



HOME OF THE



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Top 30 Suggestions and Tips for Building or Remodeling

1. Do lots of research
 - Call other pastors and churches who built or remodeled recently
 - Call especially others in similar situations or locations
 - Ask especially about best and worst choices made in construction and design
2. Use a liturgical architect or consultant
 - Groth Design Group
 - Korb Tredo
 - Massmann Studios
3. Use an acoustical architect or consultant
 - Riedel Associates (Scott Riedel)
 - DSH Audio Visions (David Hosbach)
 - Do not use some member who has “done that work before”
4. Spend extra money on the sound system
 - “Good enough” is not good enough for the proclamation of the Word
 - Speakers and mics from Best Buy are not good enough
 - Plan for expansion even if you can’t afford it now
 - Bigger sound board
 - Run extra wires right away
 - Have enough amperage, wattage, etc.
5. Carpet is for bedrooms
 - It gets out of date fast
 - It gets worn down faster
 - It gets stained the fastest
 - Hard surfaces are better for acoustics
 - The extra money is worth it
6. Plan carefully
 - Where will future rooms be located?
 - What rooms might be remodeled or moved?
 - What happens when you grow?
 - What does all this mean for electrical, plumbing, load-bearing walls, etc.
7. Build as many bathrooms as possible
 - No church has ever had too many stalls!
 - Do a cost analysis study on kinds of paper dispensers and hand dryers

8. Build as much storage as possible
 - No church has ever had too much storage!
 - Where will you put tables and chairs?
 - Where will you store your important liturgical items?
 - You need a “slop sink”
9. Build as much fellowship space as possible
 - No church has ever had too much fellowship space!
 - No church ladies have ever complained about huge kitchens
10. Where will your fellowship be?
 - Is it enough space for seating?
 - Is there a kitchen?
 - What about long food lines?
 - Enough outlets?
 - Enough amperage?
11. What will you do when you need more sanctuary seating?
 - Plan ahead for big events
 - What about Christmas? Easter? VBS Sunday? Children’s Christmas Service?
 - What happens when you grow?
12. What do you do with kids?
 - A staffed nursery?
 - Children’s church?
 - A/V in the narthex!
 - Better acoustics = more kid noise
13. Build flexible space
 - Could the narthex be fellowship space?
 - Could classrooms be your nursery?
 - What can be movable or multi-purpose?
 - Consider extra outlets and A/V connections everywhere
14. Spend money now so you don’t have to later
 - Some things cost more to do later
 - Shortcuts often end up costing more
 - Wires cost next to nothing
 - Use materials that are cost efficient (e.g. insulations, structural materials, etc.)
 - Plan facility for easy expansion
15. Don’t skimp on things that matter most
 - Nothing says cheap or cheesy like catalogue, dime-a-dozen liturgical items
 - Nothing proclaims the gospel like carefully planned, built, and bought liturgical items
 - The sanctuary is God’s house where the Most High dwells
 - Contact Avignon Art Studios and retired Pastor Nathan Pope

16. Plan *at least* 10% for contingencies
- Construction *always* costs more than you think
 - Something *always* comes up
 - Plans and tastes and choices and the economy *always* change
17. To screen or not to screen?
- Be careful of screen placement!!
 - When would you need or use a screen?
 - You *always* need a bigger screen and better projector than you think
 - Remember that technology *always* changes
18. Plan for expansion
- What will you do when God blesses?
 - What will be the path of least resistance (and cost!)?
 - Make sure you have a master plan for many years in advance
19. Do you really need dozens of building committees and sub-committees?
- Why would the falling away member influence permanent structural choices?
 - What does a new member know about Lutheran liturgical furnishings?
 - Can a vote be an informational survey instead?
 - Can you involve “the people” in your project without letting everyone make a decision?
 - The more democratic you make it, the more Satan will exploit it
20. “Contemporary” does *not* = Outreach
- What is “contemporary” anyways?
 - What happens when “contemporary” changes?
 - How do you know what a visitor wants?
 - Will “contemporary” choices follow the four Scriptural principles for worship?
21. “Traditional” does *not* = Outreach
- What is “traditional” anyways?”
 - Just because it was done before, does that mean it should be done again?
 - How do you know what a visitor wants?
 - Will “traditional” choices follow the four Scriptural principles for worship?
22. Jesus = Outreach. Sin / Grace = Outreach
- Build, design, and plan for Law and Gospel proclamation
23. Build as much as possible . . . and then a little bit more
- Churches *always* need more space
 - God will bless the work of his kingdom
 - It is unusual for newly built or remodeled churches that do outreach to shrink
 - Be good stewards, but bold stewards
24. Put a bathroom in the sacristy
- A private holy of holies is *always* appreciated

25. Plan for what you will do when it is all done
 - How will it work when you are done?
 - Where will traffic flow to?
 - Will visitors know where to go or what to do?
 - Do you need to explain to visitors your building or your worship or your procedures?

26. Invite the whole community to see what God has done
 - Community residents generally are interested in new buildings or remodeling
 - Curiosity = opportunity

27. Prepare for visitors
 - Think the way visitors would think
 - What will make them feel most welcome?
 - What will proclaim the gospel most clearly?
 - Consider how you do greeters, ushers, bulletins, etc.

28. Follow up on those visitors
 - If you invite, people will visit you
 - If people visit you, you must visit them

29. Build with confidence
 - God promises to be with you as you fulfill the Great Commission
 - God promises to bless the proclamation of his Word

30. Give thanks and glory to God

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