

LIBERTY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A REVITALIZATION AND GROWTH STRATEGY FOR THE AFRICAN
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCHES IN THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE

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ABSTRACT

A REVITALIZATION AND GROWTH STRATEGY FOR THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCHES IN THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE

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Mentor: Dr. Charlie Davidson

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This project employed quantitative research methods to analyze the current environments prevailing in the sixty-three A. M. E. Churches in the Virginia Conference. It also provided recommendations for revitalization, health improvement, along with spiritual and numeric growth. This project presented: (1) A biblical and theological basis for the church, its mission and ministries. (a) the role of the Holy Spirit; (b) Leaders responsibility for establishing and maintaining a worship climate that extols God, and change lives; (c) Leaders responsibility for implementing coordinated strategies to train, develop and nurture members for ministry and leadership roles. (2) A glimpse into the historic beginnings and polity of the church so that readers would understand its roots and theological beliefs. (3) The results of: (a) The Church Health (CHATS), and (b) Church Information Surveys. These respectively show the current health prevailing in the target churches, and the extent to which pastors are adhering to church management “best practices,” and (4) recommendations for improved church health and growth.

(Abstract length: 153 words)

DEDICATION

I give thanks and glorify God, my heavenly Father, for the opportunity He has made available for me at Liberty University. I thank my mentor, Dr. Davidson for his patience and guidance throughout this thesis project, and Dr. Scott Hawkins who graciously read my work and provided recommendations. In addition, I thank the D Min professors at Liberty Theological Seminary whose guidance enabled me to refine my ministry area of expertise.

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my deceased father, Mr. Oscar N. Gill, Sr., my mother Brenda P. Gill and my aunt Petronella Fontanelle who inspired and encouraged my thirst for learning during my formative years. I owe a special debt of gratitude to the pastors who encouraged, guided and mentored me during my early years in ministry. I specifically want to thank Bishop Frederick H. Talbot and Dr. Sylvia R. Talbot, who, in obedience to their godly intuition, opened a Baccalaureate door, thereafter, serving patiently as “wise” mentors as I navigated the academic highway.

I will be remiss if I fail to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Wanda, my spouse. I acknowledge the sacrifices she made, and I wholeheartedly thank her for the encouraging words spoken during the times when the going was rough. To all my siblings, I say thanks. I must extend a special word of gratitude to Dr. Brenda Marshall and Dr. Wilson for their willingness to assist me through this thesis.

May God continue to bless, guide and guard each of you!

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Definition of Terms Associated with this Study

Several terms used in this project will need to be defined. Some of these are:

- a. **Outreach strategies:** Its use in this project will be to reference methods used by the church to reach a community with the message of Jesus Christ. The application of methodology should be understood in terms of the culture that prevails in the community where the local church resides. It should also be understood that the culture could differ from church to church.
- b. **Unchurched:** The author will use Barna's definition of an unchurched person as any adult (18 years or older) who has not attended a Christian church service within the past six months. However, this does not include a holiday service (such as Easter or Christmas) or a special event at a church (such as a wedding or funeral).
- c. **Great Commission:** As defined in the Bible in Matthew 28:19-20. The Lord gives this command to the individual believers that make up the local church. This serves as the reason why churches should be concerned with reaching the unchurched. These verses also serve as the basis for discovering a methodology for reaching the culture in which one lives.
- d. **Innovation:** As used in this project refers to the creative strategies used by the church to reach the ever-changing culture with the never-changing message of Jesus Christ.
- e. **Transformation:** As used in this project refers to the life of Christ manifested in the life of the believer.

- f. **Mentoring:** As used in this project refers to the process whereby the life of Christ in one person is shared and begins to be manifested in the life of another.
- g. **Ministry or ministry strategies:** These refer to the means by which a church accomplishes being a “church.”
- h. **African:** The word “African” as used in the name of the church denotes that the church was organized by people of African descent and heritage. Not that the church was founded in Africa or that it is solely for people of African descent
- i. **Methodist:** “Methodist” is used in the historic sense. It relates to all subsequent denominations that find their roots in the Wesleyan tradition. This church is a member of the family of Methodist churches.
- j. **Episcopal:** This term refers to the form of government under which the church operates. This means that the chief executive and administrative officers are the Bishops. These Bishops receive their authority from the General Conference.
- k. **Church:** This term is used interchangeably between the “local church” and the “universal church.” The church is the assembly of the “ekklesia” as expressed in the New Testament (Acts 7:38).
- l. **Episcopal Bishop:** The A.M.E. Church operates under a centralized form of Government, largely clerical. The central legislative authority resides in the General Conference, with the Bishops’ Council, General Board and General Board of Education serving as its interim interpretative agents with authority to act. The Episcopal Bishops are its chief administrative and executive heads. These Bishops receive their authority from the General Conference. Bishops are responsible for overseeing the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church, to

include: presiding over annual conferences, making pastoral appointments, ordaining deacons and elders, and organizing missions.

- m. **Annual Conference: or “Conference”** is one of the geographical subdivisions of an Episcopal District. The Bishop presides over each Annual Conference.
- n. **Presiding Elder:** The Presiding Elder is the official of the A.M.E Connection charged with the responsibility for ensuring that each local church under his/ her supervision understands and complies with the policies and programs of the connection. This person is appointed by the Bishop, and supervises the churches in his subdivided portion of the Annual Conference area known as a District. The Presiding Elder presides over the Quarterly Conference of each local church under his supervision.
- o. **Virginia Conference:** In the A.M.E. Church the geographical territory of each Episcopal Bishop (Episcopal District) is subdivided into smaller territories (Conferences). A Presiding Elder who is appointed by the Episcopal Bishop supervises the local churches within these conferences. The local churches that constitute the Virginia Conference are located in forty cities within the state of Virginia.
- p. **Doctrine:** A body of ideas, taught to people as truth. It is theology regarding the nature of truth, God, Jesus, salvation, damnation, the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, the Gospel, resurrection, etc., The two historic documents that form the basis of the church’s beliefs are contained in the Apostles’ Creed and the Twenty-Five

Articles of Religion. These Articles of Religion “were developed by John Wesley and were formally adopted in 1784 when Methodism was organized in America.”¹

- q. **Steward Board:** In the A.M.E. Church persons nominated by the pastor, and confirmed by the Quarterly Conference serve on this board. They serve as cabinet officers to the pastor and have responsibility for managing the Spiritual affairs of the congregation. They serve for a term of one year, and may be nominated annually. The Stewards are responsible for managing and accounting of all church finances; for seeking out persons who are sick and or in need and rendering assistance; they register and maintain church records relating to baptisms, marriages, and deaths within their local church. In addition, Stewards provide the utensils and elements for the Holy Communion.
- r. **Trustee Board:** Members of this body are elected by the church membership. They serve for a term of one year. However, the same persons could be nominated and elected to serve in subsequent years. Trustees are responsible for managing all the temporal concerns, real estate, physical property, parsonage, and/or school(s) owned by the local church.
- s. **Official Board:** This is the administrative body of the local church. The pastor of the local church serves as Chairperson of this Board. All persons within the local church with leadership responsibilities for the day-by-day work of the church are members of the Official Board. This includes: all ministerial staff who are members of the church, Class Leaders; Stewards; Trustees; Deaconesses; Stewardesses; and Presidents of all clubs, auxiliaries, and other organizations;

¹ Andrew White, *Know Your Church Manual: An Introductory Study of the Local Church for Officers and Members* (Nashville: AMEC Publishing House, 1965), 59.

Director of Christian Education; Superintendent of Sunday School, and the Director of the Young People's Department (YPD).

- t. **Quarterly Conference:** This body constitutes the members of the Official Board of the local church. The Presiding Elder has authority, and leads this meeting. Some of the duties of the Quarterly Conference are to: confirm the Stewards, Stewardesses, and delegates to the Annual Conference; examine all title papers for the church; examine candidates for the preaching ministry and license them.
- u. **Conference Year:** This is the official 12-month business year for the church. It covers the twelve month period beginning on July 1 and ending on June 30.
- v. **Christian Worldview:** A "worldview" refers to a comprehensive conception of the world from a specific standpoint. A "Christian worldview," then, is a comprehensive conception of the world from a Christian standpoint. An individual's worldview is his "big picture," a harmony of all his beliefs about the world, and his way of understanding reality.
- w. **Biblical Worldview:** Refers to the fundamental belief that: 1) absolute moral truths exist 2) these moral truths are defined in the Bible, 3) Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, 4) God created the universe and He continues to rule over it, 5) Salvation is a gift from God, and it cannot be earned through good works, 6) Satan is a real living entity, and 7) the Bible is accurate in all its teachings.
- x. **Pastoral Assignment:** Pastors for local churches are appointed by the Episcopal Bishop at the seat of the Annual Conference. These appointments are for one year, at which time the person could be reappointed to the same local church or to another. There is no limit to the number of times a pastor could be appointed to a particular local church.

- y. **Church Growth:** Its use in this project will not be limited to “body count” rather; the scope of the term will be broadened to refer to the effectiveness of the church, regardless of its size.
- z. **Excellence in worship:** Will be used in this project to mean; that whatever worship leaders do in whatever style, their task is to point worshippers to God, not themselves. Worshippers ought to see and experience God through their words and actions. When this project speaks of **Authenticity in worship**, it is referring to a genuine encounter between God and His people (the worshippers).

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

For years, various writers and researchers have reported that the North American church was anemic and lethargic at best. As early as the mid-1960s, some mainline denominations were apparently in trouble. Wagner addressed these symptoms; he asserted that “In the ten-year period from 1965 to 1975 the Episcopal church lost 17% of its membership or 575,000 persons. The United Presbyterians lost 12% or 375,000 members. The United Methodists lost 10% or 1,100,000 members, and so on.”²

In more recent years, even evangelical churches have shown signs of plateau and decline. Malphurs addressed this in his book. He indicated that much of the perceived church growth in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s was actually due primarily to the redistribution of believers, not genuine church growth. He further stated that, “The problems of the church in the 1980s carry over into the 1990s. The church as a whole continues to experience decline and the unchurched increase.”³

Recognition that there is a problem of decline in some A.M.E. Churches and stagnation or plateauing in others was reinforced by the published information dealing with church health and church growth. In addition there are published statistics and research findings that show a significant shift in the perception, attitude, and role of the church in the lives of Americans.

Contrary to the call for church involvement with the community at large, there seems to exist in the A.M.E. Church a casual attitude toward evangelism and mission

² C. Peter Wagner, *Leading Your Church to Growth* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1984), 31-32.

³ Aubrey Malphurs, *Visions America: A Strategy for Reaching a Nation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 62.

work. In addition, there is no stated requirement or church engineered programs that prepare members for the role of nurturing and strengthening others emotionally or spiritually, either inside or outside the church. According to Fletcher, churches that have stagnated for whatever reason, or are not growing may be focusing on non-growth issues.⁴

McGavran and Arn indicated that “God wants people to know Jesus Christ, to become His disciples, to know His power, and to begin living as new creatures.”⁵ He went on to state that churches were not achieving this goal. These authors raised the question, “Why are we, the church of Jesus Christ, not growing commensurate with the mandate, resources, and power God promised.”⁶ In considering the matter of church health and growth one must evaluate the extent to which the church is bearing fruit (producing converts to Christ). This “fruitless situation” according to these authors is most likely to prevail where evangelism is not an integral and integrated part of the local church.⁷

Project Goals

There are five goals for this project. These will serve to evaluate the project’s effectiveness. The first goal will be to present a biblical and theological foundation for the purpose and mission for the church, and for its growth.

⁴ Michael Fletcher, *Overcoming Barriers to Growth: Proven Strategies for Taking Your Church to the Next Level* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2006), 113.

⁵ Donald A. McGavran and Winfield C. Arn, *Ten Steps for Church Growth* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1977), 1.

⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁷ Ibid., 11.

The second goal will be to present the historical environment out of which the African Methodist Episcopal (A. M. E.) Church was born. In addition, goal two will present information relative to the polity (beliefs), mission and purpose of the A.M.E Church.

The third goal will be to conduct two surveys. The first is the Church Health Survey Tool (CHAT). This survey will target the pastors and selected lay leaders from each A.M.E. Church within the Virginia Conference. The second survey, referred to as the Church Information Survey will only target pastors of the selected churches. These surveys will assess the current health prevailing in the churches and the extent to which pastors are adhering to church administration strategies respectively.

The fourth goal is to analyze the data collected relative to (1) the health of the churches in relation to the standards presented by Macchia in his book, *Becoming a Healthy Church*, and (2) evaluate how pastors are adhering to best practices, and preparing leaders as presented in the church management strategies.

The fifth goal is to present data findings and strategy recommendations for the development of church leaders and ultimately the restoration of health and numerical growth of the sixty-three churches located within the boundaries of the Virginia Conference.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to assess the health and growth patterns of the sixty-three A. M. E. Churches in the Virginia Conference. Further, this thesis aims to provide

recommendations that might be used to revitalize, restore health and produce growth based on established church health and growth strategies.

Bernard and Marjorie Palmer in their book, *how Churches Grow* indicated that the evaluation of the health and growth of a local church involves more than the evaluation of church size, floor space, finances, and body count. A true assessment into the health and growth of a church would only be possible if one evaluates the growing level of effectiveness of the congregation, regardless of its size. Some questions that are pivotal to this evaluation are: (1) Are these churches focused on winning an individual to Christ as the starting point of their ministry? (2) Is there an established process for shepherding new believers, and assist mature ones to wrestle with their personal problems? And (3) who are the people the pastor and church are targeting for evangelistic outreach?⁸ This would be the basis of this study as it assesses the health of the A.M.E. churches in the Virginia Conference. Recommend strategies will be provided to the church leaders that are intended to restore the health (effectiveness) of these churches while stimulating and producing spiritual and numerical growth.

Current State of the Church in America

A few years ago pollster George Barna found that the health (effectiveness) and growth of the church across America was diminishing.⁹ This research found a 92% increase in the number of unchurched Americans over the previous thirteen years. In

⁸ Bernard and Marjorie Palmer, *How Churches Grow: An Inside Look at Eleven Churches and the Secrets of their Success* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1976), 12.

⁹ <http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=Topic&TopicID=38>. This study was done By George Barna to determine criteria among the unchurched, and posted on the website under the title "unchurched". Internet; (accessed August 2010)

addition, the data suggest that there were 39 million unchurched Americans in 1991. This number increased to 75 million in 2004. This increase of 36 million people who are either unchurched or de-churched occurred in less than a 15-year span.¹⁰ An increase of that magnitude would indicate that something has happened to the church in America; but what might that be? Why have the numbers risen at such an astronomical rate? These are serious questions that each pastor and local church must answer, and critically evaluate to determine the cause of this disturbing trend.

The way people in America choose to worship is changing, and this change should be of concern for the conventional church. In a February 2008 article, Barna presented some research findings, which indicated that:

Majorities of adults now believe that there are various biblically legitimate alternatives to participation in a conventional church. Each of six alternatives was deemed by most adults to be "a complete and biblically valid way for someone who does NOT participate in the services or activities of a conventional church to experience and express their faith in God." Those alternatives include engaging in faith activities at home, with one's family (considered acceptable by 89% of adults); being active in a house church (75%); watching a religious television program (69%); listening to a religious radio broadcast (68%); attending a special ministry event, such as a concert or community service activity (68%); and participating in a marketplace ministry (54%).¹¹

These findings should be of significance to the conventional church that must become proactive in developing strategies to reclaim the worshipper and reconnect them with the corporate worship experience. The way of "doing church" or 'conducting church' has changed drastically. Therefore, this study could serve as a timely call for church leaders to take a renewed look at their methods of evaluating church effectiveness, and their methods for establishing and implementing appropriate church revival strategies. These

¹⁰ Ibid. Barna, "Unchurched."

¹¹ <http://www.barna.org/organic-church-articles/47-americans-embrace-various-alternatives-to-a-conventional-church-experience-as-being-fully-biblical> (accessed August 2010)

are necessary if the church is to continue serving out its mission as an effective life changer and influencing force in the life of its members and respective communities.

In the same article, Barna released additional research findings that indicated millions of people are experiencing and expressing their faith in God independent of any connection to a conventional church. In the month preceding the survey, 55% of adults indicated they had attended a conventional church service. During that same month, 28% of all adults who did not attend a conventional church activity had participated in an alternative means of experiencing and expressing their faith in God.

This lack or apathy in connecting with the traditional church environment is not only reflective of the adult population. In a July 12, 2010 article entitled *How Teenagers' Faith Practices are Changing*, the Barna Group published their research findings regarding teenagers' faith practices. The data led the researchers to conclude, "While most teenagers remain spiritually active in some way, it appears that specific types of teen faith engagements are declining." The areas of change as identified through Barna's nationwide study include:

- *Changing faith* - in this area Barna found that teens are much less inclined toward spirituality than were teens a dozen years ago. According to the author, "While there remains much vibrancy to teen spirituality, it seems to be thinning out. Teenagers view religious involvement partly as a way to maintain their all-important relationships."
- *Teens ashamed of the gospel* - Teens today according to the research findings are less inclined to engage in spiritual conversations about their faith in Christ with non-believers.

- *Denominational change* - teens today exhibit a “diminishing religious engagement.” The author found that evangelistic activity among Protestant teens (13-17 years of age) had dropped from 72% in 1997 to 53% in late 2009.¹²

The Leavell Center at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary conducted a study which revealed that only 11 percent of Southern Baptist churches were experiencing healthy growth. A healthy church in this study was determined to be one that: (1) Experienced 10% total membership growth over five years; (2) Baptized at least one person during the two years of the study; (3) Needed 35 or fewer members each year to baptize one new convert (a member-to-baptism ratio of 35 or less in the final year of the study); (4) Had a conversion growth rate that was 25% of their total growth.¹³

According to Ed Stetzer, the number of baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has been relatively flat for the last fifty years.¹⁴

The church faces additional problems stemming from changing worldviews, specifically changes in the Christian worldview. In the case of this changing worldview, people are more inclined to view the world, their place in it, and the reason for their being, in a manner void of God’s intervention. A Christian worldview, on the other hand, recognizes three basic Biblical views as factual. These views are: (1) We are God’s creation, designed to govern the world and have fellowship with Him (Genesis 1: 27-28;

¹² <http://www.barna.org/teens-next-gen-articles/403-how-teenagers-faith-practices-are-changing> (accessed July 20, 2010)

¹³ Ed Stetzer, “Stirring the Waters,” *On Mission* (Winter 2005) [on-line]; accessed May 2010; available from http://www.onmission.com/site/c.cnKHIPNuEoG/b.830521/k.D281/Stirring_the_waters.htm; Internet.

¹⁴ Ed Stetzer, *The Missional Nature of the Church and the Future of Southern Baptist Convention Churches* (paper presented to the Baptist Center for Theology and Ministry conference, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 12 February 2005).

2:15); (2) Mankind has sinned against God and subjected the whole world to a curse (Genesis 3); and (3) God Himself has redeemed the world through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ (Genesis 3:15; Luke 19:10), and He will one day restore creation to its former perfect state (Isaiah 65: 17-25). A Christian worldview therefore, leads us to believe in moral absolutes, miracles, human dignity, and the possibility of redemption.

It is important to remember that a worldview is comprehensive. It affects every area of life, from money to morality, from politics to art. True Christianity is more than a set of ideas to use at church. Christianity as taught in the Bible is itself a worldview. The Bible never distinguishes between a “religious” and a “secular” life; the Christian life is the only life there is. Jesus proclaimed Himself “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6) and, in doing so, became our worldview.

Barna in examining the changes in world view among Christians over the past thirteen years found that only 9% of Americans had a biblical worldview; that for “Born again Christians” (those persons who made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ, and they are certain that they will go the heaven following their death) 1 out of every 5 (19%) shared the Biblical worldview.¹⁵ He also found that:

- One third of all adults (34%) believed that moral truth is absolute and unaffected by the circumstances. Slightly less than half of the born again adults (46%) believed in absolute moral truth.
- Half of all adults firmly believed that the Bible is accurate in all the principles it teaches. That proportion included the four-fifths of born again adults (79%) who concurred.

¹⁵ <http://www.barna.org/transformation-articles/252-barna-survey-examines-changes-in-worldview-among-christians-over-the-past-13-years> (accessed August 2010)

- One quarter of adults (27%) were convinced that Satan is a real force. Even a minority of born again adults (40%) adopted that perspective.
- One quarter of adults (28%) believed that it is impossible for someone to earn their way into Heaven through good behavior. Not quite half of all born again Christians (47%) strongly rejected the notion of earning salvation through their deeds.
- (40%) of adults believed that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life while He was on earth. Slightly less than two-thirds (62%) of the Born again segment strongly believed that He was sinless.¹⁶

A research project conducted by the Southern Baptist Church found that more than 60 percent of adults baptized in a Southern Baptist church in 1993 had been baptized before. Further, of those who had been re-baptized, 35.8% were receiving their second immersion in a Southern Baptist church. The study concluded that rebaptisms accounted for one out of every five Southern Baptist baptisms.¹⁷

When one considers the current state of the church, James White's recommendation becomes germane; it calls for a "Rethinking of the Church." He describes this "rethinking" as the "radical redesign of the church process for dramatic improvement in the fulfillment of the Church's purpose and mission."¹⁸ A process that

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ "A Study of Adults Baptized in Southern Baptists Churches, 1993," conducted by the Home Missions Board Research Division of the Southern Baptist Convention in conjunction with the Home Mission Board Evangelism Section as reported in the Biblical recorder 163, no. 15 (15 April 1995): 12.

¹⁸ James Emery White, *Rethinking the Church: A Challenge to Creative Redesign of an Age of Transition* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 13.

White asserts will necessitate that the church and its leaders rethink (1) why they do what they do, and (2) why it is done the way they do it.¹⁹

In recent years, he asserts church leaders developed a tendency to break the church down into specialized tasks and programs. Therefore, rather than “rethinking” the church, its leaders have concentrated on “repairing” the church. In a survey he conducted prior to planting a church, White discovered that people have specific reasons for not attending and participating in church. The responders indicated that: (1) They do not have the time; (2) There is no value in attending; (2) they are not interested; (4) Churches have too many problems; (5) Churches ask for money too frequently; (6) Church services are usually boring; (7) Christian churches hold no relevance for the way people live; and (8) people do not believe in God, many are not certain of His existence.”²⁰

Regis Nicoll in the December 23, 2008 Break Point article entitled, *Assessing Church Health*, asserted that:

Anyone who serves on a church board or reads the church minutes will notice the attention given to attendance, budget, and facilities. These he referred to as **lagging** rather than **leading** indicators of church health. Effective health management, he admonishes, involves looking for hidden conditions via health assessments and diagnostic tests, rather than waiting for the appearance of superficial symptoms. In the same way, because “bodies, bucks, and buildings” are late material effects of an underlying spiritual condition, a church that waits for an adverse trend to show up there may be well on its way to hospice, if not already on life support.²¹

¹⁹ Ibid., 13.

²⁰ James White, 22-25.

²¹ Regis Nicoll, *Assessing Church Health: Beyond Bodies, Bucks, and Buildings*
<http://www.breakpoint.org/features-columns/archive/1134-assessing-church-health> (June 4, 2010)
 page???

Bonheoffer said, “The rusty swords of the old world are powerless to combat the evils of today and tomorrow.” These words continue to haunt the church today even more as we observe more and more traditional churches that are unable to reach and maintain the receptive, searching secular people in their ministry areas, or even retain a bare majority of their own young people.”²² Regarding the challenges facing the church, Rose and Hadaway pointed out that between the period following the Civil War and 1920 urbanization occurred in 51% of the cities in the United States.²³ However, they added, “Protestant dominations have not kept up with the rapid pace of urbanization.”

Hadaway cited the Southern Baptist Convention, with their estimated 14 million members as having 38% of its churches in metropolitan areas.²⁴ This compares to 75% of the American public that reside in these same metropolitan communities. Rose and Hadaway conclude that the problem of the church and its ambivalent attitude toward the city has two main roots: (1) An inherently conservative institution failing to adjust to change, and (2) The “sorry” state of the large city in America.²⁵ The urbanization of the United States and the world “calls for churches to become increasingly innovative in their methods, churches will need to examine new areas and new opportunities for reaching people, and to become more creative in programming, in style, in worship, and in the use

²² George G. Hunter III, *Leading and Managing a Growing Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 9

²³ Larry L. Rose and C. Kirk Hadaway, ed. *The Urban Challenge: Reaching America's Cities with the Gospel* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982), 13

²⁴ C. Kirk Hadaway, “A Compilation of Southern Baptist Churches and resident Members Located in Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas, 1978.” Unpublished paper (Atlanta: Baptist Home Missions Board, 1979), 24

²⁵ Rose and Hadaway, 13.

of facilities.”²⁶ According to the research of sociologist Wade Roof, over half of all Americans have come to believe “that churches have lost the real spiritual part of religion.”²⁷

“The Christian Church in America is in trouble” says Schaller who estimates that 80 - 85 percent of all the churches in North America are plateauing or declining.²⁸ Entire denominations are floundering, each year, he estimates; about thirty-five hundred to four thousand Protestant churches in North America close their doors for good.²⁹ He cited a twenty-year study of church membership between 1965 and 1985 which revealed that virtually every mainline denomination is in decline, including the United Methodist down 16%, Episcopal 20%, Presbyterian 24%, and Disciples of Christ 42%.

Figures released in 1991 indicate that more than 70% of all Southern Baptist churches are either plateauing or declining in membership. In expanding the study to include all U. S. churches, the figure leaps to 80-85%. Threatening storm clouds have appeared, darkening the bright horizon of American Christianity.³⁰ Many churches in America are facing a crucial future relating to their survival. According to Hunter, this situation is occurring because “many Western Church leaders are in denial; they plan and

²⁶ Ibid, 18

²⁷ Wade Clark Roof, *Spiritual Marketplace: Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 85

²⁸ Win Arn, *The Pastor's Manual for Effective Ministry* (Monrovia, CA.: Church Growth, 1988), 16.

²⁹ Lyle Schaller, *44 Questions for Church Planters* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1991), 173.

³⁰ Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 13.

do church as though next year will be 1957.”³¹ Many churches have lost touch with the communities they are trying to reach. Hunter laments, “Most traditional churches today cannot reach, or even communicate meaningfully with their unchurched, non-Christian neighbors”³²

Roxburgh in his book, *Reaching a New Generation* asserted,

Often Christians insist that we need to recover the Biblical pattern of the Church. They assume that we have lost God’s intention for the Church and this is the root of only part of the story. North American churches have lost touch with the incredible changes that have been transforming our culture over the past twenty-five years. Consequently, we are ill prepared to speak the Gospel into the world taking shape around us.³³

Cladis cautioned that the church must change if it is to successfully carry out the Great Self-Leadership and Church Health Commission effectively (Matthew 28:19-20) in the twenty-first century and beyond. In most cases, traditional ways of doing ministry simply do not reach across the broadening chasm that exists between the modern world in which traditional churches thrived and the postmodern world in which leaders and organizations are required to do something entirely new.³⁴ According to Towns and Byrd, the challenge the church has today is to present the gospel clearly to people who look at Jesus through “secular, skeptical and technical eyes.”³⁵

³¹ George G. Hunter III, *the Celtic Way of evangelism: How Christianity can Reach the West-Again* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2000), 9.

³² _____, *Church for the Unchurched* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 12

³³ Alan J. Roxburgh, *Reaching a new Generation: Strategies for Tomorrow’s Church* (Vancouver, B.C.: Regent College Publishing, 1993), 8

³⁴ George Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 29

³⁵ Elmer Towns and Warren Byrd, *Into the Future: Turning Today’s church Trends into Tomorrow’s Opportunities* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 2000), 19

Necessity for this Study

The role of the church, specifically the Black church in post modern America, its relevancy in the lives of the people it serves, the community of residence, along with the issues it faces as an institution are vastly different from those it wrestled with during the pre and post Civil war periods, or post emancipation years. Andrew White noted that “the A.M.E. Church has always been an instrument of service to mankind, Richard Allen and his followers, during the early days of the church, were committed to a life of practical service in the interest of the growth and development of people.”³⁶

The information presented, relative to the state of the church would indicate that something happened to the church in America. These findings beg the questions: (1) what is causing the number of the unchurched to increase? (2) Why have the numbers risen at such an astronomical rate? (3) How do Americans view the role of the church in their lives? And more importantly (4) does the church still have a role as social activists? Pastors and local church leaders must find answers to these important questions if the church is to survive, remain instrumental in the lives of its members and the life of its resident community. In addition, church leaders must begin to critically analyze the situation, find concrete solutions and implement them.

McGavran and Arn pointed out that church growth is directly related to God’s will when they suggest that God wants His church to grow.³⁷ These authors pointed to Jesus’ commission to His disciples as recorded in Matthews 28: 18-19 as support for their

³⁶ Andrew White, *Know Your Church Manual*, 49.

³⁷ Donald A. McGavran and Winfield C. Arn, *Ten Steps for Church Growth*, 21.

stance. The authors concluded that any church that does not heed this commission is disobedient to God.

Paul made this point in his letter to the Ephesian church when he said they should *"in all things, grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work"* (Ephesians 4:15-16). In this statement, the apostle not only describes the interdependent unity within the body; he also issues a prophetic certainty of the church's renewal. The body metaphor contains the notion of a capacity for health as well as the potential for sickness and deterioration. The apostle is certain, however, that in the end the church will be presented to Christ as his beautiful bride. He indicated it would be *"a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish"* (Ephesians 5:27).³⁸

Getz and Wall share some poignant questions raised by students at Dallas Theological Seminary; these reflect the tone of the questions raised by members of the church and the secular community, even today; questions such as: (1) What does God say about the church? (2) What is the relevancy of the church in the changing culture? (3) Why does the church exist in the world? (4) How should the church function in a changing culture? (5) How does the church differentiate between absolutes and non-absolutes? (6) How could the church avoid becoming institutionalized?³⁹

³⁸ Del Birkey, *the House Church: A Model for Renewing the Church* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988), 21-22.

³⁹ Gene Getz and Joe Wall, *Effective Church Growth Strategies* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2000), xii.

In order to assess their performance, many churches currently employ tangible indicators such as (a) attendance at services, (b) number of participants in church programs and (c) giving patterns. However, other metrics are worthy of consideration, and include: (1) conversion growth- as indicated through baptisms, (2) holistic spiritual formation, and (3) the missional engagement of the church in all of its spheres. Regarding church health, Wagner indicates that one of the most accurate barometers for determining church health is to evaluate its external operations. The functional question for such an assessment would therefore be: what impact does the congregation have on its members, the community and on the world?

According to Wagner, it is natural for one to suppose that churches can be either sick or healthy, and that their health will influence their growth.⁴⁰ Wagner further likened the church to the human body. This “church body,” he asserts is similar to the human body because it is not free from sin nor is it free from sickness. The Bible also referred to the church as “the body of Christ (Ephesians 1: 22-23) that has many members/ parts (Romans 12: 4). Similarly, the Apostle Paul instructs his readers that this “church body” should be “built up” or “edified” (Ephesians 4: 12). These passages indicate that God anticipates having churches that are healthy, churches that are growing stronger, bigger, and becoming efficient in a manner that emulates the healthy, growing human body.

Why is it necessary to conduct a church assessment? Conducting a church health assessment is tantamount to the analysis one makes before crossing the street - to evaluate where they are, where they are going, to identify any potential danger, and to be

⁴⁰ Peter C. Wagner, *The healthy Church: Avoiding and curing the 9 diseases that can afflict any Church* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1982), 13.

able to make wise decisions going forward. A church assessment will provide church leaders with accurate and objective information rather than anecdotal conversations or gut feelings. This accurate baseline data would dramatically increase the leaders' ability to plan, strategize and lead the church and its related ministries in a God-directed manner; it will also identify areas where church leaders and programs are failing to influence the body of believers. Moreover, it will identify resources, areas of need, areas of strength, and areas of weaknesses within the body.

Conducting this study, according to Hull, will maneuver the church away from asking the wrong assessment question, which is "How many people are present" to begin asking the correct one, which is "What are these people like."⁴¹ After all, the goal after accepting Christ is not only to learn how to live like Christ, but to actually live like Christ. This involves nothing less than radical life change. The model is the Saul to Paul experience on the Damascus Road. Since salvation alters a person's eternal destiny and introduces the power and work of the Holy Spirit into the person's life, substantive change is not only expected but assured. Bruce asserted that Saul's conversion to Paul followed a lengthy period of mentoring and disciplining by others.⁴²

The A. M. E. Church has its roots in the Wesleyan tradition. Therefore, to evaluate the mission and health of the church, one must be able to identify: (1) The purpose and mission of the church; (2) Whom the church is trying to reach for Christ; (3) The values that will be used to determine whether the church is healthy (effective) and growing; and (4) The strategies that will be used to accomplish the mission that Christ and to a lesser extent Richard Allen has given to the church.

⁴¹ Bill Hull, *the Disciple-Making Pastor* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1988), 13.

⁴² F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 74-82.

This study is also necessary because Christ the Savior established the church and He outlined some specific roles, tasks and missions for His church. In order for church leaders to know and understand how they are complying with this mission, mandates and tasks, they must subject the local church to periodic assessments.

A church assessment is a necessary first step towards understanding the current situations that are prevailing in the church. It is an objective view of the current health (effectiveness) and vitality of the church body. Without the discipline to gather objective information about the church climate, the stated goals and objectives of the church might be missed. Periodic church evaluation is crucial to informed decision-making and effective leadership.

Church leaders must periodically find objective answers to two questions. These being (1) is our church growing in quantity? And (2) is it growing in Quality? It is Werning's opinion that research is an aid to health in both areas.⁴³ He indicated that church leaders who are concerned about growing in obedience to the Lord's will and to His will for His people will be vigilant about taking periodic inventory about the church so that their planning and decision making could avoid situations of "Overcorrection" and allow the church to steer clear of past mistakes.

