
Prepare for Church Growth Today

We all want to experience church growth.

Seeing more people come to Christ, stronger families, and developing disciples are fruits of a healthy, growing congregation.

Church growth also means:

- More children – which means more volunteers needed for children's ministry
- More requests for new ministry programs
- More seats needed in the sanctuary or the need to add service times
- More parking spaces needed
- More requests for pastoral care
- More requests for officiating weddings and funerals
- More volunteers and possibly more staff members needed
- More wear and tear on the church facility which requires additional maintenance

Most of this will take more money. And more people doesn't necessarily mean more funding right away. The church may have to absorb additional costs for months (or longer) before an increase in tithes helps to offset those expenses.

This shouldn't discourage you from seeking to grow the church. However, it should serve as encouragement to start planning now for how your church will support a larger congregation.

As [Steven Kryger, The Unstuck Group](#) stated, “The biggest mistake is to believe that as a church gets bigger that everything can just stay the same but on a larger scale. Sure, there’s still preaching and praying but the supporting structures and mindset must adjust to cope with growth.”

Here are seven ways to prepare for the unintended effects of a growing church:

#1 – Train up volunteer leaders

Before you start adding to the volunteer team, invest time in developing current volunteers. If you’re leading a small team of volunteers, that’s manageable without assigning volunteer leaders. However, as the volunteer team grows you’ll need to appoint certain volunteers to lead volunteer teams.

Before you make those decisions, consider your current volunteers:

- Which volunteers have already demonstrated leadership capabilities?
- Which ones lead others in their current profession?
- Which volunteers are super-dependable?
- Which volunteers do others within the congregation respect and listen to?
- Which volunteers do you know well and trust to lead others?

Start with those individuals and have some one-on-one conversations. Hopefully, they already know the church is starting to see growth and that leadership expects more to come. Discuss how you’d like them to be part of leading volunteers and how they can play an important role in supporting a growing congregation.

#2 – Start delegating more now

At the moment, you might not feel the need to delegate (at least not more than you already do). Yet as the church grows, the demands on your time will increase. Before you wish you’d already handed off certain tasks, go ahead and start training someone else to handle those items.

So, what to delegate?

Write down every recurring task you currently perform yourself. From that list, note which are tasks that only you can perform. All other tasks are potential items to delegate. Consider which ones take the most time or tasks that aren't the best use of your skill set. Delegate those first.

The beauty of delegating before you really need to is you have more time to train the person receiving the task and answer his/her questions along the way.

#3 – Review systems and processes

Systems and processes are simply “the way things get done around here.” How stuff gets done may have to change when you have 20% more people in the congregation next year. Talk with your staff and walk through an average week in the life of your church.

What might have to change with a larger congregation?

- Do you need to add more stations for children's check-in to avoid long lines before services?
- If you add ministry programs and have more events to announce, will your current process for communicating events still work?
- Is the current process for counting and recording tithes too time-consuming? You might need to find ways to make that more efficient before it increases.
- Will the current building maintenance schedule be sufficient to support greater wear and tear on the facilities?

Talk through what might need to change and assign leaders to start working through those changes now.

#4 – Evaluate church property

Before you have an increase in traffic flow, this is a good time to walk through the church property and look for any potential maintenance projects.

Consider the following areas:

- Parking lot – Do you have enough spaces? Do you need to have potholes repaired or the lines repainted?
- Sidewalks – Are there any significant cracks that could become a safety hazard?
- Nursery and Children’s classrooms – Do you have enough cribs, toys, chairs, and other supplies for these areas? Does the carpet need to be replaced? Should you repaint the walls?
- Seats – Do you have enough chairs in the sanctuary? Does the carpet need to be cleaned or replaced? Are there any tears in the carpet or other potential safety hazards?

Walkthrough the church property with someone fairly new to the church staff. Ask him/her to point out any area that looks at all shabby or in disrepair. Someone new will be able to see things you’ll miss since they’re looking at it with fresh eyes. Take detailed notes and create a plan to fix those areas.

#5 – Consider whether you’ll need to add a service and start drafting a plan

Unless your sanctuary is only half full at the moment, you might need to consider adding a service to accommodate more people. That day might arrive sooner than you expect, so now is a great time to develop a plan.

Talk with your staff about service times, how many volunteers you’ll need, how to communicate a new service time to the congregation and community, etc. Also, discuss what criteria you’ll use to decide when to add a service. Is that when the current service is 75% full when you start running out of parking spaces, etc.?

#6 – Talk with staff about what they might need to change as the church grows

For example:

- If the youth pastor has fifty students today but ends up with two hundred in twelve months, how will he handle that growth?
- Since more people may lead to more expenditures, is the finance department ready to process more purchase requests and bill payments?
- If you add services or other events, that will increase the workload of the graphics and communications teams. Have they considered how they'll support that aspect of growth?

Having these discussions before the team starts feeling the pressure gives everyone time to consider how to move forward. Don't let the team procrastinate on their plans, but do give them sufficient time to develop them. Then decide together when to activate various aspects of those plans (adding volunteers, hiring staff, changing processes, etc.).

#7 – Consider budget impacts of a growing church

You may not see a corresponding increase in tithes right away, yet you'll have more expenses. How will that impact the church's financial situation and how do you start preparing for that now? Talk with your accountant or finance office to plan ahead.

Before we invite people into our homes, we make sure we're ready for their arrival. We clean, cook, and prepare to host them. By going through these steps, you are preparing to receive the people God will entrust to your congregation. When they arrive, you'll be equipped to focus on ministering to and discipling them.

As [Chuck Lawless](#) states, one characteristic of church growth leaders is, "They've led their churches to get ready for growth. They're not always fully prepared for what God does, but their churches don't take lightly their

responsibility to disciple new believers God gives them. They have the “nursery” ready for babes in Christ.”

Preparing For Church Growth

Feel like your church should be growing, but it's not?

Ultimately, church growth is up to God. Are we being good stewards of what He's given us? Are we doing everything we can to ensure our church is healthy? How do we overcome the barriers we feel are in front of us?

We know you care deeply about leading a healthy growing church because it means leading more people to Jesus. So we created a free guide to breaking barriers that will bring clarity and help begin to alleviate your frustrations.

Get your FREE copy of the Senior Pastor's Guide to Breaking Barriers today.

[Download the guide](#)