



our
NEW HOME

for a flood of lifelong disciples

Join Us In Prayer

Heavenly Father, please lead and guide the Building Committee and the Salt Leadership Team, giving them wisdom and foresight as they make crucial decisions for your glory.

*our prayer
is for a flood
of **lifelong** disciples
in **Wollongong**
& beyond...*

saltchurch.



a message from your Lead Pastor

God has been so good to Salt. Planted in 2012 with a few core families meeting in a lounge room; we now have over 300 adults, kids and youth. We've met in The Town Hall, the Presy Church and now '275' Keira St.

Today, we're a different church, but our vision remains the same: a flood of life long disciples in Wollongong and beyond.

275 has been an excellent facility playing a significant role in our growth by virtue of its location, facility and vibe. We've seen the benefits of a CBD location as a hub for ministry available for use all week. We've also experienced the limitations and frustrations of leasing. I am convinced now is the time for us to prepare for a new home that we own.

There are four big reasons:

Give us space to keep growing

Praise be to God we've seen growth at Salt, but there are still so many in Wollongong and beyond who are not disciples of Jesus. Even to see 10% of our city become disciples means every church in Wollongong needs to be over three times the size. More disciples means we need more space!

Imagine a new home where we can accommodate the next wave of disciples. We need room for all our kids to have a safe indoor space (not the Beaurepaires carport), a bigger creche room and a youth hangout. Imagine a functional kitchen, meeting rooms, an auditorium for more people to gather and a foyer to welcome and show hospitality to more people.

Help us better make disciples

Have you ever lived in a home that just doesn't work? The kitchen is too small, the roof leaks, it's hot in summer and freezing in winter. It's not just frustrating, it makes life more difficult and you're far less likely to invite someone over. The same goes for church.

We have much to be thankful for 275, but imagine a new home where the kitchen is used to create the perfect meal for hospitality, the creche and office space doesn't reach 30 degrees in summer, the auditorium doesn't require a ski jacket in winter, and the kids' spaces are safe and protected from the weather. We need a new home to better do what we're already doing - making disciples.

Not being caught out

Wollongong Council plans to demolish 275 as part of a redevelopment of McCabe Park. They haven't said when, but one thing is certain - 275 won't be our long term home.

By God's kindness in April 2023 we will sign a new 3 year lease giving us the perfect window to prepare to move into a new space over the next 3 years. We need to use this time to continue to grow and move into a new home.

**"I am convinced now
is the time for us to prepare
for a new home that we own."**

Safeguarding our vision

We want the next generation, our children and grandchildren to continue to love the people of Wollongong by making disciples. And yet our culture is becoming increasingly hostile to Jesus' message and disciples. I'm convinced the days of churches leasing publicly owned facilities is fast coming to an end. This is a great reminder our true home will always be in Heaven. But until Jesus' return we need a home in Wollongong we can rely on.

The task ahead of us is huge. So many people in our city don't know Jesus. We need to keep praying that God brings a flood of disciples at Salt, not for our glory, but his. I'm convinced now is the time for us to step out in faith and prepare for a new home that we own.

This is going to stretch all of us financially. It is a time to be challenged as to how we can sacrificially invest in the work of making disciples at Salt.

May I urge you to join me and the other members of Salt by investing as sacrificially as you can. Pray that God would surprise you with how much he enables you to give.

For most of us, this is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Grab this opportunity and help Salt find a new home for a flood of lifelong disciples.

Michael.
Michael Plaege

how will we get a new home?

It would be amazing if we were given a new home ready to go this Sunday! God could do that! But that would also mean we would miss out on the opportunity to do some serious growing in generosity and dependance on him.

Expect this and the following phases over a few years for us to own Our New Home:

Phase ONE - Research (completed!)

During 2022 our Building Committee, assisted by staff and the admin committee, researched our financial capability, our ministry needs, surveyed the property market, prayed and made the recommendation that our best option for the long term stability of our vision would be to renew a 3 year lease at 275 and begin preparing financially to purchase our own property in 3 years' time. We presented this to church and after receiving very positive response have started to prepare the pathway for a new home at Salt.

