

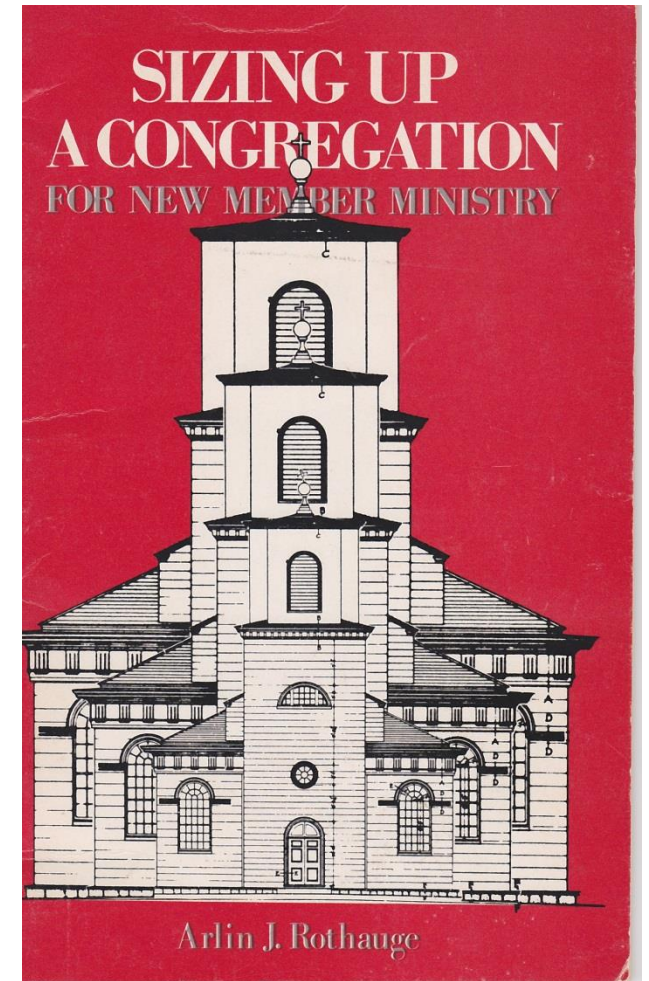
Congregational size
differences

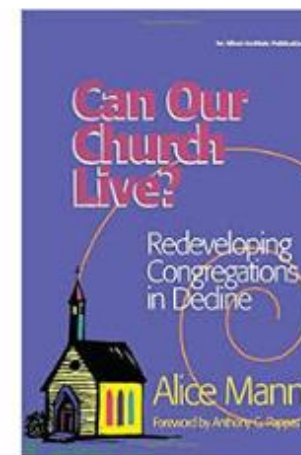
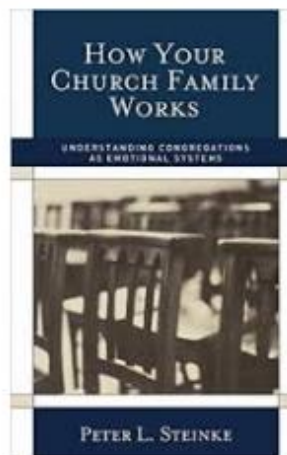
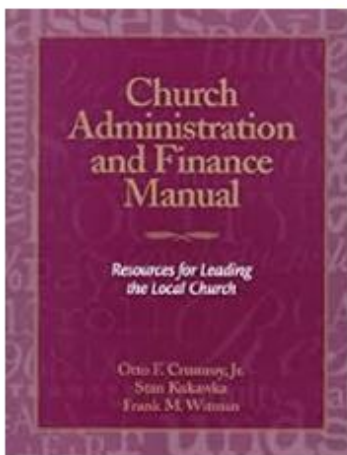
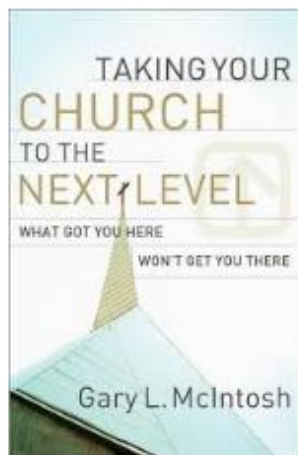
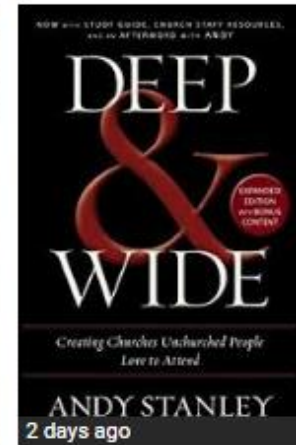
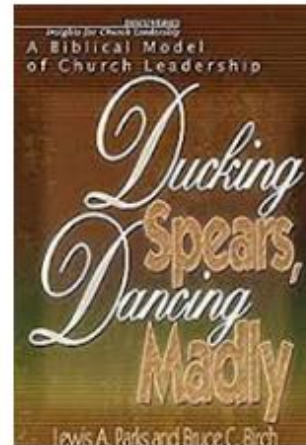
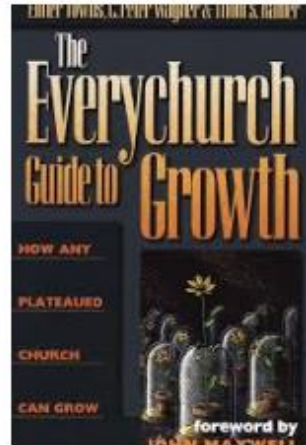
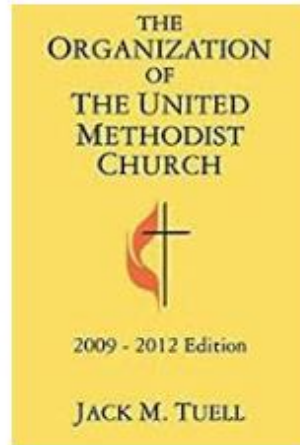
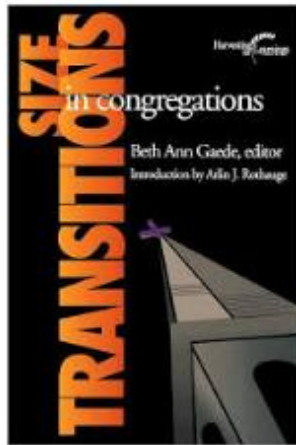
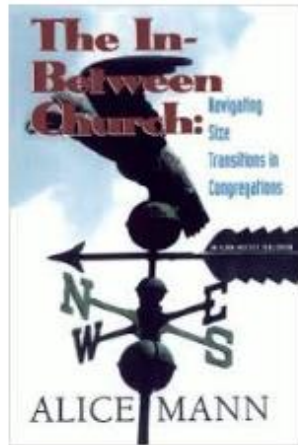
Why should we understand congregation size dynamics?

