

Designated Space: A Thing Of The Past

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Replacing existing square footage with newly constructed square footage can stretch a church's faith and pocket book. It is usually impossible for churches to replace all of their existing facility, square foot for square foot, with a new facility. The general rule for what a church can afford to build in new construction is typically 50 to 75 percent of their existing square footage. So if they have 35,000 square feet in their present facility, they will be able to build about 17,500 to 26,250 square feet. The biggest disappointment to church leadership is when they find out how much they can actually afford to build. The leadership will respond with: "If we can't build at least the same size of a facility that we have now . . . why build?"

So what is the solution? The solution to this problem is to make a paradigm shift in one's thinking. Instead of thinking in terms of square footage you have to start thinking in terms of ministry space. How can a church meet their ministry needs with less square footage? The answer is Multi-Purpose space. The time when space was designated to only one activity is quickly becoming a thing of the past. The maximization and effective use of space is the trend.

Here is an example of how to minimize square footage costs and maximize ministry space. Let's say that a church has 35,000 square feet in their existing facility and they want to relocate. Phase one has to meet short term ministry needs as well as their financial affordability as well as the added cost of buying property. This can be a balancing act that can tax the most seasoned financier and church planner. The church's budget allows only 17,500 square feet to be built.

For proper ministry balance, phase one will require worship, fellowship, education, and administration space. For continued growth the sanctuary/worship area will need approximately 7,250 square feet. Fellowship area will need 6,000 square feet and education requires 4,000 square feet. The

balance of 6,250 square feet can be divided into administration, mechanical, kitchen, storage, and restrooms. This totals 23,500 square feet which is over the ministry's budget.

Now here is the magic of Multi-Purpose Design (MPD). There is 7,250 square feet for worship that can also be used for fellowship. So add up the ministry space available. Worship space has 7,250 square feet available and because it is multi-use, fellowship space has 7,250 square feet available. This adds up to 14,500 square feet of ministry space, and you only had to build and pay for 7,250 square feet. When you add the education space of 4,000 square feet and the 6,250 square feet for administration, kitchen, storage, and restrooms, you get a grand total of 24,750 square feet for ministry programming. However, because of Multi-Purposed Design (MPD), the church was spared from having to build an additional 6,000 square feet in new construction for the Fellowship Hall. Multi-Purpose Designing kept the ministry balanced and within budget.

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