

Organizational Types

Usual Size	Very Small [under 75 members; Aver. att: under 50]	Small [75-200 members; Aver. att: 40-100]	Middle-Sized [200-350 members; Aver. att: 75-200]	Moderately Large [350-800 members; Aver. att: 150-400]	Very Large [Over 800 members; Aver. att: over 350]
Key Characteristics	A tight-knit group	Familiar faces; dominant core group	Full-time pastor; full program	Diverse fellowship and program	Comprehensive program; specialized staff
Definition	A tight-knit group of persons who have regular interaction with one another; one or two extended families may dominate. Very small congregations almost always have limited resources. They must limit program to bare essentials, and/or cooperate with other congregations to provide a full program and pastoral leadership	A homogeneous group of persons who all know at least about one another, and who are dominated by a single core of leading members or families. Small churches usually have limited resources and must cooperate with others to employ clergy and to provide a full program.	A relatively homogeneous group of persons who function within several sub-groups around a single center; and who are economically self-sufficient, and able to provide a full program and support a full-time pastor.	A diverse association of individuals and groups sufficient in size to support a variety of programs that meet needs and interests both within and beyond the church membership. In addition to the pastor, the congregation usually employs at least part-time program staff.	A complex association of many individuals and groups who support a wide range of programs, professional staff and facilities to meet their own needs and to reach out to others within the region the church serves.
Typical Pattern of Familiarity and Interaction	Members know and interact with one another regularly.	All members have current information about each other; a majority interact with one another regularly.	Pastor has current information about all members; a few members have current information about most members. A nucleus, often a majority, interact with one another regularly; the rest interact primarily within sub-groups.	Pastor has current information about almost all members. A core of members interact with one another regularly; a majority interact primarily within sub-groups	No single member or pastor has current information about all members. Regular interactions are confined largely to sub-groups, even during such large gatherings as worship services.
Primary Organizational Roles of Lay and Clergy Leaders	A few persons set the tone and direction of the group; often they hold the same offices and program responsibilities for many years. Roles of clergy limited to those functions prescribed by local traditions, required by denominational polity and deemed essential by local leaders. Clergy seen almost entirely in preacher-pastoral role.	Persons within the nucleus exercise overall control. Even when formal leadership posts rotate among church members, those with real influence remain constant, guiding forces. The same persons often carry the same program responsibilities year after year. Lay leaders, tradition and denominational polity set boundaries within which clergy must function. Clergy usually viewed primarily in a preacher-pastoral role.	Persons elected to board(s) determine policy and program, not, however, without the influence of a few respected leaders. Lay persons usually carry major responsibility for maintenance and finance, and share responsibility for program with pastors in other areas. Pastor usually expected to provide direct guidance in all areas	Persons elected to boards set policy and allocate program development responsibility to well-defined sub-groups whose work they review at stated intervals. Lay persons share responsibility for program delivery in many areas with pastor and other paid (usually part-time) staff. Pastor and other employed staff are expected to offer suggestions and guidance in their areas of expertise. Individual responsibilities are limited and defined.	Persons elected to boards and agencies set policy and direction. Various administrative, maintenance and program functions are assigned to sub-groups and usually coordinated by staff. Trained lay persons share responsibility for delivery of services with employed staff, with staff usually playing key roles in each area. Pastors and other staff are expected to offer expertise and guidance within areas assigned to them.
Typical Communication System	Word of mouth	Word of mouth, supplemented by print	Word of mouth within core group and sub-groups; print to reach others.	Generally by print; word of mouth within sub-groups and core group.	Generally by print and other formal means; word of mouth with staff and sub-groups.
Typical Planning Style	Spontaneous and informal; carried on within nucleus and based on data available to members' experience.	Usually spontaneous and informal; carried on by nucleus and based mostly on data available to members' experience.	Usually formal; carried on by board and pastor; sometimes with sub-groups. Based on data available in group and occasionally on research.	Formal; carried on by board and as assigned by sub-groups. Pastor and other staff participate. Data often gathered by research	Formal; carried on by sub-groups coordinated by board, occasionally aided by consultants. Data usually gathered through a formal research process.
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