

# Church Needs Assessment & Congregational Survey

A Comprehensive Planning Tool for Your Building Project

Prepared by Hawkey Church Management Inc.

**Updated 2026 Edition**

This document combines two essential planning tools into one comprehensive resource: a **Congregational Survey** for gathering broad input from your membership, and a detailed **Church Needs Assessment** for your building committee and leadership team. Together, they provide the foundation for a building program that accurately reflects your church's ministry needs, operational requirements, and growth vision.

**Before You Begin — Guiding Principles:**

1. Pray that God will give discernment and unity during this process.
2. Your real needs are often clarified if your "problem" is well defined.
3. Facility needs are driven by your church's program, mission, and ministry strategy.
4. The building is not the end goal — ministry is! The building is merely a tool.
5. Be careful to identify personal motivations; buy-in from church members will be difficult if motivations seem self-serving.
6. There will never be enough money or space to meet all needs — prioritize and identify which spaces can be multi-purposed.
7. Consider prioritizing efforts on areas that are growth engines and barriers to your ministries.
8. For areas that don't apply, please indicate N/A.

Church name: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# PART A: Congregational Survey

Distribute this section to the full congregation (print and online). Aim for 40–60% response rate.

## Section 1: Current Space Assessment

Please rate the adequacy of each current space on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means completely inadequate and 5 means fully meets our needs. If a space does not exist, mark N/A.

Space / Area	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Worship / Sanctuary space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fellowship hall / multi-purpose room	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's ministry rooms (nursery, preschool, elementary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth ministry space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult education / Sunday School classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pastoral and administrative offices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kitchen and food preparation area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music / choir rehearsal space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking and vehicle access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessibility (wheelchair, mobility aids, stroller access)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restroom facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage (general, seasonal, ministry supplies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor spaces (playground, gathering area, signage)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foyer / welcome area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology and audio/visual systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**What is the single biggest space challenge our church faces today?**

## Section 2: Ministry Priorities for New Spaces

Please rank each potential space as Essential, Important, Nice to Have, or Not Needed.

Space	Essential	Important	Nice to Have	Not Needed
Expanded or new worship sanctuary	■	■	■	■
Fellowship hall / banquet space	■	■	■	■
Children's ministry wing (nursery through elementary)	■	■	■	■
Dedicated youth room or lounge	■	■	■	■
Gymnasium or multi-purpose athletic space	■	■	■	■
Commercial-grade kitchen	■	■	■	■
Pastoral offices and administrative suite	■	■	■	■
Counseling rooms / private meeting spaces	■	■	■	■
Music room / choir practice space	■	■	■	■
Library or resource center	■	■	■	■
Outdoor covered gathering area	■	■	■	■
Additional parking	■	■	■	■
Welcome centre / coffee bar	■	■	■	■
Seniors room / lounge	■	■	■	■
Prayer room / chapel	■	■	■	■
Green room / platform support rooms	■	■	■	■

## Section 3: Growth Expectations

Current average weekly worship attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

**Expected attendance in 5 years:** ■ Same ■ 10–25% growth ■ 25–50% growth ■ 50%+ growth ■ Decline

**Expected attendance in 10 years:** ■ Same ■ 10–25% growth ■ 25–50% growth ■ 50%+ growth ■ Decline

**Expected attendance in 20 years:** ■ Same ■ 10–25% growth ■ 25–50% growth ■ 50%+ growth ■ Decline

**Are there new ministries you would like our church to offer if we had the space?**

- Community outreach / food bank
- Daycare or preschool program
- After-school programs for children and youth
- Senior adults programming
- Addiction recovery or support groups (AA, NA, Divorce Care)
- ESL (English as a Second Language) classes

Sports and recreation ministry

Counseling ministry

Out of the Cold program

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 4: Accessibility and Special Needs

Please indicate any accessibility features that are important to you or your family.