Phase TWO - Raising a deposit (2023-2025)

Before we can seriously consider a property, there are two things we need in place (much the same as buying your own home). We need a deposit. And we need to prove to a lender that we can service a loan.

In April-May this year we'll be running **Our New Home Campaign 2023** to raise \$1 Million in donations and pledges over the next 3 years. This will become our deposit, and prove to a lender that we can service a loan of up to \$3 Million (a total outlay of \$3.5-\$4.0 Million).

Phase THREE - Buying (when we find the right place)

Land is expensive and competition with developers fierce, but the Building committee have already identified possible properties within the CBD and its fringe. It's thought the most realistic option is the purchase of an existing warehouse that we could refit for our purpose (a larger version of 275!) in a good central location with good access to parking. Properties like this are rare, so it will take time to find the right property and we will need to be financially ready to act when the opportunity arises. Please pray about this.

Phase FOUR - Developing (plans & finances)

It would be nice to move straight in after we purchase, but it's highly likely we will need to develop plans to ensure the property suits our vision. This will require additional time and financial resources to complete renovations, building and meeting Council's requirements for a new use.

Phase FIVE - The Fitout

Once we have secured the funds for a deposit, received approval for a loan and found the right place, we will need to design the fitout. We are really excited about this stage as we hope to create spaces that will allow us to make and grow disciples, to engage and grow our kids and youth and to have a space that allows us to develop an even greater sense of community.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2015 we commenced our first 3 year lease at 275, a very ordinary looking carpet warehouse.

Before we could move in we spent about 9 months and \$120,000 on renovations and meeting Council requirements.

A lot of the skilled labour & design was donated by Salt members to make it ready for the making of disciples for the years ahead.





the flood that's coming

timeline of events 2023

Weeks of 20th, 27th March & 3rd April

Building Committee/Pastors
visiting small groups

Sunday 30th April

Start of Our New Home Campaign
Sunday Sermon series (including Small
Group studies & Next Gen)

Monday 15th May

Prayer + Q&A Night
Another opportunity to gather to pray
and ask questions on
Our New Home

Wednesday 7th June

GROW
Celebrate the total amount given,
give thanks and next steps

Sunday 26th March

Info & Prayer Arvo for all
Salt Leaders

Sunday 7th May

Prayer + Q&A Arvo
An opportunity to gather
to pray and ask questions on
Our New Home

Sunday 28th May & 4th June

Bring your donation
commitment cards

Join Us In Prayer

Heavenly Father,
please fill us with a vision
of the impact we could make
in Wollongong for your glory.

a flood of questions

Why do we want a CBD location?

Our growth is partly attributable to the accessibility of our location and close proximity to the city. Being close to public transport and amongst the vibe of the city are highly desirable for our new location. A central location will also provide the best opportunity to impact the increasing residential unit communities being built in the inner city.



Why not keep leasing ?

Leasing as a long term strategy could leave us very vulnerable. As we grow it will become more difficult to find a suitable property at an affordable price and increasing anti-christian public sentiment is likely to mean churches no longer have access to publicly owned property (like schools and Council owned properties). Purchasing our own home will give us long term security and the freedom to make it our own.

Why can't we stay at 275?

Council is planning a redevelopment of McCabe Park including the demolition of 275. There is no exact time table and in God's kindness, we have been able to negotiate a lease for another 3 years. However there is no certainty as to what might happen moving forward.

Will Our New Home have the 275 vibe?

The vibe of 275 is important to us and whatever we choose as Our New Home will reflect our current style; however we will also have the opportunity to shape it in the way we want it to function. This is the freedom that ownership provides.

Can we afford this?

There's no question a new home will cost a substantial sum. All indications point to a spend of \$3.5 - 4 Million. But when you consider the long term benefits and the thousands of people it will serve into the future - it's worth it. Can we afford it? The more important question is can we afford not to? Making disciples in Wollongong is far too important for us to do nothing. If we want to keep growing and be in Wollongong long term, we need to own property.

Would we consider our own build?