- It is a key factor in the function and style of relationships and leadership within a parish
 - Role of laity
 - Role of pastor
 - Expectations for leadership
 - How decisions are made
- There is no inherent stigma or value for any, but they function differently, much as different families function differently.
 - Different people are looking for different things in a parish
 - Difficulties and opportunities for each
- *Size impacts behavior and behavior impacts size.

How do we measure this?

- 1986 Arlin J. Rothauge wrote a monograph entitled Sizing Up A Congregation for New Member Ministry
- Based on average Sunday attendance
- We will discuss four categories and focus on two
- There is now a great deal of research on this topic.





a) By # of churches

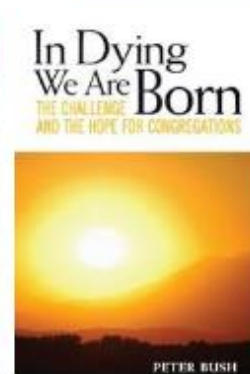
	1950	1960	1970	1980	1989
United States	48	96	121	120	131
Canada	109	136	139	178	198
Total Churches	177	232	260	299	329
Total gain per decade		55	28	28	31
Total gain per decade by %		31%	12%	15%	10%
Net annual gain by decade		3.1%	1.2%	1.5%	1%

b) By New Churches

	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s
By Decade	Start/Stop	Start/Stop	Start/Stop	Start/Stop
United States	+27 -3	+29 -16	+15 -6	+21 -16
Canada	+22 -16	+86 -19	+41 -18	+61 -16
Total	+49 -19	+75 -37	+56 -24	+71 -32
Net Gain by church	30	38	32	39
Total Churches Region (4 decades): 1950s - 80s: 262 Total				
Enrich 112 New 150				
Percentage of Total starts stops: 57%				

c) By membership (Source: Yearbooks)

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1989
United States	11,676	12,896	15,103	16,972	16,794
Canada	10,033	13,945	16,694	21,095	25,185
Total	21,709	26,841	31,797	38,067	41,979
Net Growth by decade		5132	4956	6260	3730
Decadal growth by		24.0%	18.6%	20.0%	10.0%
Annual growth by		2.4%	1.8%	2.0%	1.0%



Family church defined

- 0-50 active members
- Close relationships between members
- Pastor functions as a chaplain (probably a part time priest)
- Lay leaders (patriarchs and matriarchs) have a lot of power
- Decision making is democratic and typically requires consensus of the whole group

Pastoral church defined

- 50 – 150 active members
- Needs more cohesive leadership than family church
- A rector is at the center and functions as a pastoral presence
 - Members look for the rector for direction, leadership and pastoral care.
- There is a leadership circle, with powerful individuals (long time members, prominent personalities)
 - Effectiveness of leadership depends on good communication and delegation
- Leadership is pastoral and there are many relationships, like a big family.
 - Conflict management is a critical skill.

