

CHURCH FACILITY NEEDS

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INTRODUCTION

The Christian church originated in Roman Judea in the first century AD/CE. It was founded on the teaching of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who first gathered disciples. The disciples were later known as Christians. Jesus commanded them to spread his teachings to the world.

Traditionally, it was recorded that the first gentile Church was founded in Antioch, (Acts 11: 20-21) where it is recorded that the disciples of Jesus Christ were first called Christians (Acts 11:26) Compelling truth.org defines Church as building or organization.

Robert Velarde (January 1, 2009) said the early Church has no buildings. At least not in the sense of what we have today. Century Christians usually met in homes, as the influence of Christianity spread, the buildings dedicated to worship were also established.

The visible and invisible churches

The visible and local church refers to the physical churches that we see around us and around the world. As well as the members of those churches.

The invisible and universal church refers to all believers everywhere and is one church, united in Christ, not many physical churches. Everyone in the universal church is a true believer, but it is not necessarily the same with the visible and local churches.

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The Concept of the Church

Webster's definition of the church is building for public and especially Christian worship. The word church came from the Greek word kuriakon which means "belong to the Lord" or the "Lords" example is the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20) and the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10).

Though, the most widely used term for church is the Greek word ekklesia. Jesus said I will build church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).

This indicated that Jesus would make provision for the church's building. He was concerned for his disciples, providing instruction and nurture for them. The Lord's will is what will prevail in the church. The church will be build according to the Lord's will and not man's discretion.

Ekklesia or church that Jesus was going to build is a compound Greek term derived from two word "ek" meaning "out" and "kales" meaning "to call" therefore, the compound word means "called out" group or an assembly. The word assembly did not necessarily refer to a religious assembly but to any group of people from the larger population.

In Acts 19:32-41, Luke wrote concerning the assembly of men in Ephesus, Paul met much opposition and some of the city people gathered together to confront him. They were not Assembly of God's people.

Many New Testament terms were derived from the Old Testament. The Hebrew word that relate to the Greek word "ekklesia" is the term "qahal". Although for the people of Isreal, Moses used it no address the people in (Deuteronomy 31:30)

David also spoke to the assembly (Chronicles 29:1) etc. The Term qahal was frequently used in Old Testament for an Assembly of God's people. The early church understood qahal as referring to God's people.

The Church was a new assembly under the New Covenant. There was no formal definition of the term "Church" given in the Bible but the usage of the term enable us to understand its meaning. The Church came into being after the ascension of Jesus (40 days after Easter) on Pentecost (the Seventh Sunday after Easter), when 3,000 Jewish people repented and were baptized (Acts 2). The early Christians understood qahal as referring to the people of God, they thought of it as Synagogue.

Synagogue developed during the Babylonian captivity, when it was not possible to worship in the temple. Synagogue was different from the temple in that they were located in each Community and had no Priesthood or Sacrificial System. The Synagogue was accepted by the people of God as a Centre for Religious Worship. (Acts.15-21).

Jesus also preached in the Synagogue the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 4:23), (Luke 14:16). His acceptance of Synagogue indicates that God was at work in leading the early Church to model its organization and service after the Synagogue.

The Church as the Body of Christ

Paul frequently described the Church as the "Body of Christ" he used the term body in a metaphorical sense. Examples "for by one Spirit, we were all baptize into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13). This means that every Christian is part of Christ's body. (Eph. 5:29-30) "For no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church:" "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."(KJV) God through Jesus Christ showed the

Immeasurable greatness of His power, when Jesus was raised from the dead and (God) made him sit at the right hand in the heavenly places.

This involved God the father putting “all things under the feet of Jesus and has made him the head over all things for the Church, which is body of Christ” (Ephesians 1:23) Jesus is before all things and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church (Colossians 1:17-18).

In Romans 12, Paul wrote that we have different gifts but of ‘one body’. “For as in one body, we have many members and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many are one body in Christ (Romans 12:4-6). Each member is given grace according to the measure of Christ gift given to us, let us use them.

ANALYSIS

Church Facility Needs

Dictionary.com describes facilities as something designed, built, installed etc. to serve a specific function affording a convenience, or service: transportation facilities, educational facilities, a new research facility, church facility etc.

According to en.m Wikipedia.org; Need is something that is necessary for an organization to live a healthy life, needs are distinguished from wants. In other words, a need is something required for safety, stability and healthy life (examples are air, water, food, land and shelter) while a want is a desire, wish or aspiration.

According learningtogive.org needs are special kinds of want, and refers to things we must have to survive such as food, water and shelter.

Cambridge dictionary define needs as something you must have for a satisfactory life.

Church facility needs are the necessary things the church must have to survive, to be stable and satisfied.