In order to effectively execute the purpose and mission that God has set for His church, its leaders must ensure they are effectively using the resources and the gifts within the body to effectively impact the lives of all members and the community through evangelism, Christian education, stewardship, and ministries to meet social needs. Werning points out that research which involves careful measurements are vital not only for the accomplishment of God's mission through the church, but more importantly

⁴³ Waldo J. Werning, *Vision and Strategy for Church Growth* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), 41.

because church leaders are accountable to the Lord of the church, and He has entrusted the church and its leaders with the responsibility to direct the affairs of His church, so that His name will be praised, and His salvation extended to others. Therefore, an “objective analysis would reveal where the church is, at a particular time, in relation to what Christ wants it to be, and provides a solid base for future planning.”⁴⁴

This study will provide somewhat of a routine maintenance "check-up" to ensure that healthy churches prevail. This study will provide knowledge of the present state of the church so that church leaders could become "proactive" instead of "reactive" in their leadership responsibilities. This study will allow church leaders to determine future course of action to realize the primary missions of the church to fulfill the Great Commission via evangelism, missions, and ministry. The art and science of church growth is ever in flux. We are living through the midst of a pivotal cultural shift that is changing everything we thought we knew about church, and though the Gospel has not changed, the tools used, and strategies employed to carry the Gospel to the culture must evolve in order to remain fresh, effective, and life changing.

Barna indicated that there are a few churches that have discovered how to become effective in one or two dimensions of ministry. The church may be doing well in Christian education or community service but is struggling in the other “core ministry” areas. According to Barna, the core areas to a holistic ministry are: 1) worship; 2) evangelism; 3) Christian education; 4) community among the believers; 5) stewardship, and 6) serving the needy.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ibid., 41

⁴⁵ George Barna, *Being Strategic in your God-Given Ministry: The Habits of Highly effective Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1999), 17-18.

He addressed the importance of effective church leaders adopting ‘good habits’ in their daily lives. In addition, church leaders, he asserts, must become intentional and examine their actions and decisions in light of their impact on the effectiveness of their ministry.⁴⁶ Barna presented nine habits that his research showed to be essential and present in highly effective churches. These church habits are: (1) Relying upon strategic leadership; (2) Organizing to facilitate highly effective ministry; (3) Placing emphasis on developing significant relationships within the congregation; (4) Church members investing themselves in genuine worship; (5) Church members engaging in strategic evangelism; (6) Getting church members engaged in Bible study (theological) groups; (7) Utilizing holistic stewardship practices; (8) Serving the needy in their community; (9) Equipping families to minister to themselves⁴⁷

The aforementioned points would indicate that the proposed study needed. It would provide a snapshot showing: (1) What the church believes compared to what is being taught; (2) What Jesus commanded, and the expectations of the church versus what is really taking place; (3) What the church promotes through its mission statements versus what it does. In addition, a study of this kind would offer a baseline measure of the church’s effectiveness that could be used to measure future effectiveness and growth. It would also direct the church leaders so that they could effectively deploy their limited resources in areas best suited to accomplish the mission of the church.

⁴⁶ Barna, 23

⁴⁷ Barna. 24.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This survey presents two limitations reliability and validity.⁴⁸ Reliability deals with the ability of the tools to produce consistent results. This is a factor because; the researcher will not be present when the CHAT Survey is completed. The second limitation, validity, deals with the quality of the data supplied. This is a limitation because, as a former pastor of a church in the Virginia Conference, Lay leaders may be cautious in their responses rather than being brutally honest because of the fear of being identified.

This study has two external limitations and several delimitations. The external limitations are: (1) this study is limited by the fact that it cannot vouch for the identity of the responders since the survey information is collected via the internet; and (2) This study will not employ any independent sources to verify the information provided CHAT survey or those provided by the pastors during the telephone interviews.

Some of the delimitations placed on the study by the writer include:

- A. The study will be limited to the 63 A.M.E. Churches located in the Virginia Conference.
- B. The study will employ two survey instruments. These are:
 - (1) The Church Health Assessment Tool (CHAT). This survey instrument will be available to the responders in electronic format. Responders will be able to access, complete, and submit the questionnaires electronically.

⁴⁸ Kjell Erik Rudestam and Rae R. Newton, *Surviving your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001), 82.

(2) The Church Information Survey. This instrument will be completed via telephone interviews.

C. The responders for the various surveys are:

(1) The Church Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) survey will be limited to the pastor, Musician/Minister of Music, Chairperson of the Stewards Board, the Chairperson of the Trustee Board, the Director of Christian Education, and the Director of the Young Peoples' Department (YPD), of each A.M.E. Church within the Virginia Conference.

(2) The Church Information Survey Tool will be limited to the pastor of each A.M.E. Church within the Virginia Conference.

D. The survey will not collect nor in any way reveal the identities of the specific responding church, pastor, or Lay leader. Rather, the data will reflect the health (effectiveness) of the churches in the Virginia Conference and leadership attitudes of the pastors of these churches.

E. The Healthy Church components as presented by Michael Macchia will serve as the template against which the health (effectiveness) of the churches in the Virginia Conference will be evaluated.

F. The leadership and management components in the *Church Information Survey* were gleaned from a wide array of church growth literature up to and through the 1980s. The factors selected were the ones deemed most prominent by this writer within the church growth literature based upon reading and research.

- G. This study did not survey the churches based on any other church health or church growth themes other than the ones presented in this project (e.g., this project will not focus on evangelism).
- H. This survey sought the responses of the pastors and specific Lay leaders from each A.M.E. Church within the Virginia Conference. It excluded the general membership, and other persons who may have leadership responsibility within the local A.M.E. Church.

Attention in this study is focused on finding answers to specific questions, these are: (1) what is the current health (effectiveness) of the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference? (2) To what extent are pastors engaged in the activities recommended to mine and develop the lay-leadership gifts in the church? 3) To what extent are pastors engaged in best practices such as developing, communication and executing long-term strategic, financial, and building plans. And 4) what are the recommendations to restore health to the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference that have stagnated, and move others that have plateaued back to becoming life-giving and effective.

In the article *Training for research in Social welfare*, published in the Journal of Educational Sociology, Fletcher asserted that any agency that takes its mission seriously would be interested in knowing whether its past activities actually produced the results they were expecting. In addition, the organization would want to know how reasonable their expectations for future program and activity results are. He also challenged pastors and church leaders to examine how they are doing before they dismantle everything in their church and emulate some mega church model.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Michael Fletcher, *Overcoming Barriers to Growth*, 114.

The CHATS tool is extremely reliable and valid. Leadership Transformations based on an extensive national research study involving over 2,000 churches and individuals developed this church health assessment model. Macchia, in distilling the data from this study, was able to identify the 10 traits of a healthy church.

While conducting material searches for the preparation of this thesis, the student did not find any district-wide evaluation based data specific to the A. M. E. Churches in the Virginia Conference. Therefore, data from this study could serve as baseline data for effective program and strategic planning.

Methodology of the Study

This study is intended to measure the current health (effectiveness) prevailing in the sixty-three A.M.E. Churches within the Virginia Conference. The study process began with the development of the research instruments. These became operational after the faculty assigned by Liberty University approved them. In addition, the survey instruments were submitted to the Episcopal Bishop who presides over the Virginia Conference for review prior to their implementation in the Conference.

The CHAT questionnaire will utilize a five-point Likert rating scale with labels ranging from 1 = "Very poorly" to 5 = "Very Well." This questionnaire was developed by Leadership Transformations and is being used with their permission. The questionnaire consisting of seventy-two questions was sub-divided into 10 component areas. Each area was intended to evaluate the church relative to the components Macchia identified to be present in the more than 2,000 churches he surveyed nationally. The ten concepts of church health measured by the CHATS instrument are:

1. *God's Empowering Presence*- This assesses the extent to which the church seeks the direction of the Holy Spirit.
2. *God-Exalting Worship*- This question assesses the quality of Worship services in relation to the extent the heart, mind; soul and strength of the people are engaged.
3. *Spiritual Disciplines*- This assesses the extent of training afforded to members of all ages in order to foster spiritual development.
4. *Learning and Growing in Community*- The extent to which the church encourages believers to grow in their walk with Christ in a safe and affirming community.
5. *The Church's Commitment to building loving and caring relationships*- within members, families and the community.
6. *Servant-Leadership Development*- This element will assess the extent to which church leaders develop their members for church leadership responsibilities.
7. *Outward Focus*- The extent to which the church engages with the community outside the church.
8. *Wise Administration and Accountability*- the wise use of the church's facilities, resources and equipment to provide maximum growth and ministry development.
9. *Networking with the Body of Christ*- the extent to which the church is working collaboratively with persons inside and outside the church.
10. *Stewardship and Generosity*- This is the extent to which the church members and leaders are using their resources to sacrificially share with others in need.⁵⁰

The "Church Information Survey" is the second survey tool to be executed in this project. Its aim is to gather information that will be used to assess the resources and

⁵⁰ Stephen Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 23.

leadership factors currently used by the pastors to replicate themselves and intentionally develop leaders for the purpose of evangelistic growth. This telephone survey aimed at the pastors will provide insightful analysis relative to 1) the emphasis and frequency of prayer in the daily life of the pastors, 2) the lay leadership development, 3) the level of strategic planning, 4) the extent to which leadership visions are communicated to lay leaders, 5) the strategic use of technology, 6) the extent to which pastors engage in developing and employing long range strategic, financial and building plans, and 7) the extent to which worship services are planned in an effort to produce excellent and “authentic worship”⁵¹ experiences.

According to Creswell, A survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population.⁵² From sample results the researcher generalizes or makes claims about the population. The CHATS and Church Information Survey tools are examples of this type of survey. They will qualitatively and numerically describe trends, attitudes, and opinions of church leaders who provide leadership and guidance to the members of the congregations. A cross sectional study, as used in this study, is one that takes place at a single point in time. It is a slice, or cross-section, of the population that is being observed or measured.⁵³ The present study is a retrospective cross-sectional assessment, taking a slice of the beliefs, attitudes, practices, stewardship, and focus of the A.M.E. Churches in

⁵¹ Debra Rienstra and Ron Rienstra, *Worship Words: Discipling Language for Faithful Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 24.

⁵² John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003), 153.

⁵³ William M. K. Trochim, *the Research Methods Knowledge Base*, 2nd ed. (Cincinnati, OH: Atomic Dog, 2001), 5.

the targeted geographical area. According to Emory, “applied research has value to the extent that it assists management to make better decisions.”⁵⁴

This is a single denominational study. It is restricted to the A. M. E. Churches within the Virginia Conference. The geographical boundary of this Conference encompasses the State of Virginia. The study will employ both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.

An informational packet explaining the reason and scope of the survey, confidentiality, the use of the data collected, and soliciting the assistance of the pastors will be sent to the pastor of each A.M.E. Church within the target area. In addition, these informational packets will contain copies of the survey instruments, completion and submission instructions, Web-site, log-on and password to access the CHATS survey, and postage paid, self-addressed envelope. An informational letter will also be sent to each of the two Presiding Elders notifying them of the study, explaining confidentiality regarding the use of data provided, and the survey implementation dates. Their information package will also contain copies of the surveys so they will be knowledgeable regarding the questions asked of their pastors and Lay leaders. .

Responders will be allowed seven days to complete and submit their completed survey instruments. Based on historic data presented by the CHAT representative, completing the survey should take no more than 25-30 minutes. A follow up call will be made to pastors as a reminder to overdue lay responders. Survey information will be entered into the computer for analysis. Once completed, data from the Church Information Tool will be entered into the computer for data analysis and evaluation.

⁵⁴ C. William Emory, *Business Research Methods*, Revised ed. (Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irvin, Inc., 1980), 11.

The proposed timeline for completing the survey and related data analysis are:

- (1) Send out information letter to Episcopal Bishop, Presiding Elders and pastors
- (2) Conduct - pastor telephone interviews
- (3) Enter information from the paper questionnaires and telephone interviews into the computer
- (4) Analyze data
- (5) Prepare reports of data findings
- (6) Prepare conclusions and recommendations
- (7) Mail out “thank-you” letters to the Episcopal Bishop, Presiding Elders, pastors and their participating Officers.

The only designations will be reflected on the CHATS survey. These will consist of “P” for *Pastor*; *St = Steward*; *T = Trustee*; *M = Minister of Music*; *Y = YPD Director*; *D = Director of Christian Education*; and *S = Sunday School Superintendent*. These designations will allow for data comparisons. Data from both survey instruments will be entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) application for analysis.

Independent Variables: An independent variable answers the question: What do I change? In the case of the Church, the study is examining the responses to survey questions designed to elicit the personal behaviors and beliefs of two sets of participants, the pastors and the Lay leaders. The actual survey questions asked in the CHATS and the Church Information Surveys demonstrate these independent variables. The following are examples of this: (1) How many adults (18 years or older) were baptized, by year? (2)

What is the average weekly Sunday school attendance? (3) Do you prepare a sermon schedule for the Conference year? (4) How well does our church depend on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit for our shared life and ministry?

The researcher determined if these independent variables have any type of relationship with the observed phenomenon, or the dependent variables. In effect, has the independent variables affected the dependent variables in a manner to produce change?

Dependent Variable: A dependent variable answers the question: What do I observe? In the case of the churches, one anticipates to see a change in the numerical and spiritual growth of the church. An example of this would be the spiritual level and numerical level of their membership (old and new). These dependent variables will be evaluated by determining:

- (1) The number of persons baptized annually
- (2) The establishment of God-exalting worship
- (3) Learning and growing in community
- (4) The development of servant-leaders
- (5) The development of a community where loving and caring relationships are encouraged
- (6) The church begins to focus on the community outside the church
- (7) The church begins to network with others in the community outside the church and with others in the body of Christ
- (8) The church administrators begin to work in an environment of accountability.
- (9) The church membership and leaders begin to operate in an environment that practice stewardship and generosity.

CHAPTER 2: THE CHURCH

Biblical and Theological Basis for the Church

Erickson asserts that “the church is at once a very familiar and a very misunderstood topic.”¹ According to him:

There are concrete evidences that the church exists, or at least that it existed. Church structures even though sometimes very few persons gather within them, are proof of the reality of what we call the church. The church is mentioned in the media, but without much specification as to what is meant. Legislative documents refer to it. In the United States the church is to be kept separate from the state. People belong to a church; they go to church on Sunday. But for all of this familiarity, there are frequently considerable confusion and misunderstanding concerning the church.²

In order to understand the church one must first answer the question, what is the church?

According to Macquarrie, much of the information presented today about the church deals with the practical applications relating to the church in missions, or the church in society and its rapid changes. However, for these concepts to be effective, they need to be guided and under girded by a theological understanding about the church.³

Burkhart explains that the church is a place where people meet and grow in several areas, these include: (1) “their ability to seek and know God; (2) Their union with God through worship, meditation, and study; and (3) their skills of witnessing to others so that they, too, may find God and His purpose for their lives.”⁴ He noted that one could find several definitions to explain what a church is. Brown, for his part cited Professor Rylaarsdam who defined the church as: “First and foremost a divine reality, this

¹ Mallard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 1036.

² Ibid., 1036

³ John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology* (New York: Scribner, 1946), 346.

⁴ Roy A. Burkhart, *How the Church Grows* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), 5.

distinguishes it from all other realities . . . For those who, by faith, affirm it and belong to it, it is the whole family of God in heaven and on earth, and it is the work of God in the world.”⁵ According to Brown, the most common understanding of the word “church” is that of a local congregation, housed in a specific building. The “church” Brown suggests is:

The place you go to on Sunday or the building you pass on Saturday on your way to the golf course. It has a minister, an organ, some bizarre windows and a mortgage. But it is also a place where people have been sustained in times of tragedy, where they have prayed to God and felt his presence, where they have gone to offer themselves up in service for others. The church may be much more than a local gathering of people, but it must always be at least that.⁶

In responding to the question, Anderson defined the church as “A group of baptized believers organized to worship and obey the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”⁷ Brown turned to Archibald Hunter’s definition of T.W. Manson’s interpretation of the Apostle Paul who described the church as “The continuator of the messianic ministry of Jesus, called like him, by service and suffering, to spread the Reign of God to the ends of the earth, till all men are reconciled to him through Christ.”⁸ Professor Brunner indicated that the church – the body of Christ - is nothing other than a fellowship of persons. It is “the fellowship of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:9); It is also “fellowship” with the Holy Ghost (2 Corinthians 13:13, and Philippians 2:1).”⁹

⁵ Robert McAfee Brown, *The Significance of the Church* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), 45.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 45

⁷ Stanley Edwin Anderson, *The First Church* (Little Rock, AR: The Challenge Press, 1973), 8.

⁸ Brown, 47.

⁹ Emil Brunner, *The Misunderstanding of the Church* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1952), 10.

Professor Binnie in defining the word “Church” indicated that “the English word has no etymological connection with the *ecclesia* of the Greek scriptures. It is derived from a quite different Greek word, *Kyriake*, signifying dominical, pertaining to the Lord; a word which occurs only twice in the Greek New Testament.”¹⁰ In his book *The Church*, he asserted that the Greek word translated church in the New Testament is “Ecclesia,” and it signifies a meeting, an assembly, or congregation of people. In unpacking the concept, he indicated that the Greeks used the word to denote the assembly of the citizens summoned for public matters, or meetings.¹¹

He pointed out that the word *ecclesia* was mentioned in Acts 19:39 to refer to a meeting, or regular assembly. In Acts 7:38 the assembly or congregation consists of the “children of Israel” congregating in the wilderness. This meeting could be described as the “church in the wilderness.” According to Binnie, the word *ecclesia* in the New Testament refers to “the company of Christ’s people,” or the congregation of the faithful.¹²

Bush makes a similar case in explaining the origin of the assembly of people. He explained that the Greek word “ekklesia” is derived from the words “ek” which means “out” and the verb “kaleo” which means “to call.” Based on this explanation the Greek word “ekklesia” would mean “the called out ones. In addition, Bush argued that the texts

¹⁰ William Binnie, *The Church*, ed. Marcus Dods and Alexander Whyte (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, no year), 3.

¹¹ Marcus Dods and Alexander Whyte, ed., *The Church: Handbooks for Bible Classes and Private Students* (New York: Ribner and Welford, Edinburgh: T & T Clark), 1.

¹² Binnie, *The Church*, 1.

of Genesis 49:6; Proverbs 5:19; Jeremiah 31:8; Deuteronomy 5:19, and Ezra 10:2 would render “ekklesia” to mean an assembly.¹³

According to Kangas, God desires to use mankind (his church) to bring glory to Himself. In fact He created mankind for this intended reason – mankind exists to bring God glory. Kangas indicated that the “sinful fall of Adam” has taken mankind away from his intended purpose. He asserted that:

We were created in God’s image for His expression in glory. However, being sinners, we fall short of God’s glory and live in a manner that insults the divine glory and disregards the divine purpose. Instead of expressing God, we express sin and our sinful self.... We were created to express God, but as fallen human beings we express the self. This is sin.¹⁴

This author also asserts that believers in God’s church are out of His will when they ascribe glory to anything other than God. The fallen man magnifies himself and as believers, the tendency is ever present to express themselves in ways contrary to God’s Word. Kangas suggested that as a believer grows, God can be glorified through their life:

God in His Divine Trinity will wrought into us to such an extent that, having been constituted with Him, we will become His glorious expression. God will be expressed through us, this expression will be glory, and this glory will incite the angels and all positive things in the universe to praise God for His expression.¹⁵

According to Marks, the believer becomes more and more like the One whom He has been identified with. This is doxological living. Marks emphasized this same point

¹³ Luis Bush, *The identity of the Local Church: Biblical Principles*, in the Book the Church: God’s Agent for Change, edited by Bruce J. Nicholls (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1986), 85-86.

¹⁴ Ron Kangas, "The Glory of God and the Economy of God," *Affirmation & Critique* 7, no. 1 (April 1, 2002): 7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 3

when he said, —The daily Christian life should be the story of the progressing and advancing expression of God, the glory of God.¹⁶

As the believer grows, he should be glorifying God by taking on God's character. In other words, the believer's growth is not haphazard, and is not up to each individual believer. Instead, he will grow into God's character. The way that the believer brings glory to God is by emulating God's character. Vanhoozer emphasized this when he wrote, "The way we worship should be directed by the nature of what we worship."¹⁷ Worship in this context refers to the way that glory is brought to God. It is never apart from who He is, but instead is defined by who He is. Therefore, it is important that church leaders understand the role of the church so that they could assign adequate resources to train, educate, and mentor believers into effective worshippers who will bring praise to God's Name.

In Richard Foster's view "Jesus and the early Apostles preached a salvation radically different from the kind of salvation being preached today. They spoke of a life in the kingdom of God encompassing all of human existence, both here and hereafter."¹⁸ This means the church has the responsibility for transforming the believer into the likeness of Christ. Higgins presented a similar view when he indicated that:

It is not enough to go through the motions of a faithful life without knowing what we believe. It is not enough to learn the basics of faith without practicing what we know. Critical learning and practical divinity, knowledge and practice, instruction and nurture, must inform and shape each other.¹⁹

¹⁶ Ed Marks, "From Glory to Glory," *Affirmation & Critique* 7, no. 1 (April 1, 2002): 17.

¹⁷ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Worship at the Well: From Dogmatics to Doxology (and back again)," *Trinity Journal* 23, no. 1 (March 1, 2002): 9.

¹⁸ Richard J. Foster, "Salvation is for Life," *Theology Today* 61, no. 3 (October 1, 2004): 297.

¹⁹ Sondra Higgins Matthaei, "Rethinking faith Formation," *Religious Education* 99, no. 1 (December 1, 2004): 63.

Bush pointed out that the apostle Paul, in his letters (epistles) described the church as the “saints in Jesus Christ by the calling of God.”²⁰ He describes the church as:

- (1) *A living organism* (I Corinthians 3:16). Here he shows that the local church lives, being indwelt by the spirit of God.
- (2) *An organized community* (Ephesians 4:12 and Acts 14:23) in which each member functions doing the work of the ministry to build up the body of Christ. The Church also has leaders who have authority over the members (Titus 1:5; Acts 20:17, and 1 Peter 5:1); In addition the local church has authority over the life of the church members.
- (3) *A worshipping community* (Acts 2:41-47).²¹ Bush also expounded on the activities the New Testament church engaged in. These include: (a) observing the Lord’s Supper, (b) perseverance in the Word of God, and (c) people devoting themselves to prayer (Acts 2:42).

Getz in his book *The Measure of a Church* asserted that the key biblical standard for the maturity of a church is love. He asserted that members ought to (a) exist as a sharing community to refresh each other (Romans 15:32); (b) Speak truth to each other (Colossians 3:9); (c) Bear with one another, (d) forgive (Col. 3:13), (e) encourage each other to good works (Heb. 10:24); (f) Admonish one another (Col. 3:16); (g) Pray for one another (Rom.15:30), and (h) put on Love (Col. 3:14).²²

²⁰ Ibid., 86

²¹ Ibid., 87-89

²² Gene A. Getz, *the Measure of a Church* (Glendale: Regal Books, 1975), 22.

He pointed out that the church is also a *witnessing community*” (*Acts 1:5*); The Bible informs its reader about the activities of the early church and the results of their actions. For example readers are informed that: (a) 3,000 souls were added on the day of Pentecost (*Acts 2:41*); *b*) God’s message continued to spread, and the number of believers greatly increased. (*Acts 6:7*); *c*) Samaria received the Word of God (*Acts 8:14*), and *d*) the Word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region (*Acts 13:48-49*). Based on these experiences of the early church, Bush suggests that “each local church as a community of witnesses, regardless of size or geographic location, should have a world view and assume responsibility for its own Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, through to the uttermost parts of the world.”²³

The Bible calls the church the “body of Christ.” The apostle Paul said God pulls all things under Jesus’ feet and made Him the head of the church. This is His body (Ephesians 1:22-23). Paul wrote, “*For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God*” (1 Corinthians 15:9 (NIV). In this text he presents his past activities as persecutor of the “church” of God. In another text, Matthew 16:18, Christ talked about “building His Church,” and Acts 9:31 (RSV) talks about the peace the church throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were having.

According to Binnie, Ephesians 5:23, 25, 27, 30 and Hebrews 11:23 are Biblical texts that presents ecclesia in relation to the whole company of those who have been given to Christ by the Father, and whom He will present faultless in the great day of judgment. This is the church of God in its broadest sense. It consists of all saved

²³ Bush, 89.

persons.²⁴ This point is borne out in 1 Corinthians 1:2 where the apostle Paul addressed his letter “to the church of God in Corinth. Here he writes to the church as it is manifested in one place, namely Corinth. The church is one throughout the whole world, and yet it is at the same time fully present in every individual assembly.”²⁵

Ephesians 3:8-11 speaks about God’s eternal plan for the “called out” persons (the ecclesia). According to Norris this suggests that “the church is the union between God and mankind which exists for the divine honor and glory.” He further asserts that the church is “the family of God’s children whose elder brother is Jesus Christ. It is also the “assembly of the redeemed who has been cleansed in the blood of Christ.”²⁶ According to Norris, “the church, founded by Christ was presented to the world on the first Pentecostal Sunday when the Holy Spirit empowered the Apostles who were assembled in the Upper room (Acts 2:2-3).”²⁷

According to Erickson, the church in the United States is as an entity separate from the state. People belong to a church; they go to church on Sunday, yet there is much confusion and misunderstanding regarding the church.²⁸ Erickson asserts that part of the confusion stems from the many uses of the word “church,” sometimes its use refers to a building, at other times it is used to refer to a body of believers, (e. g., Main Street

²⁴ Binnie, 2-3.

²⁵ Karl L. Schmidt, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76), vol. 3, 504.

²⁶ Frank B. Norris, *God’s Own People: An Introductory Study of the Church* (Baltimore, MD: Helicon Press, 1962), 11.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 13

²⁸ Erickson, 1036-1037.

Methodist Church). On this point, Norris asserted that God was from the time following man's disobedience in the Garden of Eden making plans to restore the relationship and fellowship with mankind.²⁹

In preparation for this restorative plan God choose Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). It is also through Abraham's lineage that Jesus the Messiah came. God even inspired men to write His laws for worship and living, so that His people could live in a manner that pleases Him. Throughout the Old Testament period, God selected various men (Prophets), God provided them with specific messages, and instructed them to share the messages given with His people. Examples of this are found in Isaiah 45:22-13; Isaiah 55:1; Ezekiel 36:24-28, and Jeremiah 31:31-34.

Erickson asserted that the church has traditionally been thought of as being distinct from the world, as standing against the world, with a primary intention of transforming it. When considered in this way, the church is the "repository of grace," and the world could receive this grace and then become transformed by it only after they are connected to the church and partake in its sacraments.³⁰ Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:16 indicated that God took the initiative to choose the people with whom He wanted to build a relationship. In the text God said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people" (2 Corinthians 6:16 (NIV)).

Jesus knew there was a missional role for the church after his departure. He told the Disciples in Acts 1:8b, "You will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere – throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (NLT). Bennett

²⁹ Norris, 27.

³⁰ Erickson, 1038.

indicated that this is “the essential nature of the Christian church, to minister to everyone everywhere,” when this is not done, especially “to people in need, something about her missionary nature ceases to emerge.”³¹

According to Erickson, Christ is the head of the body- the Church (Colossians 1:18), and the believers are individual members or parts. In another text, Jesus describes himself as the vine to which believers, as the branches, are connected (John 15:1-11). Erickson further made the case that the image of the body of Christ speaks of the interconnectedness between all the persons who make up the church. In 1 Corinthians 12:12, the apostle Paul develops the concept of the interconnectedness of the body, especially in terms of the gifts of the spirit (1 Corinthians 14:4-5, 12).

Macchia asserts that “we are the church, you and I, and we cannot be Christians by ourselves. Every Christian, to be complete, must be a member of a body of people who are followers of Christ.”³² Regarding the church, the Bible indicates that:

(1) The church is the body of Christ on earth. Jesus said, "I will build my church"

(Matthew 16:18), and it is still under construction. "And He is the head of the body, the church" (Colossians 1:18, and Ephesians 5:23).

(2) The church is comprised of persons who were "called out," as the Greek word implies; “Called out” of the world purified and cleansed by the shed blood of Christ, to be His own.

(3) After receiving Christ as Lord and Savior, a person is added to the church by the Lord (Acts 2:47).

³¹ David B. Bennett, “Silver and Gold Have I None: Church of the Poor or Church of the Rich?” in *International Bulletin for Missionary Research* 7.4 (October 1983): 146-51.

³² Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: Ten Traits of a Vital Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 10.

- (4) The church is more than an organization; it is a living, growing organism, with the life of Christ within.
- (5) Each member is a part of the church and has an important function. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, they are one body: so also is Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:13-31). An individual Christian is not a church but is to function as a part of the church.
- (6) God has provided for the maintenance of the church by providing its members with various gifts and ministries.

Stetzer and Dodson talked about the love Jesus has for the church, to the extent that He sacrificed His life for her (Eph. 5:25). These authors also remind us of Christ's declaration that He will build His church (Matt. 16:18) and allow mankind to join Him in its building.³³ Matthew 28:19-20 reminds us of Jesus' commission to believers; that they are to go out into the world and make disciples of all nations. Believers are to become witnesses for Jesus throughout the world (Acts 1:8).

Van Engen indicated that Jesus described His church as becoming "Salt" and "light" to the world (Matt. 5:13-16). Jesus was envisioning a "salt shaker" church, the kind of church that would scatter its members in the surrounding cultural and socio-political environment.³⁴

The Bible also prescribed the qualifications for office holders within the church. For example, Acts 6:3-5 Luke the Apostle, directed the church to choose deacons or men "of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" to serve (minister to the material

³³ Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can Too* (Nashville, TN: B and H Publishing Group, 2007), 1.

³⁴ Van Engen, 134.

needs of others) -- to do those tasks so the apostles could give themselves to prayer and ministry of the Word. Other texts such as I Timothy 3:1-14 and Titus 1:59 addressed the matter of self-will or insisting stubbornly and arrogantly on one's way, as opposed to following the will of God. Paul indicates in these passages the importance of church leaders understanding the will of God, and allowing themselves to be led by God's will rather than their own self-will (Romans 12:1-2). God is interested in His glory.

Paul wrote, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (I Cor 10:31 (NIV)). Everything, even such normal, everyday things like eating and drinking are to be done for His glory. Man's mission is to bring God glory. If man's mission is to bring God glory, then the church leaders must equip the membership to glorify God through their worship and through their daily living. Yet though God's glory is a familiar concept to Christians, it is sometimes difficult to define what it means to live for His glory. When church leaders are not intentional about understanding how man was made to live, it becomes very easy to begin doing other things in place of equipping their members to bring God glory with their lives. Living for God's glory can become a token phrase, similar to saying "in Jesus name, Amen" at the end of a prayer. It becomes something stated; however, it is without much thought or meaning.

This study will help to make the connection between the concept of living for the glory of God and the everyday thinking which leads to the practical outworking of mentoring. Christian leaders are called to live for the glory of God. Therefore, it is necessary for them to understand how Christian education is informed by doxological living – that is, living in a way that brings glory to God.

The Bible also addressed the matter of discipline and idleness in the church (Matthew 18:17 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6). This body of believers operated as the church:

they worked together as the church; they fellowshiped together, exhorted one another, and prayed together as the church. In addition, people received counseling, teaching, assistance and encouragement as members of the church, by those in the body whom God had “gifted” with the necessary skills.

Ephesians 3:10-11 unpacks the concept that the existence of the church is in accordance with the eternal “desire” of God that he purposed in Christ. The church is a manifestation of God’s eternal purpose. It did not come into being by accident; rather, God planned it in eternity. Witness Lee unpacked the word “purpose” in the Scriptures to mean, “Plan.”

Lee further asserts that God, in His infinite wisdom made provisions for the perpetuation of the church. He cited Ephesians 4:11-12 which explains that God provides His people with the gifts needed to carry out the duties of the church. This includes equipping others for ministry, and perfecting of the saints so that the building up of the church may be realized.³⁵

Writing about the “function” of the church, Bilheimer asserts that the church has several “unique” responsibilities. These include: (1) possession of the gospel; (2) Establishing the Gospel in the lives of people; (3) Developing social transfiguration, as a derivative function; (4) Caring for the universe; (5) Being the soul of the world, and (6) Preserving a Gospel that serves as judge and provide guidance and power.”³⁶

³⁵ Witness Lee, *The Practical Expression of the Church* (Los Angeles, CA: Stream Publishers, 1970), 11.

³⁶ Robert S. Bilheimer, *What Must the Church Do?* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), 28.

According to Cox and Liesse, “an organization that has lost sight of its purpose has no soul.”³⁷ Therefore, it is imperative that the church leaders understand the purpose and the nature of their business. The Bible in Acts 2:42-47 described clearly the “purpose” and “business” of the Church. It states that:

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved (NIV).

This passage makes it clear that the Church was devoted to: (1) The apostles' Teaching- ***Discipleship***; (2) Fellowship- ***Community***; (3) Breaking bread, Prayer and meeting together in the temple – ***Worship***; (4) Meeting the needs of other people – ***Ministry***, and (5) Church Growth (through Conversion) – ***Evangelism***.

White proposes that these five components (activities) constitute the business, or purpose of the church. These he suggests, “Is what the biblically functioning “church” community looks like.” Jesus made the Mission of the Church very clear in Matthew 28: 18-20 when he told His disciples:

¹⁸... “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (NIV).

White indicated that this passage clarifies the “mission” and “purpose” of the church as twofold. These being to reach out to unbelievers and develop them, while at the same time developing those already in the church into committed followers of Christ.

³⁷ Allan Cox and Julie Liesse, *Redefining Corporate Soul: Linking Purpose and People* (Chicago: Irwin, 1996), 3.

The church that Jesus Christ established and built operates and functions in the heart of the world that is controlled by God’s adversary- Satan. Therefore, to be effective in executing the mandate that Christ gave to the church, that is; to go into all the world and preach the good news to everyone (Mark 16:15a NLT); The Church and its leaders must first understand the purpose and mission of the church. Secondly, they must understand the societal environment, historical experiences and social conditions of their target audience (s). It is in this context that the reader is invited to glance into the historic and sociological conditions that prevailed -and may still be prevailing- in the lives of the leaders and people who make up the largest proportion of the population and target audience of the A.M.E. Church –African Americans.

A. M. E. Church History

The grip of slavery, race prejudice, oppression and harsh punishment, were all supported by law to exert a powerful and retarding influence against the efforts of the Negro in seeking God, and seeking a full, free, and intelligent Christian life. The 1750-1800 was the period when the grip that held Negroes in slavery in America began loosening. Negroes who were enslaved, free, or freeborn were accepting Christianity. Some converted Negroes even received license to preach. Richard Allen, born in 1760, accepted Christ at age 17, and joined the Methodist Society. He later accepted the “call” to the preaching ministry, and received a license to preach in 1782. As a licensed minister of the gospel, Allen traveled for several years throughout the Middle Atlantic States proclaiming the gospel to both white and Negro audiences.³⁸ In 1799 Francis

³⁸ Richard Allen, *The Life Experience and Gospel Labors of Rt. Rev. Richard Allen*, ed. George A. Singleton (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), 6.

