



Ωmega Church Consultants, Inc.

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Thumb Rules

Just as your thumb may not be exactly one inch wide (as mine is), not every church can measure their space needs by those of other congregations. If one keeps in mind that "rules of thumb" are only rough estimates affected by many variables, they may prove beneficial in looking at the big picture of church design.

Site Planning: A church planning for a sanctuary, classrooms, offices, and parking should allow about one acre per 100-125 people in the building at one time. Add acreage for outdoor recreation areas. Assign about one parking space for every 2.5 to 3 people in attendance. Allot 110-120 parking spaces per acre.

Sanctuary Planning: The sanctuary floor should be designed for about 9-12 square feet (s.f.) per seat. Fanned seating uses more space than straight row seating. Allow about 21" per person and rows of 16 persons maximum. The choir should seat about 10-15 percent of the congregation capacity. The foyer serving the sanctuary should be about two s.f. per seat.

Education Facilities: Preschool and day-care children need about 35 s.f. each in rooms about 12' x 18' or larger. Elementary students need about 25 s.f. each with 24 children per room maximum. Youth and adult areas should be at least 12-15 s.f. per person.

Recreation Facilities: High school basketball courts are 50' x 84'. Allow at least 4' for side and end lanes and add for spectator and team seating areas. The ceiling height should be at least 21 feet. Add for locker rooms/restrooms, office areas, storage and mechanical rooms. Allot about 12-15 s.f. per person for seating at tables in fellowship halls, and add for any stage, kitchen and storage areas.

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