Yes, if we were convinced we would get a better outcome and the finances were in place. God has gifted Salt with a number of professional skills and tradespeople that could help, but we need to begin by getting ourselves financially ready.

Can we do this sooner than 3 years? We're already running out of space!

Yes, but only if we exceeded our target and could give confidence to a lender on servicing a loan. In the meantime, we need to ensure 275 doesn't inhibit our growth. Our Leadership team is considering interim options to avoid our growth being inhibited, particularly related to our 10am gathering and kids and youth ministry. Please pray about this.

What could we purchase?

Based on the building committee's research, we could purchase an existing warehouse within the CBD or fringe, and refurbish the property to meet our requirements at a total budget of \$3.5-4 Million. We're praying for a new home in a great location that can be fitted out for a flood of lifelong disciples.

Why should I give?

It will take all of us contributing generously for us to reach our target. But more important than the dollar amount, God cares about you growing in generosity; that's measured by your heart not your dollars (remember Jesus' response to the widow's offering).

What if we don't reach our target?

We will need to reconsider our plans, and whether a purchase is still viable. With God's help we believe we have the capacity at Salt to achieve the target, but it won't happen if we're not willing to give sacrificially.

What if we raise more than our target?

That would be fantastic, pray for this! It would mean we could reduce the size of the loan we require when it comes to purchase or be in a better position to purchase the property that best suits our vision.

What will the \$1 Million be used for?

There will be costs associated with finding and purchasing a property, but primarily this will be our deposit for a purchase and the necessary proof to a lender that we can service a loan. Our building and admin committee will also be monitoring the best and most secure investment for these funds until we are ready to move forward.

Will my gift be tax deductible?

The simple answer is no. The building and admin committees have researched this issue and whilst some of the cost may be deductible it is a very complex area and until we understand more about what we are purchasing and what work is required, we are not in a position to consider this option.

What if I can't follow through on my commitment?

We understand forecasting your giving can be difficult and even with the best planning, your circumstances can change unexpectedly. If over the course of the next 3 years, you discover you are unable to fulfil your pledge commitment, please let us know so we can adjust our donation expectations accordingly.

Who will see my commitment card?

All giving information at Salt, including pledges for Our New Home, is kept private. Only our Treasurer, Bookkeeper and as necessary our Lead Pastor have access to this information.

*'Everything comes from you,
O Lord, and we have given you
only what comes from
your hand'*

1 Chronicles. 29:14



How will we raise \$1 Million?

For it to happen, it will take serious generosity, personal sacrifice and joyful participation from everyone in the Salt family. Only God can make this happen, and we trust a God who is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine, so please pray about this. In order to reach our target of \$1 Million we need 115 people giving an average of \$2900/year (\$8740 across 3 years).

Some of us can give much more than this; others less. Stewardship calls for equal sacrifice, not equal gifts. Based on the outcomes of other churches that have walked this path before us, here's an example of what this collective effort might look like.

How will you contribute?



115 gifts = \$1,005,000

why buildings matter

It was around 2009 that I started to change my mind on churches investing in buildings. Up until then I'd been part of churches that prided themselves on investing every dollar into people - leaders, staff, trainers and trainees, people becoming disciples and growing as disciples. After all, church is all about people right? Hard to argue with that... until I realised two significant things.

Firstly, all the ministry I had been doing was being done in buildings my forebears had sacrificed to build. I could afford to focus on people and not worry about the building because some very generous christians before me had the foresight and the gospel heartedness to build buildings for... people!

Secondly, I started to realise how valuable a secure, fit for purpose building was when our church didn't have one. When I moved from my home church in Sydney to pastor an FIEC church on the Central Coast, we met in a public school and the cafe of the local uni campus. Midweek we hired (or hogged!) every community space we could get our hands on and a small shop as our office. God was very kind but it began to feel like we were freeloading on the community we came to serve. The community halls were there for everyone to enjoy, not so we could maximise every booking.

There were other limitations too. We nearly got booted from the school because of a sermon I preached on human sexuality and the uni cafe's safety and security requirements became so onerous we had to move...

