

## When should you consider restoring your pews?

There are a number of tell-tale signs to keep your eye out for. The following are the most important factors to consider.

- **Age-** If you have church furniture that is thirty years old or more it is time to consider refinishing your furniture. This is a general guideline to consider which varies greatly depending on how the wood furniture was cared for since its initial installation. If wood is taken care of properly it can last for many generations. Older pews are made from solid oak which is a very strong hardwood and was more plentiful years ago than it is today.
- **Older Wood Finishes** – A real good way to know if it is time to restore your church furniture is when your cloths begin to stick to the furniture on a warm humid day. This sticking action is a result of a chemical breakdown in the wood's original finish. When this begins to occur, the original finish that was applied to the wood is no longer protecting your furniture. At this point, the wood begins to dry out and shrink. The glue that holds all of the glue joints together does not shrink. This creates stress and eventually failure of the glue joint. When you see straight line cracks in the seats, backs or supports this is evidence of a glue joint failure. These splits are a structure failure and can cause people to get pinched. These failures need to be addressed. The longer this condition exists the more difficult and expensive it will be to restore your wood furniture.
- **Cap Rails** – The cap rail area of a pew takes a great deal of stress as people grab the cap rail in front of them to rise to their feet. Body oils, dirt, perfume and grime on the hands of a person also aid in the breakdown of the wood's finish. The cap rail's finish will tend to breakdown faster due to direct contact with the human body.

To reverse this deterioration of the pew, all of the finish should be removed and a new commercial grade finish should be applied. Any splitting that has occurred should be biscuit joined back together.