

# **A SUCCESSFUL CHURCH BUILDING PROGRAM**

*(A Four Step Process for the Best Product for the Greatest Purpose)*

## **Church buildings are important. Several reasons are:**

- Tools of gospel work (Evangelism, Discipleship, Fellowship, Ministry/Missions and Worship)
- Public facilities which are used by many different people for various purposes
- Great investment of our Lord's money and a statement about our commitment to His work
- Building programs are risky ventures for churches leaders, but is a time to give our best for God

## **STEP ONE...Survey Phase (What do we need?)**

- A. The Long Range Planning, Building Steering Committee or Vision Task Force leads the church.
1. The committee (team) is elected by the church to answer *the* question -- *What do we need?*
  2. This committee should represent the church fairly and take its time to do this work.
- B. The committee answers this question based on several facts:
1. The Biblical mission of church: **E**vangelism, **D**iscipleship, **F**ellowship, **M**inistry and **W**orship
  2. The past ministry of the church (where have we come from and how did we get here?)
  3. The present ministry of the church (what is the health of our church and what going on?)
  4. The future ministry of the church (dream is "preferred future in God's will")
    - ◆ Conduct a Dream Night to gain input concerning the future
    - ◆ Use a written survey to gain input about present needs and future direction
    - ◆ Canvas the church family, using one-on-one conversation method or other means
    - ◆ Analyze your feelings and sense of "what God is doing here"
    - ◆ Discuss with pastor, staff and key leaders their understanding of His will
    - ◆ Set growth goals in worship, education, parking or use goals that have already been adopted
  5. The condition and potential of current facilities and property
  6. The community, neighborhood, city, county, surrounding areas, etc.
    - ◆ Demographics ("the people picture"). Contact the Ministry Office of MBCB for information.
    - ◆ Data (realtors, schools, industry, commerce, government, banks/financial institutions)
    - ◆ Discovery of community needs, opportunities, changes, resources, etc.
  7. The challenge to the church for prayer and seeking the will of God
- C. The committee will process their findings.
1. Analyze what was discovered about the church and community and identify these needs (spiritual, organizational, community, physical, financial, etc.)
  2. Make a priority list based on discovered needs in the church and community
  3. Formulate recommended plan(s) of action and suggestions to the church to meet these needs  
\*Professional help (architect/draftsman) may be secured to provide initial master plan.

- D. Present recommend plan(s) of action and suggestions to the church family.
  - 1. *What?* ♦ Use current leaders, organization, facilities, etc. to meet some identified needs
    - ♦ Recommend needed new facilities and/or related renovations and acquisitions
    - ♦ Challenge the church family to broader strategic planning
  - 2. *How?* Presentation document, video, testimony, question-answer, mailing, special worship, etc.
  - 3. *When?* The best time for the church family in its setting and tradition
- E. Secure the church's approval of the recommendations and proceed to the next step.
- F. The church must determine what committee or team will lead in the next three steps.

**STEP TWO...Planning Phase (How will we accomplish this building program?)**

- A. **Plans** need to be drawn of what is to be constructed or renovated. Professional help is secured.
  - 1. A Master plan should be utilized. It shows balance, capacities and phases in growth spaces:
    - ♦ Worship ♦ Education ♦ Parking ♦ Fellowship ♦ Recreation ♦ Office ♦ Other
  - 2. Concepts, elevations, floor plans, sketches and other materials are secured as needed.
  - 3. A construction budget is formulated for anticipated costs of the project(s) and phase(s).
- B. **Pennies** (money) need to be secured. A church can secure money in one of three ways:
  - 1. *Saved funds* (money on hand that can spent on the building program)
  - 2. *Raised funds* (Capital Stewardship Campaign). Contact the Stewardship Dept., MBCB.
  - 3. *Borrowed funds* (banks and bonds). Various factors influence the amount of borrowed money.
- C. **People** need to be involved. A Building Steering Committee with sub-committees involves church members in the project. Remember: *"The laziest person in the world (and our churches) is the person who follows someone else's dream."* (copied) **Note:** The Building Steering Committee will make several recommendations of these three (3) aspects of the Planning Phase.

**STEP THREE...Design-Technical Phase (How and when will this project become a reality?)**

- A. Based on previous actions, the architects/designers/contractors/etc. will "flesh out" the plans.
- B. The Building Steering Committee will recommend a method of construction. This may have been decided earlier. The size and type of projects will determine most construction methods.
- C. Firm financial plans will be recommended to the church.
- D. The bid process may be used at this time. The church is totally and continually informed.
- E. The church will approve various recommendations and/or bids to begin the last phase.

## **STEP FOUR...Construction Phase (the fruit of the first three steps)**

- A. Groundbreaking ceremony is conducted.
- B. Construction begins, furnishings ordered, payments made, inspections occur, etc.
- C. Preparation for dedication ceremony planned and wrap-up of construction.
- D. Celebration of the completion of the project(s).
- E. Use of the newly constructed or renovated facilities.

## **MISCELLANEOUS & RELATED INFORMATION**

### **1. Flake's Formula for Church Growth (Sunday School Growth)**

- a. Know the possibilities.
- b. Enlarge the organization.
- c. Enlist and train the workers.
- d. Provide the space.
- e. Go and get them.

### **2. Characteristics of Building Steering Committee Members**

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| •Christ-like             | •Stewardship faithful     |
| •Church faithful         | •Mission-minded           |
| •Cooperative             | •Leader and follower-able |
| •Sunday School Committed | •Vision for the church    |

### **3. Basics of a Good Building Program Process for Church and Steering Committee**

- |                               |                |             |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| •Prayer and Spiritual Support | •Communication | •Trust      |
| •Patience                     | •Celebration   | •Fellowship |

### **4. Expanded Building Steering Committee Process**

*Church>Building Steering Committee>Subcommittees>Building Steering Committee>Church*

- The number of subcommittees depends on the church size, setting and situation.
- Members of the Building Steering Committee serve as chairpersons of subcommittees.
- Possible subcommittees are: Prayer and Spiritual Support, Publicity, Church Program and Growth, Planning, Construction, Finance, Interior Design/Furnishings, Exterior/Landscaping and others as needed by each church.
- Some subcommittees can further involve more members by having workgroups or teams.
- Subcommittees report only to the main committee and then it reports to the church family.

### **5. Observations for pastors, staff members, committees, and other key leaders**

- a. Building projects go slower than expected. Yogi Berra: "It takes longer than it takes."
- b. Building projects cost more than first figured or thought.
- c. The Kingdom of God does not fail if a church leader does not get his or her way.
- d. Do not use Business Meetings to gain consensus or do committee work.
- e. Sometimes we must call "Time Out" and other times "Let's Go." Know the difference!
- f. Leaders must focus first on building the facilities in the members' heads and hearts.