

TYPES OF CHURCHES

Compiled by Norris Smith

Speed Leas, *Moving Your Church Through Conflict*

D. G. McCoury, *Understanding the Single-Staff Church*

FAMILY CHAPEL

Characteristics

1. Size is about 100 and below regular attendees.
2. Predominantly rural.
3. Single-cell in organization.
4. Quality more important than quantity.
5. Their history is very important.
6. Meeting personal needs is high priority.
7. Attendance is a “gathering of the clan.”
8. There is a resistance to growth.
9. Worship spirit more important than style.
10. Annual events, not long-range planning, is the focus.
11. Relationships more important than programs.

Leadership

1. Pastor is a chaplain.
2. Major task is ministry of presence.
3. The decision-makers are patriarchs or matriarchs.
4. Pastor works with their administration.

Conflict

1. It is seldom open.
2. Conflict is usually suppressed or ignored.
3. It arises when their system is threatened.
4. Conflict that does surface is usually between families or personalities.
5. Pastor can't win.

COLLECTIVE ALLIANCES

Characteristics

1. Size is about 100 to 175 regular attendees.
2. They are located in rural areas, county seat towns, and cities.
3. Pastor is central leader.
4. New members align with pastors.
5. Congregation develops dependency on pastor.
6. Limited organizational structure.
7. Growth focuses on pastor.
8. Ministry is more relational and limits growth.

Leadership

1. Pastor is key figure.
2. Pastor cultivates relationships with key leaders.
3. He is liaison between groups.
4. Patriarchs and matriarchs shift to groups or organizations.
5. Pastor becomes the administrator.

Conflict

1. Subterranean pastors emerge.
2. Conflict focused on pastor.
3. There is usually a history of tension between groups.
4. Issues are focused on persons.
5. Pastor is scapegoat if he chooses sides.
6. There is a struggle to get dependent persons to be responsible.

EQUIPPING LEADER

Characteristics

1. Size is about 175 to 250 regular attendees.
2. Predominantly in cities and small towns.
3. Multi-celled in its life.
4. Administration is done purposefully.
5. Communication is a key to functioning healthily.
6. Committee work annual planning and program ministries are major elements.
7. Each cell strives for intimacy.

Leadership

1. Pastor becomes a liaison between groups and administrates the organization.
2. Pastor becomes pastor to the leadership.
3. Pastor equips the leadership as a teacher.
4. Pastor delegates to other leaders.
5. Staff leaders often added.
6. Pastor views the leaders as companions not competitors.
7. Administration is done cooperatively by groups.

Conflict

1. Pastor is often further removed.
2. Takes longer for conflict to surface.
3. Conflict is usually within the leadership team or staff.
4. Conflict can often get worked out before it gets to congregation.
5. All groups must work together to solve conflict influencing the whole congregation.

CORPORATION CHURCH

Characteristics

1. Size is about 250 and up in regular attendance.
2. Predominantly in cities.
3. Organization is more complex and sophisticated.
4. Great increase in activities.
5. Personal relationships are formed around small groups.
6. Delegated authority given to more leaders.
7. Patriarchs and matriarchs return as strong committees or groups.

Leadership

1. Pastor is central figure with added staff.
2. Unity is symbolized in pastor.
3. Fewer people know the pastor.
4. Lay leadership is multi-leveled: committees, deacons, and councils.
5. Pastor can be perceived as CEO, and more decisions are made at this level.

Conflict

1. Conflict takes longer to spread over whole church.
2. Conflict is first managed within the group or organization.
3. Fewer people care about the outcome.
4. Pastor can be less involved personally.
5. Minority groups can be overlooked.
6. Responsible information and communication is needed if the whole church is brought into conflict.
7. Receptivity to an outside mediator is higher.