

Worship Space Remodeling

1. Overview

No other building expresses a congregation's feelings towards God more than the worship center. This building is also often the most used church building. As churches change and grow there is a need to update and expand the worship space. When remodeling is the best approach to the congregation's changing worship needs, the following basic areas need to be considered in the remodeling plan.

2. Pulpit Platform

It should be designed for multiple ministry use including: preaching, choral music (small choirs, ensembles, soloists), instrumental music (piano, organ, orchestra, band, handbells), drama and special presentations.

Platform Depth

Minimum	7'-0" to 10'-0" to front of choir
Recommended	Determined by worship style

Platform Height

Minimum	2'-0"
Recommended	1'-0" of height per 20' of distance from platform

3. Choir Loft

Capacity

Minimum seating	10% of worship center
Maximum	15% of worship center seating is common

Row Depth

Minimum	3'-0"
Front/Back Row	3'-4" (Minimum)

Riser Height

Minimum	6"
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★ For greater flexibility use chairs in the choir loft and install a removable modesty rail.

★ For churches with praise teams, extensive drama use or varying worship styles, consider use of a flat platform with portable risers.

4. Furnishings

Row Spacing

Minimum	3'-0"
Recommended	3'-2"

★ Compare costs of pew refinishing/reupholstering to purchasing new.

★ Allow space in pew arrangements for wheelchair accessibility. One space for each 75 seats.

★ Chairs or movable pews might need to be considered for flexibility.

5. Floor Coverings

Carpet should be commercial grade, direct glue down, with no pad.

★ For better acoustics do not use carpet in choir loft or under piano. In these areas use hard surfaces such as wood, vinyl, rubber, ceramic or stone.

6. Sound System

The sound equipment should be designed for (1) the ministry needs of the church and (2) the acoustical dynamics of the room. The equipment should enhance room acoustics to make the spoken word intelligible and musical presentations rich and full.

★ Provide supplemental systems for persons with hearing problems.

★ Locate sound control board and operator in congregational seating area not in an enclosed sound booth.

★ Enlist help of a qualified acoustical or sound system specialist.

7. Lighting

Adequate lighting should be provided in all areas of the worship center. Incandescent lighting is preferred in worship areas because it provides a "warm" color of light which makes persons feel more at peace. Recommended light levels (in foot candles) are listed below.

★ Congregation (35-45 fc),

★ Pulpit/Choir/Platform (100-125 fc),

★ Lord's Supper Table/Baptistry (100 fc)

Adequate lighting should be provided for the unique ministries that use the worship center.

- ★ Worship
- ★ Communion
- ★ Musicals
- ★ Drama
- ★ TV/Video

★ Separate dimmer controls should be provided for each lighting area; congregation, choir, etc. Dimmer controls should be located in a logical location (s) for operation at varying services (worship, funerals, prayer service, etc.).

★ Dark colored walls, carpet, and furnishings can make recommended lighting levels inadequate.

★ Think of maintenance, i.e. "How do I change that light bulb?"

★ Obtain professional assistance for complex lighting needs.

★ Coordinate lighting design with video projection design.

8. Air Conditioning

- ★ Zone choir and foyer separately.
- ★ Avoid forced air duct arrangements that create distracting background noise when the air cycles on.
- ★ Avoid return air grilles that allow "hallway talk" to filter into worship area.

9. Special Design Considerations

★ Consider the theological implications of the design.

★ In baptistry/pulpit/choir area create a visual focal point (cross, stained glass window, etc.) to draw the attention of the eye.

★ It is critical to develop a comprehensive remodeling plan which will include floor coverings, furnishings, lighting/sound systems, etc. It can be highly beneficial to enlist the services of qualified design professionals such as architects, interior designers and acoustical/sound equipment consultants in developing a successful remodeling plan.

★ Do not reduce required circulation space or eliminate exits when remodeling.

★ Avoid multiple banners, attendance boards, flags, etc. in pulpit platform area. Too many decorations can make for a cluttered look.

★ Avoid locating restroom walls against a worship center wall.