**LEADERSHIP IN THE CONGREGATIONAL SETTING**

1. THE FAMILY SIZE CONGREGATION
2. The smallest-sized congregation, with its accompanying styles of practices, is the so-called *Family-Sized congregation*. Relatively small in number – from 10 to 50 members – the “family” designation is apt.
3. The individuals that tend to make up these congregations are a family in a very real sense: They all tend to be related through familiar bonds. The easiest way to become a bona fide member in this church is to “marry into it.”
4. It is not unusual to have two or three influential extended family systems setting the tone for how this church functions. That includes everything from how worship is done (or not done) to how the church make decisions.
5. TWO HIDDEN IMPORTANT LIFE FORCES TO APPRECIATE FOR THIS SIZE CONGREGATION
6. First, the inclusion dynamics of this congregation make it essentially a “closed” system. This is a “members-only” congregation with a strong sense of “we” are and who “they” are – or perhaps more precisely, who “is not one of us”. The resistance to include outsiders into this congregation makes it a tight-knit group providing a feeling of closeness, of being a part of a “real family”.
7. The second significant hidden life force is the ascribed leadership function of the pastor. Even when this congregation can afford a full-time pastor, the system’s required leadership pastoral functions are bounded. That is, this congregation has clear, if unspoken expectations of the pastor regarding what it does and does not want the pastor to provide for them.

Mostly, this congregation wants the pastor to function as a family chaplain who will provide basic pastoral care, officiate at family events (weddings, funerals, births) and provide crisis counseling. As worship leader, a pastor in this church will do well to foster the family atmosphere and provide inspiring (but not challenging) sermons that affirm and reinforce the congregation’s beliefs.

In fact, the string of short pastoral tenures typical of this congregation is evidence of its resistance to change and its adeptness at maintaining its homeostatic structure. What people in a Family-size congregation want from their pastor is to be loved and cared for – in effect, to be shepherded.

1. **Education**
2. The hidden truth about education in this context has less to do with how religious education is done, than to what end. Because of its size and limited resources, religious education programming tends to be basic, small-scaled and run on a shoestring budget. Educational programming tends to be pastor-initiated and pastor-led. These tend to be family affairs (rarely do outsiders attend educational or training functions offered by this congregation) with basic content that is nontransformative.
3. This church will rarely partner with another small church in joint educational ventures. Despite the advantages to such a partnership, this church will resist interacting with other congregations because of the possibility that its own beliefs and values will be challenged.