Asbury ordained Allen a Deacon and later an Elder in St. George's Methodist Church. Allen was the first Bishop consecrated in the A. M. E. Church.

As a minister of the Gospel Allen preached within and outside the walls of St. George's, as a result and the Negro membership grew significantly, "at one point the Negro membership at St. George's outnumbered the whites."³⁹ Soon, according to Allen, "(the Negro presence) in the white church became obnoxious and the Negroes were relegated to sit one to a pew, around the walls of the church on the main floor." Gregg indicated "the Negro members were later requested to move themselves to the gallery."⁴⁰ The situation reached a level that as Payne's historical account records "in 1787 the colored people of Philadelphia connected with St. George's Methodist Church met to consider the unkind treatment received at the hands of their white brethren."⁴¹ By his own account, Allen described the treatment he and some other Negro members received during a worship service in November 1787 that resulted in the Negroes walking out of St George's Methodist church and birthing the A.M.E. Church. Allen recalled that:

The service began with singing, followed with prayer. While Allen and his friends were reverently kneeling, one of the officers attempted to pull Absalom Jones from his knees and told them that they could not worship there. Allen raised his head and looked around, the group was threatened with expulsion; but when the prayer was over; Allen walked out, followed by Jones, William White, and Dorus Ginnings. This was the beginning of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Allen was not bitter or resentful, and remained a Methodist.⁴²

³⁹ Ibid., 6

⁴⁰ Howard D. Gregg, *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church: The Black Church in Action* (Nashville: Henry A. Belin, Jr., 1980), 16.

⁴¹ D. A. Payne, *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, vol. 1 (Nashville: A. M. E. Sunday School Union, 1891), 79.

⁴² Allen, 7.

These events are significant because they present vivid snapshots of the social fabric of the American society that prevailed before and after the Civil War. Allen and the A. M. E. Church does not represent a unique experience, white communicants who did not want Negroes to commune with them, or worship with them, established separate churches for Negroes in order to make them feel a part of the faith.⁴³

According to DuBois, “the deeply embedded African belief system added to the continuity of the social institution that caused the church to thrive among the enslaved Negroes.”⁴⁴ He further claimed that the “Negroes embraced the Biblical teachings by interpreting its stories in reference to their own experiences.” It is important to note Park’s assessment of the Negro when he wrote, “There is every reason to believe that the Negro, when he landed in the United States, left behind him almost everything but his dark complexion and his tropical temperament.”⁴⁵

Raboteau had a different perspective on the matter. He avowed that “thousands of Africans from diverse cultures and religious traditions, forcibly transported to America as slaves, retained many African customs even as they converted to Christianity.”⁴⁶ W.E.B. DuBois supports this view when he expressed that:

At first sight, it would seem that slavery completely destroyed every vestige of spontaneous movement among the Negroes. This is not strictly true. The vast power of the priest in the African state is well known, his realm alone - the province of religion and medicine- remained largely unaffected by the plantation

⁴³ Ruby F. Johnston, *The Development of Negro Religion* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), 14.

⁴⁴ Mitchell, 18.

⁴⁵ Robert E. Park, *Journal of Negro History*, 60 vols. (Washington, DC: Associated Publishers), vol. 4, 116.

⁴⁶ Albert J. Raboteau, *Canaan Land: A Religious History of African Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), ix.

system. The Negro priest, therefore, early became an important figure on the plantation and found his function as the interpreter of the supernatural, the comforter of the sorrowing, and as the one who expressed, rudely but picturesquely, the longings and disappointments of a stolen people. From such beginnings arose and spread with marvelous rapidity, the Negro church, the first distinctively Negro American social institution.⁴⁷

Woodson, the Negro historian, described this situation as, “the dawn of the New Day,” he believed “the religious development of Negroes occurred when the Methodists and Baptists began proselyting the Blacks.”⁴⁸

Understanding the environment from which the A. M. E. Church was born is important to understanding the nature and added responsibility of this church in the lives of the people it serves. The A. M. E. Church adopted as its motto: “God our Father Christ our Redeemer, Man our Brother.”⁴⁹

Mitchell adds that, the centralized leadership, written guidelines, and itinerancy of the A. M. E. churches enabled it to develop a large network of small churches in small cities and towns. These elements are noteworthy in the evaluation and development of growth and revitalization strategies for this church. Gayraud Wilmore in summing up the situations that created the foundational strength in the Black churches indicated that:

Notwithstanding elements of White evangelicalism in the mainstream of black faith, there was from the beginning a fusion between a highly developed and pervasive feeling about the essentially spiritual nature of historical experience flowing from the African traditional background, and a radical secularity related both to religious sensibility and to the experience of slavery and oppression. This fusion accounts for the most significant characteristic of black religion.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ W. E. Burghardt DuBois, *The Negro* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), xii, 113-14.

⁴⁸ Carter G. Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: 1921), Chapter II.

⁴⁹ Allen, 9.

⁵⁰ Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism*, 2nd ed. (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1983; reissued 1993), 3, 15.

Gregg asserts that the A. M. E. Church originated out of an environment of social injustice and mistreatment by man to their fellow man.⁵¹ In their new roles, the A. M. E. Church found itself having to deal with issues affecting the newly emancipated Negroes. These issues included: (1) Women in the pulpit; (2) Church expansion, and (3) Social Activism. The social issues in the Negro community were vast. They ranged from (i) anti Slavery Movement, (ii) the Underground Railroad, (iii) Black church and the military, (iv) Civic and social responsibilities, (v) slave Insurrections, (vi) African American schools and universities, (viii) new African American Church in Reconstruction, (ix) post civil war churches, and (x) family issues.

In order to understand the A.M.E. Church, a person must first become familiar with the economic and social situations that prevailed in the broader society that necessitated its birth. While growing up in Sunday school, I learned a song that has the words: *Read your Bibles, pray every day and you'll grow! Grow! Grow!* This concept is true. However, personal and church growth, involves more than just praying and reading one's Bible.

Paul E. Johnson affirms that the enslaved Africans and their descendants experienced something new when they encountered European Christianity in its Protestant form in North America. According to Johnson:

The Africans encountered a fully articulated ritual relationship with the Supreme Being who was pictured in the book the Christians called the Bible. This being was not just the Creator and Ruler of the Cosmos, but also the God of History, a God who lifted up and cast down nations and peoples, a God whose sovereign will was directing all things toward an ultimate end, drawing good out of evil.⁵²

⁵¹ Howard D. Gregg, 494.

⁵² Paul E. Johnson, *African-American Christianity: Essays in History* (Berkeley University Press: 1994), 1.

Johnson further postulates that the transplanted Africans reflected upon the evil that had befallen them and their parents; they increasingly turned to the language, symbols, and worldview of the Christian holy book. The Africans found the Bible story of the Exodus parallel with their own experiences and suffering.⁵³

From the beginning of the Atlantic slave trade, Europeans claimed that the conversion of slaves to Christianity justified the enslavement of Africans. Yet the conversion of slaves was not a high priority for the colonial planters. British colonists in North America proved especially indifferent, if not downright hostile to the conversion of their slaves. At first, opposition was based on the suspicion that English law forbade the enslavement of Christians and so would require slaveholders to emancipate any slave who received baptism. Masters suspected that slaves would therefore seek to be baptized in order to gain freedom. These fears were quickly allayed by colonial legislation declaring that baptism did not alter slave status.⁵⁴

With the legal obstacles aside, slave owners for the most part still demonstrated scant interest in converting their slaves. The plantation owners held the prevailing thought that exposure to Christianity would spoil the slaves. Christian slaves would begin to think too highly of themselves, became impudent, even rebellious. Moreover, Anglo-Americans were troubled by a deep-seated uneasiness at the prospect that slaves would claim Christian fellowship with whites.

The Africans were foreign; to convert them was to make them more like the plantation owning colonists, therefore they would deserve better treatment. In fact,

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 2

religion, like language and skin color, constituted the colonists' identity. To Christianize black-skinned Africans, therefore, would confuse the distinctiveness of the races and threaten the social order based upon that distinctiveness. Finally, the labor, not the souls of the slaves, concerned most slaveholders.⁵⁵ Peter Kalm, a Swedish traveler in America from 1748 to 1750, perceptively described the colonists' objections to religious instruction for slaves, he stated:

It is . . . to be pitied, that the masters of these negroes in most of the English colonies take little care of their spiritual welfare, and let them live on in their Pagan darkness. These are even some, who would be very ill pleased at, and would by all means hinder their negroes from being instructed in the doctrines of Christianity; to this they are partly led by the conceit of its being shameful, to have a spiritual brother or sister among so despicable a people; partly by thinking that they should not be able to keep their negroes so meanly afterwards; and partly through fear of the negroes growing too proud, on seeing themselves upon a level with their masters in religious matters.⁵⁶

The success of missions to the slaves depended largely on circumstances beyond the missionaries' control: the proportion of African-born to Creole slaves, the geographic location and work patterns of the slaves, and the ratio of blacks to whites in a given locale. Blacks in the North and in the Chesapeake region of Maryland and Virginia, for example, experienced more frequent and closer contact with whites than did those of the lowland coasts of South Carolina and Georgia, where large gangs of African slaves toiled on isolated rice plantations with only limited and infrequent exposure to whites or their religion.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Peter Kalm, *Travels into North America*, 2d ed. (London: 1772), reprinted in vol. 13 of *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels*, ed. John Pinkerton (London: 1812), 503.

Even if a missionary gained regular access to slaves, the slaves did not invariably accept the Christian gospel. Some rejected it, according to missionary accounts, because of "the fondness they have for their old Heathenish Rites and the strong prejudice they must have against teachers from among those, whom they serve so unwillingly."⁵⁷

The Church of England mounted a concerted attack on these obstacles to slave conversion in 1701 when it established the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts to support missionaries to the colonies. The first task was to convince plantation owners that they had a duty to instruct their slaves regarding gospel truths. Therefore the tract prepared and distributed contained messages directed to plantation owners heralding the benefits of exposing their slaves to Christian education.

The prevailing thought was that Christianity would make the Africans better slaves by convincing them to obey their owners out of a sense of moral duty instead of out of fear. After all, society pamphlets explained, Christianity does not upset the social order, but supports it: "Scripture, far from making an alteration in Civil Rights, would expressly direct that every man abide in the condition wherein he is called, with great indifference of mind concerning outward circumstances."⁵⁸

Missionaries, for their part, reiterated ad nauseam the verse from Ephesians 6: 5 that "slaves ought to be obedient to their earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as they would obey Christ." The missionaries thus denied that spiritual equality implied worldly equality; they restricted the egalitarian impulse of

⁵⁷ Thomas Secker, Bishop of London, *A Sermon Preached before the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts . . . February 20, 1740-1* (London: 1741), reprinted in Frank J. Klingberg, *Anglican Humanitarianism in Colonial New York* (Philadelphia: Church Historical Society, 1940), 217.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 223

Christianity to the realm of the spirit. Therefore, in effect, they built a religious foundation to support slavery. As the historian Winthrop Jordan aptly put it, “these clergymen had been forced by the circumstance of racial slavery in America into propagating the Gospel by presenting it as an attractive device for slave control.”⁵⁹

In assessing this situation, Pennington speculated that some African slaves accepted Christianity because they hoped—colonial legislation and missionary pronouncements notwithstanding—that baptism would raise their status and ensure eventual freedom for their children, if not for them self. He cited a situation in South Carolina where a missionary in South Carolina required slaves seeking baptism to swear an oath that they were not requesting the sacrament out of a desire for freedom.⁶⁰

Johnson acknowledges that slaves were first converted in large numbers in the wake of the religious revivals that periodically swept parts of the colonies beginning in the 1740s. Accounts by George Whitefield, Gilbert Tennent, Jonathan Edwards, and other revivalists made special mention of the fact that blacks were flocking to hear the message of salvation in hitherto unseen numbers. Not only were free blacks and slaves attending revivals, but they were also taking an active part in the services as exhorters and preachers.

For a variety of reasons, Evangelical revivalists succeeded where Anglican missionaries had failed. Whereas the Anglicans had depended upon a slow process of indoctrination, the evangelicals preached the immediate experience of conversion as the

⁵⁹ Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Baltimore, MD: Penguin, 1969), 191.

⁶⁰ Edgard Legare Pennington, *Thomas Bray's Associates and their work among the Negroes* (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1939), 25.

primary requirement for baptism, thereby making Christianity more quickly accessible. Because of the centrality of the conversion experience in their piety, evangelicals also tended to de-emphasize instruction and downplay learning as prerequisites of Christian life. As a result, all classes of society were welcome to participate actively in prayer meetings and revival services, in which the poor, the illiterate, and even the enslaved prayed, exhorted, and preached.

The American Revolution ended, however, revival fervor continued to flare up sporadically in the South. Johnson indicated that many slaves converted to Christianity under the dramatic preaching of evangelical revivalists, especially Methodists and Baptists. The emotionalism of the revivals encouraged the outward expression of religious feeling, and the sight of black and white converts weeping, shouting, fainting, and moving in ecstatic trance became a familiar, if sensationalized, feature of the sacramental and camp meeting seasons.

In this heated atmosphere slaves found a form of Christian worship that resembled the religious celebrations of their African heritage. The analogy between African and evangelical styles of worship enabled the slaves to reinterpret the new religion by reference to the old, and so made this brand of Christianity seem less foreign than that of the more liturgically sedate Church of England.

In the 1780s, the evangelicals' implied challenge to the social order became explicit. Methodist conferences in 1780, in 1783, and again in 1784 strongly condemned slavery and tried "to eradicate" this abomination," first from the ministry and then from the membership as a whole, by passing increasingly stringent regulations against slave

owning, slave-buying, and slave-selling.⁶¹ Several Baptist leaders freed their slaves, and in 1789, the General Committee of Virginia Baptists condemned slavery as "a violent deprivation of the rights of nature."⁶² In the South, these antislavery moves met with strong, immediate, and, as the leadership quickly realized, irreversible opposition.

In 1785, the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Church suspended the rules passed in 1784 by the Methodist General Conference. Methodist leader Thomas Coke explained, "We thought it prudent to suspend the minute concerning slavery, on account of the great opposition that had been given it, our work being in too infantile a state to push things to extremity."

Local Baptist associations in Virginia responded to the General Committee's attack on slavery by declaring that the subject was "so abstruse" that no religious society had the right to concern itself with the issue. Instead, each individual should be left "to act at discretion in order to keep a good conscience before God, as far as the laws of our land will admit."⁶³ As for the slaves, the goal of the Church should be the amelioration of their treatment not their emancipation.

These events, Johnson reiterated, resulted in the failure of the evangelical challenge to slavery in the late eighteenth century. Though both Methodists and Baptists rapidly retreated from antislavery pronouncements, their struggle with the established

⁶¹ Donald G. Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism: A Chapter in American Morality, 1780-1845* (Princeton, NJ: 1965), 293-99.

⁶² David Barrow, *Circular Letter* (Norfolk, Va.: [1798]), 4-5; Robert B. Semple, *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia*, ed. George W. Beale (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1894), 105.

⁶³ Francis Asbury, *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury*, ed. Elmer T. Clark, J. Manning Potts, and Jacob S. Payton, 3 vols. (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1958), 2: 284; Wesley M. Gewehr, *The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1930), 240-41, 244-48.

order and their uneasiness about slavery gave slaves, at least initially, the impression that they were "friendly toward freedom." For a short time, revivalist evangelicalism breached the wall that colonial missionaries had built between spiritual and temporal equality.

In order to understand the role the Negro church played as an agency for social control one needs only to reflect on the composition of the Negro family during plantation life and after emancipation. Frazier described a Negro plantation family as "an amorphous (unstructured, shapeless, and nebulous) group gathered around the mother or some other female. For the most part, the father was a visitor to the household without any legal or recognized status in family relations."⁶⁴ The father, according to Frazier's account, lived with the constant knowledge and possibility that the plantation owner could sell him at any moment.

Following the Civil War and emancipation, the Negroes were expected to fend for themselves within a nation of mores, laws, and economic systems that were unfamiliar. Moreover, systems for which the Negroes were never equipped. Barbour pointed out that, this would explain the stated mission of the A. M. E. Church, which is "to minister to the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and environmental needs of all people by spreading Christ's liberating gospel through word and deed."⁶⁵ Religion, according to Johnston "acquired a more meaningful, practical form as the Negro visualized the

⁶⁴ Frazier, 31.

⁶⁵ Johnny, Barbour, *the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, 2000-2004, 46th ed. (Nashville: AMEC Publishing Company, 2000), 13.

essence of the Christian doctrine and applied this in a manner that to him best served his needs.”⁶⁶

Notwithstanding, the historical treatment and the social hurdles the AME church the advancement of the African people in America was contingent on their ability to acquire an education. In this regard, the church embarked on establishing and maintaining institutions of learning, these include:

- Western University (Kansas)
- Allen University (Columbia, SC)
- Edward Waters College (Jacksonville, FL)
- Morris Brown College (Atlanta, GA)
- Paul Quinn College (Dallas, TX)
- Wilberforce University (Wilberforce, OH)
- Shorter College (North Little Rock, AR)

The church also established theological seminaries to prepare its people for ministry. These institutions for theological preparation include: Jackson Theological Seminary, Payne Theological, and Turner Theological Seminary.

The A.M.E Book of Discipline instructs that every level of the Connection and every local church shall engage in carrying out the spirit of the original Free African Society, that is, to seek out and save the lost, and serve the needy through a continuing program of: (1) preaching the gospel, (2) feeding the hungry, (3) clothing the naked, (4) housing the homeless, (5) cheering the fallen, (6) providing jobs for the jobless, (7) administering to the needs of those in prisons, hospitals, nursing homes, asylums and

⁶⁶ Johnston, 17.

mental institutions, senior citizens' homes; caring for the sick, the shut-in, the mentally and socially disturbed, and (8) encouraging thrift and economic advancement.⁶⁷

The social issues that occupied the attention of the Negro church lend credence to Gregg's position that "the basic philosophy of the A. M. E. Church is to help others."⁶⁸ He postulates that, "If the church moved or has gotten away from this noble idea it has strayed from its original moorings and at some point it needs to come back to its original stance." The A. M. E. Church, he asserts, "is fundamentally a missionary enterprise." He went on to say that the church "pioneers faced dangers untold and considered not their safety and well being so that they could spread the gospel to the less fortunate."⁶⁹ Frederick Talbot, a retired Episcopal Bishop of the A. M. E. Church seemed to agree with Gregg when, in his book *God's Fearless Prophet: the Story of Richard Allen*, he cited Steve Klots who wrote that:

In Methodism, Allen found a faith in tune with his own experiences. He liked the religion's emphasis on individual responsibility and its attack on slavery. Originally, just a movement within the Church of England, Methodism in the late 18th century was evolving towards an independent identity in America, one which was marked by attacking the status quo and bringing religion to the common people.⁷⁰

Professor Frazier pinpoints that, prior to the First World War nine-tenths of the Negro population resided in the southern states; of these four-fifth lived in rural areas. He adds that at the end of the war Negroes migrated in significant numbers to northern cities

⁶⁷ Barbour, 13.

⁶⁸ Gregg, 53.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Frederick H. Talbot, *God's Fearless Prophet: the Story of Richard Allen*, 2ed (Nashville, TN: Dr. Johnny Barbour, Jr. Publisher, 2007), 28.

to satisfy the increasing need for unskilled workers. This migration destroyed the social organization that existed in the Negro communities in the South. The Negroes upon arrival in the Northern cities were relegated to living in large urban cities. Frazier pointed out that the Negroes' lifestyle in the north was vastly different from their accustomed southern way of living.⁷¹

Frazier cited Drake and Clayton who indicated that the large influx of Negroes to Northern cities resulted in the creation of a new stratification strand based on Occupation. This complemented the established stratification Negroes brought from the south which was based on education, and family connection.⁷² These authors additionally suggest that the changes in the Negro societal structure resulted in them worshipping in predominantly Black churches. He indicated that 75% became Baptists, and 25% Methodist. This rapid increase in church membership, with all their societal issues resulted in the secularization of the Black churches.

For Mays, this secularization means "the Negro churches lost their predominantly other-worldly outlook and began to focus attention upon the Negro condition in this world."⁷³ Secularization expanded as the Negro church became interested in the affairs of the community and began advocating for them. This voice of campaigner was evident even in their church messages.⁷⁴ Frazier opines that, "In many northern cities, pastors of large Negro churches have been influential in politics; (some)

⁷¹ E. Franklin Frazier, *the Negro Church in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), 47.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 50

⁷³ Benjamin E. Mays and Joseph W. Nicholson, *The Negro's Church* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1933), 156.

⁷⁴ Mays and Nicholson, 154.

even received important political appointments.”⁷⁵ He cited a stratification study published by Vattel E. Daniel which concluded that:

In Negro churches in Chicago, church-going was not important for many persons of upper class status and that those who attended church attended churches with services that were ritualistic and deliberative, the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational.⁷⁶

According to Frazier, the church became a sanctuary where Negroes sought refuge from the white society that treated them with condemnation and contempt.⁷⁷

Gregg advises that beginning in 1816, the A. M. E. Church engaged in missionary work and established churches in several regions of West and South Africa, Haiti, Santo Domingo, South America, Australia, and in several cities within America. The official record from the General Conference held in 1884 recorded a church membership of 245,597 souls. By 1887, the church leaders believed the membership ranks had risen to approximately 500,000 persons.⁷⁸

Considering the societal and economic conditions that prevailed at the time and the conditions under which the Negroes lived, one cannot avoid asking the questions: (1) what was the A.M.E. Church doing that rendered it effective in the lives of the Negroes? And (2) what was happening in the church that impacted the personal lives of the Negroes in the various communities in America?

In response McClain offered six possible reasons why people of African descent were drawn to the A.M.E church. He suggested that: (1) The church presented a simple

⁷⁵ Frazier, 51.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 52

⁷⁷ Ibid., 71

⁷⁸ Gregg, 60.

message of salvation; (2) The leaders of the A.M.E Church were concerned about the harsh and cruel establishment of slavery and they became involved in the abolishment struggle; (3) the Negro members were allowed to serve as lay ministers in the church; (4) their preaching and worship style; (5) the church leader(s) were primarily concerned and focused on bringing the person through the conversion, repentance and regeneration processes toward a acceptance; these leaders worked on winning and converting the heart, and (6) the church was adaptable enough to meet the needs of the Negroes, giving them a sense of ownership.⁷⁹

The leaders and members of the A.M.E church faced daunting historical and sociological pressures. In addition, the church leaders had the responsibility for establishing a denominational connection that would best serve the needs of its people - the Negroes- The areas of concern involved the context of the church's doctrinal beliefs and position on theological and social issues.

Historical Background to A.M.E. Doctrines and Beliefs

Henderson believed that John Wesley, the father of Methodism, "always found a place for the individual but seldom found room for individualism." This author suggested that Wesley's emphasis on community was reflected in his zeal to establish class meetings, bands, and societies within the church. In his writing Henderson indicated that:

Wesley was convinced that all learning is expedited by group interaction whether the content of that learning is behavioral transformation, redirection of attitudes and motives, cognitive data gathering, strategic training, or social rehabilitation. It

⁷⁹ William B. McClain, *Black People in the Methodist Church: Whiter Thou Goest?* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), 26.

seems that he responded to every instructional need he met by establishing a group... He felt that his own personal growth was largely due to participation in group experiences and he advocated them for others [T]here was always the people-to-people element in his solution to human problems and development.⁸⁰

In order to understand the doctrinal and theological beliefs of the A. M. E. Church, it becomes imperative to look back to the theological convictions firmly held by Charles and John Wesley and the principles they executed in their personal lives and ministry. The theological underpinnings of all Methodist Churches were shaped and articulated by the Wesley's, whether through the hymns written by Charles, or through the messages given and lessons taught by John Wesley as they developed Methodist movement within the Anglican church to generate church revival.⁸¹ The Wesley's were concerned about developing a faith that worked in everyday living.

According to Steve Harper the Wesley's were in search of a "Scriptural Christianity" that was confirmed by human experience.⁸² Thomas Jackson asserted that John Wesley believed and taught that the "soul and the body made the man; and the spirit and discipline made a Christian."⁸³ Harper asserted that Wesley's churchmanship was based on Scripture rather than contemporary doctrinal formulations; Wesley, he stated "abhorred stagnant orthodoxy" and sought a Scriptural Christianity "energized" by the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit" Wesley, in one of his sermons declared that he had a desire to know one thing, that "thing" was "to know the way to heaven."⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Michael D. Henderson, *John Wesley's Class Meeting: A Model for Making Disciples* (Nappanee, IN.: Evangel, 1977), 132.

⁸¹ Harper, 20.

⁸² Ibid., 18

⁸³ Thomas Jackson, ed., *The Works of John Wesley* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979),13:101.

⁸⁴ John Wesley, *Forty Four Sermons* (London: Epworth Press, 1944), 6.

According to Harper, Wesley believed that the root of all mankind's problems was sinfulness; that God loves mankind because: 1) they were the supreme objects of his creation, and 2) He expressed His love for mankind even in the midst of their sin.

According to Telford, Wesley also believed and taught that "there is no Gospel without salvation from sin."⁸⁵

John Wesley by his own account wrote that he believed in simplicity, and in God's grace. He also believed as he expressed in one of his sermons that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15). Charles, on the other hand captured their theological beliefs about God's triumph over sin in his hymns. An example of this is presented in the hymn "*And Can it Be.*" This hymn declares:

Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound by sin and nature's night
Thine eyes diffused a quickening ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light.
My chains fell off, my heart was free.
I rose, went forth, and followed thee!

Jackson advises that Wesley also believed and taught about "God's prevenient grace." This is the grace of God that operates before our conversion experience. Through this doctrine, Wesley taught that the first move regarding salvation was God's and not man-kind's. Jackson asserted that Wesley also spoke about converting grace or Saving grace. Wesley in one of his sermons entitled *Salvation by Faith* indicated, "There is nothing we are, or have, or do, which can deserve the least thing at God's hand." The apostle Paul expressed this same sentiment when he said: "For it is by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2:8).

⁸⁵ John Telford, ed., *The Letters of John Wesley* (London: Epworth Press, 1960), 6:327.

Jackson further suggests that Wesley's teaching on saving faith and belief encompassed "assurance." In his sermon entitled "*the Witness of our Own Spirit*" Wesley indicated that it is through this saving faith that one comes to know and believe that Jesus is truly the Son of God.⁸⁶ These represent a small sampling of the theological beliefs held by John Wesley, the father of Methodism. Wesley believed the church to be "a body of people united together in the service of God."⁸⁷

When Richard Allen and the other persons of African descent walked out of St. George's Methodist church in 1787, they organized their own society and employed Wesley's ministry methods and strategies. They were also guided by his biblical and theological beliefs. Ted Campbell, professor of Wesleyan studies at Wesley Theological Seminary maintains that the Methodist church has always focused on doctrine as a way of assuring the unity teaching among the various churches. He indicated that:

A consistent trait of the Wesleyan heritage and the Methodist churches has been a notable liberality or openness on doctrinal issues. . . . Methodists have historically made very few doctrinal requirements for church membership Methodism has never claimed to be the one true church and has seldom claimed to be even the "truest" of all churches, understanding itself rather as a religious movement with a particular mission among the broader body of Christian believers. Learning the Methodist tradition should entail learning the whole of the Christian tradition in a way in which liberality or openness in doctrine is encouraged as a central spiritual discipline.⁸⁸

The Black church continues to be a source of support for members of the African-American community. When compared to American churches as a whole, black churches tend to focus more on social issues such as poverty, gang violence, drug use, prison ministries, and racism. The importance of the church in the Black community way made

⁸⁶ Jackson, Works, 5: 137 (sermon: "*The Witness of Our Own Spirit*").

⁸⁷ Jackson, Works, 6: 392 (sermon: "*Of the Church*").

⁸⁸ Ted A. Campbell, *Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 19.

evident in an article published by The *Pew Research Center for the People & the Press*, dated June 25, 1996. The author concluded that Black Christians were more likely to have heard about health care reform from their pastors than were white Christians.⁸⁹

The postwar years in America were marked by a separatist impulse as blacks exercised the right to move and gather beyond white supervision or control. They developed black churches, benevolent societies, fraternal orders and fire companies.⁹⁰ In some areas they moved from farms into towns, as in middle Tennessee or to cities that needed rebuilding, such as Atlanta. Black churches were the focal points of black communities, and their members' quickly seceding from white churches demonstrated their desire to manage their own affairs independently of white supervision. It also showed the prior strength of the "invisible church" hidden from white eyes.⁹¹ In black neighborhoods the churches may be important sources of social cohesion.⁹² For some African Americans the kind of spirituality learned through these churches works as a protective factor against the corrosive forces of poverty and racism.⁹³

The leaders of the A.M.E Church had to contend with Biblical and theological issues not only in a cerebral manner, but more importantly in the context of their

⁸⁹ "The Diminishing Divide ... American Churches, American Politics". June 25, 1996. <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=126> (accessed August 13, 2010).

⁹⁰ James T. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Church in the United States and South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 54.

⁹¹ Peter Kolchin, *American Slavery: 1619-1877* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 222.

⁹² Church Culture as a Strategy of Action in the Black Community Mary Pattillo-McCoy *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 63, No. 6 (Dec., 1998), 767-784.

⁹³ "Gathering the Spirit" at *First Baptist Church: Spirituality as a Protective Factor in the Lives of African American Children* by Wendy L. Haight; *Social Work*, Vol. 43, 1998.

applicability to the struggles and inhuman experiences facing the Black person in America.

Biblical and Theological Beliefs of the A.M. E. Church

Professor Ted Campbell affirms that the Wesleyan beliefs shared by the AME and other churches within the Wesleyan family (United Methodist (UM), African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ), and Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) churches, found in their respective Book of Discipline represents the doctrine that the churches have agreed to teach.⁹⁴ Studying these doctrines, according to Campbell, is important if church members are to understand the Methodist beliefs and develop clarity about their Christian faith. However, the Methodist churches “have made few doctrinal requirements for church membership, but have consistently reserved the possibility for removing church members for “dissemination: of doctrine contrary to the established standards of doctrine of the church.”⁹⁵

Secondly, studying church doctrines in Campbell’s view is important for maintaining the doctrinal uniformity that binds the churches under Methodism.⁹⁶ According to him, Wesley made a distinction between “*essential doctrines*” on which agreement and consensus is critical, and “*opinions*” about theology and church practices on which disagreements must be allowed.

⁹⁴ Campbell, 17.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 26

⁹⁶ Ibid., 17

In 1816 at the birth of the A.M.E. Church, Richard Allen, the founder and first bishop, felt that Methodism and the precepts of John and Charles Wesley were best suited for the capacity of the African people in America. White indicated that Allen was impressed with the simplicity and emphasis placed on the “plain and simple gospel” which the unlearned Africans could understand. He was also impressed by the orderly system of rules and regulations, which could benefit the newly emancipated Africans. In Allen’s view, the Methodist church contained the structure and approach to Christian education that would best prepare the freed African slaves to make progress, worship God freely, and provide training for leadership roles in the church and community.⁹⁷

The Wesleyan evangelical message McClain proposes “was a simple Gospel of salvation designed to awaken a godly response in its hearers about a conscious fellowship with God, while emphasizing the love of God and the way of redemption. It sought to bring into the lives of poor benighted people, the message of a Father who cares for His children - all of His children-“⁹⁸

By adopting the Methodist Articles of Religion the A.M.E church inherited doctrinal statements pertaining to the broad ecumenical or “Catholic” heritage of Christianity. These doctrinal statements dealt with: (1) the Trinity; (2) the Nature of Christ; (3) the human need for grace, and (4) the church and its sacraments. In addition, Methodism provided the Church with a body of Hymns that were theologically sound. These hymns would be instrumental and complementary in strengthening religious

⁹⁷ White, *know Your Church*, 22.

⁹⁸ McClain, 21.

education on matters such as: (1) *The way of salvation*, (2) *justifying grace*, and (3) *sanctifying grace*.

Hymns penned by Charles Wesley that the A.M.E Church inherited addresses theological matters such as “*salvation, the Christian walk, the church, and redemption.*” An example of a hymn that dealt with salvation is ‘*O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing.*’ This hymn is based on several biblical passages, these include: Ps. 40:3; 71:23; 103:1-4; Isa. 1:18; 12:4-5; 35:4-6; Acts 4:12; Eph. 2:8, and Heb. 9:11-14. The words of this hymn are:

O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer’s praise
The glories of my God and King, the triumphs of His grace!

My gracious master and my God, assist me to proclaim,
To spread thro’ all the earth abroad the honors of Thy name.

Jesus! The name that calms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease;
Tis music in the sinner’s ears; Tis life, and health, and peace.

He breaks the power of canceled sins; He sets the pris’ner free.
His blood can make the foulest clean; His blood availed for me.

He speaks and, list’ning to His voice, new life the dead receive.
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice; the humble poor believe.⁹⁹

Others include: (1) *Author of Faith, To Thee I Cry*¹⁰⁰ - This hymn deals with salvation; (2) *God of All Power and Truth and Grace*¹⁰¹ – This hymn deals with sinners seeking redemption; (3) *A Charge to Keep I Have* - This hymn based on Leviticus 8:35; Luke 21:36; Romans 14:12, and 1 Peter 4:10-11, speaks to the matter of the Christian walk,¹⁰² and

⁹⁹ Ken Bible, *Wesley Hymns* (Kansas City, MO: Lilenas Publishing Co., 1982), 1.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 1

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 31

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 75

about the church in *And are We Yet Alive* – This hymn is based on Psalm 34:17; Luke 9:23; 2 Corinthians 7:5-6; Philippians 3:8; Colossians 3:3 and Hebrews 7:25.¹⁰³

Campbell communicated that the Wesleyan beliefs shared by the AME and other churches within the Wesleyan family (United Methodist (UM), African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ), and Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) churches are found in their respective Book of Discipline.¹⁰⁴ Anyone wishing to understand the specific beliefs of the AME could explore the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.¹⁰⁵ There the individual articles and their theological explanation would be presented. These twenty-five articles are:

- (1) *The Holy Trinity*: The church believes that God is one living being who created and preserves the earth. God is experienced through three personalities; namely, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- (2) *The Incarnation of Christ*: That Christ's two natures - divine and human – are embodied in one person.
- (3) *The Resurrection of Christ*: That Christ truly rose from the dead and ascended into heaven.
- (4) *The Holy Spirit*: That the Holy Spirit is one of the substance of the Father and the Son.
- (5) *The Holy Scriptures*: That the Bible contains all that a person needs to be saved.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 102

¹⁰⁴ Campbell, 116.

