

Creating Your Own Space for Gospel Hospitality

Recently, our church (Redeemer Presbyterian Church) embarked on a hugely ambitious capital campaign to purchase the first of several ministry center facilities in Manhattan, one of the most expensive real estate markets in the world. Why are we doing this?

It has become increasingly clear that this effort represents good stewardship. Hospitals and colleges in major cities have learned that it is considerably less expensive to conduct programs in owned facilities than in rented ones. For long-term stability and financial stewardship, we should acquire our own facilities.

Ultimately, however, the most exciting reason for purchasing a building has little to do with money. **The most important reason for seeking to secure space in the city is gospel hospitality.**

HOSPITALITY AND THIRD PLACES

In modern English, the word “hospitality” conveys little more than the word “entertaining” does, but in the Bible it is something important and radical (Romans 12:13; 1 Peter 4:9; Hebrews 13:2; 1 Timothy 3:2; and Titus 1:8). Contemporary Western culture leads us to think of the home as a private enclosure, only to be shared with a few intimates. The New Testament, on the other hand, calls Christians to see their homes as neither strictly private nor public space— but as places where we routinely share our homes’ safety and comfort as spaces to nurture others.

Hospitality incorporates newcomers into common, daily household activities—eating a meal, sharing a cup of coffee, or painting a room. The Greek word for hospitality—*philoxenia*—literally means the “love of strangers.” **Christians are called to an attitude of welcome, not only toward other believers but also toward those who are currently outsiders to the faith.**

In most of the neighborhoods where we are seeking property, young single professionals live in extremely tiny spaces. They would be glad for an urban space that welcomes them without trying to sell them something, and that could perhaps provide them with quiet space, a free wireless network, a place to meet others, food, and drink, as well as offering space for family activities and cultural events. **We want to say to our neighbors, “This is not just our place; it is also your place.”** In a location as suspicious and tough as Manhattan that message will probably take some time to get through – but that is the message.

>>Download the entire article by Tim Keller [here](#) as he unpacks the importance of Gospel Hospitality.