It was time for us to step up and demonstrate we're serious about serving the community we belong to. It was a long hard road taking sacrificial giving to new heights, but it had some other amazing benefits I'd seriously underestimated.

As a church we grew into even more serious disciples of Jesus. In our new building we had a much more welcoming and purpose built space than a spartan school hall and dank classrooms. We were in a more visible location and had a hub for ministry 7 days a week rather than a pop up church on Sunday. It quickly enabled existing ministries to flourish and new ministries to start. But most of all it said to our community... We're serious about you checking out Jesus, he really is worth it! We've invested heavily so we might reach our community for generations to come. It was a very powerful and God-glorifying moment.

Buildings matter because people matter.

Michael.

reflection

on giving

Like lots of things I'm a work in progress when it comes to being more generous. God has brought me a long way in the past 35 years, (just ask Natalie!), but I still wrestle with the allure of possessions and the false security that money offers.

As I've been preparing for Our New Home campaign I've found myself praying "Lord, help me get better in this area. Forgive me and change me. Help me be content" and "Can I be giving more? Am I greedy? Am I holding on too tightly to your gifts? What could I go without for the sake of your work?"

As God's transformed my heart I've also been greatly helped by some key ideas God has used to shape me to be a more generous disciple.

God is exceedingly generous

Of all people I have every reason to be generous. God has been so generous to me. Through his Son, Jesus I have salvation! I am his child and belong to his precious church. I have unnumbered days to live with him and his people. This is the most precious and generous gift in the world. I should never feel hard done by only deeply loved by a generous father. And I need not fear being generous, my Heavenly Father will provide for me and give me joy in being like him. In fact...



"We've had our building since 2010 and I can't commend enough the value of investing in a building. The return has been manifold. In pretty much every room (including the kitchen) people have given their lives to Christ. Because buildings are for people, and people matter to God."

Ray Galea

Lead Pastor, MBM, Rooty Hill (1992-2022) & Salt Church Board of Reference (2012-2022)

Everything I have comes from God

God's given me many temporary gifts too - a home, a lifestyle, safety, food, a family, an education and many other material things too. It all belongs to God! My job is to work out how it could be best used for Him.

I get to invest in an eternal work

Christians aren't the only ones to give their money away. Plenty of my friends give to great causes. But I get to give to an eternal work. I may expect my friends to give to charities, the homeless and the poor, but I don't expect them to give to the making of disciples, that's my responsibility and privilege.

I want you to know that Natalie and I have already planned what sacrifices we're going to make. We've had a good hard think and pray about what we need to cut back on and what we're going to sell so we can contribute generously and joyfully to this important step for Salt. We're excited!

As I pray for myself, I'm also praying that God will help you to be generous. That could look very different for each of us at Salt. Someone with much might give thousands upon thousands, but not be generous in their heart. Someone with little might give hundreds and be more generous than everyone combined. What matters even more than Salt getting a new home is God growing us into a church more grateful and more generous than ever before.

Michael.



'But since you excel in everything - in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you - see that you also excel in this grace of giving'

2 Corinthians 8:7

how to give

To reach our target we're asking everyone at Salt to complete a **New Home Commitment card and bring it on Sundays 28th May or 4th June!** On the day you will have the opportunity to make an upfront donation and/or a 3 year commitment.

Upfront donations would make it easier for us to move forward with more certainty and assist with the planning. However given the funds we require it is most likely people wanting to contribute sacrificially will need to spread their gift over the 3 years.

It is important that whatever you choose to donate to Salt's New Home it needs to be in addition to your normal giving to Salt. The day-to-day running of Salt and our ongoing growth depends on your regular giving. It would defeat the purpose if we took from one to fund the other. This is why we are seeking sacrificial giving towards Our New Home.

As a side note, if Salt is your church home and you haven't started giving regularly, we would encourage you to set that up first as God enables you, and then give to Our New Home.

How do I work out how much to give?

Here are some suggestions to help you consider how to give generously...



