

## Research on Religion podcast: February 11, 2018: "On Building Churches"

### Host:

- Anthony Gill, Ph.D.
  - Professor of Political Science, University of Washington
  - Distinguished Senior Fellow, Baylor University's Institutes for the Study of Religion

### Guests:

- Kelly Jones & Dirk Dalhausser
  - Goff Companies, a plan/design/build firm specializing in churches

### Notes:

#### Trends:

- facilities with smaller worship spaces/less seating capacity; trend is attributed to increasing popularity of multiple services per location and multi-site model
- less education space, especially adult education
- increasing attention to and importance of AV-L (audiovisual and lighting)
- increasing municipal assertiveness on property taxation

#### Space Usage:

- "Commons" are ever-present in new construction; also referred to as "gathering spaces" and are typically equal square footage as worship space seating area
- guideline of no more than 90 feet from platform to seating area's last row
- worship spaces are more often fan-shaped and not as frequently rectangular
- ancillary enterprises such as coffee shops are now usually open on weekdays
- facilities are increasingly available for weekday usage by those outside the church
- baptistries are moving from worship space into Commons area; often incorporated into a water feature that is otherwise for decorative use

#### Parking:

- adequate parking essential for growing congregations
- local regulation is a determinant in number of required spaces, but those criteria are typically inadequate for church traffic patterns
- church's mission style also a strong determinant in parking requirements:
  - "three hour model" gaining in popularity and eases parking requirements
  - early service – fellowship/education hour – second service
- typical metrics:
  - one parking space for every four seats in the worship space (assumes lots of families with children)
  - one acre of parking for every 100 seats in worship space

#### Miscellaneous:

- worship space occupancy is influential in visitors' initial perceptions; the "uncomfortably empty" scenario [defined elsewhere as less than 40% of capacity]
- "thousand day rule" –time required from initial ideas to new facility completion