Program church defined

- 150 – 350 active members
- Priest is the chief administrator with democratic organization and leadership of laity.
- With increased size, it is not possible for the central leader to maintain pastoral contact for the whole congregation
- Priest works on coordination of different ministries, goal setting, training.
- Decision making occurs in vestries and structured committees.
- Friendships cluster around areas of common interest and worship styles; there is not an expectation that everyone knows everyone.
- Communication becomes more challenging and needs to be very intentional.

Corporate church defined

- 300- 500+
- Much more complex and diverse in membership
- The head pastor is a symbol of unity and stability in a complicated congregational life.
- Worship services are more “professional” in tone and serve as an entry point
- Personal relationships form within small groups, but anonymity is possible.

Where is Redeemer?

- Membership says we are a program church
- Some of our behaviors say we are a pastoral church
- We have a foot in both camps
- What are we seeking in a rector?
- Parish profile:
 - “We are looking for a rector who is knowledgeable regarding the characteristics of program-sized churches, while recognizing that we, in many ways, still function as a pastoral-sized church.”

“Character” of a smaller church (40 – 200)

- Strong expectation that each member has a face to face relationship with each other member
- While there are appointed and elected leaders, there are “opinion leaders” who carry large influence.
- Communication is somewhat informal.
- Pastor is primarily a shepherd.
 - In a smaller church, people will listen to sermons if you are a good pastor, whereas in a larger church, people will let you pastor them if your sermons are good.
 - Shepherding of every member is a driving force of ministry. There is little delegation.
- Changes are processed relationally and informally by the whole congregation. No major changes unless the opinion leaders buy in.

Entry into smaller churches

- Newcomers are attracted with relationships in the congregation and also via a personal relationship with the pastor.
- Newcomers expect the attention of the clergy person
 - This puts limits on growth and can lead to excessive demands on the rector.
- There is not a formal way of greeting and incorporating visitors.
- Members may think of themselves as friendly but this may be primarily among themselves; It's hard to break into the fellowship circle

“Character” of a medium church (200-450)

- Primary circle of belonging is a small group or class.
- There is more complexity in membership demographics.
- Leadership teams or commissions have more authority (vs. individuals)
- Leaders are chosen based on gifts, not longevity or personality.
- Vestry leaders are in partnership with pastor and staff in decision making.
- Senior pastor trains, organizes and supervises – needs significant administrative skills
- Change is driven by creative committees and teams with new ideas.
- Quality of ministries becomes more “professional”.

Entry into medium churches

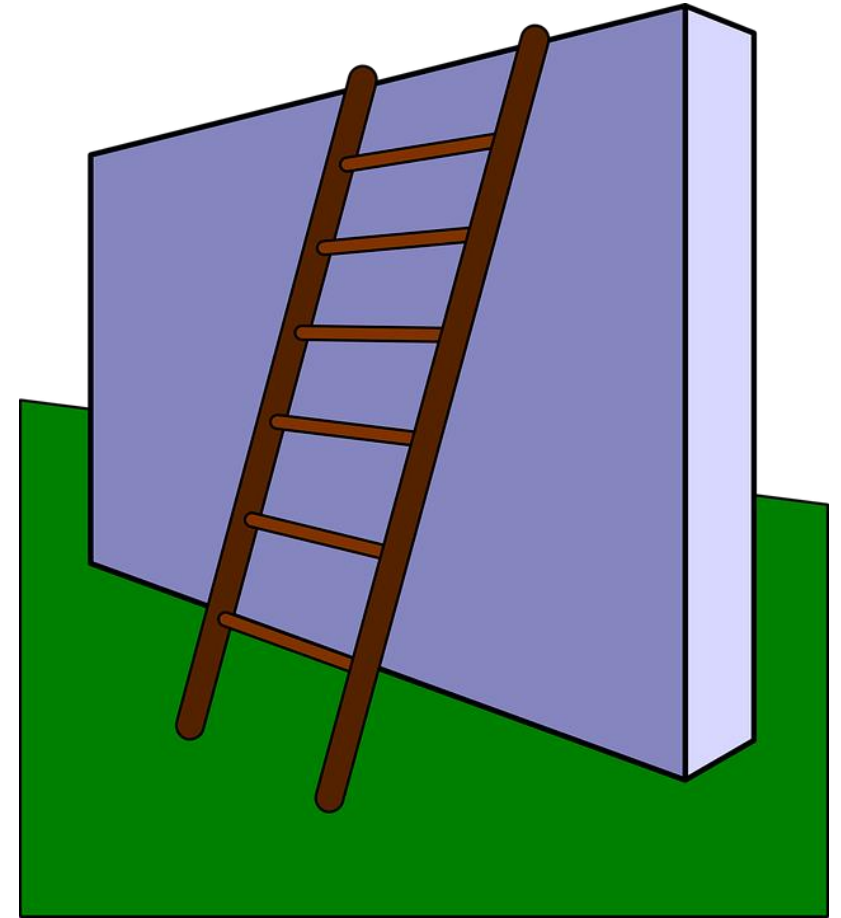
- Visitors are drawn by the visibility and quality of programs
- “Find a hurt and heal it” – community outreach
- Specific programs to promote community outreach

