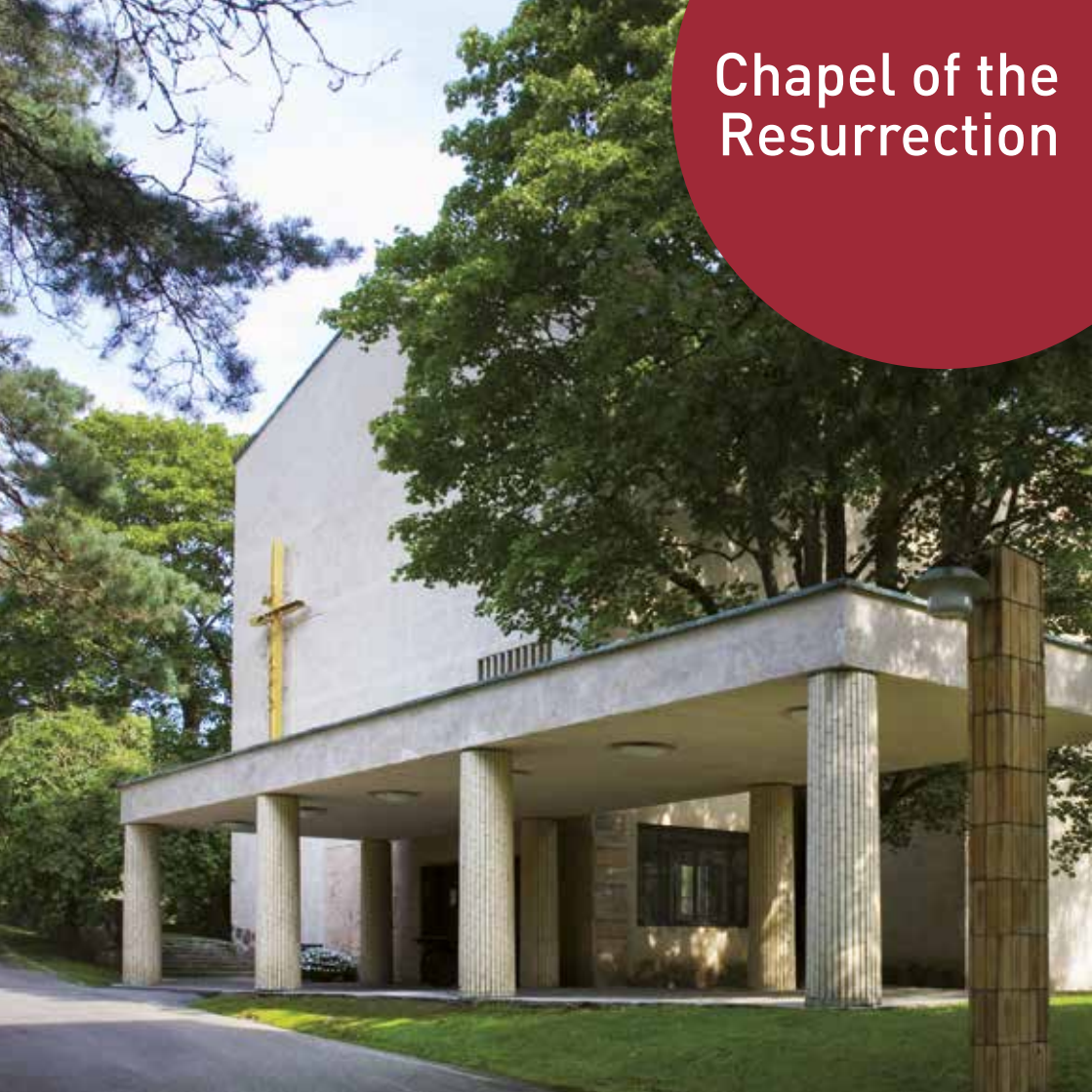


Chapel of the Resurrection





🚶 The road approaches up a slight incline. The shallow treads of wide stone steps lead one up the gradual ascent of this unhurried journey. Time itself seems to slow.

At the top of the steps stands a white chapel, serenely present among the conifer trees as if it has been there forever. Unobtrusive yet confident and welcoming, it seems wholly at one with the natural environment.



Here, mourners
come to acceptance.
Acceptance of
the vicissitudes
of life.
Acceptance of death.
Acceptance of light.

Time Travel

☛ For centuries, Turku Cathedral and the Unikan-kare area surrounding it were the burial ground for the people of Turku. It was never a large graveyard.