Church facility needs are the requirements necessary for healthy and superior services to the members and the Communities

Church facility needs are the special requirements that will help the church stand out among others.

Church facility needs are the basic qualities that will enhance standard of the church like, good environment, good administration etc.

Quality, as understood by Deming and his interpreters is normally characterized by offering more than is “expected” quality according to him is that which delights the customer, member or client.

Quality is centered on something which makes life better for everyone.

It is focusing on continual improvement

According to Steve Clapp and Cindy H. Snider in *Creating Quality in Ministry* (1989) the reality of Quality is that it will not itself bring new people into the Church but the absence of quality will certainly drive them away.

Church facility needs are the essential ingredients needed to sustain the Church like quality services.

Facility Upgrades Strategy

Church facility upgrade strategy is meant to help us improve on our church services.

The original biblical definition of Ekklesia is the idea of a Christ – centered community of believers doing life together instead of doing just worship service once or twice or week were meant to share space and break with one another, and the community at large.

1. Intentionally designed church

The idea of a church environment being carefully considered and designed, down to every detail (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch) is incredibly powerful. When your space is designed for church members and the outside community alike, you are able to point more people towards eternity.

2. Access community needs

In order to bring more people to Christ, you have to study the broader community outside your church walls. You have to strategically plan your ministries to serve not only your church internal community but those outside your church as well.

3. Create a true share space

You have to plan to maximize your space outside the normal church functions. Instead of leaving the space empty for most of the weeks find a way to share the space with your neighbor create a performing arts space that can use the space when the church is not using it. Utilize your facilities for recreation, daycare services etc. the most important audience to consider as you upgrade your space is your primary target e.g. the lost out the outside the community.

Church facility issues:

Here are some of the issues in Churches including established Churches and Church plants that meet in rented spaces:

- **Poor Signage:** Some of the Churches have no main entrance; the building has several doors that enter into the facility in different locations but the only one that leads to the main entrance is unmarked, (unattended to) no welcome signage to welcome them into the church and no Usher to direct people.

Sermon CDs might be available there, but sometimes no one is there to distribute them. Sometimes we see paper signage hand written (or poorly done computer generated) even in big Churches. This type of signage implies a lack of attention to excellence.

- **Old Information on Notice Boards or Bulletin**

Some Churches display events that took place sometime ago on the Notice Board and Bulletin pages.

- **Lack of Security**

There are no security system in some churches to protect the children movement around the Church premise. In cases where security exists there is some inefficiency of the security men which allow unnecessary entrance into premises.

- **Lack Furniture in the Children Department**

Sometimes, it is the adult's furniture that is in children's department, the Chair or the Tables are meant for Adults. In this case you are telling the children to seat and act and learn as adults.

- **Some of the issue in church facility is the donated gifts:**

Somehow, the Church facility has become a gathering for junk; this ought not to be so. Some of the donations/ gifts items are things that cannot be used, so they become junk in the church store.

- **Open outlets:** Any electrical outlet without a cover inserted on it is an open invitation to trouble, since the toddler in particular has not learned not to stick something to the outlet.
- **Dirty carpets:** Sometimes the carpets are left unclean; this implies lack of concerns about God's house.
- **Poor lights:** Dimming the lighting might be an effective device to focus worship, but a service is hardly facilitated if members strain to read their Bibles. Some people are very sensitive to this lighting issues especially the older ones and those with issues in their eyes.
- **Few garbage cans:** Church building would be cleaner if our buildings included nicely designed, strategically placed garbage cans.
- **Faded Paints:** It's amazing what a fresh coat of paint will do to a room. It's also amazing how long some churches wait before adding a fresh coat. Some of the churches took the trouble whatever the facilities they were using to create environment that would not be barrier to guests hearing the gospel and accepting Christ as their Lord and Saviour. The facilities they used include private homes, a tennis clubhouse, converted offices, a storeroom, a school gymnasium, maritime museum conference rooms, the station garage bay, café etc.

A mother who has left her infant in an unsafe environment will not be about the message but about the safety and health of the child. That un-safe environment has become a distraction to her and consequently a barrier to hearing the gospel. She is unlikely to return to the place.

Creating attractive and safe environment can be viewed as a form of pre-evangelism. It conveys to the guest that the church values them and their children. On setting out adequate signage and posting volunteers at strategic locations will help convey to the guest that they are welcome. Taking this and other steps increases their receptivity to hearing the good news. Guest arrives at the church doors on Sundays with different levels of needs, sometimes we may have to help them meet their physical needs before the spiritual needs.

Some churches sometimes provide light breakfast for guests who have not had an opportunity to eat. The young married couples with their first child should be assisted by providing clean, well- equipped staffed by adult volunteers and take parents cell phone numbers when they register their infants so can be called if need be. This will help to solve the security needs.