- Barrier-free access throughout the building (ramps, automatic doors, wide corridors)
- Accessible washroom facilities on every level
- Hearing assistance systems in the sanctuary (hearing loop, FM system)
- Visual aids (large-print materials, screen displays, good lighting)
- Dedicated space for nursing mothers
- Sensory-friendly space for children or adults with sensory processing needs
- Elevator or lift access to all levels
- Accessible parking close to main entrance (beyond minimum code requirements)
- Allergy-aware spaces (nut-free zones, low-VOC materials)

Other accessibility needs: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 5: Identity and Image

Style of building preferred: ■ Modern ■ Contemporary ■ Traditional ■ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Level of quality desired: ■ Most cost efficient ■ Average ■ High quality

What values should your church facility reflect?

What word(s) would best describe the character for a new or renovated facility?

What special building elements/spaces will better enable you to minister to your community?

*(e.g., coffee bar, bookstore, children's play area, welcome centre)*

## Section 6: Financial Participation

How comfortable are you with our church undertaking a capital campaign?

■ Very comfortable ■ Somewhat comfortable ■ Neutral ■ Somewhat uncomfortable ■ Very uncomfortable

What total project cost range do you believe is appropriate?

■ Under \$500,000 ■ \$500K-\$1M ■ \$1-\$2M ■ \$2-\$5M ■ Over \$5M ■ Unsure

Would you be willing to make a multi-year financial pledge (above regular giving)?

■ Yes, over 3 years ■ Yes, over 2 years ■ Yes, a one-time gift ■ Not at this time ■ Need more info

Concerns about a building project: (check all that apply)

- Project cost and church debt
- Impact on current ministries and mission giving
- Disruption during construction
- Timing is not right for our congregation
- The current facility can still meet our needs

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 7: Open Comments

Please share any additional thoughts, ideas, concerns, or dreams for our church's future facility.

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# PART B: Church Needs Assessment

This section is for the building committee and church leadership to complete in detail. It provides the technical and operational information needed to develop your building program.

## Section 8: General — Staffing & Operations

a) List the staff requiring space in this facility:

Name	Position

b) What changes in congregation or staff are anticipated?

c) Other users of the facility (non-staff) requiring space?

*(volunteers, sound/lighting/video, music, reception, children's ministries, library, store, café)*

d) Describe the typical sequence of space usage on days of worship:

e) Describe the typical sequence of space usage on weekdays:

f) Are there space adjacency requirements? *(staffing or space uses that overlap)*

**g) Describe special events that affect space planning:**

## Section 9: Operational Requirements

a) Special equipment or facility requirements influencing room locations?

*(e.g., offices near main doors, children's spaces close to outdoors)*

b) Is the current building functionally adequate? Describe any issues:

c) Is the current building adequate in size? Describe problems:

d) Special operational problems or suggestions for improvement:

## Section 10: Attendance Demographics

This section captures the demographics of the current congregation for space planning.

	Membership	Weekly Attendance
Present attendance		
Projected: 2 years		
Projected: 5 years		
Projected: 10 years		

Age Group	Presently	5 Years	10 Years
0 – 5 years			
6 – 12 years			
13 – 18 years			
19 – 30 years			
31 – 60 years			
Over 60 years			
<b>Total</b>			

## Section 11: Services & Programs

Please also note any programs that are desired but not currently operating.

### a) Number of services and times:

Service	Times	Current Attendance

### b) Other programs / functions:

(e.g., AA, NA, afterschool care, divorce care, daycare, out of the cold, children's programs, small groups, music, sports, discipleship, worship practice, board meetings)

Program	Day / Time	Current Attendance

## Section 12: Sanctuary

**a) Occupancy:**

	Presently	5 Years	10 Years
Main sanctuary seats req'd			
Overflow seats req'd			

**b) Seating type:**  Pews  Chairs  Theatre seats  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**c) Seating format:** *(describe preferred layout — traditional rows, semi-circular, etc.)*

**d) Areas shared with sanctuary:**  Christian education  Conferences  Youth activity  Fellowship hall  Other:

\_\_\_\_\_

## Section 13: Church Office

**a) Waiting area:**  Within Secretary's office  In Foyer  Separate room  Not required

**b) Offices / rooms required:** *(check all that apply, indicate quantity if more than 1)*

- Senior pastor  Assistant pastor
- Youth pastor  Christian Ed. / children's
- Counselling  Receptionist
- Music  Missions
- Accounting  Small group
- Staff / lunch room  Building administrator
- Board room  Counselling room
- Group work space / Volunteer  Server room