¹⁰⁵ *The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville: AMEC Sunday school Union, 2000), 13-18.

- (6) *The Old Testament*: That eternal life is offered to mankind in both the Old and New Testaments, and that these Books are not contradictory.
- (7) *Original Sin*: That all mankind have inherited evil impulses that originated from Adam- the first man.
- (8) *Free Will*: That each person has been given the choice to choose right or wrong. However, one could not expect to do right except with God's assistance.
- (9) *The Justification of Man*: That we are saved by faith in Christ alone, and not by good works.
- (10) *Good Works*: That good works are the end result (fruit) of one's faith in Christ.
- (11) *Works of Supererogation*: This is the belief that one can do more good than is expected by God.
- (12) *Sin after Justification*: This means that a Christian could depart from grace and fall into sin. However, following their true repentance, they would be restored to a good and holy life.
- (13) *The Church*: That the visible church of God is the congregation where the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are administered.
- (14) *Purgatory*: Methodists do not believe in Purgatory, a doctrine that holds that souls after death are held in a place for cleansing from sin.
- (15) *Speaking in Tongues*: That the language used during public worship and the sacraments must be one that that is understood by the participants.
- (16) *The Sacraments*: That Christ only ordained two sacraments. These are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

- (17) *Baptism*: That this is a sign of regeneration. It also serves as the beginning of the Christian life. The Methodists believe in baptizing adults, children and infants.
- (18) *The Lord's Supper*: This is a symbol of Christ's suffering and death for sinful humans. Methodists believe that the "communion elements" (Bread and wine) are merely representative of the broken body and shed blood of Christ.
- (19) *The Communion Elements*: These consisted of bread and wine. They were to be given to the communicants at the same service.
- (20) *The Sacrifice of Christ*: That Christ's sacrifice is for the sins of people in the whole world, those through history and those to come.
- (21) *The marriage of Ministers*: That the ministers of Christ are not prohibited from marriage.
- (22) *Rites and Ceremonies of the Church*: That it is not necessary that the rites and ceremonies of all Methodist church be similar and alike. Each denomination is permitted to create, adopt and implement their peculiar rituals.
- (23) *Regarding the rules of the Government*: That the U.S. is, and ought to be a free and independent nation, and that all righteous government should be supported by Christians.
- (24) *Christian and their Possessions*: That Christians have a right to own private property. However, every person should give liberally of their possessions to help others.
- (25) *A Christian's Oath*: That a Christian should not swear. However, they may take an oath.

Each local congregation, like the church universal has a responsibility to share the Good News of salvation (Jesus' death, burial and resurrection). In order to be effective the bearers of the message and their delivery strategies must take into account the distinctive historical and social needs of the people. Allen recognized this and was able to successfully interpret Christ's message to his audience in light of their experience. He was also successful in building a bridge that allowed persons within and outside the Continental U. S. to become familiar with the God of grace. In addition, he established specific strategies within the Church to move the person through the steps of (1) curious spectator; (2) believer and acceptance of Christ as lord and Savior, and (3) training that ushered the believer into the field of mission and evangelism ranks.

CHAPTER 3: CHURCH HEALTH AND GROWTH PRINCIPLES

Principles of Church Health

In order to evaluate the health of the A. M. E. Churches within the Virginia Conference, one must consider the historical foundations of the church. This would then lead to questions such as:

- Does the A. M. E. Church have the responsibility for providing religious instructions to its members?
- Does the church still consider Christianity, as Rev. Laviscount described it, a doctrine of freedom and brotherhood?¹
- Does the church, as Johnston describes it, serve an “assuaging function” to provide comfort, hope, and an outlet for the members?
- Does the church exist to provide “social and psychological values to its members whose life in this world is not abundant, and therefore are looking to the future prospects from God and heaven as a means of compensation for present inadequacies?
- How does the church conduct evangelism?
- Does the church still see itself as a defender and advocator for social justice and social change?²
- Would the yardstick used to evaluate the health of a White church be effective in evaluating a Black church?

¹ Johnston, 19.

² Rodney Clapp, *Practicing the Politics of Jesus* in the Church as Counter Culture by Michael Budde, ed. (Albany, N.Y: State University of NY Press, 2000), 5.

- Would the evaluation criteria used to evaluate the White church fairly apply to the Black church?
- Does a set of common elements exist that could evaluate the health of any Christian Church?

The literature and data search provided valuable information regarding the poor health (lack of effectiveness) and poor outcome in winning persons to Christ (poor performance) which result in minimal numerical growth (stagnation). In other instances the information shows that a significant number of churches in the United States are guilty of not creating and maintaining a church environment that is conducive to spiritual growth and Christ-like transformation of its members. This deficit leads to stagnation in the spiritual development and growth of church members.

The literature and document search found several “healthy church” evaluation tools. However, the ten specific traits or functional components found in a “healthy church” that Macchia compiled based on the knowledge gained through his extensive church evaluation experience is the most comprehensive. Based on his empirical evaluations Macchia concluded that, in order for a church to become, and or remain healthy (effective) in the lives of its members and the community outside the church, it must be involved in a specific set of biblically prescribed activities. These include:

1. Engaging in God Empowering Worship (*Romans 8:16*).
2. Engaging in God-Exalting Worship (*John 4: 23*).
3. Being governed by Spiritual disciplines (*James 3:17*).
4. Fostering environments where members could Learn and Grow in Community (*Romans 14:19*).

5. Maintaining environments based on a Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships (*1John 3:16*).
6. Actively developing Servant Leaders (*Ephesians 4:16*).
7. Actively focused on the community outside the church (*Luke 19:10*).
8. Fostering Wise Administration and leadership Accountability (*Luke 16:11*).
9. Networking with other Bodies of Believers (*John 17:23*), and
10. Actively engaged in Stewardship and Generosity (*2 Corinthians 9:6*).³

Wagner indicated that, while some churches are functioning the way God designed them; others are only functioning in a minimal manner. He described these churches as being “sick.” He further asserted that all living organisms experience sickness. In the same manner, the church as a spiritual organism also experiences sickness, and the process of regeneration and decay occur simultaneously from birth onward.

According to Macchia, three broad components must be present if the church is to be healthy. These components are (1) the church and its leaders must be intentional in their relationship with God; (2) leadership and members must exalt God in their worship services, and (3) Personal actions and decisions must be in keeping with the will of God. A.W. Tozer reminds us that God-Exalting worship is very important. It is important because God desires to hold worshippers deeper in His heart.⁴ In addition, He wants worshippers to expand their love for Him. Healthy churches, he further proposes are constantly working on building close relationships with God. Moreover, healthy

³ Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 16.

⁴ A.W. Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1985), 26.

congregations are always looking for ways to foster and maintain church environments that lend to enriching personal relationships and leadership development. Thus, healthy churches encourage accountability, generosity, and stewardship, even as the church and its leaders focus on meeting the needs of the community outside the church.

Lovelace made the point that health care in North America tends to focus on pathology- that is diagnosing diseases and treating sickness. In this regard he indicated that, more attention and resources are invested in remedies than in prevention. When it comes to the health of the church, he advises that its leaders ought to place much emphasis on wellness. Church leaders, he asserted could not ignore areas where illness is indicated. Rather, they must invest significant amounts of their time, talents, and resources into promoting holistic church health. This includes: 1) Spiritual Health; 2) Directional Health; 3) Relational Health; 4) Missional Health, and 5) Structural Health in their church.

In Lovelace's view the experiences of the first generation Christians as recorded in Acts, Galatians, and the Corinthian correspondences would indicate that the foundations of the church, and the beginning of their decay clearly coexisted side by side.⁵ Malphurs unpacked the thought that "the typical Church in North America is like a sailboat without a rudder, drifting aimlessly in the ocean. As if that is not bad enough, the winds of change and the currents of post-modernism are relentlessly blowing and

⁵ Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1980), 293.

pulling it further off course.”⁶ He further asserts that the health and vitality of the living church (the body of Christ) was the single major concern of Jesus and the apostles.

Maintaining a healthy church involves looking for hidden conditions via diagnostic tests rather than waiting for the appearance of superficial symptoms to appear. As symptoms are to human ailments the measurement of “bodies, bucks, and buildings” are late “material” effects of an underlying spiritual condition and a church that waits for an adverse trend to show up may be well on its way to hospice, if not already on life support.⁷

Bernard and Marjorie Palmer presented the concept that assessing church growth could suggest a narrow focus, such as weekly body count. These authors suggest that, in contemplating church growth a person must focus on the effectiveness of the church, regardless of its size.⁸ They also indicate that the size of the congregation in itself is not an effective measurement of success, nor the lack of it. Moreover, church programs, they conclude, are not the keys to determining church growth. These they claim, point only to methods, and these may not be good indicators for health evaluations. According to Luis Bush the “reproduction of the life of the church involves the planting of new healthy churches nearby, encouraging existing churches, developing social concerns, and participating in a strong world mission thrust.”⁹

⁶ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 1.

⁷ Regis Nicoll, *Assessing Church Health: Beyond Bodies, Bucks, and Buildings* <http://www.breakpoint.org/features-columns/archive/1134-assessing-church-health> (accessed June 4, 2010)

⁸ Bernard and Marjorie Palmer, *How Churches Grow*, 11.

⁹ Bush, 90.

Principles of Church Growth

The publication of McGavran's book *The Bridges of God* is believed to mark the birth of the church growth movement. However, by the mid-seventies the conversation began shifting away from church *growth* and more toward church *health*. In 1973, McGavran and Win Arn concluded that diagnosing church health is an important and worthwhile endeavor. They asserted that doctors and dentists tell us of the need for regular check-ups. The same is true for the church; "Each church board needs to have at least an annual picture of the health and growth of their church"¹⁰

When this project speaks about church growth, it is encompassing more than body count, campus size, fleet of buses, square feet of floor space, etc. Contrary to these accustomed markers, for the purpose of this project; church growth will be broadened in scope to refer to an evaluation of the church in terms of its growing effectiveness, regardless of size. The Palmers suggested that, in order to understand the effectiveness of a church its leaders must first understand and agree on the purpose and mission of the church.¹¹ Once this is agreed upon, the leaders could then execute specific strategies (principles) that would ultimately lead to the accomplishment of their mission and revitalization of their congregation.

According to the Palmers, church leaders must 1) *Analyze and evaluate* everything that is being done in each department and ministry of the church; (2) *Emphasize* strong Biblical principles and teaching; (3) *Encourage and foster* a warm loving atmosphere and way of operation in the church community; (4) *Develop* effective

¹⁰ Donald McGavran and Win Arn, *the Bridges of God: A Study in the Strategy of Missions* (New York: Friendship Press, 1955), 74.

¹¹ Bernard and Majorie Palmer, 11.

Leaders- this means training, preparing and empowering others so that they may be effective in their areas of responsibility; (5) *Adaptability*- pastor and leaders must become an integral part of the community. More importantly, community members must see the church leaders as caring and willing to serve, and (6) the church must *evaluate* its *programs for suitability* to the community where it resides. Missing components should be included with some consideration on how it could best advance the kingdom work.¹²

Regarding church growth, White advised that church leaders “must engage in rethinking the end-to-end activities of their church activities to determine how they could either improve and or fulfill the purpose and mission of the church.”¹³ Some questions that church leaders ought to have clear answers for include (1) Does God want church growth? (2) Is the goal of the church quality rather than quantity? And (3) should the church be content with faithfulness in the seed sowing of proclamation, or does God expect persuasion?¹⁴ McGavran referred to this as a “theology of harvest”¹⁵

Conn raised another question, that is: “are believers” who are the “church” called to win souls or to glorify God? In his response he suggested that God’s answer is contained in his “blessing and functional call to Adam” found in Genesis 2:3, 27, 49. In these texts, God instructed Adam to “be fruitful, multiply and replenish the earth, subdue it; and have dominion” (Genesis 1:28). He further suggested that God commissioned

¹² Ibid., 161-169

¹³ James White, 13.

¹⁴ Harvie M. Conn, *God's Plan for Church Growth: An Overview, in Theological Perspectives on Church Growth*, ed. Harvie Conn (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and reformed Publishing, 1976), 1.

¹⁵ Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), 37.

Adam to extend the covenant territory “the garden of God”¹⁶ This call to Abraham, according to Conn, established the boundaries to encompass the whole earth. God desires that his people (His church) would fill the earth with persons who know Him.

Conn in his argument suggested that God’s calling to “multiply” (Genesis 1: 28) is not adequately handled by the ethicists who either use it merely as an anti-family planning slogan for population explosion or defuse its potency to the time span of an empty planet. Conn explained that Genesis 1:28 is an expression of God’s desire to see the earth crowded with prophets, priests and kings who are serving and worshipping Him. A desire that shall not be thwarted by the arithmetic of Satan (Genesis 6:1), but will be performed in the covenant purposes of grace which God Himself will undertake for His Abraham (Gen 6: 10, 17:2).¹⁷

In addressing the matter of church expansion Hodges purported that:

The beginning of church expansion is in the heart of God. If we begin anywhere else we miss the source.” Church expansion he continued “does not begin with better methods and more money. Rather, it is a continuation of redemption, in the heart of God from eternity, revealed in His Son.”¹⁸ According to Hodges, “Christ imparted this ministry to his disciples. It was energized by the Holy Spirit, and given to Christians today as both a gift and a command.”¹⁹

This author further affirms that God demonstrated his love through His son Jesus Christ. It was Jesus the savior, he claims, who filled His church with the Holy Spirit, then sent them (the church) out to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth. Hodges noted that the theology of church growth is linked to the extent believers demonstrate faith and

¹⁶ McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 88.

¹⁷ Conn, 2-3.

¹⁸ Melvin L. Hodges, *Creating Climate for Church Growth in Church Growth and Christian Missions*, edited by Donald A. McGavran (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1965), 27.

¹⁹ Ibid.

godliness in their daily lives. He also implies that if believers live like “New Testament Christians with New Testament experiences and faith,” the church will be healthy and experience the kind of growth the New Testament church experienced.

Hodges also indicated that the apostles lived as “possessed (persons)” because they were possessed of the Holy Spirit, they were dedicated, they were “sold out to Jesus Christ, and to His cause.”²⁰ He also noted that persons who formed the New Testament church were themselves under the control of the Holy Spirit, “who was moving, while the apostles were simply carrying out His will.”

T.S. Elliott, in one of his poems indicated that:

The Church must be forever building, and always decaying, and always being restored... The Church must be forever building, for it is ever decaying within and attacked from without; for this is the law of life. . . much to cast down, much to build, much to restore. Let the work not delay, time and the arm not waste. Let the clay be dug from the pit, let the saw cut the stone, let the fire not be quenched in the forge.²¹

In a similar manner, Wagner asserted that from its inception, the church has followed that very pattern throughout its history, growing, decaying, and then being restored. He also indicated that the state of the North American church has been in a period of decay, and for years, various writers and researchers have reported that the North American church was anemic and lethargic at best.

Wagner pointed out that as early as the mid-1960s, some mainline denominations were experiencing growth problems. This is borne out in the data showing that from 1965 to 1975 the Episcopal Church lost 17% of its membership or 575,000 persons; while the

²⁰ Ibid., 41

²¹ T. S. Eliot, *Collected Poems 1909-1962* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1991), 153-54.

United Methodists lost 10% or 1,100,000 of their members.²² Stetzer presented data from a study conducted by Wagner that found that during the years 1965-1975 the number of Baptists in the Southern Baptist Convention had been relatively flat.²³

In recent years, even evangelical churches have shown signs of plateau and decline. In his book *Vision America*, Malphurs states that much of the perceived church growth in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s was actually due primarily to the redistribution of believers, not genuine church growth. He believed “The problems of the church in the 1980s carry over into the 1990s. “The church as a whole,” he claims, “continues to experience decline and the unchurched increase.”²⁴

A study conducted by the Leavell Center at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary found that only 11% of Southern Baptist churches were experiencing healthy growth. In their healthy church assessment, the Leavell Center used some specific criteria to determine health, these include: (1) the church had to experience a 10% total membership growth over five years; (2) the church baptized at least one person during the two years of the study; (3) The church needed 35 or fewer members each year to baptize one new convert (a member-to-baptism ratio of 35 or less in the final year of the study), and (4) for the final year of the study, the percentage of growth that was conversion growth must be at least 25%.²⁵

²² C. Peter Wagner, *Leading your Church to Growth* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1984), 31-32.

²³ Ed Stetzer, *The Missional Nature of the Church and the Future of Southern Baptist Convention Churches* (paper presented to the Baptist Center for Theology and Ministry conference, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 12 February 2005).

²⁴ Malphurs, *Vision America*, 62.

²⁵ Ed Stetzer, “Stirring the Waters,” *On Mission* (Winter 2005) [on-line]; accessed May 2010; http://www.onmission.com/site/c.cnKHIPNuEoG/b.830521/k.D281/Stirring_the_waters.htm; Internet.

In 1993, Wade C. Roof, in addressing the anemic nature of the North American church relative to the spiritual lives of drop out boomers reported that “Less than one in four has returned to active participation in a place of worship 80% say you can be a good Christian without attending church.”²⁶ More recently, George Barna’s research indicated that 95 to 100 million Americans of all ages were unchurched.²⁷

In another study, the Barna Group explained, “Since 1991, the adult population in the U. S. has grown by 15%. However, during that same period the number of adults who do not attend church has nearly doubled, rising from 39 million to 75 million—a 92% increase”²⁸ Overall, Barna’s research indicated that churches in North America were not healthy and growing. According to Barna, the church in North America needs to find the pathway to healthy evangelistic growth.

According to Getz and Wall, “the primary Biblical criteria for measuring church growth are clear. The New Testament focuses primarily on spiritual growth in the local church, which is best reflected in Faith, Hope, and Love.”²⁹ These authors claim that churches are not growing because they are not focusing on these three components; rather, they are focusing on pragmatic results, numerical growth, buildings, organizational efficiency, activities, and budget size. These functions, they assert are

²⁶ Wade Clark Roof, “*The Four Spiritual Styles of Baby Boomers*,” USA Weekend, March 1993, quoted in Aubrey Malphurs, *Vision America*, 63.

²⁷ George Barna, *Grow Your Church from the Outside in* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books from Gospel Light, 2002), 23.

²⁸ George Barna, “Number of Unchurched Adults Has Nearly Doubled Since 1991,” The Barna Update (4 May 2004) [on-line]; accessed 15 January 2006; available from <http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdateNarrow&BarnaUpdateID=163>; Internet.

²⁹ Getz and Wall, 35.

important for the functioning of the church. However, they are not the reasons for which Christ built His Church. Therefore, a true measurement of the growth or “health” of a church could be determined (measured) by the extent the church is reflecting the qualities embodied in “faith, hope, and love.

Literature Review

The literature review focused on the written and electronic materials that identified research and written work done in the areas of church health, A. M. E. history, church health assessment tools, and church Growth. The literature review explored:

1. The Biblical definitions for church
2. Definitions for a healthy church
3. Recommendations for reestablishing church health and growth
4. The historical perspective of the African American and the Black church in America
5. The historical context of the A. M. E. Church in America
6. The Biblical and theological beliefs of the A.M.E. Church in America
7. The availability of appropriate tools for conducting church health assessments

Laurence Iannaccone asserted that studies of church growth have fallen prey to numerous statistical pitfalls. Flawed methods and inadequate data he suggests have reduced the predictive power of past research while systematically biasing its results. These biases work to overstate the importance of the demographic context in which a

church exists and under-state the importance of the churches institutional characteristics such as organizational strictness.³⁰

He also explained that although church growth studies extend backward to the early part of this century the touchstone of modern research in this area appeared in 1972 when Dean Kelley published his landmark book, *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing*. This book called attention to the unprecedented decline in the membership ranks in America's mainline Protestant denominations that begun around 1965.

According to Iannaccone, Kelley purported that mainline denominations had become insufficiently strict, shedding their distinctive demands, thereby losing their capacity to create meaning and generate commitment among their church members. In his article *Measuring Church Growth* which appeared in the *Christian Century*, dated June 13, 1979, Carl Dudley, professor of Church and Community at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago declared that "objective information on the dynamics of church membership growth - and lack thereof - is crucial, especially when church decline is eminent.

Dudley contended that historically, well-intentioned denominational programs for membership recruitment were built on "fragmentary evidence," "parochial success," and the "personal experience of the leadership group," and that hard statistical data have been difficult to find. In addition, comparative information on the patterns of growth or decline by denominations, in different communities was almost nonexistent.

³⁰ Laurence R. Iannaccone Source: *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Sep., 1996), 197-216 Published by: Wiley Blackwell Publishing on behalf of Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1386549> Accessed: 04/07/2010. p. 197

McSwain's research, published by Hoge and Roozen addressing mainline protestant churches provides a comprehensive collection of data gathered in the past half-century.³¹ In 1972, Dean Kelley published the book *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing*. In it, he presented a powerful but winsome argument about denominational losses that were occurring.

Kelley's charts and statistics compared growing and declining churches, with a devastating judgment on mainline denominations. He argued that mainline Protestant churches were declining because they were too weak to adhere to the marks of a true church; these marks he described as: (1) institutional strictness; (2) religious distinctiveness; (3) theological conservatism, and (4) evangelical zeal.

According to McSwain, it was McGavran and Wagner who popularized the congregational growth theories. However, Hoge and Roozen provided comprehensive empirical information on church growth research stemming from the conferences sponsored by Hartford Seminary Foundation from 1976 through 1978. McSwain indicated that:

These conferences brought together historians (Smylie), theologians (Evans), sociologists (Carroll, Roof, Dyble, Hadaway, and McKinney), church growth practitioners (Wagner), the denominational statisticians (Doyle, Kelley and Jones), and the commentators on American Protestantism (Schaller and Kelley). These groups were responsible for "birthing" the factors that influenced church growth. At the national level, they considered the national institutions, and at the local level, they looked at corresponding local institutions of influence.³²

Hoge and Roozen recognized that the factors influencing the growth and or decline in the churches were "contextual" and "institutional" in nature. They found that

³¹ Larry L. McSwain, *Understanding Church Growth and Decline: 1950-1978*, in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, ed. Dean R. Hoge and David A. Roozen (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1979), 376.

³² *Ibid.*, 376

the matters of “national context” affected the growth and or decline of denominations. Conversely, matters of “local context” directly affected the growth and or decline of the local congregation.³³

Another study conducted by Roof et al on the Presbyterian Church, found that 56% of the variance in their study was attributed to local contextual factors. Hoge’s study found that 50% of the variance in denominational growth was caused by national contextual factors.

In a paper on “the effects of geographic mobility on church attendance” Wuthnow and Christiano found that “people who move are less likely to attend a church than are people who have been in the same residence or in the same state for a relatively long time.”³⁴

Following their examination of eleven churches to determine the secrets of their success, Bernard and Marjorie Palmer recommended that churches undergo periodic evaluations to assess their effectiveness in the lives of the people in their congregation and in the community. The Palmers recommend that the evaluation be broad enough to include all programs and ministries within the church.³⁵ The components of the Bernard’s church health evaluation include: (1) A strong emphasis on Bible; (2) Love as a cornerstone of the church; (3) Visionary leaders; (4) Leadership and church adaptability, and (5) church programs that are able to advance the Kingdom of God.³⁶

³³ Ibid., 377

³⁴ Donald Capps, *The Religious Dimension: New Directions in Quantitative Research*, edited by Robert Wuthnow (New York: Academic Press, 1979), 208.

³⁵ Palmer, 161.

³⁶ Ibid., 161-169

Keith McKerracher in an article published in the *Anglican Journal*, indicated that:

Critics of Anglican policies have used the issue of declining attendance to blame it on positions taken on same-sex issues, on the ordination of women, or policies they don't like. These critics fail to recognize (or ignore) that the decline in church attendance in Canada began to occur at least a decade before any of these issues arose.³⁷

As part of his presentation to the house of Bishops, McKerracher polled 100 Anglican priests across Canada. His aim was to find out how many priests felt there were no major problems facing the church. Forty-three priests responded. Based on these responses: (1) Fifty percent of the priests indicated that the church was ignoring the issue of decline; (2) twenty percent felt that everything was okay in the church, and (3) the remaining 30% did not indicate one way or the other.³⁸

McGavran and Arn propose “church growth principles are universal truths which when properly interpreted and applied, contributes significantly to the growth of churches and denominations.” In addition, they regarded church growth “as a truth of God which leads His church to spread His Good News, plant church after church, and increase his body.”³⁹ According to these authors, the church has two broad ministries: (1) caring for those already in the church, and (2) reaching out to the lost. They described these two areas as (a) “ministries to the Body and (b) ministries through the body.”⁴⁰ These authors

³⁷ Keith B. McKerracher, "Declining church membership is an issue." *Anglican Journal* Mar. 2006: 4. *Academic One File*. Web. 30 Sept. 2010.
http://find.galegroup.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/gtx/infomark.do?&contentSet=IAC-Documents&type=retrieve&tabID=T001&prodId=AONE&docId=A145221592&source=gale&srcprod=AONE&userGroupName=vic_liberty&version=1.0 (accessed September 30, 2010)

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 3

³⁹ McGavran and Arn, *Ten Steps for Church Growth*, 15.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 20

indicated that in order for churches to grow, church leaders must look at their congregations differently. They must “discern the various homogeneous parts of the Body,” and they must begin seeing the community in new ways.

“A community is a tremendously complex mosaic” contend McGavran and Arn, “each facet has needs, interests, likes, and dislikes. As the churches discover these different pieces and direct evangelistic, witnessing and service efforts toward them, they will find responsiveness.”⁴¹ These authors identified ten principles or markers they that found to be present in any healthy, growing church. A healthy church, they propose, would be a congregation that is respecting Biblical principles by:

1. Accepting the Bible as the final authority
2. Seeing people outside the church (outside of Christ) as lost
3. Affirming that God’s love and concern is for all people
4. Believing that Christ is the only way to Salvation
5. Being obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit
6. Praying intelligently and specifically for the “health” and growth of the church
7. Seeing the church as the body of Christ
8. Reproducing themselves through evangelistic outreach and missions
9. Structuring themselves for growth
10. Taking the risks involved in church growth.⁴²

In his book *Your Church Can Grow*, Peter Wagner succinctly presented the basic principles of church growth as:

- (1) ***Commitment*** - the church (especially the pastor) must want to grow

⁴¹ Ibid., 20-21

⁴² Ibid., 22-30

- (2) **Identify** (*our*) *people* - members must look for others who are similar to themselves in values, culture, heritage and religious expectation (called the “homogeneous unit”)
- (3) **Receptivity** - the church must look for those persons within the homogeneous unit who are most receptive and then be ready to receive them
- (4) **Priority** - the church must be willing to eliminate unproductive elements from its own programs, and to abandon unproductive segments of the larger population.

Growing congregations, according to Wagner embody four elements, these are:

(1) *strong worship*; (2) *diversified programs*; (3) *an effective pastor*, and (4) *Enthusiastic members*. These four elements may carry a different content based on the community and its traditions. However, in general, growing congregations have (1) a favorable location; (2) they generate a higher level of activity, and (3) the membership feel better about what they are doing than do congregations not experiencing (growth) expansion. Based on these research findings, Wagner cautioned church leaders against the tendency of focusing on a single church component; (e.g., attendance at worship services) as a gauge for determining church growth. This he deems counterproductive.

White contends that the news of various scandals has eroded the confidence and trust unchurched people have for the church and they often site these as reasons for their lack of involvement. Based on data published by Patterson and Kim the confidence in the church by adults fell from 49% of the U.S. population in 1974 to 22% in 1989.⁴³

⁴³ James T Patterson and Peter Kim, *America Told the Truth* (New York: Dutton Plume, 1992), 28.

Research by Gorge Barna in 1992 and 1993 found that of the four major protestant denominations in America- Baptists, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran – none held reputations that the American public considered to be favorable.⁴⁴

Regarding the impact the church has on individual lives in America, the Sociologists Robert Bellah, recorded the information communicated to him during an interview with an American woman, she claimed that she believed in God; however, she continued, “*I’m not a religious fanatic, I can’t remember the last time I went to church, my faith has carried me a long way.*”⁴⁵ She went on to say that she relies on her own intuition as the guiding force in her life. What is the conclusion from this? You need some statement here.

White in addressing the question regarding the effectiveness (health) of the Christian church today in America indicated that:

The challenge before the church runs even deeper. The average person we are trying to reach has gone through what might be called a “great divorce,” meaning a separation between spiritual longing and desire and the embrace of a particular religious faith. It’s not that people are far away from Christ and His church in their life and knowledge; they no longer see their spiritual desire and search as involving the discovery of a faith or religion. There are too many roads to God, so people are no longer even looking for a road. If the current malaise were simply about belief in Christianity as the “way,” our challenge would be to create deeper levels of understanding. If the impasse involved doubt that Christianity is the way, we would have to make an effort to convince them. Today people reject that there even is a way, so the challenge is for the very need of Christianity itself.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ George Barna, *The Barna Report 1992-1993* (Ventura, California: Regal, 1992), 61.

⁴⁵ Robert Bellah et al, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985), 221.

⁴⁶ White, *Rethinking the Church*, 47.

This means that the church, in light of today's realities, must devote much attention to the process that leads people to the event of salvation. White provided some steps that he considers crucial if the church is to become successful in bridging the gap between the world and Jesus. The proposed steps involve: (1) building bridges between the believer and non-believer; (2) witnessing within the boundaries established between believer and non-believer, and (3) exposing non-believers to Christ through a Christian event by invitation,⁴⁷ as was done by Wesley in his open-air meetings, or Jesus on the hillside.⁴⁸

The church today has a responsibility to consider the cultural relevance of its messages, and worship experiences it provides. White indicated that the church must provide worship experiences that are "meaningful to the worshipper."⁴⁹ According to White, this means worshipping God in spirit and in truth. Truth he explained has to do with worshipping God in light of the full biblical witness about God, while spirit has to do with worshipping in a way that reflects the sincerity of our hearts. White made the observation that churches today have the tendency to confuse tradition with orthodoxy, and to make worshipping in "spirit" so privatized and individualized that there is very little or no reflection upon cultural distinctives.⁵⁰

White cautioned church leaders to rethink their adherence and question the relevancy of church traditions. One such tradition he highlighted has to do with the 11

⁴⁷ Ibid., 54-56

⁴⁸ G.A. Pritchard, *Willow Creek Seeker Services: Evaluating a New Way of Doing Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 189.

⁴⁹ White, 103.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 103

A.M. start time for Sunday worship services. He pointed out that the Sunday 11:00 A.M. worship time was originally chosen to accommodate the milking schedule of dairy farmers.⁵¹ This church tradition continues even though the agricultural landscape has changed. According to Anderson, the church is holding on to this hour of worship on Sunday as though it is somehow holy.⁵²

In like manner, church leaders are to evaluate their proclivity regarding the use of hymns, specifically in their original formats. Leaders must remember that the hymns of themselves are not sacred, and many were written to tunes that were popular to their time of writing. According to Doug Murren, the hymn writers simply changed the lyrics to popular songs so that the people could express themselves meaningfully in worship.⁵³ Lucenay in his writing asserts that Bach, the great composer, used tunes from “questionable sources and reworked them for the church.”⁵⁴

Being culturally relevant does not mean throwing out all vestiges of historic Christian communication.⁵⁵ The traditions, worship expressions, and historic practices of the church could be very appealing to today’s worshippers. However, church leaders must be careful to evaluate their worth in enhancing the worship experience. If deemed to be a hindrance to the authentic worship experience, then the particular tradition, to be

⁵¹ Ibid., 104

⁵² Leith Anderson, *Dying for Change* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House, 1990), 43.

⁵³ Doug Murren, *The Baby Boomerang: Catching Baby Boomers as they return to Church* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal, 1990), 188.

⁵⁴ Harry Lucenay, “Blending the Traditional and Contemporary,” in Joe R. Stacker and Wesley Forbis, eds. *Authentic Worship: Exalting God and Reaching People* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1990), 22.

⁵⁵ Sally Morgenthaler, *Worship Evangelism: Inviting Unbelievers into the Presence of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 128.

meaningful to contemporary worshippers, must be explained and or expressed in contemporary ways. The Church leaders must strive to “reach out, without dumbing down”⁵⁶ Christianity or the worship experience. The church must strive to arrest the practice of going through the motions and make a concerted effort to engage in meaningful, life changing ministries, and share in worship services that reflects authentic love, honor and praises to God. The church leaders must create an atmosphere where worship experiences could involve the heart of the worshippers.

In the Christian Church, the leadership Structure and decision making are as important as Christian education, and Worship. According to Howard Snyder, the structure of the church is vital for rethinking the purpose and mission of the church. When the organizational structure is mal-functioning, several areas of the organization are negatively impacted. According to study findings presented by Dean Spitzer, areas impacted are (1) morale; (2) effectiveness, and (3) unity.⁵⁷ These are key issues for the life of the church. Consequently, church structure must be evaluated in order to determine the level of morale, effectiveness and unity prevailing in the church. Effective church structures should not be dominated by Committees, policies nor majority rule. Based on research conducted by George Barna most successful churches employ an operational philosophy that states that “the ministry is not called to fit the church’s structure; rather, the structure exists to further effective ministry.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the Century Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995),

⁵⁷ Dean R. Spitzer, *Super-Motivation: A Blueprint for Energizing Your Organization from Top to Bottom* (New York: AMACOM, 1995), 43-58.

⁵⁸ George Barna, *User Friendly Churches* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal, 1991), 137.

There are inherent problems with Committees, policies and majority rule that are allowed to dominate the church structure. Rick Warren indicated that committees remove people from the vital task of doing ministry. He further pointed out that these bodies utilize the time and energies of the best and brightest” persons in the church invariably, “turning them into bureaucrats.”⁵⁹ According to Philip Howard, policies inhibit the use and exercise of judgment.⁶⁰ In addition, one must bear in mind that no policy could anticipate and cover every conceivable circumstance.

