-find visitor parking to an accessible information desk with plasma displays along with a live greeter to welcome attendees, everything about the design of the church helps outreach efforts. Nowhere is this more visible than in the children's sanctuary—and with good reason.

DWOC's ministry region includes Fort Hood, the largest military base in the country. While visitors of all ages attend and enjoy the church—and are certainly welcome—the age 20-40 demographic,

### » A FAMILIAR SPACE

**Photo (above):** DWOC's interior design is similar to a hotel's or a mall's. The reasoning: the church and its design team drew heavily from secular elements so newcomers and visitors would naturally linger and talk.

### » KIDSWORLD

**Photo (inset):** The children's area at DWOC is a key outreach feature. Following the ministry lesson of the week and arts and crafts, children enjoy snacks in a kid-friendly bistro. In the KidsWorld Auditorium, children take to a 28-foot-high play structure supplied by Soft Play of Huntersville, N.C.

*“[A visit to Universal Studios] was a progressive experience, and it came to us to organize our children’s ministry the same way.”*

— Chad Rowe, pastor, Destiny World Outreach Center, Killeen, TX

along with their children, is a key to the church’s growth and, in particular, the children’s ministry.

Research has proven that the best way to reach the parent demographic is to target its children; marketers call this concept “pester power,” but for Christians the significance is even greater than just the latest new toy advertised during Saturday morning cartoons.

Not only does attracting children to church through a fun, lively and exciting children’s ministry help bring their parents back every Sunday, it also increases the odds that children who have accepted the Lord into their lives remain Christians as they grow.



Photo courtesy of DWOC.

### For the Kids

The children’s ministry area sits to the left of a large, spacious and bright entry foyer, with vivid signage pointing the way. Children in grades K-5th grade rotate from space to space every 20 minutes as the two-and-a-half hour service takes place in the main sanctuary.

The children engage in arts and crafts, learn the ministry lesson of the week, enjoy snacks in the bistro, watch videos in the theatre and unwind with a healthy dose of physical activity in the climate-controlled KidsWorld Auditorium, which features a 28-foot-tall playscape play structure supplied by Huntersville, N.C.-based Soft Play.

Each week, a central theme is taught and reinforced in each venue, from the theater to the craft room to the bistro. “They leave each week with a biblical concept taught in several different ways, so they will have a better and more memorable grasp on it,” Marla Rowe stresses.

The 100-seat theatre was designed to utilize some existing equipment, including the projector and mount. An Electro-Voice sound system is paired with a Denon theater control processor, which handles both the power and processor from a Denon DVD player.

The church rents out the playscape area and café for children’s birthday parties—a great way, Chad Rowe points out, to bring the unchurched into the building. “The children’s ministry is our main outreach tool,” he says, calling the \$80,000 Playscape “bait” to keep kids excited about coming to church.

### Very Un-Church-Like

Just as the children’s area was designed to be similar to places children might encounter in a secular environment, the church as a whole is more reminiscent of a mall or a hotel than a church.

And just inside the doors, to the right of the glass-walled atrium, sits a very familiar icon of 21st century living: a coffee shop that brews Starbucks coffee and sells the coffee chain’s familiar bakery products.

Oaster based the facility on another church project he completed recently in Manteca, Calif., Crossroads Grace Community Church. He says that both churches are showcase pieces, exemplifying how a church’s design can help make visitors feel comfortable.

Some regional variations give DWOC a local feel and also helped keep costs down. The building features an exterior finish of Austin flagstone and stucco, and the architectural development team carried the stonework elements into the atrium and sanctuary, as

#### DESTINY WORLD OUTREACH CENTER AT A GLANCE

Location: Killeen, Texas

Weekly Attendance:  
Approximately 2,200

Denomination:

Non-denominational,  
charismatic

Style of Services: Contemporary

Special Events: Various men’s, women’s and married ministry programs held monthly; Easter Service; Christmas Pageant; “Heaven’s Gates and Hell’s Flames” (annual play)



◀ INTERACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

**Photo (left page):** Marla Rowe, wife to Pastor Chad Rowe, likens kids' experiences at DWOC to school systems where children rotate from class to class for various topics. The goal of DWOC is to help keep children engaged so they want to stay longer.

⤴ A BIG DWOC WELCOME

**Photo (above):** DWOC reinforces its mission of outreach at the moment of a visitor's first impression. Inside, a well-positioned greeting desk with informational plasma displays and a live attendant greet visitors. Outside in the parking lot, DWOC offers easy-to-find visitor parking.

⤴ LATTÉ ANYONE?

**Photo (above right):** The individual elements of DWOC are designed to draw heavily on the secular world to reinforce the welcoming, lingering environment for visitors. One example of this design intent is right inside the church's doors—a coffee shop that brews Starbucks coffee and sells its bakery favorites.

well. A curved metal roof becomes a focal point on the outside of the building.

The facility is standard Type 2 steel construction on a concrete foundation, with a concrete second floor. The developer saved the church nearly \$150,000 by using local lumber as opposed to steel for part of the structure. "Here in Texas," Oaster says, "you can hire carpenters for less than iron workers. So we framed the main elements in steel and used steel I-beams, but used trussed joints and plywood for the in-fill."

A black portico lets visitors unload out of the elements, including the hot sun or rain. The wrought iron and black material of the portico can be seen again indoors on the stair railing and in the black hardwood floors and black acoustical drapery in the sanctuary.

The darker design elements, however, reportedly don't make the building seem claustrophobic, thanks to the large glass structure in the atrium and big, open windows that let in lots of natural light. "We designed the building keeping in mind many of the elements a mall developer would consider," Oaster says.