**c) Access to offices:**  Office foyer  Receptionist office  Direct to foyer  Exterior access only  Accessible to sanctuary

**d) How much / what kind of storage is required?**

**e) Technical / server room required?**  Yes  No

## Section 14: Foyer

a) **Size:**  Small  Medium  Large

b) **Other uses:**  Available for overflow  Coat room  Café  Library  Lounge  Concerts / small venue  Welcome / guest services  Resource centre

c) **Features:**  Natural light / skylight  Missions display  Events board  Fireplace  Mail boxes  Water feature  Information kiosk

## Section 15: Nursery & Children's Areas

a) **Do you currently follow Plan to Protect guidelines?**  Yes  No

*If so, please provide a copy of your policies.*

b) **Nursery rooms needed:**

Age Group	Present	5 Years	10 Years
0–18 months			
18 months – 3 years			
3 – 5 years			

c) **Duration of use:**  During church service  During Sunday school  Daycare (weekdays)  Christian school

d) **Facilities:**  Separate reception area  Sign-in centre  Cubbies / lockers  Change counter  Sink / cupboards  Dedicated washroom  Washer / dryer  Mother's room  Separate sleeping room

## Section 16: Christian Education Classrooms

a) **Classroom requirements:**

Class	Age Range	Present	5 Years	10 Years
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				

10				
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**b) Sign-in areas required?**  Yes  No Type:  Computer kiosk  Manual

**c) Classroom separation:**  Open concept  Permanent walls  Folding partitions

**d) Usage:**  Sunday school only  Midweek groups  Daycare  Community groups  Christian school

**e) Will the church consider theming or additional design in these areas?**  Yes  No

**f) Facilities to incorporate:**  Large group areas  Indoor playground  Games room  Lounge / café  Sink / cupboards  Dedicated washroom  Snack bar / vending  Video game stations

## Section 17: Fellowship Hall / Gymnasium / Multi-Purpose Room

a) Rooms required:  Gymnasium  Fellowship hall  Gym/Fellowship combined  Fellowship/foyer combined  Change room  Not required

b) If gymnasium is required, describe usage and requirements:

c) Occupancy:

Auditorium seated — # of people desired: \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet — # of people desired at tables: \_\_\_\_\_

d) Expected dinner frequency:

e) How do you normally serve meals? (*banquet, buffet, light snacks, etc.*)

f) Usage:  Meetings  Banquets  Sunday school  Worship services  Fellowship  Conferences  Sports

g) Location near:  Main foyer  Worship area  Secondary entry  Servery  Christian education  Washrooms

h) Furnishings:  Chairs  Tables  Projection screens  Stage / platform  Sound system  Scoreboard

i) Storage requirements: (*tables, chairs, sound equip, sports equip, theatre props*)

## Section 18: Kitchen / Servery

a) Is the existing kitchen adequate? What would you change?

b) Usage:  Commercial style  Residential style

Max # of people working in kitchen: \_\_\_\_\_

Max # of people served by kitchen: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of food:  Coffee / beverages only  Light lunches / reheat food  Full meals prepared on site

c) Direct access for delivery / garbage removal?  Yes  No

d) Appliances required: (*check all that apply*)

Food Prep:  Range  Commercial oven  Griddle  Deep fryer  Rice cooker  Toaster  Mixer(s)  Microwave  Coffee maker  Prep table

Refrigeration:  Deep freezer  Walk-in fridge/freezer  Glass door refrigerator  Reach-in refrigerator

**Serving:** ■ Serving carts ■ Warming plates ■ Drawer warmers ■ Soup kettles ■ Display cases ■ Hot food tables ■ Beverage dispenser

**Sanitation:** ■ Dishwasher ■ Deep pot sink ■ Mop sink ■ Hand wash sink ■ Garbage cans

**e) Pass-through roll-up shutter?** ■ Yes ■ No

### Section 19: Platform / Stage

- a) Floor:  Fixed, built in, permanent  Movable sections  Tiered  Flat
- b) Furnishings:  Pulpit  Communion table  Baptismal tank  Prayer rail  Projection screen  Chairs
- c) Instruments:  Organ  Piano  Keyboard  Drums  Guitar  Bass  Percussion
- d) Choir:  Yes  No Location:  Centre  Side Number of persons: \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Is access to the back of the platform a requirement?  Yes  No
- f) What rooms are required to service the platform? (*green room, change room, washrooms, prayer rooms*)

- g) How much storage is required for A/V equipment?

