

Discussion Resources For Church

This series of resources poses questions to prompt discussion amongst church members. It is intended to lead to a fresh understanding of the way in which the Church's buildings can serve the work of the Church.

This follows the book "[Making Property Serve Mission – Rethinking the Church's Buildings 21st-Century](#)" by Fred Batterton. This is a series of on-screen slides to accompany the following questions. Download the slides in PowerPoint (Windows) or Keynote (Mac).

Part 7.2 What are the basic design considerations - Auditoria and Gathering?

Questions and comments relate to the following slides:

3. Building for purpose: "Build a boat for yourself out of good timber: make rooms in it and cover it with tar inside and out. Make it 133m long, 22m wide, and..." Genesis 6 14-15 GNB "... Solomon began work on the temple. Inside it was 27m long, 9m wide and ..." 1 Kings 6 1-2 GNB. Getting the design right was important to God.
4. Gathering spaces: Should they be themed (eg Kids) or neutral? Borrow kids' space and rejoice that you have kids at church Matt 19: 14. Room size needs to suit group. Intimacy is encouraged by smaller size. Creating comfort shows you care. Retail and business knows about caring for and engaging its customers. Church can learn from this.
5. Kids spaces ...should be fun like this US church.
6. Meeting spaces: This is the cafe space in a Launceston church.
7. Worship auditorium: "A place for hearing" but also for seeing and for participation. Sense of transcendence. Sense of worshipping together. Direction of focus towards leaders and visual imagery. Is it acoustically successful? Here are some key considerations. These apply to traditional or historic interiors as well as modern ones. How does your church worship space perform against these criteria? Have you been in more successful ones?
8. Heritage auditorium: This heritage interior is reconfigured for different uses.
9. Future worship auditorium: Larger auditoria need to carefully consider view-lines from seats and closeness to the platform for as many people as possible as well as many other issues.

10. Worship c/w theatre:
Consider the basic principles for worship compared with theatre.

Worship	Theatre
Uplifting & transcendent	Stage focus only
Hear neighbours singing	Actors voices only
Engaged in the activity	Passively entertained
Open to all	Paid-for seating location
Participating with like-minded	Silence expected
Long term supporting	No lasting connection



11. Fixed seating; Required if sloping or tiered floor. Sloping floor may be needed over 700.
However European cathedrals have chairs. No flexible use of the room - restricts. Tip seats assists cleaning. Pews restrict alternative uses & may be uncomfortable. There are many other considerations - these are just a few.
12. Fixed seating: For a large church, fixed seating will normally be needed for many reasons.
13. Movable seating: Flat floor auditorium allows reconfiguration. Often enables heritage building to be used more widely and often in the life of the church. New building viable up to 500 - 700 seats. Chose comfort, ergonomics, lightweight, stack-ability, clean-ability and aesthetics. Cheap seats may be less easy to move/store and restrict use or require more labour. Consider the wider economies and benefits.
14. Movable seating: ...can make your building more useful.
15. Shape: More people can gather within 20m in a fan shape. Screens important for speaker's facial expression at 20m and beyond. 90° and 135° engage people better. Greater than 135° is less successful at the perimeter.
16. Shape: Seeing fellow worshippers faces. Many people close to platform (20m limit). Clearly seeing screens (if used). Height can convey transcendence. Sound desk location to be subservient. People cannot see the leader's facial expression beyond 20m away. Cameras and screens become necessary. Screen orientation and distribution become important for everyone to be engaged.
17. Heating & cooling Heritage church will have negligible insulation so heat rises to roof and escapes. Warm and cool the people, not the building. Engage the thermal mass for cooling. Full a/c to 22° is very costly to install and run for a large auditorium. Instead be sustainable. Sustainability and running costs are vital considerations. Comfort can be within a range.
18. Lighting: Daylight must be controlled, but view to landscape can be beneficial. Reveal a beautiful heritage roof structure with lighting and colour. Light the room differently for alternative uses. Externally highlight your entrance.
19. Lighting: Careful mix of daylight and artificial lighting can be successful.
20. Next time: What are the processes - Part 8

