

A temporary church

By [L. Gail Irwin](#)

August 30, 2013

A church I once served was born in a cheese warehouse, grew, purchased property, built a building, grew some more, plateaued, added an addition, declined and closed—all in a 50-year timespan. Now its building sits vacant, as much a liability as an asset to its judicatory.

Those 50 years of faithful ministry are worth celebrating. But a vacant church building is just sad. And expensive. Did you know it costs about twice as much to insure a vacant building as it does to insure one that has an occupant?

Here's a novel idea: in Australia, they built a [temporary church](#). When a gothic cathedral in Christchurch was destroyed by an earthquake, its members dreamed of rebuilding. But they knew it would take decades to replace their old building. So while they are waiting, they had an architect build a temporary building that will only last 50 years, and can be easily dismantled.

Really? Fifty years is *temporary*? And look at this building! Who would build a gothic cathedral when they could have this one, which is built out of *cardboard*?

So, what do you think? Should we start building cardboard churches?

(Thanks again to Joe Duggan at [Congregational Seasons](#) for tossing this story my way.)

Originally posted at [From Death to Life](#)