Additionally, policies could in time serve to restrict decision makers and planner from thinking in more new and creative ways. The third inhibitor -majority rule- can invariably render an organization impotent. This would severely inhibit the organization (church) from doing anything.⁶¹ This stems from the fact that the members who vote invariably outnumber the leaders; and as such, church decisions, plans and innovative directions could be killed because of the limited spiritual knowledge, and or lack of faith of the members casting the votes.

How about the church as a community? How much turmoil, discord, broken relationships, power plays, malicious gossip and slander is allowed to prevail in the church community? How does authority, specifically, the authority of the pastor and church leaders impact on the prevalence or absence of turmoil? How about the spirit of exclusion? The apostle Paul addressed this in Romans 15:5-7. In these texts the Apostle admonished the church members “*May the God who gives endurance and encouragement*

⁵⁹ Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Church: growth Without Compromising your Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 376.

⁶⁰ Philip K. Howard, *the Death of Common Sense: How Law is Suffocating America* (New York: Random House, 1994), 11.

⁶¹ Allan Cox and Julie Liesse, *Redefining Corporate Soul: Linking Purpose and People* (Chicago: Irvin, 1996), 69.

give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, ⁶so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God” (NIV).

Paul is informing the members in the church that they have a responsibility (as Christians) to accept others – with all their differences- for who they are, regardless of race, gender, or social / economic status.

The research also pointed to the fact that pastors and church leaders have a responsibility to develop and maintain a biblically functioning community. This means that the pastor and leaders are responsible for making membership an important and integral part of the church- They need to make membership matter. This means persons currently in the body, and new members “must know and understand the doctrinal, lifestyle issues, purpose and overall mission of the church.”⁶² He asserted that in many churches no one verifies the verbal acclamations made by perspective members. White indicated that church leaders must attend to and insure five components are effectively working in the body if the church is to be united. These include: (1) faith in Christ; (2) values and Beliefs; (3) Purpose and mission; (4) Strategy for achieving that purpose and mission, and (5) structure.⁶³

The church exists in an environment that is constantly changing. Whether, the church chooses to change will have a profound impact on its effectiveness in the lives of its members and on those in the community where the church resides. In addressing change, Everett Rogers suggested that change involves two broad groups. These are the

⁶² White, 134.

⁶³ Ibid., 135

leaders and the followers in the church. The leadership group consists of: (1) The Innovators- this group makes up 2% of the membership. These are the people who initiate the ideas for change and (2) the Opinion Leaders- these are the 14% of the membership that are good at communicating the ideas (either in favor or against) to the general membership. According to Rogers, the “followers” could be broken down into three sub groups, namely:

1. Early Adoptors - these members take their cue from the opinion leaders.
2. Late Adoptors – these members who make up about 75% of the membership are usually resistant to change. They would stand on the side lines until they could see where the program is going.
3. Resistant – persons in this group (about 16% of the church) usually dig in. They resist change, preferring the status quo.⁶⁴

Barna recommends that the church, (like the frog sitting in the pot of water on the hot stove) is facing a very real possibility of dying because of its un-responsiveness to the changing world all around.⁶⁵ The changes, he further cautions, should not only be cosmetic. Benson and Elkin referred to this as “tinkering”⁶⁶ This is accomplished when the church or organization tries to increase its effectiveness by adding a few new programs without changing their underlying educational precepts, structure or operational format. The other (recommended) approach, suggested by Benson and Elkin is “restructuring.” In this model the organization (church) introduces new models of

⁶⁴ Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 4th ed. (New York: Free Press, 1995), 262.

⁶⁵ George Barna, *The Frog in the Kettle: What Christians Need to Know about Life in the Year 2000* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal, 1990), 21-22.

⁶⁶ Peter Benson and Carolyn Elkin, *Effective Christian Education: A National Study of Protestant Congregations* (Minneapolis: Search Institute, 1990), 67.

teaching and learning.⁶⁷ A study by the South Carolina Baptist Convention published in the “News and Notes,” *The Charlotte Observer*, 23 March 1996, 2G; found that the fastest growing churches were the ones most willing to move beyond “*tinkering*” and *embrace* real and substantive change.

Trueheart reminds us that change in the church does not have to translate into compromise.⁶⁸ Instead the church ought to emulate the New Testament Church; what those Christians said was consistent; the way they said it and how they went about such things as ministry or evangelism varied from situation to situation. They considered the directives as absolute, but their methods were relative and merely served to accomplish divine ends.⁶⁹

Erasmus told a mythical tale about Jesus’ return to heaven after his time on earth. The angels gathered around him to learn what had happened. Jesus told them of his miracles, his teaching, and then of his death and resurrection.

When he finished, Michael the archangel asked, “But Lord what happens now?” Jesus answered, “I have left behind eleven faithful men who will declare my message and express my love. These faithful men will establish and build my church.” “But,” responded Michael, “what if these men fail? What then?” And Jesus answered, “I have no other plan,”⁷⁰

According to James White, there is no other plan outside the church for God’s redemptive work. It rests in the hands of the believers and in their hearts.⁷¹ Therefore, if

⁶⁷ Ibid., 67

⁶⁸ Charles Trueheart, “Welcome to the Next Church,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 278, no. 2 (August 1996): 46.

⁶⁹ Gene Getz, *Sharpening the Focus of the Church* (Wheaton: Victor, 1984), 78-79.

⁷⁰ Adopted from Tony Campolo’s use of the story in *Who Switched the Price Tags?* (Waco: Word, 1986), 170-71.

the church is to fulfill the mandate and mission that Christ established for His church. The members must be informed about the purpose and mission of the church. They must know and accept their role in fulfilling the purpose and accomplishing the mission. In addition they will understand and embrace the need for personal spiritual growth and enhanced mission strategies.

Christ Jesus first mentioned building a church in His conversation with Peter in Matthew 16:18. There Christ stated “---And on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates o hell shall not prevail against it.” Paul confirmed that the church has its foundation in Christ (1 Cor 3:11). The Bible further asserts in Ephesians 1:18-23 that Christ is the head of the church; in addition He is responsible for the life of the church (John 10:10). Having said this, it must be remembered that “growth” has to do with more than just numbers.

A church can be alive and growing even though the number of members/attendees is not changing. Persons in this church could be growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ, and submitting to His will for their lives. This would be a church that is growing. If a church is executing the great commission Christ gave in Matt 28: 18-20, then the church would experience numerical growth. This would be a by-product since these converted persons would come to fellowship with believers (Rom 12:10), for religious instruction (Rom 15:14), and to partake in the Lord’s Supper (1Cor 11: 23-26; Acts 2:42). The numbers will also increase as these converts assemble for corporate prayer (Phil 4: 6-7).

⁷¹ White, 161-62.

CHAPTER 4: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Recapitulation of the Survey

A survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population.¹ The CHAT survey is intended to quantitatively or numerically describe trends, attitudes, and opinions of the pastors and lay leaders in the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference. The purpose of this project is to evaluate the current health (effectiveness) of the sixty-three A.M.E. Churches located in the Virginia Conference and recommend strategies to improve their health, and restore their spiritual and numerical growth. This project is needed because of the stagnation observed in some churches while others have plateaued.

This chapter describes the results of the study and is organized into four sections. Section 1 describes the survey instruments used, and the approaches employed to increase the survey response rate. Section 2 presents an executive summary of the data, and detailed summary-findings based on the responders age, years of church membership, marital status, gender and education. Section 3 will present the breakdown of the CHAT characteristics based on summary data findings. Finally, section 4 will present the findings of the Church Information tool. This tool was intended to assess the level to which pastors are implementing good church administration strategies.

The findings from these two surveys will present a composite of the areas in the church that are healthy (effective) and likely to produce growth. The surveys will also identify areas that are not effective and may be unconsciously eroding the strength of the

¹ Creswell, 153.

church. In addition, the surveys will indicate areas where the Leadership Team could improve their church administration efforts, in so doing; improve their effectiveness as leaders, and that of the church.

Section 1: Tools and Methods Used to Increase Response Rate

This project employed two separate questionnaires to gather data from the pastors and Lay-Leaders from each A.M.E. Church in the target area. The two survey tools consisted of (1) the Church Health Assessment Tool (CHAT), and (2) the Church Information tool. The project requested and received permission from Leadership Transformations, the company that developed and uses the CHAT questionnaire to conduct professional church health assessments.

The CHAT tool targets the pastor and select lay-Leader of each A.M.E. Church within the Virginia Conference. These Lay-Leaders include the:

1. Steward Pro Tem
2. Chairperson of the Trustee Board
3. Musician/ Minister of Music
4. Sunday School Superintendent
5. Director of Christian Education
6. The Director of the Young People's Department (YPD).

The Church Information Tool was directed at pastors only. This tool was intended to gather data relative to the pastor's prayer life, use of technology and church management strategies currently being employed in the congregations.

Survey Methodology

A Survey package was prepared for each lay-leader. Each packet contained:

1. A letter that:
 - a. Explained the project
 - b. Explained confidentiality
 - c. Provided instructions for completing and returning the survey electronically
 - d. Encouraged the responder's participation
2. A hard copy of the CHAT survey questionnaire
3. A self addressed stamped envelope for responders who elected to complete the paper survey rather than completing and returning the survey electronically.

A similar package for each of the six lay-leaders selected was mailed to the pastor of each of the 63 churches within the target area on November 18, 2010. Each pastor received written instructions for completing and returning the surveys similar to those given to their lay leaders. The CHAT survey was designed to be completed and returned electronically. However, each responder was given the choice of completing and returning the survey electronically or the paper (hard copy) form that was mailed to them.

The pastors were responsible for distributing the addressed lay leader packages to the respective lay leader in their Congregation. The Steward Pro Tem is elected by the Steward Board, and according to the Discipline of the A.M.E. Church, this person has responsibility to act in the absence of the pastor.² For this reason this project will

² *The Doctrine and Discipline of the A.M.E. Church*, 69.

consider the Steward pro tem and the pastor as the Leadership Team for the church. The other six selected lay leaders will be referred to as the Congregation.

Survey Limitations

The survey was conducted in an environment that presented limitations, for instance:

1. The questionnaires were mailed out to addresses provided by the Presiding Elders. These addresses were not verified against any official directory
2. The identities of the responders were not verified
3. The information submitted was not validated against any official church records
4. The survey responders were not observed as they completed their questionnaires
5. Training was not provided to survey responders to enhance their computer skills
6. Training was not provided to survey responders prior to them completing the survey
7. No other assistance (other than the written instructions provided) was given to survey responders
8. There was no way to verify that the postal service delivered the survey packages to the intended responder
9. The project did not conduct a pre-test to evaluate the capabilities of the computers accessible to the responders

10. The electronic questionnaire did not make allowances for responders who may be color blind or otherwise physically challenged
11. The pastor was the only link to the lay leaders in their Congregation
12. Responders were given the option to use their names or some other assumed name to protect their identity
13. This project is limited to conducting the assessment and presenting findings and recommendations for improvement. It will not seek to implement the recommendations in the A.M.E churches being assessed.

Survey Follow Up

Progress in determining the rate of responses could be measured through the Pastor's Consul in the CHATs application. The project employed some strategies to raise the survey response rate. These include:

1. Sending a follow up e-mail reminder to each pastor on December 9th. This communication was intended to remind and encourage pastors to complete and submit their surveys. In addition, they were encouraged to remind their lay-leaders to complete and return their surveys.
2. Making phone calls to each pastor on December 17 and 27th, thanking them for their support in completing the survey, and encouraging those who may not have complied, to complete and return the survey.
3. Extending the end date for data collection from December 22nd to December 30, 2010.

4. Allowing a second date extension through January 8, 2011 after following up by telephone to pastors who did not submit their survey. This second extension was to accommodate mailed surveys that would be impacted by the temporary halt in mail delivery by the postal service in response to the winter storm in Georgia.

In order to elevate the survey response rate, this project employed four of the five strategies recommended by Don Dillman.³ These strategies include:

1. Using a respondent friendly survey
2. Initiating five contacts with the questionnaire respondent
3. Including a self-addressed stamped return envelope
4. Personalizing the correspondences.

This project did not employ the fifth recommendation. That is, to send a token financial incentive with the survey. In order to touch the respondents in five instances, the project:

- Contacted pastors, informing them about the arrival of the survey, and assuring them that their response would be greatly appreciated.
- Included a detailed cover letter in the questionnaire mailing that explained why the responder's response was important.
- Sent out a follow up email to each pastor thanking them and their lay leaders for their assistance in completing and returning the surveys.

³ Don A. Dillman, *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*, 2nd ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2000), 150.

- Contacted pastors via telephone and expressed appreciation to them and their lay leaders for their willingness to assist in making the project a success.
- Sent out a reminder email to the pastors thanking them for their participation, reiterating the importance of the study, and encouraging them and their lay leaders to complete and return the survey if they had not done so.

Section 2: CHAT Executive Summary and Data Breakdown

Mailing Results

For this project, an envelope containing the CHAT surveys for the pastor and each of the six lay leaders selected was mailed to the attention of the pastor of each A.M.E. Church within the Virginia Conference. This mailing accounted for 441 CHAT survey instruments. Four pastor's packets (28 survey instruments) were returned by the U.S. Postal Service due to incorrect addresses. A fifth packet was returned in a mutilated envelope, with its address label missing. Since each pastor's packet contained 7 CHAT surveys, 35 (8%) were never received by the intended recipients. This means that a total of 406 (92%) were delivered to their intended recipients.

At the end of the data collection period 132 (33%) of the surveys were completed and returned. Of these, the pastors accounted for 21 (16%) and the Stewards 33 (25%). The combination of the pastors and stewards will from hereafter be referred to as the Leadership Team. The Leadership team accounted for 54 (41%) of the total responses. The other five lay leaders will from hereafter be referred to as the Congregation. This group accounted for 78 (59%) of the responders. The demographics for the CHAT survey participants are presented in figures 1-9 below.

Executive summary:

This section will present an overview of the CHAT data findings. These are based on the information provided by the 132 responders to the survey

Figure 1. CHAT Responders Based on Church Leadership Roles

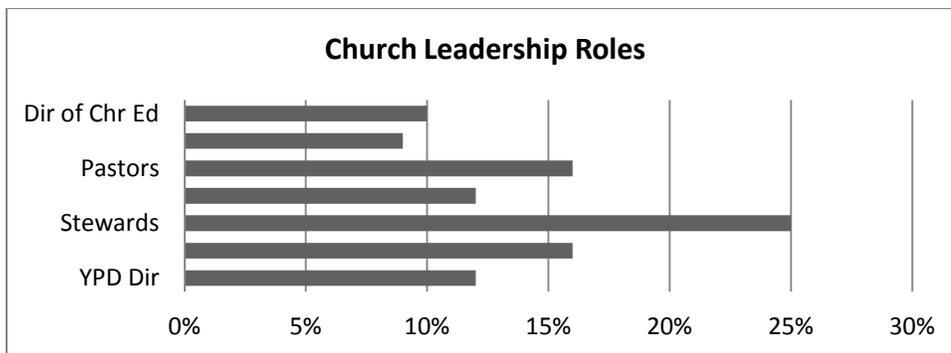


Figure 1 shows that:

- YPD Directors accounted for 16 (12%) of the survey responders
- Trustees – 21 (16%)
- Stewards – 33 (25%)
- Sunday school Superintendents – 16 (12%)
- Pastors -21 (16%)
- Minister of Music/Musicians – 12 (9%)
- Director of Christian Education – 13 (10%)

Figure 2. CHAT Responders Based on Gender

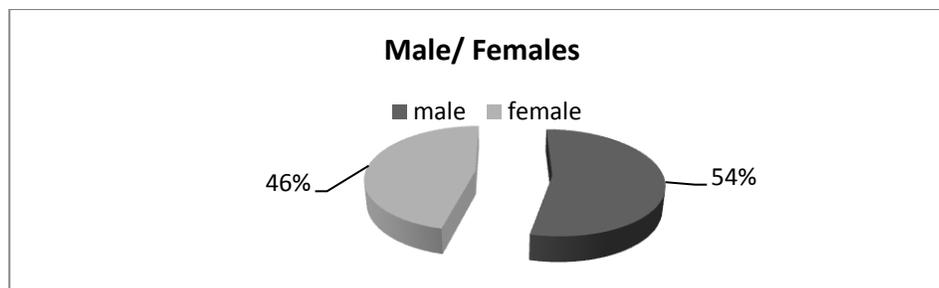


Figure 2 shows that 71 (54%) of the responders were males and 61 (46%) females

Figure 3. CHAT Responders by Marital Status

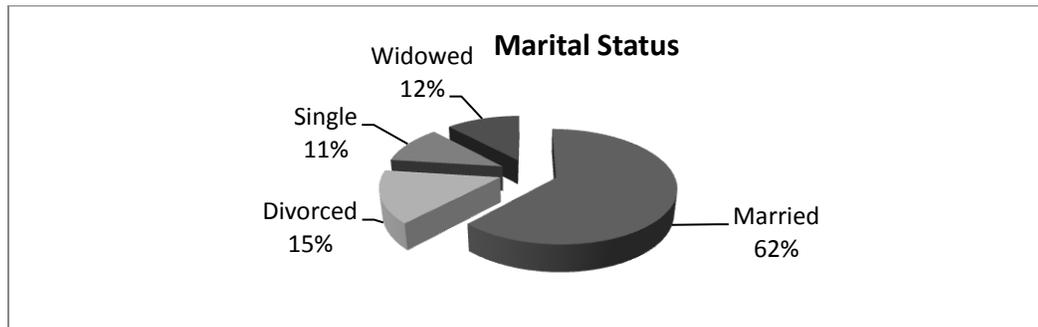


Figure 3 shows that:

- 82 (62%) of the responders indicated they were married
- 20 (15%) indicated being divorced
- 16 (12%) indicated they were widowed
- 14 (11%) indicated being single.

Figure 4. CHAT Responders by Years of Church Membership

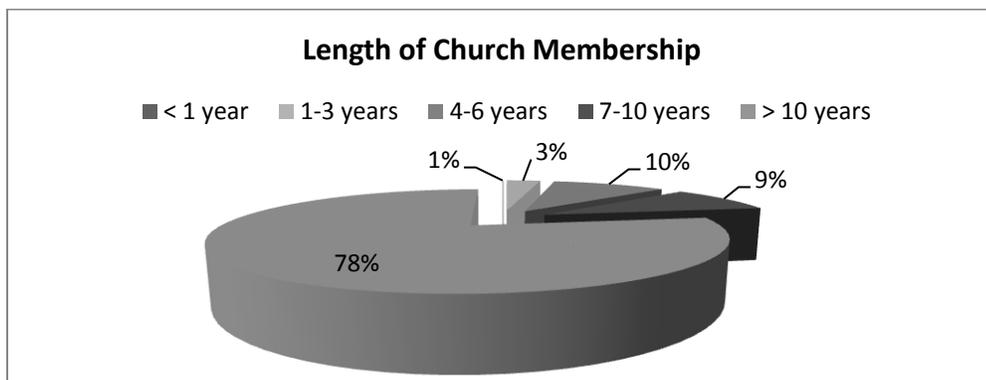


Figure 4 shows that:

- 1 (1%) of the responders indicated being members for less than 1 year
- 4 (3%) indicated being members for 1-3 years
- 13 (10%) indicated being members for 4-6 years
- 12 (9%) indicated being members for 7-10 years
- 102 (77%) of the responders indicated being members for more than 10 years

Figure 5. CHAT Responders Based on Age

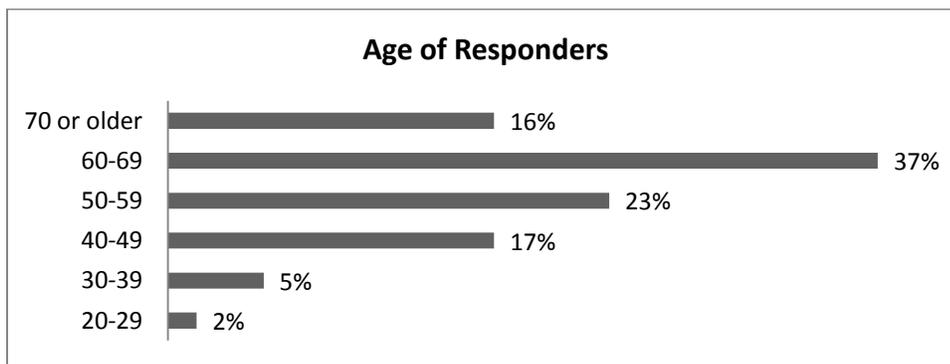


Figure 5 shows that:

- a) 22 (16%) of the CHAT responders were 70 years of age and older
- b) 49 (37%) were between 60-69 years of age
- c) 30 (23%) of the responders were between 50-59 years of age
- d) 22 (17%) were between 40-49 years of age
- e) 7 (5%) were between 30-39 years of age
- f) 2 (2%) were 20-29 years of age

Figure 6. CHAT Responders Based on Education

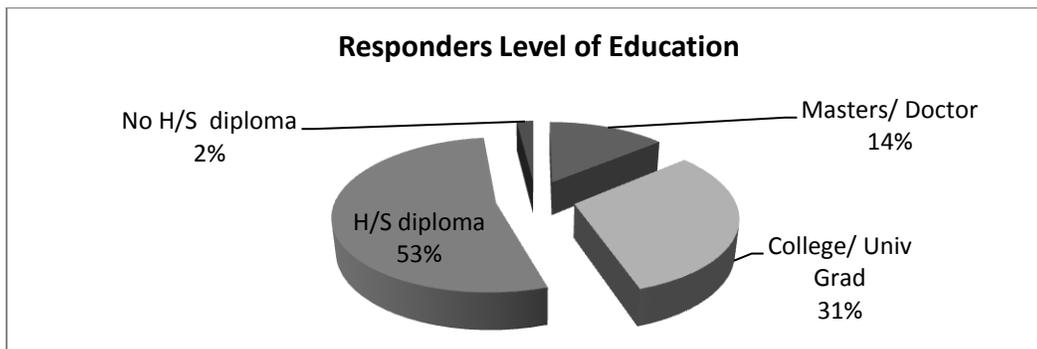


Figure 6 shows that:

- a) 41 (31%) of the responders had graduated from a college/ university
- b) 18 (14%) had attained graduate degrees
- c) 3 (2%) had no high school diplomas
- d) 70 (53%) were H/S graduates

Figure 7. CHAT Responders Based on Leadership Role

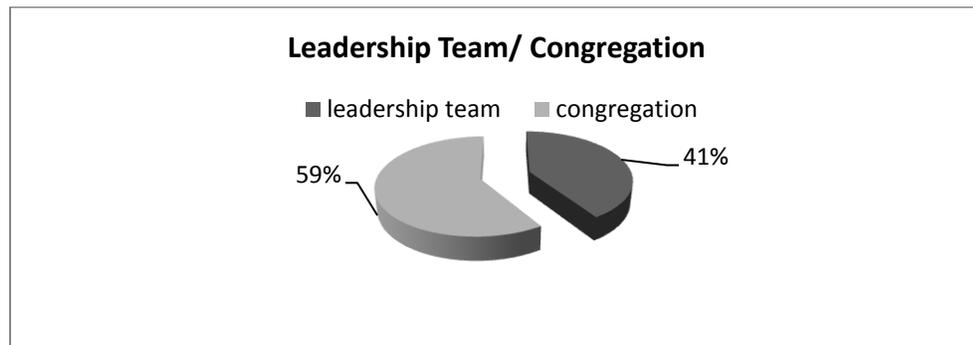


Figure 7 shows the breakdown of the CHAT responders based on their leadership roles. It shows that 41% of the responders were from the Leadership Team and 59% from the Congregation.

CHAT Survey Data Breakdown

In this section the project will present the survey outcome of the ten CHAT Characteristics based on the responders: 1) age; 2) Gender; 3) Education; 4) Years of church Attendance, and 5) Marital Status respectively.

Table 1. Leadership Position Based on Marital Status

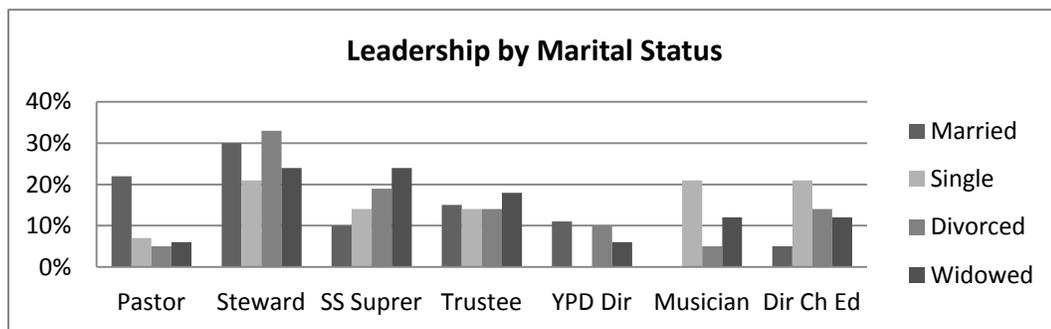


Table 1 shows that the greatest proportion of church leaders (34%) who responded to the CHAT survey were stewards who were divorced; 23% of the pastors and 30% of the stewards were married; 24% of the Sunday school superintendents and

18% of the trustees were widowed, and 21% of the musicians, stewards and Directors of Christian education were single.

Table 2. Leadership by Gender

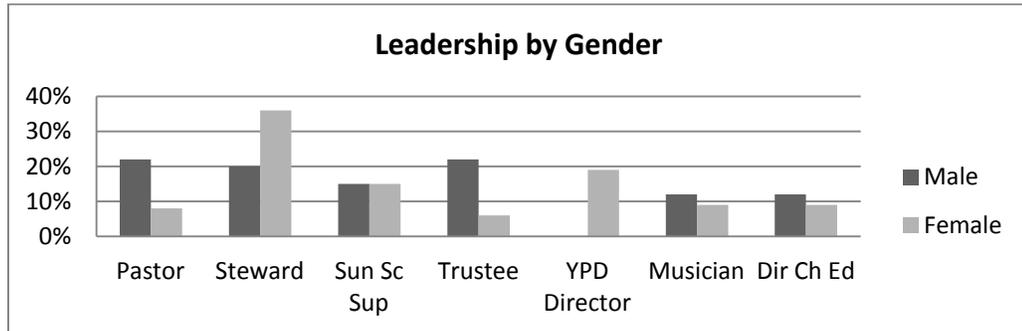


Table 2 presents a breakdown of the 132 church leaders who responded to the CHAT Survey. The data suggests that 22% of the pastors were males and 8% females; that 36% of the responses were from male stewards, and that all 19% of the YPD directors who responded were females.

Table 3. Leadership by Level of Education

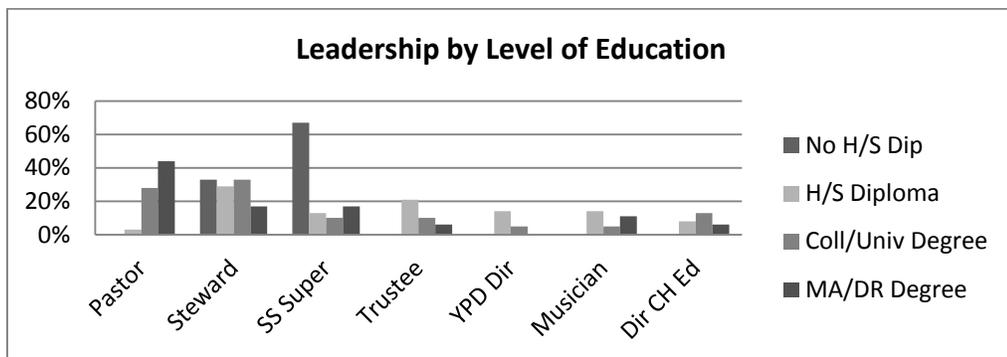
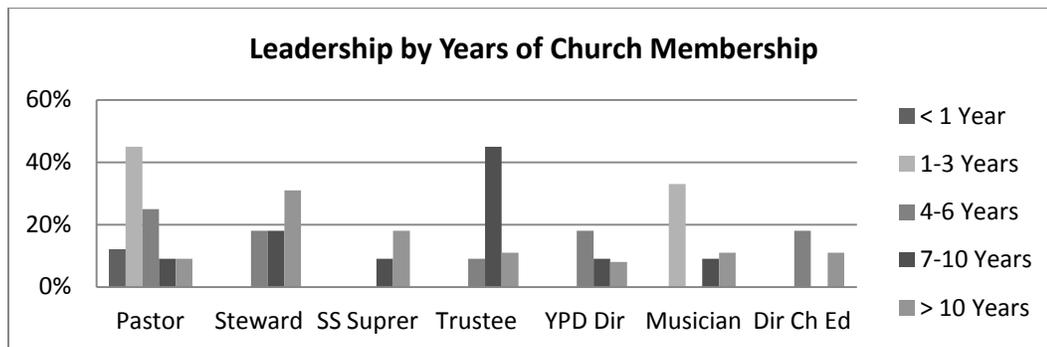


Table 3 shows interesting results when an assessment is made of the responders based on their educational level. It reveals that a significant percentage (67%) of the Sunday school superintendents and 33% of the Stewards did not have a high school

diploma. It also revealed that 3% of the pastors who responded to the CHAT survey possessed only a high school diploma.

Table 4. Responders Based on Years of Church Membership



This table based on the responses of the 132 CHAT survey responders shows that 67% of the pastors have been at their churches for a period of 1-3 years, 9% for 7-10 and more than 10 years respectively.

The table also shows that 31% of the Stewards have been members of their respective churches for more than 10 years, while 18% have been members for 4-6 and 7-10 years respectively.

Eighteen percent of the Sunday school superintends indicated being church members for more than 10 years. No person in this position indicated being church members for less than 3 years.

Forty-Five percent of the Trustees indicated being members of their church for 7-10 years, while 11% indicated membership lasting more than 10 years. Eighteen percent of the YPD Directors indicate being members of their church for 4-6 years, 8% indicated being members for more than 10 years. No person in this position indicated being a member of their church less than 4 years.

Thirty-three percent of the Ministers of Music/Musicians indicated being members for 1-3 years, while 11% indicated membership for longer than 10 years. Eighteen percent of the Directors of Christian Education indicated being members of their respective church for 4-6 years, 11% have been members for more than 10 years.

The project realizes the statistical limitations based on the relatively small sample size. However, in order to determine the differences within the four independent groups of variables (marital status, age, education, years of church membership (attendance), and their relationship between each of the 10 CHAT characteristics (dependent variables), the project will employ the analysis of variance (ANOVA) test. The results from this analysis would be beneficial to church leaders who could then understand the specific subgroups within the church that they could immediately engage in their initial efforts to restore health to their churches.

The operating null hypothesis for these ANOVA tests is that the groups within each independent variable group are equal, meaning there are no differences within the group.

Table 5. ANOVA Results of Marital Status toward CHAT Characteristics

| Source | Dependent Variable | Sum of Squares | DF | Mean Square | F Value | P Value. | Comparison Sig at 0.05 Conf level |
|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|----|-------------|---------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| Marital Status | God's Empowering Presence | 6.20167112 | 3 | 2.06722371 | 6.61 | 0.0003 | * single |
| | Exalting Worship | 9.17953232 | 3 | 3.05984411 | 5.12 | 0.0022 | * single |
| | Encouraging & Equipping | 7.93094384 | 3 | 2.64364795 | 3.19 | 0.0259 | * single |
| | Learning & Growing | 5.97666709 | 3 | 1.9922224 | 2.23 | 0.0882 | |
| | Caring Relationships | 2.44747038 | 3 | 0.81582346 | 0.94 | 0.4238 | |
| | Leadership | 5.07753748 | 3 | 1.69251249 | 1.78 | 0.1537 | |
| | Outward Focus | 6.56338921 | 3 | 2.18778640 | 2.53 | 0.0602 | |
| | Wise Administration | 6.88769843 | 3 | 2.29589948 | 2.42 | 0.0687 | |
| | Networking | 4.44624981 | 3 | 1.48208327 | 1.85 | 0.1407 | |
| | Stewardship | 6.06135892 | 3 | 2.02045297 | 1.89 | 0.1339 | |

The ANOVA analysis of the data presented in table 5 suggests that the married status groups (married, widowed, single, and divorced) are equal (null hypothesis). When observing Marital Status and Empowering Presence, the alternate hypothesis is that at least one of the four groups is different (alternate hypothesis).

The $Pr > F$ value is 0.003. This value is less than 0.05. Therefore the project can conclude that one of the four values within the Marital Status group is different. Rejecting the null hypothesis and employing the Tukey's Test to determine which groups within the marital status are different (widowed and single; widowed and single; and

divorced and single). The results reveal that, there is a significant difference between these two groups; the other groups are not significant. Thus, the study concludes that when observing the relationship between marital status and empowering presence, there is a significant difference between; widowed and single, married and single, and divorced and single.

Further, when observing the relationship between marital status and the following dependent variables: Outward Focus, Leadership, Caring Relationship, Learning and Growing, the $Pr > F$ value is greater than 0.05, therefore, the project rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that the four groups of marital status are equal.

Table 6. ANOVA Results of Education toward CHAT Characteristics

| Source | Dependent Variable | Sum of Squares | DF | Mean Square | F Value | P Value. |
|-----------|---------------------------|----------------|----|-------------|---------|----------|
| Education | God's Empowering Presence | 0.29686261 | 3 | 0.09695420 | 0.28 | 0.8429 |
| | Exalting Worship | 2.11309469 | 3 | 0.70436490 | 1.08 | 0.3607 |
| | Encouraging & Equipping | 1.57229805 | 3 | 0.50909935 | 0.58 | 0.6294 |
| | Learning & Growing | 3.25776850 | 3 | 1.08592283 | 1.19 | 0.3178 |
| | Caring Relationships | 5.94121713 | 3 | 1.98040571 | 2.35 | 0.0751 |
| | Leadership | 3.00846760 | 3 | 1.00282253 | 1.04 | 0.3779 |
| | Outward Focus | 2.66491428 | 3 | 0.88830476 | 0.99 | 0.3990 |
| | Wise Administration | 6.54224898 | 3 | 2.18074966 | 2.30 | 0.0808 |
| | Networking | 1.54441516 | 3 | 0.51480505 | 0.63 | 0.5993 |
| | Stewardship | 3.81804481 | 3 | 1.27268160 | 1.17 | 0.3224 |

Table 6 shows the estimate of the population variance based on the CHAT data. An observation of the within group variance Education has a predictive mean value of 0.28. The table also shows the error (df) to be 128. The sum of squares are shown to be 0.29686261, the error mean square 0.09895420; and the Pr>F value of 0.8429. This value is greater than 0.05. The table shows that when observing education and each of the dependent variables (CHAT characteristics) the Pr>F values are greater than 0.05. Therefore the project will conclude that the 4 groups of educational levels are equal.

