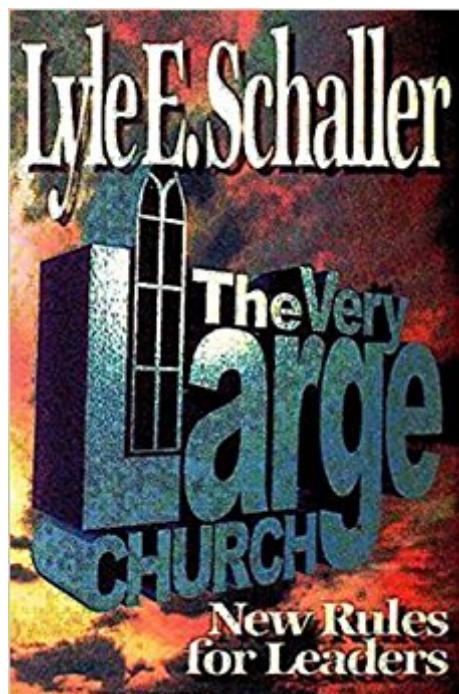


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# The Very Large Church: New Rules For Leaders



## Synopsis

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was written for those congregational leaders, both volunteer and paid staff, who recognize that their old rule-book is obsolete and who are eager to learn how to participate effectively in the very large church in a context that is defined by the culture, the societal context, clearly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

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Lyle E. Schaller was the country's leading interpreter of congregational systems and their vitality. He was the author of dozens of books, including *From Geography to Affinity*, also published by Abingdon Press. He lived in Naperville, Illinois.

If it is a book by Lyle Schaller, then it is a book you ought to buy! No one in church assessment, analysis, consulting, and speaking can compare to what Lyle has to offer. He is the Cal Ripken and Energizer Bunny of church and denominational prognostication. Steal enough time from your busy schedule to thoroughly read this book. When you take the time to read this book you will discover the details concerning three crucial issues surrounding congregations that have more than 800 in average weekly attendance: 1. We need more of them to reach the generations born after 1965. 2. A new rule book is needed to understand the congregation of more than 800 in attendance. The old rules do not apply. 3. Consumerism has changed the congregational game plan, and big congregations are a must during the third millennium. Very large congregations have a can do attitude about new spiritual and strategic opportunities they believe are presented to them by God. They seemingly have no limits to the resources they have faith that God will provide through them. This book is an excellent follow-up to earlier books by Schaller where he heralds the full-service, seven-days-per-week, family-focused congregation. One such book, published by Abingdon Press in 1992, is *The Seven-Day-A-Week Church*.

Lyle Schaller's "The Very Large Church" is a bit dated (2000) but remains an amazing resource for large churches or churches that aspire to be large. The most valuable and timeless insights deal with how leadership changes across church size. Schaller makes the point that a large church is not just a bigger version of a small church. Everything is different - the role of the lead pastor, the composition of the staff, the structure of governance and much more. For a large church (or a church that wants to be large) that is in a pastor transition, reading this book could help keep the church from selecting a new pastor that is not gifted or suited to lead a large church.

Lyle Schaller is a keen observer of churches, large and small. In this volume, he provides a contemporary update on the very large church. As senior pastor a very large church, I have found this latest work to be an invaluable resource to help lay leaders and new staff understand. Schaller is able to bring the reader "inside" the day to day life of the very large church.

I found this book to accurately depict the changing landscape of the church in America. We need to raise the bar and create "high expectation" environments in the church that challenge people to high performance. We need "vision leaders" that inspire us to "do the impossible".. Great Book..

This book would be very helpful for anyone interested in helping his/her church grow. Also gives solid reasons why many churches are dying. Illustrates trends in church with trends in the business world...i.e. large offers more choice for the consumer. User friendly format makes for easy, quick reading.

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