



## **Talk #1: What's Behind the way Churches Organize?**



### **Key Idea One**

The Bible actually says very little about how churches should be organized. That means...

1. There is (mostly) no right or wrong way to organize a church.
2. We organize based on our culture, our experience, or our preferences

### **Key Idea Two**

Research suggests that we organize our relationships based upon the size of groups that we are a part of. These groupings are called 'social networks'. The key theory is called Dunbar's Numbers.

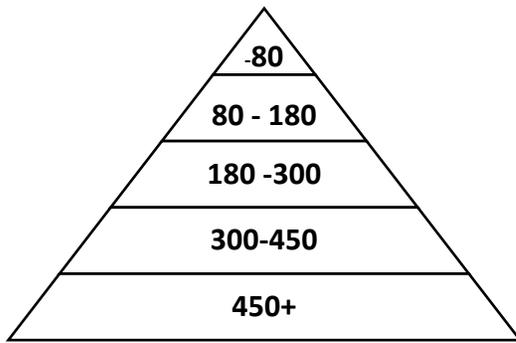
Note: the numbers are approximate and vary somewhat from individual to individual and from situation to situation.

- 5 - Close support group
- 15 – Friends you really trust
- 50 – People you call friends
- 150 – People you can keep tabs on
- 450 – Faces you recognize & feel comfortable with
- Over 450 – Basically strangers you might recognize

### **Key Idea Three**

Churches seem to come in 'sizes' that reflect Dunbar numbers.

- A regularly meeting small group: Up to 15
- Tiny: Up to about a maximum of 80
- Small: Up to a maximum of 200
- Mid-size church: Up to about 400
- Large: Over 400
- Mega Church: Over 1000



### Application 1: Role of Pastor

- Tiny - Chaplain
- Small - Hero
- Mid-size - Coordinator
- Large - Executive
- Mega - Celebrity

### Application 2: Role of Programs

- Tiny – Do everything together
- Small - Key Areas
- Mid-size – Specialized ministries
- Large – Full service, Community services
- Mega - High profile key ministries with wide impact

### Application 3: Church Structure

- Tiny - Key leader
- Small - Bylaws
- Mid-size - Policies
- Large - Procedures
- Mega – Executive level decisions

### How does the size of our church affect Bethany today?

TED Talks™ are a worldwide phenomenon. The TED organization began as a conference in 1984 to provide short and powerful talks on what it called “Ideas That Matter” in the fields of Technology, Education & Design. Now, in addition to conferences, it produces 100’s of widely viewed short videos on a huge variety of topics.

Our Bethany version of TED Talks is ThED talks – Theological Education & Discussion. They will focus on particular key ideas about what It means to be ‘the Church’ in a fast changing world with special reference to Bethany. Drawn from Biblical references and key ideas from theologians, church leaders and other research, our ThED talks will come every several weeks or so and will provide a 3-6 minute look that will help us as a community to focus on our purposes, organization, & tasks.

Please take this page home to reflect upon in the light of who we are as a church today. Talk about the ideas with others. Open up your Bible to check the ideas against God’s word, and then think and pray about what you’ve learned. As we all do this, we will be opening ourselves to the leading of God’s Spirit in our church community.