The building's contemporary design created certain challenges—and expenses—for the church, developers and builders because, as builder Randy Reding points out, "It's more expensive to build a commercial building than a church."

Reding, the major developer of a large percentage of the commercial and retail venues in Killeen, cites the high ceilings—30 feet at the highest point—as one architectural element that raised costs.

A Look Inside

A large two-story glass atrium divides the building into two halves, with the children's ministry to the left and the sanctuary, bookstore, café and visitor information center to the right.

Donnie Haulk and his team at Audio Ethics Inc., with headquarters in Charlotte, N.C., understood the concept Chad Rowe had for the black box-style auditorium. They first addressed the acoustical issue of a "big black box" and then designed the technology systems to give the pastor the versatility he was looking for. The auditorium seats

*"Here in Texas, you can hire carpenters for less than iron workers. So we framed the main elements in steel and used steel I-beams, but used trussed joints and plywood for the in-fill."*

— Brad Oaster, chief evangelist in charge of really big ideas, Harvestime, Larkspur, CO

*“I worked closely with Marla Rowe to create an aesthetically pleasing worship space that addresses the church’s acoustical needs while creating a warm and intimate environment.”*

— Donnie Haulk, president, Audio Ethics Inc., Charlotte, NC

800 and features movable chairs to create a multi-purpose space as the church grows. “I worked closely with Marla Rowe to create an aesthetically pleasing worship space that addresses the church’s acoustical needs while creating a warm and intimate environment,” Haulk, the company’s president, says.

The Audio Ethics team, led by design engineer Rose McCollough, completed a \$400,000 audio, video and lighting system in the sanctuary. The d&b audiotechnik sound system, capable of concert-level sound, uses a customized Yamaha DM2000, a 48-channel digital console. The console features an isolated microphone splitter

system, permitting the audio engineer to provide separate mixes for front-of-house, monitor and broadcast systems from one unit easily, eliminating the need for three separate consoles.

A complete ETC dimming system and fixture package, for both the house and performance lighting, along with a Robe moving light package is controlled by a Jands Vista T2 lighting console. The lighting system gives the in-house lighting designer the tools to create both intense worship looks and a high impact look for performance.

The soft goods and curtain package is designed to frame the platform and create a

worship environment that looks good both live and on video. It consists of motorized, black Princess velour main curtains, black Commando back and stage curtains and a full backstage cyclorama curtain in natural muslin. The auditorium curtains are made of beige Commando cloth.

“The technical systems,” Chad Rowe notes, “allow us to hold concerts, do more theatrically illustrated sermons, and take performances to a level that we could not before.”

Behind the entire length of the stage sits a garage with rolling doors that open onto the backstage area. Church volunteers can build custom-designed sets and easily transport them onto the stage, again, raising the bar for the theatrical experience within the contemporary worship church. “That’s part of our outreach efforts, as well,” Chad Rowe emphasizes.

One month after moving out of the old space—a 26-year-old, 18,000-square-foot converted furniture store—and into the new, 33,000-square-foot purpose-built facility, the church’s congregation doubled. Certainly, the children’s ministry, coffee house, bookstore and high-powered contemporary worship helped, but even more critical to success was the church’s clear vision.

“Buildings are cool,” Oaster notes, “but the strategic ministry plan is most important. Plan your ministry, identify who you’re trying to reach—in this case, the [age] 20–40 family demographic—come up with your strategy and shape your building as a tool to accomplish that strategy.”

#### QUICK-LINKS

##### **AUDIO ETHICS INC.**

Audio, video, lighting, acoustics design and installation  
(800) 467-3709 • [www.audioethics.com](http://www.audioethics.com)

##### **DESTINY WORLD OUTREACH CENTER**

Killeen, Texas  
(254) 690-0856 • [www.dwoc.com](http://www.dwoc.com)

##### **HARVESTIME**

Church facility design  
(866) 532-0780 • [www.harvestime.com](http://www.harvestime.com)

##### **PATRICK MORGAN ARCHITECT**

Comprehensive architectural services for the church market  
(719) 534-0453  
[www.patrickmorganarchitect.com](http://www.patrickmorganarchitect.com)

##### **RANDY REDING CONSTRUCTION**

General contracting  
(254) 698-1919

##### **SOFT PLAY**

Commercial contained playground manufacturer  
(800) 782-7529 or (704) 875-6550  
[www.softplay.com](http://www.softplay.com)

##### **WORLDS OF WOW**

Themed environments and play attractions  
(817) 380-4215 • [www.worldsofwow.com](http://www.worldsofwow.com)

#### RESOURCES

Primary flooring product: Shaw Carpets

Primary ceiling product company: Armstrong Ceiling Systems

Primary seating product company: Bertolini

Fixtures: Sloan Plumbing

Primary door product company: Shlage Door Hardware

Primary window product company: Pella windows

Safety & security products: Honeywell Security Systems

Roofing: Bitumen Roofing System

Designer: Harvestime

Architect: Patrick Morgan

Children’s ministry: Worlds of Wow

Builder: Randy Reding Construction, Killeen, Texas

Landscaper: Picture Perfect Landscaping

Lender: Foundation Capital Resources Inc.

#### AUDIO/VIDEO/LIGHTING EQUIPMENT:

**Children’s Ministry:** Electro-Voice sound system; Denon Theatre; Control Processor; Denon DVD player

**Sanctuary:** d&b audiotechnik sound system; Yamaha DM2000 48-channel digital mixer; ETC dimming system; ETC fixtures; Robe moving lights; Jands Vista T2 lighting console

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