



pastor, and experience friendly people. Visitors respond positively to a follow-up after they attend a service, from a member or the pastor.

*What are the key clergy skills?* The pastor has strong interpersonal skills and is someone who enjoys one-on-one work. In addition to strong preaching, members expect the pastor to be their primary teacher. In a church of this size, the pastor is involved in most of the congregation's activities. Clergy need an interactive leadership style that involves a team of lay people in decision-making.

### **The Program Church**

This church size offers more programming than smaller congregations and is by definition a multiple-staff organization. In addition to just more members, multiple member constituencies hold diverse opinions about almost everything. Considered the "awkward" size, about one in five U.S. congregations falls in this range.

*What is the mission?* Through worship, group activities, and events, the church carries out ministries to help people grow spiritually, express love for neighbors, and offer Christ to people outside the church.

*What are the methods?* This church draws from a larger pool of gifts and talents to accomplish ministry. In addition to the pastor, other full-or part-time staff lead many cells of activity. More people also means first-time visitors can get lost in the crowd. Effective churches develop specific strategies to ensure visitors are welcomed: acknowledging their presence as part of the service; inviting them to fill out a "New Here" card with contact information; following up with a postcard, letter, or email; offering some kind of free gift and information about the church; and assigning pew monitors in the worship space who look for visitors to greet. Reaching out to people in the community can also take the form of advertising through a church website or Facebook page, door hanger invites, mass postcard mailings, yard signs, and radio ads.

*What are the key clergy skills?* The lead pastor cannot relate in depth to every member and must rely on trained staff and lay leaders to fulfill some pastoral functions. Clergy spend more time in planning with other leaders to ensure high quality programming and worship. Recruitment, training, and supervising others consumes more time.

### **The Corporate Church**

People attending worship today are concentrated in larger congregations and that concentration is increasing.<sup>2</sup> Although only 14% of congregations

grow to this size, non-denominational churches are over-represented in this size group. One in four church visitors say denomination is not important and half of those under the age of 25 agree.

*What is the mission?* Offering exceptional worship is a top priority and vast effort goes into making certain it is a rich experience. Ministries are complex and diverse, meeting many niche member and community needs.

*What are the methods?* A major cause of growth is the congregation's positive reputation in the community. This causes members to spontaneously invite and more people respond to those invitations. Larger congregations are more likely to have a group for newcomers and invite them to take part in small groups or service opportunities. The resources of the corporate church allow for many types of mass marketing,<sup>3</sup> public events to reach out to new people, multiple worship sites and times, and accessible facilities for sports and recreation.

*What are the key clergy skills?* Clergy, as the head of staff, must be able to manage multiple staff and foster collegial ministry. In addition, the lead pastor usually spends more time than other clergy in preparing for preaching and worship leadership.

### **Finding the Perfect Fit**

When the pastor and lay leaders can answer these important questions about the church's mission and size, their efforts are more likely to bear fruit.<sup>4</sup>

- What size type is your congregation and how long has it been that size?
- How is your membership stability or decline related to community population mobility?<sup>5</sup>
- Do members and leaders have the motivation, skills, methods, and resources to grow a larger congregation?

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1. Arlin Rothauge, *Sizing Up a Congregation for New Member Ministry* (Episcopal Church Center, 1986).

2. National Congregations Study, <http://www.thearda.com/archive/NCS.asp>.

3. See "Six Reasons Our Church Produced a Spring Catalog," <http://www.unseminary.com>.

4. Roy Oswald, "How to Minister Effectively in Family, Pastoral, Program and Corporate-Sized Churches," <http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org>.

5. Find your community mobility type at American Communities Project, <http://americancommunities.org>.