Table 7. ANOVA Results of Length of Church Membership toward CHAT Characteristics

| Source | Dependent Variable | Sum of Squares | DF | Mean Square | F Value | P Value. | Comparison Sig at 0.05 Conf level |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|----|-------------|---------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| Length of Church Membership | God's Empowering Presence | 3.51290981 | 4 | 0.87822745 | 2.61 | 0.0386 | *4-6 yrs |
| | Exalting Worship | 4.85987901 | 4 | 1.21496975 | 1.91 | 0.1130 | |
| | Encouraging & Equipping | 8.00414711 | 4 | 2.00103678 | 2.40 | 0.0535 | *4-6 yrs 1.4936 |
| | Learning & Growing | 11.43666068 | 4 | 2.85916517 | 3.33 | 0.0125 | *4-6 yrs |
| | Caring Relationships | 9.20266651 | 4 | 2.30066663 | 2.80 | 0.0288 | *4-6 yrs or > 10 yrs |
| | Leadership | 11.37145893 | 4 | 2.84286473 | 3.13 | 0.0170 | *4-6 yrs or > 10 yrs |
| | Outward Focus | 5.73163264 | 4 | 1.43290816 | 1.63 | 0.1704 | |
| | Wise Administration | 10.89484745 | 4 | 2.72371186 | 2.95 | 0.0226 | *4-6 yrs or > 10 yrs |
| | Networking | 8.21851052 | 4 | 2.05462763 | 2.65 | 0.0364 | *4-6 yrs or > 10 yrs |
| | Stewardship | 10.13694429 | 4 | 2.53423607 | 2.43 | 0.0510 | *4-6 yrs or > 10 yrs |

Table 7 shows the results of the ANOVA observation of length of church membership and each CHAT characteristic. The null hypothesis is that the 5 groups are equal. The $Pr>F$ value is 0.0386; this result indicated that at least one of the 5 groups are different. Therefore the project will reject the null hypothesis.

Tukey's Test results to identify the group(s) within the length of church membership group (< 1 year, 1-3 yrs, 4-6 yrs, 7-10 yrs, and > 10 years). The table shows

that there are significant differences between memberships 4-6 years and 7-10 years of church membership and empowering presence. There is a significant difference between the following groups; 4-6 years and 7-10 years and more than 10 years – 4-6 years. Table 7 used an (*) to indicate the areas that were significant relationships exists between length of church membership and CHAT Characteristics.

Table 8. ANOVA Results of Age toward CHAT Characteristics

| Source | Dependent Variables | Sum of Squares | DF | Mean Square | F Value | P Value. | Comparison Sig at 0.05 Conf level |
|--------|---------------------------|----------------|----|-------------|---------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| Age | God's Empowering Presence | 5.38260420 | 5 | 1.07652084 | 3.32 | 0.0075 | |
| | Exalting Worship | 10.88194380 | 5 | 2.17638876 | 3.67 | 0.0039 | * 20-29 or 50-59 yrs of age |
| | Encouraging & Equipping | 6.93961922 | 5 | 1.38792384 | 1.63 | 0.1556 | |
| | Learning & Growing | 14.11809158 | 5 | 2.82361832 | 3.35 | 0.0072 | |
| | Caring Relationships | 11.04824859 | 5 | 2.20964972 | 2.71 | 0.0230 | |
| | Leadership | 9.26692270 | 5 | 1.85338454 | 1.99 | 0.0845 | |
| | Outward Focus | 8.99316926 | 5 | 1.79863385 | 2.09 | 0.0706 | |
| | Wise Administration | 8.53017177 | 5 | 1.70603435 | 1.80 | 1.1179 | |
| | Networking | 8.04616488 | 5 | 1.60923298 | 2.05 | 0.0756 | |
| | Stewardship | 12.90821186 | 5 | 2.58164237 | 2.51 | 0.0335 | |

The ANOVA analysis of the data presented in table 8 is calculated with the assumption that the 5 age groups (20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69 and ≥ 70 years of age) are equal (null hypothesis). When observing age and Empowering Presence, the alternate hypothesis is that at least one of the 5 groups is different (alternate hypothesis).

The $Pr>F$ value is 0.0075. This value is less than 0.05. Therefore the project can conclude that at least one of the five values within the age group is different. Rejecting the null hypothesis and employing the Tukey's Test to determine which groups within the

age group are different. The results reveal that, there is a significant difference between these two groups; the other groups are not significant. Thus, the study concludes that when observing the relationship between age and each Chat Characteristic, there are significant differences between the following age 50-59 – 20-29 and Exalting Worship. This was the only CHAT characteristic, and only age range (50-59 – 20-29) that showed significant differences.

Section 3: CHAT Survey Findings

Research Question

This question asks: What is the current health of the 63 A.M.E. Churches located in the Virginia Conference? Specifically, how effective are the 63 churches in the Virginia Conference living out each of the ten CHAT characteristics? Table 9 illustrates the individual characteristics that will be used to evaluate the health of the churches in the Virginia Conference.

Table 9. Ten CHAT Characteristics

| <i>Church Health Component</i> | <i>Explanation</i> |
|---|---|
| 1. GEP - God's Empowering Presence | The healthy church actively seeks the Holy Spirit's direction and empowerment for its daily life and ministry |
| 2. GEW - God-Exalting Worship | The healthy church gathers regularly as the local expression of the Body of Christ to worship God in ways that engage the heart, mind, soul and strength of the people. |
| 3. SD - Spiritual Disciplines | The healthy church provides training, models, and resources for members of all ages to develop their daily spiritual disciplines. |
| 4. LGC - Learning and Growing in Community | The healthy church encourages believers to grow in their walk with God and with one another in the context of a safe, affirming environment. |
| 5. LCR - A Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships | The healthy church is intentional in its efforts to build loving, caring relationships within families; between members and within the community it serves. |
| 6. SLD - Servant-Leadership Development | The healthy church identifies and develops individuals whom God has called and given the gift of leadership and challenges them to be servant-leaders. |
| 7. OF - An Outward Focus | The healthy church places high priority on communicating the truth of Jesus and demonstrating the love of Jesus to those outside the faith. |
| 8. WAA - Wise Administration and Accountability | The healthy church utilizes appropriate facilities, equipment, and systems to provide maximum support for the growth and development of its ministries. |
| 9. NBC - Networking with the Body of Christ | The healthy church reaches out to others in the Body of Christ for collaboration, resource sharing, learning opportunities and united celebrations of worship. |
| 10. SG - Stewardship and Generosity | The healthy church teaches its members that they are stewards of their God-given resources and challenges them to be sacrificially generous in sharing with others. |

Survey Findings

In this section the project will look at the data results from the CHAT survey.

These results are based on the responses of the lay leaders (referred to as the

Congregation) and the pastor and Steward pro tem (referred to as the Leadership Team).

Summary CHAT Data – Congregation and Leadership Team Responses

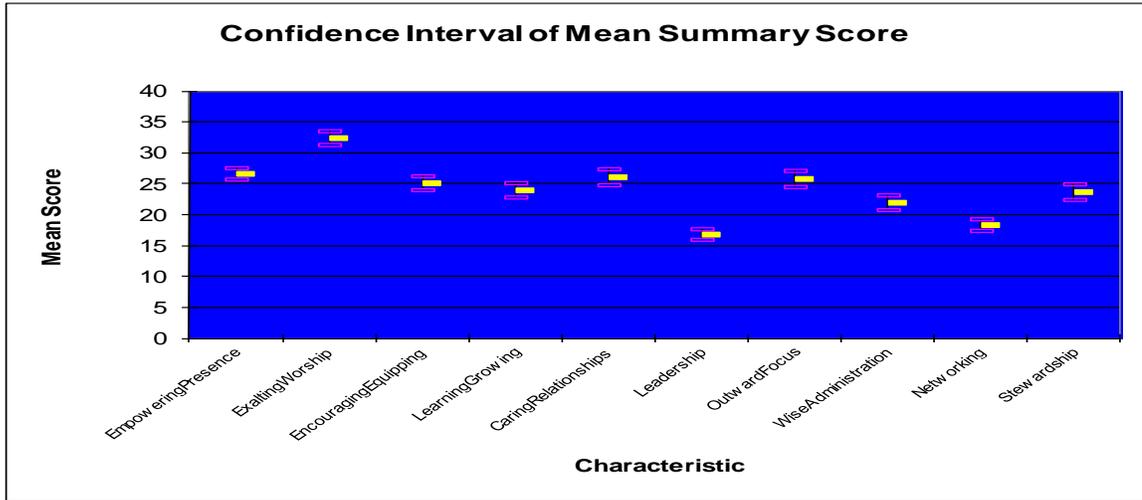
Table 10. Non-Parametric Ratings for All CHAT Responders

| Characteristic | CI_high | CI_low | Mean | non-parametric | | |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|--------|------|
| | | | | CI_high | CI_low | Mean |
| Empowering Presence | 27.61017 | 25.76862 | 26.68939 | 28 | 27 | 27.5 |
| Exalting Worship | 33.58384 | 31.35556 | 32.4697 | 35 | 32 | 34 |
| Encouraging Equipping | 26.2983 | 24.05018 | 25.17424 | 28 | 24 | 26 |
| Learning Growing | 25.17855 | 22.86691 | 24.02273 | 26 | 23 | 24 |
| Caring Relationships | 27.42683 | 24.86105 | 26.14394 | 28 | 24 | 26 |
| Leadership | 17.71752 | 16.0249 | 16.87121 | 18 | 15 | 16 |
| Outward Focus | 27.16712 | 24.56015 | 25.86364 | 27 | 23 | 26 |
| Wise Administration | 23.20693 | 20.82337 | 22.01515 | 24 | 20 | 21.5 |
| Networking | 19.33419 | 17.46884 | 18.40152 | 20 | 17 | 18 |
| Stewardship | 24.99239 | 22.4773 | 23.73485 | 27 | 22 | 25 |

Table 10 shows the comparative breakdown of the responses between the Congregation and Church Leaders to the question ‘*Overall, how effective is the church at living out each characteristic?*’

Because of the small sample size of the data used in this project, there was concern about the weight placed on the arithmetic means. To generate means that are more normative and that are not significantly affected by huge data distribution differences, the nonparametric statistical mean was used. Table 10 presents a comparative mean distribution for each of the 10 CHAT Characteristic used in this project. In both techniques the characteristic outputs rankings remained the same. For example Exalting Worship, Empowering Presence, Caring relationships, Outward Focus, Encouraging and Equipping retained their ranked order and highest overall ratings.

Table 10A. Confidence Interval of Mean Summary Scores (all Responders)



Tables 10A and 10B provide graphical representations of the mean summary and Non-parametric median summary scores at 95% confidence levels. The data presentations show characteristic areas that were rated as strengths of the church and those that were most in need of improvement. The characteristics most in need of improvement are: leadership, Wise Administration, Networking, and stewardship.

Table 10B. Non-Parametric Confidence Interval of Median Summary Score

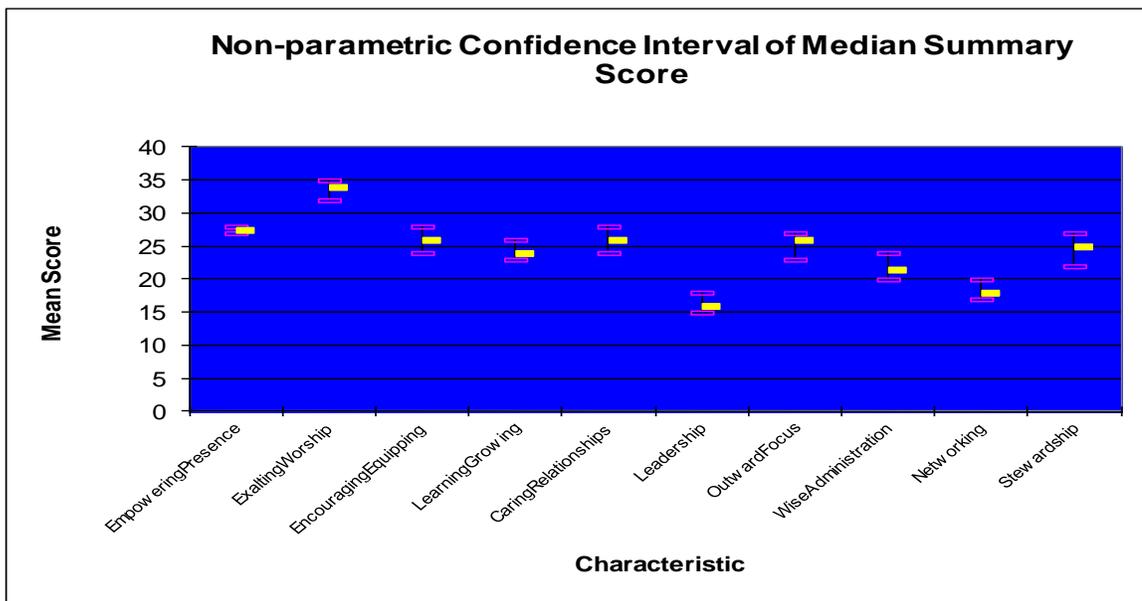


Table 11. Mean Summary and Non- Parametric Median Summary Scores for CHAT Responders

| Characteristic | CI_high | CI_low | Mean | non-parametric | | |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------------|---------|---------|
| | | | | CI_high | CI_low | Median |
| Empowering Presence | 3.0678 | 2.86318 | 2.96549 | 3.11111 | 3 | 3.05556 |
| Exalting Worship | 4.19798 | 3.91944 | 4.05871 | 4.375 | 4 | 4.25 |
| Encouraging Equipping | 3.7569 | 3.43574 | 3.59632 | 4 | 3.42857 | 3.71429 |
| Learning Growing | 3.59694 | 3.2667 | 3.43182 | 3.71429 | 3.28571 | 3.42857 |
| Caring Relationships | 3.42835 | 3.10763 | 3.26799 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.25 |
| Leadership | 3.5435 | 3.20498 | 3.37424 | 3.6 | 3 | 3.2 |
| Outward Focus | 3.39589 | 3.07002 | 3.23295 | 3.375 | 2.875 | 3.25 |
| Wise Administration | 3.31528 | 2.97477 | 3.14502 | 3.42857 | 2.85714 | 3.07143 |
| Networking | 3.22237 | 2.91147 | 3.06692 | 3.33333 | 2.83333 | 3 |
| Stewardship | 3.57034 | 3.21104 | 3.39069 | 3.85714 | 3.14286 | 3.57143 |

Table 11A. Confidence Intervals and Mean Summary Scores for CHAT Responses

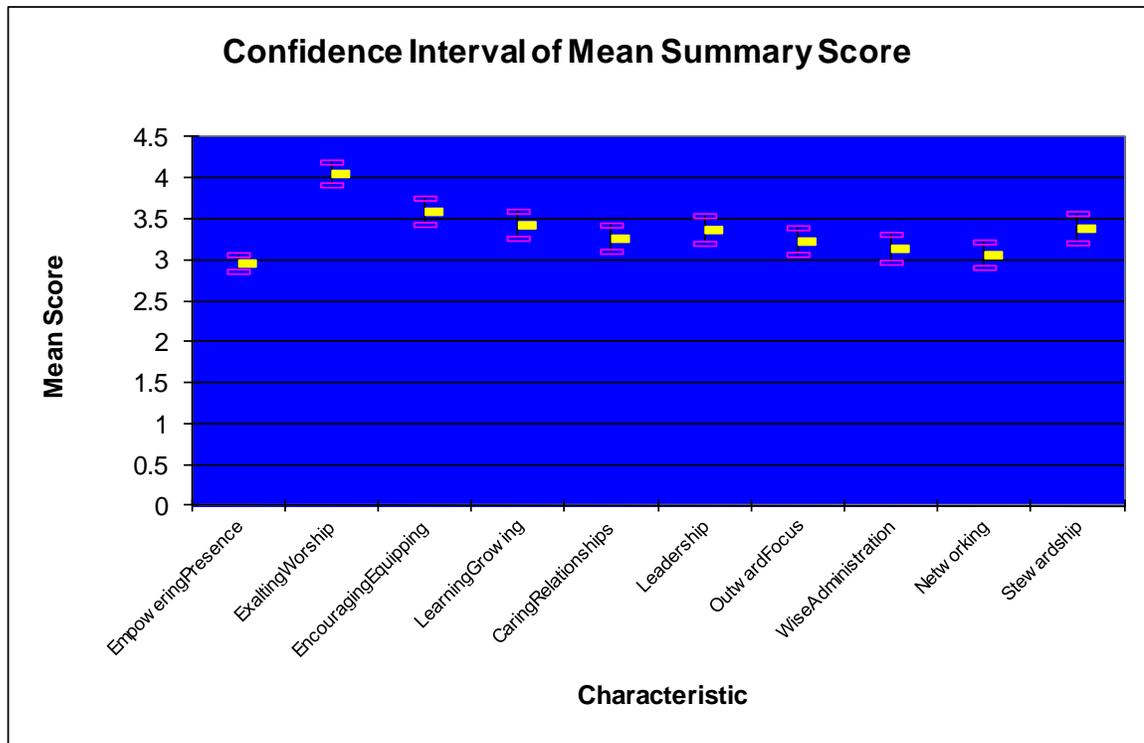


Table 11B. Non-Parametric Confidence Intervals for Median Summary Scores

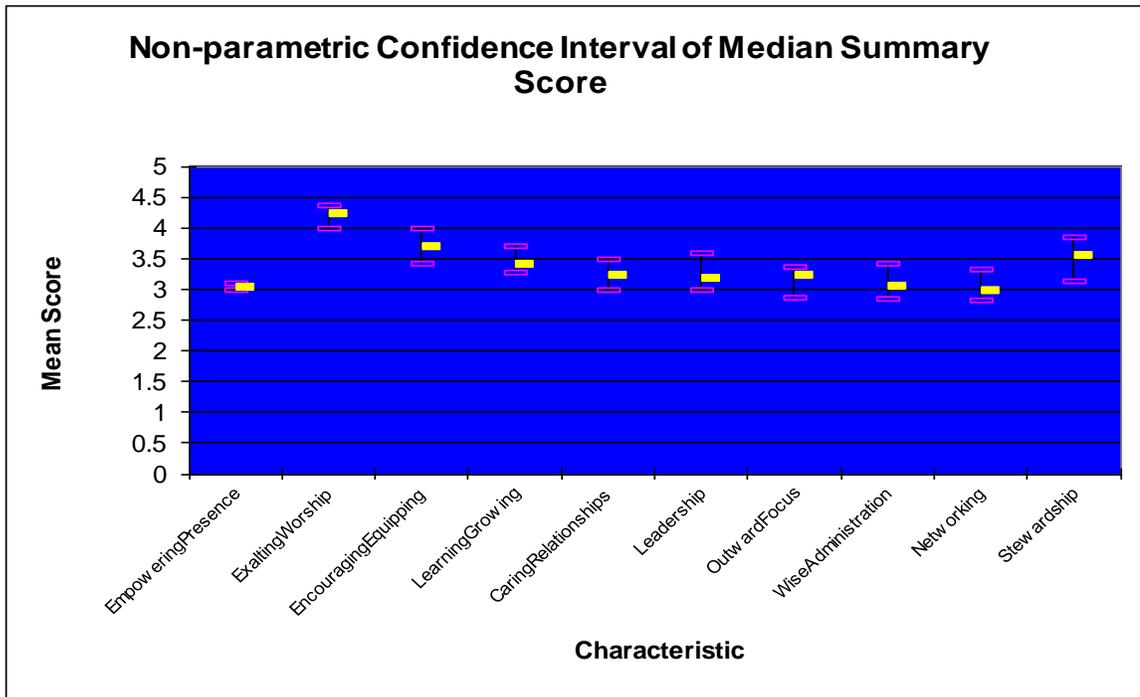


Table 12. CHAT Comparison: Leadership Team, Congregation and Overall Church Ratings

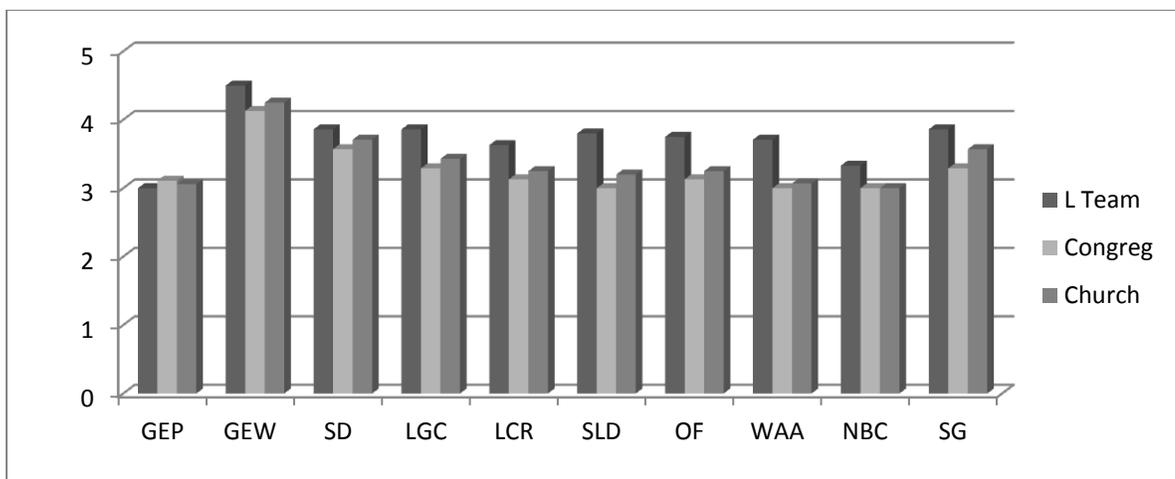


Table 12 presents the comparative median data breakdown of the CHAT survey responses for the Leadership Team and Congregation, to that of the combined results.

The table also shows the variance between the responses for the respective groups. It shows the overall rating for the Leadership Team and Congregation compared to the overall rating. The table shows the ratings by the respective leadership groups relative to the areas of strength and those most in need of improvements. These areas of strength are:

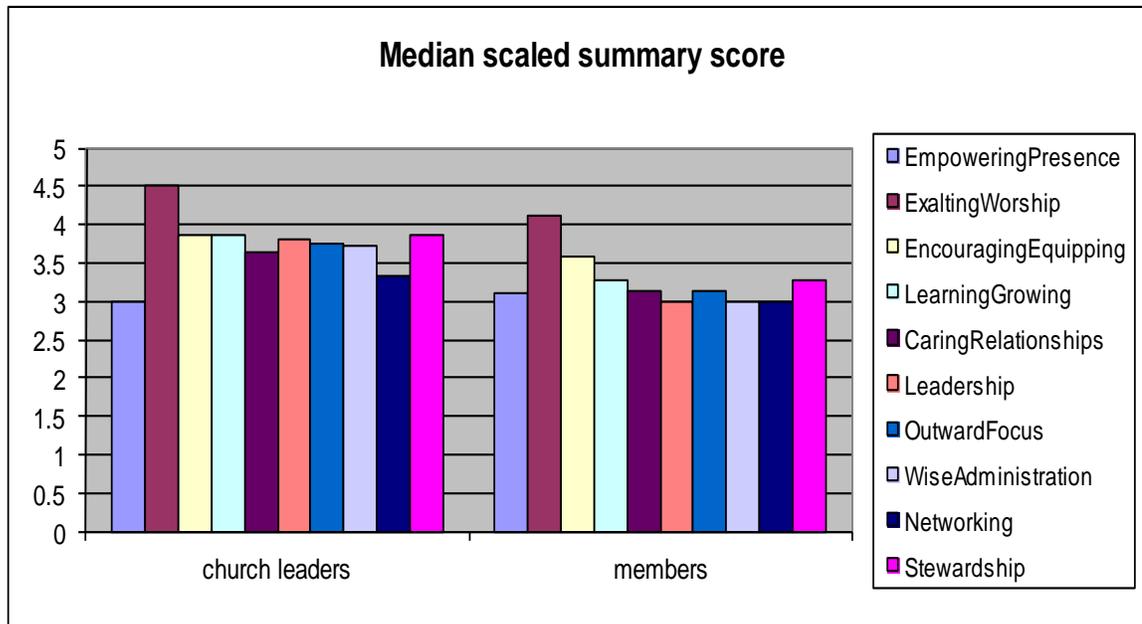
1. God's Empowering Presence (GEP) [3.0], [3.11], [3.06]
2. Wise Administration and Accountability (WAA) [3.71], [3.0], [3.07]
3. Networking with the Body of Christ (NBC) [3.33], [3.0], [3.0]
4. Servant Leadership Development (SLD) [3.8], [3.0], [3.2]

Table 13. CHAT Responses: Church Leadership Team compared to Congregation

| Characteristic | Staff=1 | | | Staff=0 | | |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|-------------------|---------|---------|--------------|
| | high | Low | Church leadership | high | low | Congregation |
| Empowering Presence | 3.33333 | 2.88889 | 3 | 3.22222 | 3 | 3.11111 |
| Exalting Worship | 4.875 | 3.875 | 4.5 | 4.25 | 4 | 4.125 |
| Encouraging Equipping | 4.42857 | 3.28571 | 3.85714 | 4 | 3.42857 | 3.57143 |
| Learning Growing | 4.42857 | 3.28571 | 3.85714 | 3.57143 | 3.14286 | 3.28571 |
| Caring Relationships | 4.25 | 3.25 | 3.625 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.125 |
| Leadership | 4.4 | 3.4 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 3 | 3 |
| Outward Focus | 4.25 | 2.875 | 3.75 | 3.375 | 2.875 | 3.125 |
| Wise Administration | 4.14286 | 3.14286 | 3.71429 | 3.28571 | 2.85714 | 3 |
| Networking | 4 | 2.5 | 3.33333 | 3.33333 | 2.66667 | 3 |
| Stewardship | 4.28571 | 3.42857 | 3.85714 | 3.71429 | 3.14286 | 3.28571 |

Table 13 presents the median scaled summary scores for the church Leadership Team (staff) compared to the Congregation. Based on their responses to the ten characteristics in the CHAT survey the table shows that the rankings are very similar, although the Leadership Team rated the performance (effectiveness) of the church in each characteristic higher than the Congregation.

Table 14. CHAT Survey: Median Scaled Summary Scores Comparison (for the Leadership Team and Congregation)



This table presents data findings showing the median scaled summary scores for each CHAT characteristic. It also compares findings for the leadership team against those for the Congregation. Both groups of church leaders rated 1) Exalting Worship 2) encouraging and equipping 3) Learning and Growing, and 4) stewardship as strengths of the church. In addition, the responders from both the church Leadership Team and Congregation rated 1) God's Empowering Presence, 2) Caring relationships, 3) Outward Focus, and 3) Wise Administration and Leadership as areas most in need of improvement.

Table 14A. CHAT Survey: Median Scaled Summary Scores (Leadership Team)

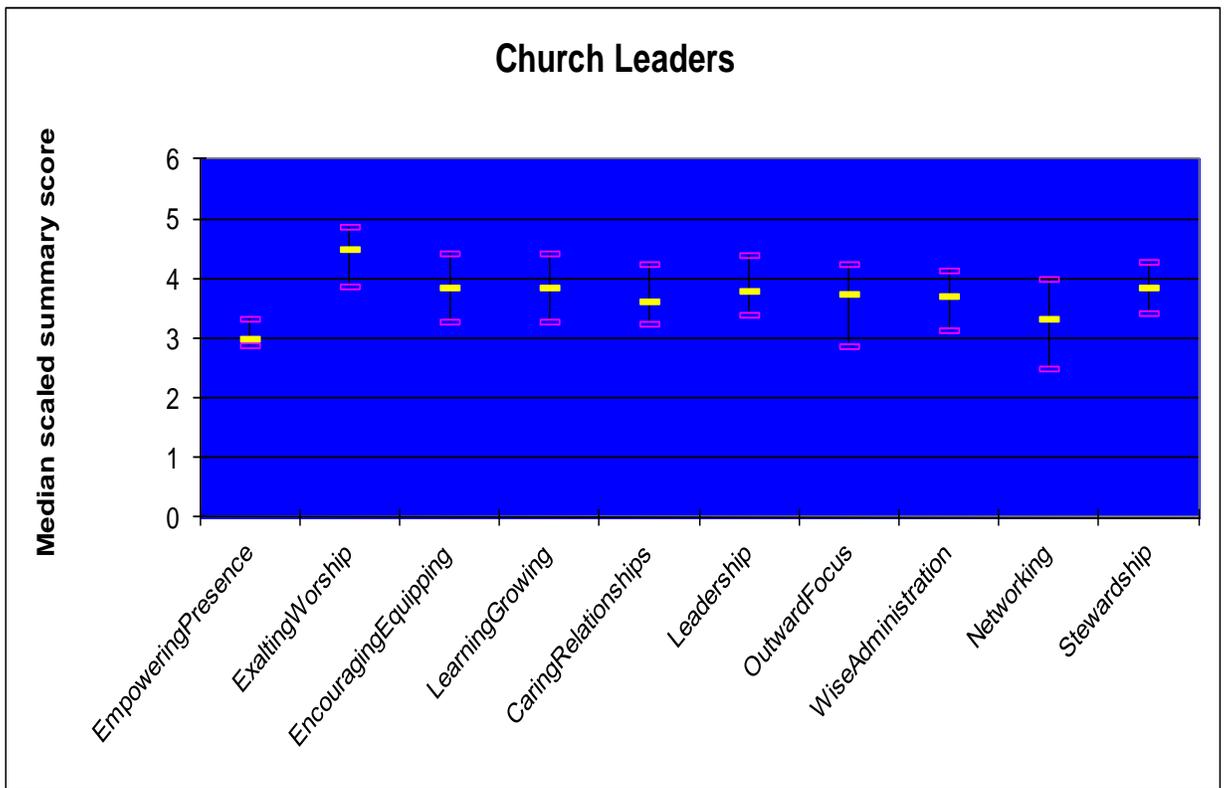


Table 14A presents a breakout of the median scaled summary scores for the church leadership Team. It also shows the confidence levels for each CHAT characteristic. These scores are calculated at 95% confidence levels.

Table 14B. CHAT Survey: Median Scaled Summary Scores (Congregation)

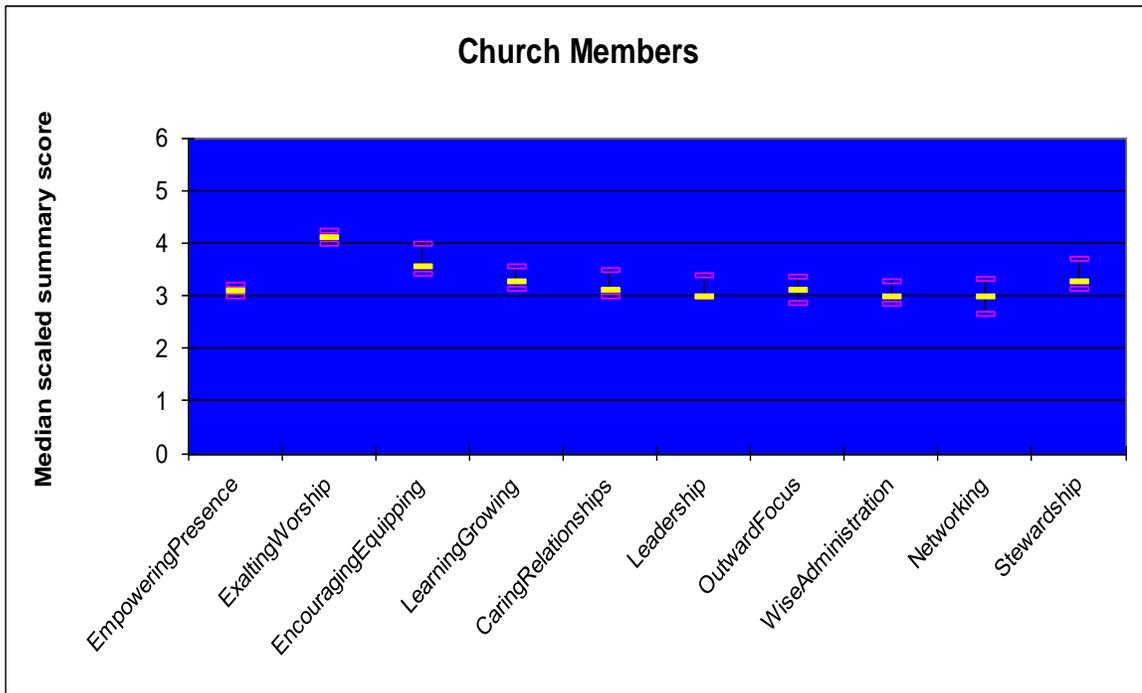


Table 14B presents a breakout of the median scaled summary scores for the Congregation. It also shows the confidence levels for each CHAT characteristic. This table indicates a slight downward variance when compared to the Leadership Team’s responses for similar characteristics. These scores are calculated at 95% confidence levels.