In 1807, a new cemetery was founded in the Skanssin malmi district, which at the time lay outside the city limits. The grounds were laid out following plans drawn up by the architect Charles Bassi. A first funeral chapel, since demolished, was built there in 1887. To walk around this burial ground is to time travel in Finnish cultural history from the early nineteenth century to the present day.

A Jewish cemetery was laid out in the area in the nineteenth century, an Eastern Orthodox one followed in 1823, an Islamic cemetery was established in 1915, and in 1936 an area was reserved for Roman Catholic burials.

Chapel of Comfort

☛ While Europe was suffering World War II (1939–1945) a new funeral chapel, designed by the architect Erik Bryggman, was built in the cemetery. Building work, begun in the spring of 1939, was interrupted by the Winter War (between Finland and the Soviet Union). The fate of soldiers killed in action and the pain of their bereaved families influenced Bryggman and details of the chapel. He wanted the building to provide comfort for those broken by death and grief.

The Chapel of the Resurrection was completed in the spring of 1941, on the eve of the Continuation War. It became an international attraction and is considered to be the most beautiful funeral chapel in all of the Nordic countries.





Rock Solid

🔨 Flagstone steps lead up to the chapel. The stone flooring continues through the pillared hallway by the entrance, into the vestibule and the choir. Stones also clad the back wall of the chapel hall and the wall behind the pulpit.

Bryggman had at first planned to use Swedish, then Estonian stone for the chapel, but war made it difficult to import foreign building materials. The architect then studied

Finnish quartzite slate and found it suited his requirements perfectly.

The chapel hall floor was made by setting chips of quartzite into white concrete, with thin lines of brass giving structure to the mosaic floor.

HDrawn in Sand

🔨 Strong yet fragile human figures, carved in relief on sandstone, adorn the walls of the chapel. Outside, to the left of the pillared portico, fate is seen to take children, young

people and the elderly. Inside, near the pillar by the altar arch, a young woman plays a lute. By the exit in the side aisle, other figures appear to be sliding through the glass, to be leaving the chapel, in transit from the shade to light.

The relief by the entrance was designed by Ennu Oka, who was killed in the Winter War. His work was finished by Jussi Vikainen. Both artists were members of a Symbolist group based in Turku.



Shadow of the Cross

• Above the sandstone relief by the entrance hangs a large gilt cross with a vine trailing up it. Behind that, subtly imprinted in the stucco wall surface, is another cross. When the sun shines in from the southwest, a third cross appears as a shadow on the wall – symbolically reminiscent of Golgotha.

Even in a place of execution, there is hope, as Jesus promised the malefactor on the cross beside him, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.'

Vine of Life

• Stylised metal vines curve across the glass entry doors, the door handles and the windows of the aisle door. And in the pulpit, the vine grows on the form of wooden insets. The vine symbolises both the Tree of Life and the Holy Communion. As Jesus said, 'I am the vine, you are the branches.'

The artwork was created in the workshop of Oskari Tuominen, in Turku.





Sacred Light

✦ Entry into the chapel is through a shadowy vestibule, which opens up into a kingdom of light inside the chapel. The glass wall of the aisle allows soft light, filtered through the conifer trees outside, to flood the chapel hall. The south-facing window of the choir reaches from floor to ceiling and bathes the altar in a special light.

Erik Bryggman studied the changing effects of natural light throughout the day and worked with it as an architectural element. In Christian symbolism, Christ is likened to light. In many images in old churches, the Sun is used to represent God, the eternal giver of life. Originally, Bryggman called his chapel design *Sub specie aeternitatis* (From the Point of View of Eternity).

Most Beautiful Arch

✦ The chapel hall narrows towards the altar. The hall and the altar choir are separated by a vaulted arch. Traditionally, this is called a triumphal arch, like those used in ancient victory parades, and represents Christ's victory over death.

The chapel's triumphal arch begins behind the pulpit,

crosses the choir and ends in a pillar that narrows towards the bottom. The lone pillar carries the weight of the wall, giving it a sense of lightness.

The architect Pekka Pitkänen, who worked at Bryggman's office, considers the chapel arch to be the most beautiful triumphal arch in modern Finnish architecture.

Respect for Tradition

✦ The altar faces east towards the rising sun. A row of pillars separates the aisle from the main part of the chapel hall, the choir has a triumphal arch, the ceiling of which is barrel vaulted. All such features can be found in old churches.

Bryggman also paid homage to the medieval builders of Finland's stone churches by having large stones set into the outer walls of the chapel, bell tower and mortuary. All the stones were found in the area where the chapel is built and Bryggman himself decided the position of each stone.

