

## Spaces For Church Planting. #5 Share an Existing Church.

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It can be a great way to start a new church community, to share the property of an existing church when they don't need it. As a host church it is environmentally responsible to fully utilise a building and allow it to be a blessing to another church community. Ethnic church communities have often done this and sometimes have grown into larger congregations than the host church. The arrangements can be of benefit to both church communities providing the new church does not present a challenge to the host.



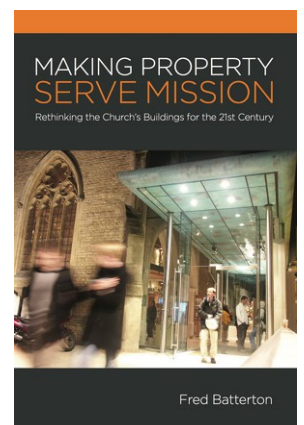
*St Columbs Hawthorn has hosted The Field church in its hall.*

Some key considerations for the new church.

- **Is the property okay?** There may be a need to set up equipment, including audio visual and seating. Can this easily be done and stowed away afterwards? Is there storage on site or does everything have to be brought in? If your community normally enjoys meals with their gatherings, is there a suitable kitchen? Is the worship setting okay for the church's normal worship expression or is there a clash of culture? Does the facility have meeting rooms for kids? Are the toilets of an acceptable standard? Do you need to be able to use space during the week, including for offices?
- **When is space available?** Does the new church plant want to meet on Sunday? Is there a time slot available either in the main worship building or in an adjoining hall? Perhaps the new church community prefers to meet on a weekday. The Field Church meets in St Columbs, Hawthorn's, large hall building during midweek, and incorporates an evening meal in their gathering utilising St Columbs' Prodigal Hub Cafe .
- Is parking available? Street parking on Sundays is often less restricted than on weekdays, which may impact members.
- **Sharing costs** with the host church. It is only reasonable to cover costs of energy and cleaning as an absolute minimum. The host church has other costs including management and maintenance of the building, repairs, and in some cases property taxation. These would normally be covered in a rental fee. A lease commitment to a period of time is reasonable.
- **For the Host Church.** They have the opportunity to be a blessing to an emerging community of God's people. They can benefit financially by sharing some costs. They are contributing to the sustainability of the community by allowing the space to be used rather than requiring something else to be built elsewhere. They may need to provide some dedicated storage to enable the new church to operate easily.

Rather than detracting from the activities of the host church, the increased activity makes it a more important focal point for the community. We see this in retail where co-locating similar shops makes a place the focal point for people to visit.

Next time - Using a redundant church



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