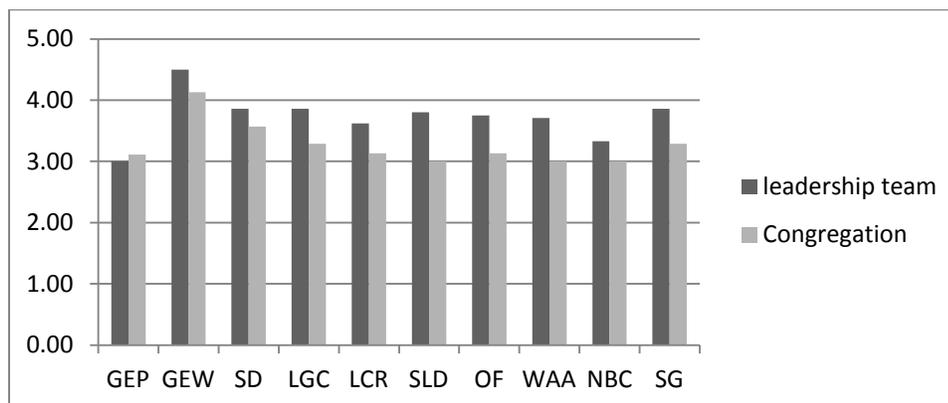
Table 15. Median Scaled Comparative Responses

Table 15 shows the Median Scaled Comparative output based on the responses provided by the Leadership Team and Congregation based on the CHAT characteristics.

Table 15A. Areas of Strength and those most in Need of Improvement (Leadership Team's Ratings)

| Characteristics | Areas of Strength | Needs Improvement |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| <i>GEP – God's Empowering Presence</i> | | 3.00 |
| <i>GEW – God Exalting Worship</i> | 4.50 | |
| <i>SD – Spiritual Disciplines</i> | 3.86 | |
| <i>LGC – Learning and Growing in Community</i> | 3.86 | |
| <i>LCR – A Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships</i> | | 3.62 |
| <i>SLD – Servant-Leadership Development</i> | | 3.80 |
| <i>OF – An Outward Focus</i> | | 3.75 |
| <i>WAA – Wise Administration and Accountability</i> | | 3.71 |
| <i>NBC – Networking with the Body of Christ</i> | | 3.33 |
| <i>SG – Stewardship and Generosity</i> | 3.86 | |

Table 15A pinpoints the specific church health characteristics identified by the leadership Team to be areas of strength, and those most in need of improvement.

**Table 15B. Areas of Strength and those most in Need of Improvement
(Congregation Ratings)**

| Characteristics | Areas of Strength | Needs Improvement |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| <i>GEP – God’s Empowering Presence</i> | | 3.11 |
| <i>GEW – God Exalting Worship</i> | 4.13 | |
| <i>SD – Spiritual Disciplines</i> | 3.57 | |
| <i>LGC – Learning and Growing in Community</i> | 3.29 | |
| <i>LCR – A Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships</i> | | 3.12 |
| <i>SLD – Servant-Leadership Development</i> | | 3.00 |
| <i>OF – An Outward Focus</i> | | 3.13 |
| <i>WAA – Wise Administration and Accountability</i> | | 3.00 |
| <i>NBC – Networking with the Body of Christ</i> | | 3.00 |
| <i>SG – Stewardship and Generosity</i> | 3.29 | |

Explanation of CHAT Findings (Areas indicated to be most healthy)

At the end of each characteristic section of the CHAT survey the responder was asked to rate the overall effectiveness of the church at living out (executing) the specific characteristic. The median scaled comparative responses displayed in tables 14, 15, 15A, and 15B shows the level of effectiveness of each CHAT Characteristic. The table shows the variance in the level of effectiveness for each characteristic as viewed by the Leadership Team compared to that of the Congregation. *(More than three characteristics indicate a tie in median responses)*. Based on the results of the Median Scaled Summary Scores (MSSS) the three areas of strength in the church as rated by the Leadership Team along with their MSSS are: *(These results are displayed in tables 15A and 15B)*

Table 15C. Comparative Ratings: Characteristics of Greatest Strength

| Areas of Strength (Health) | Leaderships Team (Median Scaled Scores) | Congregation (Median Scaled Scores) |
|---|--|--|
| GEW- God-Exalting Worship | 4.50 | 4.13 |
| SD- Spiritual Disciplines | 3.86 | 3.57 |
| LGC- Learning and Growing in Community | 3.86 | 3.29 |
| SC- Stewardship and Generosity | 3.86 | 3.29 |

The data presented in table 15C shows an outcome segment of the results of the CHAT survey. This table shows the outcome ratings (based on median scaled scores) for the Leadership Team and Congregation relative to the areas within the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference that are identified as areas of greatest strengths (healthy). The table shows that the output ratings for both groups of church leaders identify similar areas of strength within the churches. These areas of strength are: 1) God-Exalting Worship (GEW); 2) Spiritual Disciplines (SD); 3) Learning and Growing in Community (LGC), *and* 4) Stewardship and Generosity.

The outcome data shows that the ratings by the Leadership Team (pastors and stewards) and those of the Congregation (lay Leaders) have indentified similar characteristics as being most healthy for the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference. However, the ratings by the Leadership Team for each characteristic area are significantly higher than those of the Congregation.

The project will now proceed to extrapolate on each characteristic found to be areas of strength (healthy) so that church leaders would understand their implications for the churches in the Virginia Conference, and continue to maintain their healthy status.

1. **God-Exalting Worship:** When the church leaders of the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference affirms “God-Exalting Worship as an area of strength in the church, they are celebrating the fact that the experience of gathering together for worship as the people of God is refreshing and rewarding, meaningful and uplifting. That worship is of value and is placed in high esteem. It also means that Church leaders generally appreciate the way they are ushered into the presence of God. It is important that church leaders continue to build on this characteristic so that people could benefit from being fed by the Word of God, they can be nurtured by prayer, and encouraged to engage the world as instruments of God’s mercy, wisdom, and strength.
2. **Spiritual Disciplines:** By identifying this characteristic as an area of greatest health for the churches in the Virginia Conference, the responders are saying that they recognize the importance of teaching members of all ages the principles and practices that lead to a deeper walk of faith. In this environment, the church will foster a life of prayer, devotion to scripture, and reflective disciplines. This characteristic as an area of faith also indicates that, as the churches walk with God they will encourage others within the body to pursue their personal spiritual vitality. This characteristic will result in a strong sense of integrity and personal growth to Christ-like maturity both within the church leadership and congregational ranks.
3. **Learning and Growing in Community:** The data shows that this is an area of greatest strength for the A.M.E. Churches within the Virginia Conference. This means that the church leaders are delighted with the options afforded the

membership to congregate in environments conducive to spiritual growth. This is accomplished through small groups, classes for all ages, specialized training opportunities and other gatherings where believers could deepen their faith in God and their relationship with others in their faith community.

- 4. Stewardship and Generosity:** Based on the CHAT survey findings this characteristic was identified as one of the areas of health within the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference. This finding suggests that a significant number of church leaders in the conference believe the churches are engaged in financial stewardship, and that financial resources are being used for kingdom priorities both inside and outside the local church.

Explanation of CHAT Findings (Areas indicated to be most in need of Improvement)

The analysis of the CHAT survey data not only identified areas within the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference that were healthy, it also identified areas that are most in need of improvements. These areas are presented in table 15D.

Table 15D. Comparative Ratings: Characteristics most in Need of Improvement

| Areas Most in Need of Improvement | Leaderships Team (Median Scaled Scores) | Congregation (Median Scaled Scores) |
|---|--|--|
| OF- Outward Focus | 3.75 | 3.13 |
| WAA- Wise Administration and Accountability | 3.71 | 3.00 |
| SLD- Servant Leadership Development | 3.80 | 3.00 |
| LCR- A Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships | 3.62 | 3.12 |
| NBC- Networking with the Body of Christ | 3.33 | 3.00 |
| GEP- God's Empowering Presence | 3.00 | 3.11 |

Table 15D shows the outcome data from the CHAT survey. It presents the areas that the data revealed to be areas most in need of improvements. These results are based on the information provided by the pastors and lay-leaders of the A.M.E. Churches located in the Virginia Conference.

The project will now proceed to extrapolate on each characteristic found to be most in need of improvement so that church leaders would understand their implications for the churches in the Virginia Conference, and implement corrective actions based on the recommendations provided by this project.

- 1. An Outward Focus:** Following the data analysis, “an outward focus” emerged as a characteristic most in need of improvement. This result would indicate that ministry areas of evangelism, social action, international missions, and the care for the poor and impoverished are not effective or not given the attention by church leaders that would indicated they are an integral part of the church and its

mission. It also indicates that reaching outward into the community outside the church is not a priority.

- 2. Wise Administration and Accountability:** This result indicates that church leaders are concerned about the lack of long term strategies for church finances, buildings, administration, missions, and ministry. This result also indicates that church leaders are concerned about the church's lack of or efficiency of the current church's long term administration, structures and systems in producing effective ministries, mission work and overall church effectiveness in the lives of members and the community outside the church.
- 3. Servant Leadership Development:** This characteristic was identified as a trait in need of improvement. This means there is recognition that too few people are handling too much responsibility. This also means the church is not developing fresh initiatives to assist members in discovering their God-given gifts, provide places to utilize their gifts, or train them in developing their gifts. These churches are not commissioning members to serve God in various ministry arenas within and outside the local church. Creating an environment that would identify and train others for church leadership roles, empower and assimilate many into the active ministry of the local church.
- 4. A Commitment to Loving and Caring relationships:** The data shows this characteristic to be one most in need of improvement. This indicates church leaders are concerned about the lack of commitment on the part of the church in building healthy relationships. It also indicated that relationships among church members and families are not shared in tangible ways. In these churches there is a

hesitancy to address problems areas such as communications, conflict resolution, and reconciliation within the framework of God's Word.

- 5. Networking with the Body of Christ:** Following the data analysis, this characteristic emerged as an area most in need of improvement. This result would indicate there is some concern regarding the minimal contact the churches have with the wider body of Christ. When churches connect in a healthy way with other like-minded local churches, there is collaboration, sharing of resources and learning opportunities. This collaboration would also prove beneficial in sharpening the spiritual growth, levels of friendships, and theological convictions of the pastors.
- 6. God's Empowering Presence:** This characteristic was identified as one most in need of improvement. This result indicates that the churches are not actively communicating their plans to God; neither seeking His direction nor the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to spearhead their plans. This outcome would also indicate that the church does not routinely seek the "abiding presence" of the Holy Spirit when they gather for worship and fellowship. In addition, it means that the people in the churches are not actively demonstrating the fruits of the spirit in their daily lives or in their interactions with each other within the body of believers. This is a reminder that God's people need to depend on the Holy Spirit for guidance in their decision making, their relationships, and in every actions lived out in God's name.

Section 4: The Church Information Survey

The aim of this Church Information Survey was to execute a telephone survey on 40% of the pastors of the churches in the Virginia Conference to determine their level of compliance to recommended “best practices” for effective church administration. These best practices are necessary for effectively managing the temporal business of the church. These best practices include:

Table 16. Church Administration Practices

| Pastors: Best Church Administration Practices | Best Practices Continued |
|--|---|
| Prayer | Financial planning |
| Develop members spiritually | Develop worship as a team |
| Develop a worship calendar | Develop building and maintenance plans |
| Adhere to accounting and budgeting principles | Develop and implement mission statements |
| Strategic planning | Networking outside the church |
| Lay leadership training | Effective Communication: Use of computers |

The initial data gathering timeframe for this survey was November 26, 2010 through December 22, 2010. However, due to the snow storm in Virginia that resulted in the closing down of the Virginia Beach and surrounding areas, the survey timeline was extended through December 30, 2010. At the end of this timeframe 21 (33%) of the 63 pastors were interviewed.

This survey was intended to assess the impact of the pastor’s adherence or non-adherence to church administration best practices. The survey information was collected

via telephone interviews to the pastors. The telephone numbers published in the District Directories were used to contact the pastors. The survey consisted of seventeen questions. These are presented in table 17.

Table 17. Church Information Survey Questions

| Areas 1 – 9 | Areas 10 – 17 |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a standing prayer time daily? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you use the computer in your church? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you prepare a sermon schedule for the conference year? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you use the computer in your worship service? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who usually selects the music for the worship service? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the church have a five-year strategic plan? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the church use a printed bulletin in their worship services? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the church have a long-range financial plan? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What day and time does the church have Bible Study? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the church have a long-range building plan? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What other teaching opportunities are available to members during the week? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the church have a mission statement? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the church have written job descriptions for each leadership position? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a monthly basis, how often do you meet with your church lay-leaders? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many schools within a 5-mile radius does the church work with? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many seminars or church related workshops did your officers attend last year? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the church have a computer? | |

Church Information Survey Findings

Do you have a standing prayer time daily?

Standing

| Prayer Time | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------------|-------|---------|--------|
| No | 4 | 19.05 | 19.05 |
| Yes | 17 | 80.95 | 100.00 |

81% of the respondents reported having a standing prayer time.

Do you have a prayer team /partner(s)?

| Prayer Team/ Partners | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| No | 11 | 52.38 | 52.38 |
| Yes | 10 | 47.62 | 100.00 |

47% of the respondents reported having a prayer team/prayer partner(s).

If yes to previous question, how often do you meet during the week?

| Prayer Team/ Or Partners | Prayer Team Freq per Week | | | | | Total |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| | 2-3 times | More than | N/A | Once | Other | |
| No | 0 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 0 | 11 |
| | 0.00 | 0.00 | 90.91 | 9.09 | 0.00 | 100.00 |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 10 |
| | 10.00 | 10.00 | 0.00 | 60.00 | 20.00 | 100.00 |

60% of the respondents who reported having a prayer team/partner(s) met once per week, 10% met 2-3 times per week, 10% met more than three times per week and 20% reported other meeting frequency.

How many hours do you spend each day in personal prayer?

| Personal Prayer | Hours | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------|-------|-------|---------|------|
| -----+ | | | | |

| | | | |
|------------------|----|-------|--------|
| 1-2 hours | 13 | 61.90 | 61.90 |
| 3-4 hours | 1 | 4.76 | 66.67 |
| Less than 1 hour | 7 | 33.33 | 100.00 |

33% of the respondents reported spending less than one hour per day in personal prayer. 60% spent 1-2 hours and 5% spent 3-4 hours per day.

Do you prepare a sermon schedule for the conference year?

| Do you prepare a Sermon Schedule For the Year | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---|-------|---------|--------|
| No | 21 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

If no to question #5, what schedule do you use?

| Sermon Planning Freq. | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 4 | 19.05 | 19.05 |
| Monthly | 1 | 4.76 | 23.81 |
| Quarterly | 1 | 4.76 | 28.57 |
| Weekly | 15 | 71.43 | 100.00 |

100% of the responders indicated that they do not prepare a sermon schedule for the conference year. 71% prepare weekly sermons, 5% monthly, 5% quarterly and 19% did not respond.

With whom do you plan your worship services?

| Plan Worship | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|----------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| _Minister of Music | 10 | 47.62 | 47.62 |
| Yes Plan Worship Sun | 11 | 52.36 | 100.00 |
| School Teacher | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
| . | 21 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

| Plan Worship _Sun School _Sup. | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--------------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| . | 21 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

| Plan Worship _Bible Study _Teachers | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---|-------|---------|--------|
| . | 21 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

| Plan Worship _Choir Dir. | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 20 | 95.24 | 95.24 |
| Yes | 1 | 4.76 | 100.00 |

| Plan Worship _Other | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| . | 21 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

52% of the respondents reported planning their worship services with the Minister of Music / Musician, and 5% with the Choir Director. No pastor reported planning worship services with Sunday school, or Bible study teachers, neither with their Sunday school superintendent, or other staff.

Who usually selects the music for your Worship Service?

| Select Music_Min Music/

| Select Music | Musician | | Total |
|--------------|----------|-------|--------|
| _Pastor | Minister | | |
| | 0 | 12 | 12 |
| | 0.00 | 57.14 | 57.14 |
| Pastor | 5 | 4 | 9 |
| | 23.81 | 19.05 | 42.86 |
| Total | 5 | 16 | 21 |
| | 23.81 | 76.19 | 100.00 |

24% of the respondents reported that the pastor selects the music for the worship service, 57% reported the Minister of Music or the musician, and 19% the pastor together with the Minister of Music or musician select the music.

Do you have a printed bulletin in your Worship Service?

| Printed Bulletin | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| Yes | 21 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

100% of the respondents report having a printed bulletin in their Worship Service.

What is the average length of your Worship Service (in Minutes)?

| Av Length of service in min | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| 120 | 10 | 47.62 | 47.62 |
| 90 | 8 | 38.10 | 85.71 |
| 105 | 2 | 9.52 | 95.24 |
| 150 | 1 | 4.76 | 100.00 |

38% reported worship services lasting on average 90 minutes, 10% an average of 105 minutes, 48% on average 120 minutes and 5% an average of 150 minutes.

Are the announcements read in your Worship Service?

| Announcements Read | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| Yes | 21 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

100% of the respondents reported that announcements are read in their Worship Service.

What is the average time (minutes) spent on all announcements?

Average time on |
all announcements |

| -In minutes- | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--------------|-------|---------|--------|
| 5 | 6 | 28.57 | 28.57 |
| 9 | 4 | 19.05 | 47.62 |
| 10 | 4 | 19.05 | 66.67 |
| 4 | 2 | 9.52 | 76.19 |
| 8 | 1 | 4.76 | 80.95 |
| 8.5 | 1 | 4.76 | 85.71 |
| 11.5 | 1 | 4.76 | 90.48 |
| 12.5 | 1 | 4.76 | 95.24 |
| 15 | 1 | 4.76 | 100.00 |

28% of the responders spent ≤5 minutes on announcements. 58% spent 6-11 minutes, and 14% more than 11 minutes on announcements during worship services.

What day/time do you have Bible Study?

Day Bible |

| Study Taught | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--------------|-------|---------|--------|
| N/A | 4 | 19.05 | 19.05 |
| Tuesday | 1 | 4.76 | 23.81 |
| Wednesday | 16 | 76.19 | 100.00 |

76% of the respondents reported having Bible Study on Wednesdays, 5% on Mondays and 19% did not have Bible Study during the week.

| Time of Bible study | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| N/A | 4 | 19.05 | 19.05 |
| PM | 15 | 71.43 | 90.48 |
| Mid-day | 2 | 9.52 | 100.00 |

71% of the respondents held Bible Study in the evening, 10% at mid-day and 19% did not hold Bible Study during the weekday.

What other teaching opportunities are available to the membership during the week?

| What other teaching opportunities are available to the membership during the week | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---|-------|---------|--------|
| Men's Ministry, Women's Ministry, RAYAC | 1 | 4.76 | 4.76 |
| Men's group on - 1s Saturday monthly | 1 | 4.76 | 9.52 |
| N/A | 1 | 4.76 | 14.29 |
| None | 6 | 28.57 | 42.86 |
| None offered at the church. Members go | 1 | 4.76 | 47.62 |
| Noon day Prayer on Tuesday | 1 | 4.76 | 52.38 |
| Sunday New | 1 | 4.76 | 57.14 |
| Sunday school | 1 | 4.76 | 61.90 |
| Tuesday-Noon Bible Study | 1 | 4.76 | 66.67 |
| Wednesday at noon intercessory Prayer | 1 | 4.76 | 71.43 |
| Wednesday noon | 1 | 4.76 | 76.19 |
| When persons come to the soup kitchen | 1 | 4.76 | 80.95 |
| No other | 1 | 4.76 | 85.71 |
| None | 4 | 19.05 | 100.00 |
| Total | 21 | 100.00 | |

62% of the responders reported that, apart from Bible study, no other teaching opportunities are available to members during the week. 18% of the responders indicated that apart from Bible study, there is one additional teaching opportunity available for the membership during the week.

Does your church have written job descriptions for each leadership position?

| Does your church have written job descriptions for each leadership position? | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--|-------|---------|--------|
| No | 16 | 76.19 | 76.19 |
| Other (please specify) | 2 | 9.52 | 85.71 |
| Yes | 3 | 14.29 | 100.00 |

76% of the respondents reported that their church did not have written job descriptions for each leadership position. 24% reported having written job descriptions for each leadership position.

How many schools within a 5-mile radius does the church work with?

| Number of Schools | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| 0 | 15 | 71.43 | 71.43 |
| 1 | 1 | 4.76 | 76.19 |
| 2 | 3 | 14.29 | 90.48 |
| 3 | 1 | 4.76 | 95.24 |
| 5 | 1 | 4.76 | 100.00 |

71% of the respondents reported that their church did not work with any schools within a 5-mile radius. 5% worked with one school, 15% worked with two schools and 10% worked with three or more schools.

Does your church have a computer?

| Church Computer | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------|-------|---------|--------|
| No | 3 | 14.29 | 14.29 |
| Yes | 18 | 85.71 | 100.00 |
| Total | 21 | 100.00 | |

86% of the respondents reported that their church has a computer. 14% did not have a computer. Of the churches without a computer, none reported having access to a computer.

Year purchased

| Computer Year purchased | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| 2004 | 5 | 27.78 | 27.78 |
| 2005 | 3 | 16.67 | 44.44 |
| 2006 | 3 | 16.67 | 61.11 |
| 2007 | 3 | 16.67 | 77.78 |
| 2008 | 2 | 11.11 | 88.89 |
| 2009 | 1 | 5.56 | 94.44 |
| 2010 | 1 | 5.56 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

28% of the computers were purchased in 2004, 33% during 2005-2006, 28% during 2007-2008, and 11% during 2009-2010

If no to previous question, does your church have access to a computer?

| Computer Access/other | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| N/A | 18 | 85.71 | 85.71 |
| No | 3 | 14.29 | 100.00 |
| Total | 21 | 100.00 | |

What is the operating system on your computer?

| Computers | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|----------------|-------|---------|--------|
| MS Vista | 5 | 27.78 | 27.78 |
| MS Windows 7 | 1 | 5.56 | 33.33 |
| MS Windows NT | 1 | 5.56 | 38.89 |
| MS Windows XP | 5 | 27.78 | 66.67 |
| Microsoft 2005 | 6 | 33.33 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

If yes to Question 17, how do you use the computer in your church? Check all that apply:

To maintain and manage membership roles

| Use Computer Membership Roles | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 6 | 33.33 | 33.33 |
| Yes | 12 | 66.67 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

To maintain financial data

| Use Comp to Maintain Fin. data | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--------------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 6 | 33.33 | 33.33 |
| Yes | 12 | 66.67 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

To prepare financial records

| Use Comp to Prepare fin Records | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 7 | 38.89 | 38.89 |
| Yes | 11 | 61.11 | 100.00 |

To provide information to church members

| Use Comp to Provide info To members | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---|-------|---------|--------|
| | 4 | 22.22 | 22.22 |
| Yes | 14 | 77.78 | 100.00 |

To provide information to the general public

| Use Comp to Provide info |
|-----------------------------|
|-----------------------------|

| To Public | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 11 | 61.11 | 61.11 |
| Yes | 7 | 38.89 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

For church announcements

| Use Comp for Church announcements | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 14 | 77.78 | 77.78 |
| Yes | 4 | 22.22 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

To solicit financial contributions

| Use Comp to Solicit Finances | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 15 | 83.33 | 83.33 |
| Yes | 3 | 16.67 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

As a teaching tool

| Use Comp As Teaching Tool | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 14 | 77.78 | 77.78 |
| Yes | 4 | 22.22 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

As a reservoir for past messages

| Use Comp to Store pastor Messages | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 13 | 72.22 | 72.22 |
| Yes | 5 | 27.78 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

For email communications

| Use Comp for Email | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 12 | 66.67 | 66.67 |
| Yes | 6 | 33.33 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

To stream your worship services via the web

| Use Comp to Stream Services | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 17 | 94.44 | 94.44 |
| Yes | 1 | 5.56 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

When are you planning to upgrade your computer system?

-> Church computer = No

-> Tabulation of when planning to upgrade computer

| When Planning To Upgrade Computer | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| No current plans | 3 | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Total | 3 | 100.00 | |

None of the churches currently without a computer had plans to upgrade.

-> Church computer = Yes

-> Tabulation of when planning to upgrade computer

| When Planning To Upgrade Computer | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| No current plans | 16 | 88.89 | 88.89 |
| This year | 2 | 11.11 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

11% of the churches with computers had plans to upgrade their computer system this year. 89% had no current plans to upgrade.

Do you use the computer in your worship services?

| Use Computer In Service | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| No | 17 | 94.44 | 94.44 |
| Yes | 1 | 5.56 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

11% of the churches with computers reported using the computer as a Bible Study teaching tool and 6% reported using it in Worship services. No church reported using their computer to broadcast upcoming events and activities, to project information during the message, or to provide the words to the songs/hymns being sung.

To broadcast upcoming events and activities

| Use Computer In Service to Broadcast Events and Activities | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--|-------|---------|------|
|--|-------|---------|------|

| | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|--------|
| N/A | 1 | 5.56 | 5.56 |
| | 17 | 94.44 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

To project information during the message

| Use computer In worship Service | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------|
| N/A | 1 | 5.56 | 5.56 |
| | 17 | 94.44 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

To provide the words to the songs/hymns being sung

| Use Computer In Service Words to Hymns | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--|-----------|---------------|--------|
| N/A | 1 | 5.56 | 5.56 |
| | 17 | 94.44 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

As a Bible study teaching tool

| Use computer In Bible Study | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------|
| N/A | 16 | 88.89 | 88.89 |
| Yes | 2 | 11.11 | 100.00 |
| Total | 18 | 100.00 | |

Does your church have a five year strategic plan?

| Have 5 year Strategic Plan | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|----------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------|
| No | 19 | 90.48 | 90.48 |
| Yes | 2 | 9.52 | 100.00 |
| Total | 21 | 100.00 | |

10% of the respondents reported having a five year strategic plan. 37% without a plan reported, they don't know how to create one, 5% reported they don't think the plan is important, 16% never considered developing one, 42% thought about it but never got around to it, 21% operate day by day and don't see the value of a strategic plan, and 26% have a plan for a shorter time-frame. No church reported having developed a five year strategic plan but not used it.

We don't know how
Five Yr Plan_ |
Don't Know How |

| | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 12 | 63.16 | 63.16 |
| Yes | 7 | 36.84 | 100.00 |
| Total | 19 | 100.00 | |

We do not think it is important
Five Yr Plan |
Not important |

| | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 18 | 94.74 | 94.74 |
| Yes | 1 | 5.26 | 100.00 |
| Total | 19 | 100.00 | |

We never considered developing one
5 Yr Plan |
Never |
Considered |
Dev- one |

| | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 16 | 84.21 | 84.21 |
| Yes | 3 | 15.79 | 100.00 |
| Total | 19 | 100.00 | |

We thought about it, but never got around to it
Never Got |
Around to |
Doing it |

| | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 11 | 57.89 | 57.89 |
| Yes | 8 | 42.11 | 100.00 |
| Total | 19 | 100.00 | |

We developed one, but never used it
Developed but |
Never used |

| | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 19 | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Total | 19 | 100.00 | |

We operate day by day, and don't see the value
5 Yr Plan |
Don't see value |

| | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 15 | 78.95 | 78.95 |
| Yes | 4 | 21.05 | 100.00 |
| Total | 19 | 100.00 | |

We have one for a shorter timeframe

| Have plan with Shorter time Frame | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 14 | 73.68 | 73.68 |
| Yes | 5 | 26.32 | 100.00 |
| Total | 19 | 100.00 | |

Does your church have a long range (Multi- year) financial plan?

| Long range Fin Plan | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| No | 16 | 76.19 | 76.19 |
| Yes | 5 | 23.81 | 100.00 |
| Total | 21 | 100.00 | |

24% of the churches report having a Long range (Multi-year) financial plan.

Does your church have a long-range (multi-year) building plan?

| Long Range Build- Plan | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| No | 15 | 71.43 | 71.43 |
| Yes | 6 | 28.57 | 100.00 |
| Total | 21 | 100.00 | |

29% of the churches report having a Long range (Multi-year) building plan.

Does your church have a mission statement?

| Have Mission Statement | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| No | 9 | 42.86 | 42.86 |
| Yes | 12 | 57.14 | 100.00 |
| Total | 21 | 100.00 | |

57% of the churches have a mission statement.

On a monthly basis, how often do you meet with your lay-leaders?

| Meet with Lay Leaders Per Month | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|---------------------------------|-------|---------|--------|
| 1 | 19 | 90.48 | 90.48 |
| 2 | 2 | 9.52 | 100.00 |
| Total | 21 | 100.00 | |

90% meet once/month with their Lay-Leaders and 10% twice monthly.

How many seminars or church related workshops did your officers attend last year?

| Seminars Attended by Officers Last Yr | Freq. | Percent | Cum. |
|--|-------|---------|--------|
| 0 | 10 | 47.62 | 47.62 |
| 1 | 4 | 19.05 | 66.67 |
| 2 | 3 | 14.29 | 80.95 |
| 3 | 3 | 14.29 | 95.24 |
| 6 | 1 | 4.76 | 100.00 |
| Total | 21 | 100.00 | |

Waldo Werning indicated that “Church Growth is the will of God. Those who take church growth seriously are not playing the numbers game. Rather they staunchly move forward as instruments of God to find lost men and women, bring them into the fold of the Good Shepherd, and feed them with the Word of God’s glory.”⁴

The results of the Church Information survey indicate areas where pastors are doing well and others where improvements could be made. Dr Earley sited the profound message communicated by Dr. Sanders who stated that “leadership is influence”⁵ In addressing the importance of prayer, Sanders indicated that “Since leadership is the ability to move and influence people, the spiritual leader will be alert to discover the most effective way of doing this... Prayer influences men by influencing God to influence them.”⁶

⁴ Werning, *Vision and Strategy for Church Growth*, 7.

⁵ David Early, *Quoted In the Introduction to Prayer: The Timeless Secret of High-Impact Leaders* (Chattanooga, TN: Living Ink Books, 2008), x.

⁶ *Ibid.*, x

Vision and strategy for church growth: Werning asserted that, “any definition of ecclesiastical effectiveness must include setting objectives and goals.” To set these goals and objective the church leader must ask the question, “What kind of church would we like to be five years from now” Werning indicated that :

Church growth goal setting is not an attempt to program renewal in the church, nor is it an individual event or one shot of spiritual adrenalin. Setting goals has its positive influence in providing a raised vision and in developing church growth eyes that see church work in 20-20 perspective. The process requires an open mind and a seeking heart that shed negative ways and expects God to lead people to their mission in this time.⁷

This author presented several areas of church Management. These are presented in Table 18.

Table 18. Areas of Church Management

| Areas of Church Management | Church Management Areas continued |
|--|---|
| Implementing and communicating visions | Strategic leadership |
| Church accounting and budgeting | Staffing the church |
| Long range financial planning | Developing class systems for the spiritual growth and development of the church |
| Planning the Worship Service as a Team | Hiring the right mix of staff persons |
| Developing church leaders | Marketing the church |
| Reclaiming inactive members | Engage in Evangelism and missionary work |

The pastoral interview data revealed that 10% of the pastors had implemented a strategic plan. These plans were for periods of 2-3 years in duration. Many pastors indicated they choose not to develop 5-year plans because their term of assignment to the

⁷ Werning, 47.

Congregation was on an annual basis. Survey findings in relation to the management principles include:

Implementing and communicating visions: According to Heifetz and Linsky “leadership addresses emotional as well as conceptual work.” This means, when leaders lead people through difficult change, they are taken on an emotional roller coaster because they are being asked to relinquish something – a belief, a value, a behavior- that they hold dear.⁸

Nine percent (9%) of the pastors interviewed indicated having a strategic plan for their Congregation. These 2-3 year plans allowed for some future planning. Of concern are 1) the 88% of pastors who do not have strategic plans; 2) the 19% who function on a day to day basis and did not see the value of a strategic plan, and 3) the 33% of pastors who do not know how to develop and implement a strategic plan.

Church accounting and budgeting: Managing, handling and accounting for God’s money may not be a pastoral priority. However, once God’s instruction about being a good steward of His resources is understood, a pastor will quickly learn to “manage God’s money in such a way as to honor Him and protect the good name of His church and His people.”⁹ According to Henry, pastors must develop money management skills. “This means they “must master the art of developing and executing a spending plan.”¹⁰ Money management skills would equip pastors with skills needed for developing

⁸ Heifetz and Linsky, *Leadership on the Line*, 117.

⁹ Jack A. Henry, *Basic Accounting for Churches: A Turnkey Manual* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 1.

¹⁰ Ibid., 7

and managing a system to 1) receive, 2) record, 3) Budget, 4) spend, and 5) prepare appropriate reports to manage the various finance related transactions.

Based on the survey 57% of the pastors indicated using the computer to maintain membership roles, and financial records. 52% use the computer to prepare financial records only. None of the pastors indicated using the computer as a means of determining the net worth of the church. In addition, churches with computers were not using them as a means of soliciting financial assistance from members or external sources.

Nineteen percent (19%) of the pastors interviewed indicated using the computer as a teaching tool during Bible study and business meetings. None of the pastors interviewed indicated using the computer as a communication tool during their worship services. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the pastors indicated using the computer for providing information to members of their Congregation, while 4.8% used it to stream worship services on the World Wide Web.

Long range financial planning: The survey found that 76% of the pastors who responded do not have a long range (multi-year) financial plan. Twenty-three percent (23%) have financial plans. However, these plans are for 2 and 3 year durations.

Designing the worship Service (as a team): Cordeiro pointed out that “one of the most critical keys of doing church as a team is to build an ever-increasing core of servant-leaders. No pastor was designed to do church alone.”¹¹ The survey found that 100% of the pastors surveyed do not prepare a sermon schedule for the Conference year.

Regarding the frequency of sermon preparation, the survey found that 82% of the pastors

¹¹ Wayne Cordeiro, *Doing Church as a Team: The Miracle of Teamwork and How it Transforms Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2004), 87.

prepare their sermon messages on a weekly schedule, 12% use a monthly schedule, and 6% prepare their messages on a quarterly schedule.

For the question, *with whom do you plan your worship services?* The survey shows that 84% of pastors share their messages with their Minister of Music/Musician. The data also shows that 4% of the pastors' work with their Choir director to plan worship services. Regarding the selection of music for worship services, the survey finds that 76% of the pastors make music selections jointly with their Minister of Music/Musician. The survey also finds that 43% are solely responsible for selecting music for worship services.

The survey found that 100% of the pastors were using a printed bulletin in their worship service. 100% of the pastors also had announcements read during their worship services. A significant number of churches spend on average 3-15 minutes reading announcements during their worship service. Based on the survey results, worship services lasted for approximately 90 – 150 minutes.

Developing church leaders: Dave Earley in stressing the importance of leadership in the church asserted that “leadership ability is the determining factor. The single greatest hindrance to ministry growth is the lack of true leadership.”¹² He continued his admonition by stating that the greatest strength a ministry has in not in the resources it possesses, rather “it is leadership.”¹³ Prayer, according to Earley is a fundamental component for any person who desires to be effective as a spiritual leader,

¹² Dave Earley, *the Small group Leader's Toolkit: Ten Power Tools for Personal Leadership Development* (Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 2008), 11.