Crossing the threshold to the next size category

This can be a big challenge!



"Our growth consultant thinks the term *church* sounds outdated."



General trends as a church grows larger

- Increasing complexity: members have less in common and more programs are required
- Shifting lay-staff responsibilities
 - “Smaller churches have policy decided by many and ministry done by few whereas larger churches have ministry done by many and policy decided by few.”
- Increasing intentionality in identifying and incorporating newcomers.
- There are aspects of size that must be resisted:
 - “Larger churches have a great deal of difficulty keeping track of members who drop out or fall away from the faith” and this must be resisted.
 - “The smaller church by its nature give immature, outspoken, opinionated and broken members a significant degree of power over the whole body” and this must be resisted.

First change: multiplication options

- Willingness to question that every member must know every member
- More than one Sunday service with varying styles and times to meet different needs
- Multiple small group opportunities

Second change: additional staff

- One full time minister cannot personally shepherd more than 150 – 200 people
- Staff can include part time or full time options, administrators, musicians, youth ministers, depending on priorities of the parish
- Initial staffing must be to support growth.

Third change: power shifts

- Consensus process becomes too slow and unwieldy.
 - In a consensus model of decision making, it is impossible to proceed with change if any member is strongly opposed.
 - In a larger parish, someone will be opposed to most any change.
- Decisions will increasingly be led by staff.
- The lay leaders are no longer able to sign off on absolutely everything and must let staff and individual volunteers make decisions on their own.

Fourth change: formal and deliberate assimilation and communication

- These things will not happen “naturally”.
- Meeting the needs of a new member might include:
 - Warm welcome by greeters and small group sessions
 - Visitor information must be secured in some reliable way
 - Follow up to a visitor and show hospitality
 - Opportunities for orientation and education (Inquirer’s class)
 - Finding a place to belong (have shepherds for this process)
 - Self discovery and use of gifts
 - Administrative checkpoints
- Communication must be intentional and planned.

Fifth change: ability and willingness of the pastor and people for the pastor to shepherd less and lead more

- Need more visioning, strategizing and administrative know how from a pastor in a larger church.
 - The leader trains, supports and supervises more.
- The pastor is less available and accessible to every member (can't expect to just drop in to the office and visit).

Parish profile

- A mismatch of numerical size and cultural practices in a parish can lead to chaos and discomfort.
- Church membership will be at the place where the cultural practices lead.
- We will have listening sessions to discuss how we move forward as a parish, effectively carry out the mission of the Church of the Redeemer and prepare to welcome a new rector.

What does Redeemer seek in a rector?

- An **empathetic person** who has the ability to inspire, challenge, and connect with the Redeemer community;
- A **spiritual leader** who inspires growth among members and who is aware of and teaches a wide range of spiritual disciplines;
- A **loving pastor** who develops and leads a pastoral team and yet who personally conducts crisis care;
- An **inspiring preacher** who provides spiritual and moral direction and preaches Bible-based sermons that apply the Word to our lives;
- A **thoughtful teacher** who challenges people to examine their faith and who fosters a strong Christian formation program;
- A **discerning priest** who provides stability in worship style in the Episcopal tradition while keeping up with and being open to changes in worship;
- An **effective administrator** who will help us manage and expand our human and financial resources, while building consensus.

*"Christ has no body on earth but ours,
no hands but ours, no feet but ours.
Ours are the eyes through which the
compassion of Christ
looks out upon the world,
ours are the feet with which he
goes about doing good,
ours are the hands with which he
blesses his people."*

—St. Teresa of Avila



References

- The Reverend Donald Dunn
- Leadership and Church Size Dynamics: How Strategy changes with growth, by Dr. Timothy Keller
 - <https://www.redeemercitytocity.com/>
- Sizing up a Congregation
 - <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/>