

Simplify Your Church Calendar with Five Significant Steps

For many good reasons, church leaders often desire to simplify their schedules.

- They know too many programs is paralyzing for new people, as the next step is unclear.
- They know that it is impossible for their church to do everything well.
- [They see leaders exhausted](#) and they know activity does not equate with transformation.
- They want to see people in the church know their neighbors and interact in the community and not just attend a plethora of programs.

Yeah, there really are a lot of reasons to simplify. But it is easier desired, imagined, and said than accomplished. Yelling about it and taking a hatchet to your church's schedule is not the wisest approach. What can a ministry leader do? Here are five steps to consider:

1. Clarify your discipleship process.

The biggest mistake leaders make when desiring to simplify their programs is to start with their programs. [Start with your discipleship process](#), not with your programs. *What is [your overarching strategy](#) for making disciples?* Clarify and communicate that to people before you attempt to adjust your church schedule.

2. Show how your programs are tools in your discipleship process.

As you clarify your discipleship process, [show how the programs you offer are tools in your discipleship process](#). Champion the essential programs in your process as important environments that facilitate discipleship. As you shine more and more light on the most important, the less important can begin to fade.

3. Emphasize personal mission.

What does mission have to with simplifying a calendar? A lot. The role of a believer is not to continually attend programs at church. Believers are to reconcile people to Christ, just as Christ has reconciled us to Himself. As Charles Spurgeon said, "Every Christian is a missionary or an imposter." In God's providence, He has placed believers in their professions, their neighborhoods, and in their school districts. And it is not so they could drive through those areas on the way to church five nights a week.

4. Show how an over-programmed calendar harms mission.

When people have a desire to serve people in the community, they don't beg for more programs at church. Instead they value space in their personal lives to know their neighbors, to be involved in their kids' schools, to coach in the rec leagues, and to get to know people who do not follow Christ. Ministry leaders are wise to point out how an over-programmed church calendar competes with personal mission. If people are at the church all the time, they are rarely in the community.

5. Simplify

Only after you have laid [a foundation for discipleship](#) and mission should you start to simplify your church calendar. As you do so, continually remind people of the *why* beneath the changes.

[Connect with the Auxano team to learn more about simplifying your calendar to increase ministry effectiveness.](#)

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