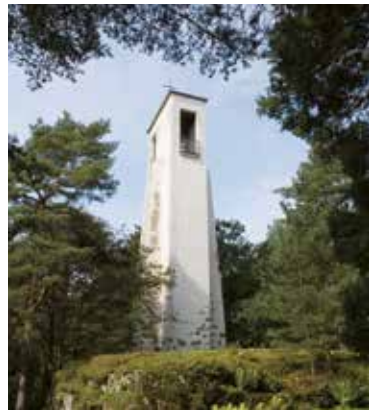
In addition to drawing on centuries of tradition, the Chapel

of the Resurrection also draws on architectural styles from the 1920s up to and including the 1940s, from Neo-Classicism to Modernism. The chapel's light uncluttered general appearance, its barely pitched roof and pillared portico all hark back to Neo-Classicism. In the 1930s Bryggman was looking for softer, more human forms for theoretical Modernism. The chapel is considered a major exponent of Romantic Post-Functionalism in Europe.

LOn Nature's Terms

✦ The Chapel of the Resurrection fits brilliantly but gently into the surrounding landscape. When the chapel was built, the mature trees surrounding it were spared. Today, that is common practice in Finland, but at the time it was a rarely seen approach.

Visible through the chapel's large windows, the natural beauty outside becomes an intrinsic element within it. Just as humankind is a part of nature, so too does this building fit organically within its surroundings.

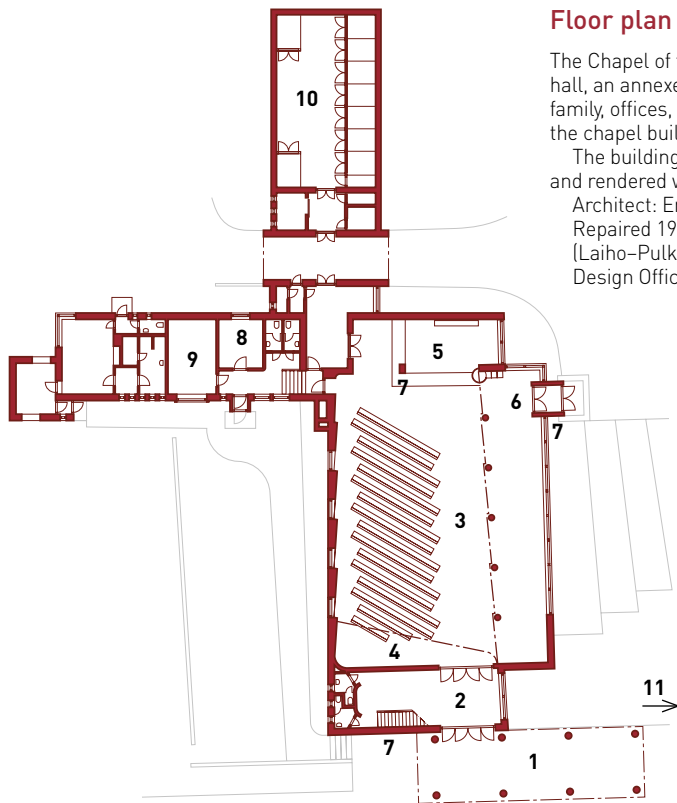


The Bells Toll for Heroes

✦ All too frequently, the bells in the tower had to toll out for the war dead. At first, this slow tolling was produced by a set of bells borrowed from Turku Cathedral, but since 1965 the chapel's bell tower has had its own set of bells.

On a rise above the funeral chapel a statue commemorates those who perished in the defence of Finland. Erik Bryggman designed the memorial statue and the graveyard for fallen heroes.

The artwork itself, made of black granite from Viitasaari, was realised by the artist Jussi Vikainen.



Floor plan

The Chapel of the Resurrection consists of a chapel hall, an annexe with a private room for the bereaved family, offices, and a mortuary that is separated from the chapel building by a drive-through archway.

The building is constructed of concrete and brick and rendered white. It was consecrated in 1941.

Architect: Erik Bryggman.

Repaired 1983–84, LPA Architects

(Laiho–Pulkkinen–Raunio) and

Design Office Carin Bryggman.

- 1 Pillared portico
- 2 Vestibule
- 3 Chapel hall
- 4 Organ
- 5 Choir
- 6 Aisle exit
- 7 Sandstone reliefs
- 8 Sacristy
- 9 Family room for the bereaved
- 10 Mortuary
- 11 Bell tower

- Unhindered wheelchair access
- Hearing induction loop available in the building