Church Facility Management

1. Facilities are one of the church largest assets. It requires a lot of money to purchase. It is of great value to the ministry. Therefore the facility needs a professional that will maximize its value and minimize cost.
2. Facilities and its environment have a large effect on the ministry's productivity. The facility manager therefore, should understand the church's mission and the interaction with the facility in order to maximize its use.
3. Facility management professional provides strategic direction and development guidance to achieve the result the church needs fulfill the vision and mission.

4. Sustainability is critical to the environment for the church and its members as well as community image. Therefore, facility management should provide leadership in the environment.
5. The environment and legislative complexity of owning or leasing facilities represents a huge risk to the church. Facility management should be able to navigate to mitigate the risk.
6. Facilities require an entire team of generalist and specialists to provide services. Therefore, facility management professional should be able to understand how to identify and assemble these resources to work together to maximize value, reduce risk and minimize cost
7. The facilities that house your ministry activities can require considerable effort to manage effectively. A facility management professional takes to this burden on what makes the church successful in delivering its core ministry (Acts 6:1-7)
8. Managing facilities with an administrative resource or line manager (i.e. maintenance person) means it won't get the attention and expertise it deserved and may put the church at risk. Facility management professional should have training, background experience in all areas of the complex issues and services required to provide effective stewardship to the church's facility assets.
9. A facility management professional has the experience and overall and oversight for facilities issues, enabling them to see patterns, track changes and identify risks that may have a future negative impact. Their knowledge enables them to take corrective action how to reduce your risk and cost.

Responsibilities of a Church Facility Committee

Managing church facilities requires financial budget, planning and organized process to fulfill its mission.

Many churches use employee and volunteer worker to manage the church facilities. This team may face the following responsibilities.

1. **General System Maintenance:** The team should be proactive to maintain the systems to ensure they function properly. The team is to dictate the need to service to it on time and call a professional to do that.
2. **Custodial:** The church should provide a cleaning schedule and training for the employees and volunteers on the proper way to clean and sanitize the facilities.
3. **The landscape:** The first impression that a visitor has when driving in to a church is its landscape. Make a plan and recruit volunteers to help with the outdoor trimming, weeding and grass cutting.
4. **Facility Expansion:** The committee should be able to plan ahead for expansion of the ministry e.g. by buying a land and building on it.
5. **Safety/ Risk:** This committee should be routine safety checks to ensure there are no hazardous materials, equipment or facility locations that could impose harm to someone.
6. **Equipment and System:** There are lots of equipments needs for a church including the building system. This team should identify the equipment needs and ensure that all necessary items are available and in good working order.

7. **Supporting Events:** This team supports all church events by overseeing trained employees and volunteers who can manage set-up and general maintenance.
8. **Facility Volunteer's Management:** It takes a lot of volunteers to keep a church in good working order. The committee should be responsible for training and overseeing volunteers who help with facility related projects. The committee should be meeting a regular basis to discuss strategy for managing church facilities, identify facility update needs and plan for future expansion or remodels.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Church facility need is an essential aspect of the church that cannot be over emphasized. The church spends so much money to purchase the facility because it is of great value to the ministry.

Therefore, the church has to pay attention on how to maximize its value and minimize cost. The volunteer workers should be trained on how to handle the church facility.

The church should use the volunteered workers to manage the facility. They should be meeting regularly to discuss strategies for improvement. The church should appoint a committee that will be responsible for the welfare of the facility, the church should also employ the use of paid workers and professional managers who must have been trained and experienced in complex issues to enable him provide effective stewardship to the church facility.

The church should see creating attractive and safe environment as a form of evangelism because the guest will see it as a sign of being welcomed. Safe environment to a mother with her infants will enable her focus on the message without fear.

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Questionnaire

1. Does your church pay attention to its facility needs in providing safe and healthy environment?

2. Does your church use the paid experience staff to provide quality services to the ministry?
3. Does the church use professional managers to handle complex issues in order to avoid risk and maximize value?
4. How effective are the volunteer workers in the church? Do you give them training to enable them be more effective handling the church facility well?
5. Are those involved in facility care unit meeting regularly to discuss issues on how to improve their service?
6. Does your church have good impression on the first visit, by providing beautiful signage on the entrance, the protocol, ushers and choir well dressed and active on their duty post during services?
7. Are you diligent in checking the information before posting it, to avoid posting old information?
8. Does your church provide light refreshment to people that came visiting the church on first visit? Workers and church members that do not have feed to eat?
9. Do you have experienced mothers and teachers in the children units?
10. Does your church have God fearing Pastors and workers that will maintain the sanctity of the Ministry?