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The Very Large Church: New Rules for Leaders

Lyle E. Schaller

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One of the most crucial changes in North American life, Lyle E. Schaller explains, has been the shift from small to large institutions. Sixty years ago one-teacher, one-room schoolhouses still abounded, and the average number of students in all American schools was one hundred. Now new construction on elementary schools is often for facilities that will accommodate more than twelve hundred students, and average school size is over six hundred. Similar changes have happened in several other branches of American life. These changes, Schaller contends, mean that the rules have changed for everyone involved in organizational life.

Very large churches?megachurches?will increasingly come to embody the new rule-book for congregations. Extending their mission far beyond a single local neighborhood, they will draw large numbers of visitors, helping them move progressively from skeptics or seekers to believers to learners to disciples to apostles. *The Very Large Church* was written for those congregational leaders, both volunteer and paid staff, who recognize that their old rule-book is obsolete and who are eager to learn how to participate effectively in the very large church in a context that is defined by the culture, the societal context, clearly defined expectations, a theological belief system, a passion for evangelism, a high level of competence, creativity, innovation, and a new and different set of rules, rather than by local traditions, geographical boundaries, or yesterday's stereotypes.

Key Features: • Focuses on issues in organization life?Schaller's strong suit • Addresses a tendency that is growing today

Key Benefits: • Places the shift to large churches within the context of a cultural shift from small to large institutions • Demonstrates how and why the old rule-book for organizational structure must change • Helps church leaders understand how to make the transition to the megachurch culture while retaining Christian integrity

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