### Section 20: Audio / Visual

- a) What words best describe your style of worship?

- b) A/V Functions:  Sound (speakers, amps, mics)  Sound recording  Video recording  Hearing impaired  Lighting controls (theatrical)  Intercom
- c) Projection screens:  Centre  Sides  Rear  Prompter screen (rear wall)  Prompter screen (stage)
- d) Sound room location:  Back of sanctuary (separate room)  Back of sanctuary (in seating area)  Side aisle  Raised crows nest
- e) What rooms will require A/V or conference features?

*(children's large group, youth, gym, chapel, prayer rooms, small group rooms, classrooms, boardrooms)*

### Section 21: Site

a) Is the current parking adequate? Suggestions for improvement:

b) Outdoor areas and amenities to include: *(benches, bike racks, trees, landscaping, pathways, gardens)*

c) Current site issues: *(poor paving, retaining wall maintenance, broken fencing, landscaping)*

d) Facilities for sports? *(soccer, baseball, basketball)*

e) Previous construction on the site we should know about? *(foundations, wells, buried lines, landfill)*

f) How do you currently handle garbage removal?

### Section 22: Custodial Facilities & Utilities

**Custodial requirements:**  Supply storage  Mop sink  Laundry tub  Garbage room  Central Vac  Workroom  Garage  Outdoor maintenance shed

Facilities manager name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Utilities available (if known):**

**Electrical:**  Single phase  Three phase  Underground  Overhead Service voltage: \_\_\_\_\_

**Water:**  Municipal  Private well **Sanitary:**  Municipal  Septic system **Storm:**  Municipal  None available

**Mechanical:**  Natural gas  Electric  Propane  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 23: Security

a) How do you currently control public access?

b) Is your current security adequate? Additional measures suggested:

c) **Video surveillance:** ■ Interior ■ Exterior

d) **Security alarm:** ■ Door contacts ■ Windows / glass breaks ■ Motion / infrared sensors

e) **Access control:** ■ Key fob / card ■ Keypad ■ High security key ■ Pushbutton control / reception

## Section 24: Other Rooms & Special Requirements

Check any additional rooms required:

- Choir room  Chapel
- Prayer room  Youth room
- Craft room  Church lounge
- Daycare office  Small group rooms
- Green room  Sound / video editing room
- Seniors room  Library / bookstore

Location requirements for any of the above:

Are there any other requirements we should know about your project?

**HCMI TIP:** HCMI uses both the congregational survey results and the detailed needs assessment as key inputs when developing your building program and preliminary design concepts. The more thorough your survey process, the better we can design a facility that truly serves your ministry's needs. Contact us at 519-509-6363 or visit [www.churchbuilder.ca](http://www.churchbuilder.ca) to discuss your project.

## How to Use the Survey & Assessment Results

Once you have collected surveys from the congregation and completed the needs assessment with your building committee, analyze the results systematically:

### Quantitative Analysis

- Calculate average ratings for each current space in Section 1 to identify the most critical needs.
- Tabulate the priority rankings in Section 2 to determine which new spaces have broadest support.
- Summarize growth expectations in Section 3 to inform capacity planning.
- Quantify financial willingness in Section 6 to help set a realistic project budget.
- Cross-reference demographic data (Section 10) with classroom needs (Section 16) to verify space requirements.

### Qualitative Analysis

- Read every open-ended comment carefully; group similar themes together.
- Identify recurring concerns that leadership must address in communications.
- Note creative ideas or suggestions the committee may not have considered.
- Pay special attention to accessibility needs that may not be on your radar.
- Compare the technical needs assessment with congregational priorities to identify gaps.

### Communicating Results

- Share a summary of key findings with the entire congregation within 4–6 weeks.
- Be transparent about areas of strong consensus and areas of disagreement.
- Explain how the results will be used in the planning process.
- Thank the congregation for their participation and invite ongoing input.