

## 75% is Full Rule

When your church is “comfortably full” and your attendance begins to fluctuate from capacity to near capacity you have begun to experience the 75% is Full Rule. While attendance may exceed 75% for a while, it will do so just temporarily. {But I’ve always heard it was 80%. True. But it is my belief that if your church is growing, a solution will take time to implement...so start when your church is 75% full.

When attendance exceeds 75% capacity, people are forced into an uncomfortably close seating arrangement. The 75% Full Rule comes into play because the personal comfort zones of worshipers are invaded. We just allow family members or close friends into this zone. For North Americans and Europeans, any invasion by strangers into this zone causes mental and physical anxiety, irritation, and fear.

There are many ways to address this challenge. Let me suggest five approaches to alleviating the 75% Full challenge.

#1: Expand the seating capacity. If the space is available, a church can put in additional seats. In some cases, using a different style of seat or a different arrangement can add significantly more seating to an otherwise full auditorium.

#2: Remodel or build a sanctuary. A sanctuary can be remodeled to add a balcony, to enlarge the room size to allow for more seats, or a new worship center can be built to hold the growth.

#3: Add new worship services: A popular option is the use of multiple worship services on a Sunday morning or other evenings of the week. This approach is very cost effective as facilities don’t need to be remodeled or new ones built.

#4: Plant a daughter church. Encouraging worshipers to plant a daughter church relieves the overcrowding at the mother church temporarily. However, the people who leave are usually replaced within a year and the problem presents itself once again.

#5: Start a satellite church. An approach, which should be considered more often, is the starting of a satellite church. The church becomes one church meeting in two or more locations.

For an onsite evaluation of your present facilities, or consulting on planning for remodeling and/or new construction, contact Tommy Echols (315-382-4919) [techols@bcnysbc.org](mailto:techols@bcnysbc.org) or Steve Sallis (315-380-0458) [ssallis@bcnysbc.org](mailto:ssallis@bcnysbc.org); the Church Growth Team of the Baptist Convention of New York.