1. Ask God to help you be generous

This is what God cares about most - a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:7). Ask God to help you be generous. And do not fear. God may answer in a number of ways. He might reduce your expenses. He might release you from bondage to an idol. He might show you how you could use equity in your home or sell something valuable. Would you pause right now as you're reading this, and pray this prayer?

*Heavenly Father,
Thank you for all that you've given me -
your Son's death for my salvation, my church,
my possessions and money.
Help me to see everything I have comes from
you and belongs to you. Please make me more
sacrificially generous than I am.
Make me generous like you.*

2. If you have kids...

Involve them in praying and working out what a sacrifice might look like as a family. A holiday? A renovation? Could you do a garage sale and donate the proceeds to Our New Home? Can you offer to match your children's donation?

3. Ask your family

If you have Christian parents or grandparents, do you think they might like to help Salt reach Our New Home target? If they've seen you grow while at Salt there's a good chance they'd love to be involved in this project. Can you give them this booklet? Could you invite them to church during Our New Home Series or our prayer and Q&A sessions?

In the end, the figure you donate is not as important as the heart that gives it. Generosity is measured at the heart, not the hip pocket. We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to make a gospel investment that will pay dividends for generations to come, eternity actually! Take this opportunity and give in such a way that you can stand before God with a clear conscience and say,

"I think this is a generous figure for me".



As you prayerfully consider your donation, here are some practical and creative suggestions to consider:

Do a health check on your finances

Do an audit of your finances (budget, assets, savings and investments) with your family. This is a healthy thing to do periodically so you know where your money is going and continue to be a faithful steward of what God has given you. *Consider: Are there cuts or savings you can make?*

Make lifestyle changes

Are there lifestyle changes you could make to free up more funds to give away?

- **Giving up take away coffee:** Four coffees or a few soft drinks a week adds up to \$20 which is \$1000 per year, that's \$3000 towards Our New Home over our 3 year campaign
- **Eating out less:** \$100 a month adds up to \$1200 per year, that's \$3600 towards Our New Home.

- **Not taking a holiday** or maybe a cheaper holiday...
- **Cancelling a subscription** or two or a membership can save big \$\$\$ as well. Are you using your gym membership?
- **Is there a purchase you could put off**, like a bigger TV, a new lounge or a new car, for one to three years in order to give to Our New Home?

Thinking bigger

- Many of us use our mortgage redraw facilities to purchase a new car, a bigger TV, a family holiday or to do renovations. Would you consider using your redraw facility to release some equity in your home or investment property to contribute to Our New Home?
- Can you put off the renovations or a holiday or just reduce the cost of these so you have some funds left over to put towards Our New Home?
- Is there something you own, big or small, that you could sell so you can give the funds to Our New Home?
- Could you give part or all of a tax refund?
- Are you able to redirect some of your external giving for a period of time so you can provide additional support to Our New Home?
- Do you have friends or family who might consider supporting our vision and contribute to Our New Home?

If you would like some help with working out what generosity looks like for you within your circumstances, then we can arrange for a suitably trained and experienced person to assist you.

Feel free to contact the committee at newhome@saltchurch.info

What if I have more questions?

If you have more questions, we would love to hear them. Questions help the Building Committee ensure we have considered everything.

Please feel free to email the committee or come to one of the Prayer + Q&A sessions in May. Email your questions to newhome@saltchurch.info

our
building committee



Andrew Fisher
10am
Rob Royters

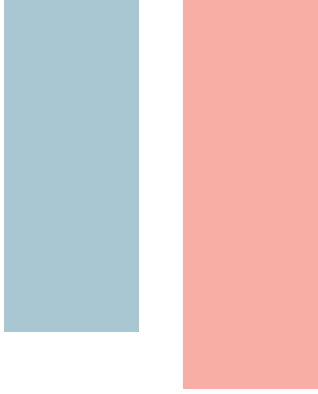


Shaun Robinson
5pm
Michael Plaege

Join Us In Prayer

Heavenly Father, please help us to see everything as a gracious gift from you and grow us in sacrificial generosity.





*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
baptising them in the name of the Father and
of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”*

Matthew 28:19

saltchurch.