¹³ Ibid.

even effective in Ministry. According to Earley the leader must be a person who spends quality time engaged in prayer. Jesus, knowing the value and results of prayer, admonished his disciples to “pray and not give up” (Luke 18:1) NIV.

Prayer is thus an essential component of effective spiritual leadership. Based on the results of the Church Information Survey, 62% of the pastors indicated praying 1-2 hours per day; 33% spend less than one hour per day engaged in prayer. This is indeed an area where improvement is needed.

Moving people from the pews into effective ministry and mission work: In their book *Comeback churches* Stetzer and Dodson communicated that “pastors should no longer see themselves as the only ministers of the church, That God has placed a whole army of people around them with gifts, talents, skills, and abilities to mobilize and empower. The people need to become ministers as well.”¹⁴ On the importance of developing leaders, the project has selected five of Earley’s eight steps. These are: 1) leaders must dream of multiplying leaders, 2) leaders must demonstrate multiplying leadership, 3) leaders must discover potential leaders, 4) leaders must describe the vision to potential leaders, and 5) leaders must develop potential leaders into leaders.¹⁵

Based on the survey findings, 90% of the pastors interviewed indicated that, apart from the Wednesday night Bible Study, there was no other teaching opportunity available to members during the week. In addition, 30% of the pastors indicated that they meet with their lay-leaders just one time per month. This occurrence is for their monthly

¹⁴ Stetzer and Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, 133.

¹⁵ Dave Earley, *Turning Members into Leaders: How to Raise up Your Group Members to Lead New Groups* (Houston TX: Cell Group Resources, 2003), 12.

Official Board meeting. Three percent (3%) of the pastors meet with their lay-leaders twice monthly, while 2% meet 3-4 times monthly.

The survey showed that lay-leaders from 5% of the churches attended more than four church related workshops or seminars during the previous Conference Year.

Thirteen percent (13%) of the churches had lay-leaders who attended 1-3 church related workshops and or seminars during the previous Conference Year. Lay leaders from 16% of the churches surveyed did not attend any church related workshops or seminars during the previous Conference year.

Marketing the church: Based on the survey results 86% of the pastors indicated they had a computer in their church. A significant number use the computer to provide information to church members. Fourteen percent (14%) use the computer to solicit financial contributions, and 33% use it to provide announcements to the general public. Ninety percent (90%) of the pastors indicated having no current plans to upgrade their computer systems. Regarding the computer operating systems, 28% have Windows 2005, while XP and MS Vista account for 23% of current operating systems.

In the CHAT survey, the Leadership Team identified networking with the body of Christ as an area most in need of improvement. This result would indicate there is concern about the minimal level of contact the local churches have with the wider body of Christ. The resulting consequence would be limited sharing of resources, missed opportunities for learning, leadership development, and united worship experiences.

Strategic leadership: Strategic leadership can only be accomplished in an environment governed by a strategic plan. Earley indicated that a leader must possess

purpose. Leaders “must see possibilities of the future when others only see problems.”¹⁶ Based on the Church Information Survey, 10% of the pastors indicated having a five year strategic plan, 42% thought about it, but never got around to it, 21% operated on a day to day basis, and did not see the value in a five year strategic plan. The survey revealed that 26% of the churches have strategic plans for periods shorter than five years. Based on the survey results, this is an area in need of improvement.

The survey further revealed that 43% of the churches do not have a mission statement, and 90% of the pastors only meet once per month with their lay leaders. These churches do not present opportunities for growing up their leaders spiritually and equipping them for effective leadership and ministry. This is another area in need of improvement.

Staffing the Church: The survey did not specifically inquire into these this area, however, the negative response from 76% of pastors to the question: *Does the church have a long range (multi-year) financial plan?* Would indicate these churches are not planning for staff additions, either paid or volunteer.

48% of the pastors indicated their lay leaders did not attend any church related workshops or seminars during the last conference year. In addition, 76% meet for Bible study on one evening during the week. This is not enough time to effectively train and develop potential leaders. 19% of the churches indicated not having any Bible study. Rather, their members receive their spiritual teaching from other Congregations in their respective home communities.

¹⁶ Earley, *the Small Group leader's Toolkit*, 53.

In introducing *Basic Budgeting for Churches*, Jack Henry asserted that:

Pastors and churches seldom have all the money they would like to have to do what they want for God. Sometimes pastors and churches excuse their lack of accomplishments for God by telling themselves that they have done the best they could with what they have- and sometimes that is not entirely true. The entire truth may be that they have done the best they know how to do; but because they do not know how to develop and operate a simple budget, they have missed the “best” and have settled for the “best they know how.”¹⁷

An important component in being able to staff churches for growth involves being able to budget for the anticipated expenses. This survey did not specifically set out to evaluate the budget preparation skills of the pastors. However, the findings relative to their preparation and attitude toward the development and execution of strategic plans would suggest that this element is not specifically adhered to. In Luke 14:28-30 Jesus reminds believers “to calculate the cost” to ensure enough funds are available to complete the intended project.

100% of the pastors indicated meeting with their lay leaders once per month. This would indicate a lack of training and development for lay leaders who could then lead/staff ministries and perform other training and development functions. Jesus demonstrated the importance of the team concept. While on earth He invested everything he had in a Team. The Bible knows nothing of solo ministry, for example the Apostle Paul in his epistle to Titus wrote “for this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you” (Titus 1:5). Also Ephesians 4:11-12 clearly makes the point that everyone in the church is to be involved

¹⁷ Jack A. Henry, *Basic Budgeting for Churches: A Complete Guide* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 1.

directly in some sort of ministry within the church. It is crucial for pastors to recognize that “ministry by lay persons is crucial to the health and growth of any church.”¹⁸

Evangelism and missionary work: Stetzer and Dodson indicate that developing an effective evangelism strategy requires a good plan. In Addition those involved must be willing to go “fishing” with more than one type of lure.”¹⁹ An effective evangelism strategy is developed in stages and requires motivating people to move from the being by-standers to becoming active followers of Christ.

In the CHAT survey 49% the church leaders surveyed identified “an Outward Focus” as one of the characteristics of the church most in need of improvement. This means evangelistic activities are not being undertaken, and if they are, they not done with any real vitality or as priority activities.

Reclaiming inactive members: The Church Information Survey did not address this component. However, in the CHAT survey pastors and lay leaders were asked about the extent to which the church *focused outward* and committed to *loving, caring relationships within the church community*. In the first instance 61% of the lay leaders and 49% of the Leadership Team indicated “an outward focus” as one of the areas within the church most in need of improvement. In the second instance, 42% of lay leaders in the CHAT survey indicated that this was an area of strength within the church.

¹⁸ Gary L. McIntosh, *Staff your Church for Growth: Building Team Ministry in the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 17.

¹⁹ Stetzer and Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, 99.

Conclusions

The analysis of the data in both the CHAT and Church Information surveys provide a work plan for the leadership of the churches in the Virginia Conference. In addition, the surveys provide a series of baseline data that church leaders could use to measure (compare) future levels in church health and the performance of pastors in the implementation of effective church administration strategies. The next chapter will identify specific areas of the church and church administration practices that the surveys identified as healthy. This project will recommend that church leaders continue to work on maintaining their efforts in these areas. In addition, it will outline the areas that the surveys identified as most in need of improvement.

The project will, in the next chapter, present some specific recommendations that when implemented, will result in improvements to the individual churches, increased effectiveness for the pastors, Congregations that are developing members for evangelism and leadership responsibilities, and local church environments where members could grow spiritually. These recommendations will ultimately increase the effectiveness of the churches located in the Virginia Conference. Peter D. Unruh, in an article entitled “Ground Rules for Church Growth,” presented some warnings for church leaders regarding strategy and church growth. He indicated that:

- 1) **Don’t try to superimpose someone else’s program** - reproducing the program of a successful church may lead to frustration rather than growth.
- 2) **Don’t increase all activity**- A church is not experiencing growth just because the bulletin is crowded with announcements and the church lights are blazing every night.
- 3) **Don’t just pray and believe** – There is no magic formula which will produce a short cut to church growth. It does not happen without intense effort.
- 4)

Don't make numerical growth the primary object – everything is not all right just because people and money are present.²⁰

²⁰ Peter D. Unruh, "Ground Rules for Church Growth," *Action* (Spring 1975), 15-16.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHURCH HEALTH AND GROWTH

Strategies for Church Health and Growth

Out of the 70 questions asked on the CHAT Survey, the Leadership Team gave the following specific questions their lowest mark:

- 1. Mean Score: 2.57 out of 5**
Do you have the impression that the pastors within our city or town meet regularly enough to pray for and encourage each other? (NBC)
- 2. Mean Score: 2.91 out of 5**
How well does our church serve as a place for supporting the needs of those who come from dysfunctional families? (LCR)
- 3. Mean Score: 2.93 out of 5**
How well does our church develop a strategy for global awareness and international mission involvement? (OF)

Out of the 70 questions asked on the CHAT Survey, the Congregation gave the following specific questions their lowest mark (more than one question indicates a tie in the mean response):

- 1. Mean Score: 2.69 out of 5**
Do you have the impression that the pastors within our city or town meet regularly enough to pray for and encourage each other? (NBC)
- 2. Mean Score: 2.79 out of 5**
How well does our church develop a strategy for global awareness and international mission involvement? (OF)
- 3. Mean Score: 2.86 out of 5**
How well does our church attend to the needs of the world's most impoverished people? (OF)

According to Werning,

Church growth is not a statistical display or exercise. Nor is it a mechanical or psychological approach to arouse church members to do that which they are not motivated to do. It is not man doing God's work. But rather church leaders are working by God's grace and the Holy Spirit's enlightenment as they look at all God's resources for their situation. It is not merely a system but a church using God's Word effectively in its cultural and sociological setting.¹

This author went on to point out that God is concerned with mankind's salvation. In fact the Bible says in 2 Peter 3:9 that our Heavenly Father is not willing that one person should perish. C. Peter Wagner wrote that God is not pleased with:

- Fishing without catching (Luke 5:4-11)
- An empty banquet table (Luke 14: 15-23)
- Sowing without reaping (Matt. 13: 3-9)
- A fig tree that bears no figs (Luke 13: 6-9)
- Lost sheep that are not brought into the fold (Matt. 18: 11-14)
- A lost coin that is sought but not found (Luke 15: 8-10)
- Ripe harvests that are not reaped (Matt 9: 36-38)
- Proclamation without response (Matt. 10:14)²

In a similar vein Ralph Winter indicated that:

The very phrase church growth implies an additional dimension of emphasis beyond conversion, since it focuses not on how many raise their hands at an evangelistic service but on the incorporation of the new believer into church

¹ Werning, 11.

² C. Peter Wagner, "Church Growth: More than Man, a Magazine, a School, a Book," Christianity Today (December 7, 1973), 12.

life.... The very concept of church growth is an attempt to emphasize the quality of corporate life beyond the quantity of individual decisions.³

Barna in describing an “effective church” described it as one where lives are being transformed, and people are becoming more Christ-like. These churches, through their ministries and mission work are changing the way their members live. According to this author, “when a church is able to constantly facilitate a personal metamorphosis among its people, then it is operating in the realm of effectiveness.”⁴

CHAT Survey: Recommendations for Areas Most in Need of Improvement

Table 19 – CHAT Survey Findings: Areas Most in Need of Improvement

| Areas Most in Need of Improvement | Leadership Team | Congregation |
|--|------------------------|---------------------|
| OF - An Outward Focus | X | X |
| LCR - A Commitment to Loving & Caring Relationships | X | X |
| NBC - Networking with the Body of Christ | X | X |
| GEP - God’s Empowering Presence | X | X |
| WAA - Wise Administration and Accountability | X | X |
| SLD – Servant Leadership Development | X | X |

³ Ralph D. Winter, “*Quality or Quantity*,” in *Crucial Issues in Missions Today*, ed., Donald McGavran (Chicago: Moody, 1972), 175.

⁴ George Barna, *Habits of Highly Effective Churches: Being Strategic in Your God Given Ministry* (Ventura, CA: Regal 1999), 15.

Table 19 displays the areas in the A.M.E. Churches located within the Virginia Conference that were identified by the CHAT survey to be most in need of improvement. This chapter will present some specific recommendations that when implemented, will improve the health of the churches in these specific characteristics, and ultimately the effectiveness of the churches. The recommendations will also raise the awareness of the church leaders and membership regarding their responsibilities as believers in the service of Jesus Christ. Regarding church health Wagner noted that:

It would be nice if churches were not sick. Many, I am glad to report, are not. This is not to say that any would be considered either by themselves or by outside observers as being perfect. It is not uncommon, however, to find churches that are fairly normal, that are growing, and that function from day to day more or less the way God designed them. Others, unfortunately, are not what they really should be, except perhaps in the most minimal way. It is not inaccurate to describe such churches as sick.⁵

Sylva asserted that Jesus envisioned His church to be a “living, breathing organism- a beautiful body where people would serve as His hands and feet to a dying world. A place identified as a unique “community.” A place where persons are committed to the spiritual growth and well being of each other, and to the advancement of God’s kingdom.⁶ He went on to say that “the church of this generation needs to look much different than the church of our parents’ generation.” It must interact with the community outside of its walls. The church, according to Sylvia, must be willing to experiment and try new methodologies “with the unchanging message of Christ.

⁵ C. Peter Wagner, *The Healthy Church: Avoiding and Curing the 9 Diseases that can Affect Any Church* (Ventura CA: Regal, 1979), 7.

⁶ Ron Sylvia, *Starting New Churches on Purpose: Strategies for the 21st Century* (Lake Forest, CA: Purpose Driven Publishing, 2006), 3.

A serious obstruction to church growth, which Green mentioned in his book, is the prevailing “*come*” strategy, in which the church opens the door and waits for the people, but the members do not go out. Growth he asserts ceases because soul-winning is seldom practiced. He claims that the “*come*” structure has robbed the church of effective “*go*” evangelistic strategy.⁷

The A. M. E. Churches in the Virginia Conference also has a charge to birth and develop new communities of faith (churches), and or initiate small group ministries in order to expand the army responsible for taking the “message of the cross” to a dying world.

McClain concluded that the early Methodist preacher was seriously concerned about the state of the unconverted person’s soul, that conversions became their primary focus. Therefore these Methodist ministers and church leaders spent time:

Exhorting the slave by visualizing, personalizing, and dramatizing the nature of sin and salvation to picture the darkness of sin and the glorious light of salvation. He helped them to see the beauty of the Father seeking after the son who is the prodigal. He helped them to feel the weight of sin, to picture in their minds the threats of hell, and to accept Christ as their only Savior . . . A reminder of the day when, and the hour when “the dungeon shook and the chains flew off.”⁸

There is no argument that the levels of growth (numerical and or spiritual) prevailing in the Church today are less than ideal. The church is at a critical juncture in its evangelical mission to the world. The CHAT findings, and data provided by the Church Information Survey suggest that church leaders consider responses to the question; *what kind of church would we like to be five years from now?* Responses to this question would then define the Church’s conviction(s) or objectives. The leaders of the church must then

⁷ Hollis L. Green, *Why Churches Die* (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1972), 136.

⁸ McClain, 27.

become purposeful in establishing the relevant objectives, developing appropriate strategies and intentionally move to execute and implement the life giving and health producing strategies.

Werning pointed out the importance of church leaders adhering to the eight functions of the church presented in the Bible. These include 1) Cultivating worship; 2) Undertaking and promoting Christian Education; 3) Equipping members for service; 4) Promoting evangelism and mission work; 5) Shepherding souls; 6) Practicing Christian charity; 7) Cultivating Christian fellowship and edifying each other, and 8) Administering the affairs of the church.⁹ These functions/responsibilities are found in several Biblical passages. For instance, in order to fulfill God's plan the church must become:

- 1) A Proclaiming body of believers(1 Cor. 23-24)
- 2) A teaching and learning body (Acts 2: 42)
- 3) A worshipping body (Rom 10: 8-10)
- 4) A witnessing body (Luke 19:10; 2 Cor. 5:20)
- 5) A ministering body (Rom. 12:5; Gal. 6:1-2)
- 6) A celebrating body (Acts 2: 46-47)
- 7) A serving body (Acts 2:45; 1 Cor. 10:33)
- 8) A fellowshiping body of believers (Acts 2: 42)¹⁰

The Bible, in Jeremiah 30:21 makes it clear that “*Their leader will be one of their own; their ruler will arise from among them*” (NIV). To accomplish this, pastors must be able to recognize potential leaders in their congregations; then train and develop them so

⁹ Werning, *Vision and Strategy for Church Growth*, 30.

¹⁰ Ibid., 30

that they could assume leadership roles. This chapter will provide recommendations for improving the areas identified by the CHAT and church Information surveys as most in need of improvement.

Table 19 presents the areas that were identified by the CHAT survey as most in need of improvement. These areas include:

- 1) An Outward Focus
- 2) A Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships
- 3) Networking with the Body of Christ
- 4) God's Empowering Presence
- 5) Wise Administration and Accountability
- 6) Servant-Leadership Development

Specific Recommendations for Church Improvement

This section will provide specific recommendations for each characteristic identified in the CHAT survey as most in need of improvement.

1. An Outward focus:

Macchia indicated that “the healthy church places a high priority on communicating the truth of Jesus Christ and demonstrating his love to those outside the faith.”¹¹ Likewise, William Temple, while serving as the Archbishop of Canterbury communicated that the church is the only society in the world that exists for its nonmembers. He indicated that evangelization calls for a life devoted to others rather

¹¹ Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church*, 135.

than to one's own well-being, comfort, and self-esteem. Jesus Christ, he said, lived and died for others; however, his example is hard to follow.

Somewhere along the way, many churches forget about their call to exist for nonmembers. They begin focusing their activities, concerns, and ministries inwardly, and pastors began functioning as chaplains or caretakers of self-contained congregations. Meanwhile, members required their pastors to focus on the pews and not on the parish. As inward-looking Christians, church members wanted to have their own needs fulfilled. Eventually, such inward-focused congregations lost their way. They ceased to bear fruit, and began to wither on the vine.

The life and health of the local church relates directly to the vitality of its ministries and mission. Ministry begins with the nurture of a church's greatest resource: its members. A vital, outward-focused church does not nurture its members merely by keeping them comfortable. Instead, it strives to promote their spiritual growth, directs them in discipleship, and helps advance their maturation as servants of Christ. This enables members to then discover and realize their call to ministry, chiefly through a new involvement in mission. So, what can the churches in the Virginia Conference do to revitalize their ministries and missions work? And what can church leaders do to turn the focus of these churches (outward) beyond the walls of the church? Following is a questionnaire that church leaders could use to assess the ministries and mission work currently being conducted in the churches.

Evaluation tool: for Assessing *Missions and Mission Education*:

- 1) What kind of mission education program do you have?
 - 1a. how do you use the mission education materials of your denomination?
- 2) What kind of mission education program do you have for the Sunday school?
- 3) How do you use the church bulletin and newsletter for providing mission news?

- 4) Do you have mission education leaders to provide leadership in the mission education program?
- 5) Have you had a mission fair or special mission emphasis week?
- 6) Do you encourage five-minute mission talks about world missions and charities at organizational meetings and at worship services?
- 7) Do you spend sufficient time in consideration of the world mission goal and budget?
- 8) How many people are present for that discussion?
- 9) If a visitor spent a week in your church, what specific evidence of mission-mindedness would they see?
- 10) Do you encourage members of your congregation to personally consider some type of short-term or long-term missionary work?

Another facet of outward focus hinges on evangelism. The first purpose of the church is to spread the gospel and evangelize all who will accept Christ as Lord and Savior. This commandment that Christ gave is found in Matthew 28:19, 20; Luke 24:47, 48; Mark 16:15 and Acts 1:8. This would indicate that this is an important aspect in the life of the church. Christ demonstrated this aspect of His ministry when He sent the disciples into the world, in a similar manner as His Father had sent Him. It is God's desire that no one perish, and the responsibility for ensuring everyone hears the "Good News" (salvation in Jesus Christ) rests in the hands of the church.

2. A Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships

The analysis of the CHAT survey data identified this characteristic as being most in need of improvement. This result indicates that the church leaders are concerned about the low level of priority placed on this characteristic in the life of the church. It also means that love is not expressed, demonstrated or shared in a tangible or intangible manner among members and families within the church.

This finding further indicates that there are problems with communication, a lack of, or willingness to deal with matters such as conflict resolution, and promote

reconciliation within the framework prescribed in God's Word. In addition, the finding would indicate that the church is struggling with relational problems. This CHAT finding ultimately means that the churches in the Virginia Conference are struggling with internal issues relating to communication, relationships, and conflict resolution. These prevailing maladies will not only impact negatively on the membership, but will adversely impact on the willingness of outsiders (non-believers) to fellowship with or join the church.

3. Networking with the Body of Christ

The CHAT survey found this to be another area in the church that was in need of improvement. This finding would indicate that the churches are not giving much priority or importance in the area of building or maintain fellowships with other like minded believers. It also indicates that the church leaders are not pro-actively engaged in fostering worship services or fellowship activities with other congregations in the community. In addition, pastors are not engaged in interfaith prayer meetings with the pastors from the other faiths in the community.

Paul uses the term "body of Christ" many times in his letters. In a few of those letters he was referring to Jesus' actual body. However, in most instances he was applying the term to the church (the *local* church). Paul loved the house churches that he founded on his missionary journeys, and he had a clear sense regarding the way they should act in order that they would enjoy the full power of the Holy Spirit. Banks brings out an important aspect of Paul's use of the "body" metaphor in the Corinthian correspondence: Here the community at Corinth is not said to be *part* of a wider body of Christ nor as *a* body of Christ' alongside numerous others. It is '*the* body of Christ' in that place. This

suggests that wherever Christians are in relationship there is the body of Christ in its entirety, for Christ is truly and wholly present there through his Spirit¹² (1 Cor. 12:13).

In letters to three separate destinations, Paul used the "body" metaphor while discussing spiritual gifts because he wanted the recipients to understand that spiritual gifts were the source of the power of the church. In contrast, individual-centered churches would not be able to harness the full benefits of spiritual gifts because persons were interpreting the gifts in an individualistic, rather than in a corporate, way. In short, these Gentiles would have preferred to receive spiritual gifts as individuals, and then each could go out into the world and do great works with the Spirit's power and claim the credit for themselves.

Paul had to tell the early Christians repeatedly that the gifts were always given in the corporate context; no one individual received all the gifts. So God established His church in such a way that believers would have to gather, and work cooperatively in order to benefit from the individual gifting. This was so vital that Christ made intra-church love a "New Commandment" in Jn. 13:34. When the church functions in this manner, all the credit for its accomplishments would go to God.

4. God's Empowering Presence:

The CHAT survey findings indicate that this is a church health characteristic that is in need of improvement. This result indicates the churches leaders do not actively seek the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives, ministry, nor

¹² Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, Revised ed., (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994),

decision making. This finding would also indicate that the culture of the church is not one of seeking God's empowerment and direction. This characteristic is most evident during worship services where the Holy Spirit is oftentimes prevented from manifesting his presence. Oftentimes, the Holy Spirit is suppressed in the interest of time, or in deference to the order of service.

God's empowering presence is not only reserved for the worship service. Rather, it should permeate every aspect of the church, and in every activity of the believer. The abiding presence of the Holy Spirit has to be an integral part of the daily life of the people and leaders. This characteristic must be demonstrated in their witness, in their fellowship, and in their interactions with each other and with persons outside the church.

This characteristic will be lived out in the life of the church as people embrace the fruits of the spirit and begin to effortlessly demonstrate them in their daily living and in their interactions one with the other within the body of believers. God cannot empower in situations, communities or areas where He is not invited to do so. Therefore, church leaders have the responsibility to teach about the fruits of the spirit. Then they must foster an environment where believers are encouraged to use the fruits in their daily interactions even as the leaders demonstrate this kind of lifestyle in their personal lives, in their deliberations, relationships and decision-making.

The question church leaders must ask is: What is the spirit that is permeating the church? Is it one of submission and dependence on God? Or is it one where agendas are being pursued and lived out? Macchia cautioned that "a church filled with strong, independent-minded people who are unwilling to submit to the Holy Spirit and yield to

the needs of others will never become a healthy church.”¹³ He proceeded to express that the spirit of independence from God needs to be dealt with in an open and honest manner within the context of church and in prayer.

Churches will begin to reverse their course from independence from God to becoming dependent on Him when the leadership and membership can honestly say in their hearts, as expressed in the words of the hymn by Frances Havergal:

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord to Thee.

Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure store.

Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all to thee. Amen.

When the church relinquishes its independence and begins to be dependent on God, not only will the fruits of the spirit (love, peace, long suffering, meekness, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, etc.,) be manifested; but persons will discover or re-discover their spiritual gifts (1 Peter 4:10) and begin utilizing them within the body. They will then be more inclined to engage in ministry activities and mission work because they will understand their roles and mission within the body of Christ.

¹³ Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church*, 30.

5. *Wise Administration and Accountability:*

For church leaders to effectively engage in “wise administration and accountability” they must establish “objectives” and set “Goals” for themselves, and for the church. *Objectives* are ultimate ends toward which the church aims its activities. These are stated in practical terms and gives direction to programs. Objectives also (1) define the congregation’s purpose, and (2) prevent and eliminate inconsistent activities.

Goals on the other hand definite result to be accomplished by a certain date. They (1) grow out of objectives, and (2) prevent means from becoming ends. Therefore any ecclesiastical effectiveness must include setting objectives and goals. Church leaders are responsible for developing and defining the goals for each of the three component areas of the church. Each component area ought to undergo a self-study and goal setting process on the basis of the new goals and strategy. In addition, these areas must be subjected to periodic evaluations to determine their effectiveness. The three component areas of the church include:

1) *Structure:*

- a. Organization (to perform effectively)
- b. Personnel and staff requirements
- c. Site and facility (whenever appropriate)

2) *Spiritual Ministry:*

- a. Worship (corporate)
- b. Personal ministry to members (edification)
- c. Education (of all ages)
- d. Fellowship (among members)

- 3) *Discipleship*:
 - a) Stewardship (of abilities and financial gifts)
 - b) Lay leadership development
 - c) Outreach and evangelism
 - d) Social ministries

Wagner cautioned his readers that an understanding of the great commission is important before any church strategy planning session commences.¹⁴ He indicated that there are many Biblical precedents for planning strategies by using “consecrated pragmatism.” For example, Moses was implementing strategies in a singular manner in his efforts to judge the people of Israel. Moses was implementing an incorrect strategy in trying to accomplish the task without any assistance. The Bible records how Jethro, his father-in-law came up with a pragmatic solution (Exodus 18).

Part of developing a program to produce wise administration and accountability involves developing long and short term strategies. According to Wagner strategies provide several advantages, these include:

- 1) *Increased efficiency* – The accomplishment of any task involves the investment of time, energy, and money. A planning session will allow the persons involved to see and understand the proportions to which each of these resources will be used to accomplish the goal.
- 2) *Helping to measure effectiveness* – A given task is effective when it fulfills its objective. If goals and objectives are not clear, then evaluating the outcome will be impossible.

¹⁴ C. Peter Wagner, *Strategies for Church Growth: Tools for Effective Mission and Evangelism* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1987), 49.

- 3) *Permits mid-course corrections* – If the tasks being performed are not resulting in the success of the intended objectives, then corrections are needed. The sooner the need for course correction is discovered the better. The project should have built-in check points so that periodic evaluations could be completed.
- 4) *Unites the team* – When a strategy is implemented, each member of the team will have a clear understanding regarding the contributions expected of them.
- 5) *Makes accountability natural* – Church work and activities for the most part are voluntary. Since people are not being paid, correcting them can pose a problem. A clearly articulated strategy will avoid this potential pitfall.
- 6) *Helps others* – Successful strategies quickly become models for future projects¹⁵

Accountability:

According to Koppell, holding people and entities accountable encompasses a large variety of goals and activities that arriving at a comprehensive definition is difficult. The typology he presented to cover accountability features five dimensions. These are:

- 1) Transparency- Did the organization reveal the facts of its performance
- 2) Liability- Did the organization face consequences for its performance?
- 3) Controllability – Did the organization do what the principal desired?
- 4) Responsibility – Did the organization follow the rules?
- 5) Responsiveness – Did the organization fulfill the substantive expectation/
Demand/need? ¹⁶

¹⁵ Wagner, *Strategies for Church Growth*, 32-34.

Evaluations:

Figure 8: The Outcome Evaluation Process

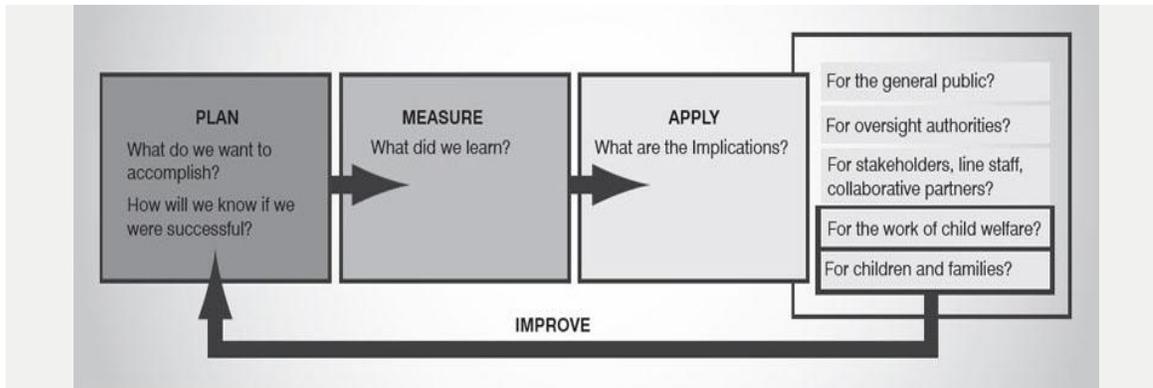


Figure 8 is intended to show that, although the principle of accountability covers more than program evaluation, this process (evaluation) is an essential aspect of accountability. The figure shows some of the logic church leaders must use to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs, ministries and mission work. Church leaders are reminded that program evaluations are an integral part of being accountable.

Church leaders are also reminded that performing evaluations are vital not only to program success, but for the overall effectiveness of the church. Evaluations take two forms. These are 1) Process evaluations and 2) Outcome evaluations.

Process evaluations are used to understand how a program works, e.g., who has responsibility for what? When/where, and with what frequency are specific program related components executed? How are failures addressed, and how are they accounted for? When, and what reports are generated, and to whom are they given? *Outcome*

¹⁶ <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/acloserlook/accountability/accountability1.cfm> (accessed February 2, 2011)

evaluations on the other hand are used to determine the level of program achievement as compared to its stated goal.

Figure 8 outlines an outcome evaluation process. In following the plan flow it becomes obvious that the process is ongoing rather than stagnant. This means that decision makers (church leaders) must evaluate periodically to determine where they are in relation to the overall goal. Then make program adjustments as needed.

As part of the church growth process, the church will adopt several programs during the year. Some of these do not really get going and only serve to rob other effective ministry areas of valuable resources. Therefore the pastor, along with the leadership team must periodically evaluate each ministry and mission area to determine if they are meeting their objectives. This team must evaluate each area by asking the question, *what are we doing that is no longer producing life to the church*. The items identified from this question will be posted to a “Stop doing” list.

Another area for evaluating the effectiveness of missions, outreach and other ministry areas of the church concerns those that may have “Drifted” off course and needs to be evaluated and refocused. After completing the evaluation, the areas identified as “having drifted” must be presented to God in prayer. The idea is to have God’s intervention in recalibrating the minds and refocusing the hearts of the respective leaders in light of God’s will. God’s intervention is necessary because the church belongs to Him, and it is His will that the church is to be about and execute. Some questions to be considered during a refocusing session include:

1. What is the most important task in my ministry?

2. Which programs and activities resulted in the church drifting from its true north?
3. How does current policies and procedures reflect what is most important?

A third response for leaders as they conduct church evaluations is to create a “Celebration List.” The natural leadership tendency is to work! Work! And work! Therefore, there is rarely a time for celebrating the victories. This celebration list will allow the workers involved in the specific activity to share in a celebration with the entire church. Church leaders must genuinely encourage these types of celebrations to recognize the ministry successes God has produced in the church, at the same time providing added momentum for the workers on the specific ministry or mission journey.

Leadership:

What is Leadership? Andy Stanley wrote that “the more you know about leadership, the faster you grow as a leader, and the further you are able to go as a leader.”¹⁷ Sylvia communicated that “purpose driven churches” require purpose driven leaders; leaders who are constantly observing and absorbing leadership lessons from others.”¹⁸ He continued by expressing, “Non-developing leaders are one of the main reasons the average church in America has less than 100 people in worship on Sunday morning.”¹⁹ Several authors have provided definitions regarding what leadership is. For example:

¹⁷ Andy Stanley, *The Next Generation Leader: 5 Essentials for Those Who Will Shape the Future* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 2003), 17.

¹⁸ Sylvia, 179.

¹⁹ Ibid.

1. Gardner expressed leadership as: “the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader.”²⁰
2. Burns said: “Leadership over human beings “is exercised when persons with certain motives, in competition or conflict with others --- so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of the followers.”²¹
3. Sanders expressed leadership as influence. “The ability of one person to influence another.”²²
4. Weems asserted that “the task of leadership is change. Leaders inspire others to their best efforts in order to do better, to attain higher purposes. Leaders are not satisfied with the status quo. They are not satisfied with maintaining things as they are. They are idealists who believe that things can be better,---Leaders therefore must be change masters.”²³
5. Barna expressed the concept of Christian leadership as “someone who is called by God to lead: leads with and through Christ-like character; and demonstrates the functional competencies that permit effective leadership to take place.”²⁴
6. Clinton said: “the central task of leadership is influencing God’s people toward God’s purposes.”²⁵

²⁰ John Gardener, *On Leadership* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 1.

²¹ James McGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1978), 2.

²² Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1967, reprint ed., 1994), 3.

²³ Lovett H. Weems, Jr. *Church Leadership: Vision Team Culture and Integrity* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 11.

²⁴ George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997), 25.

Based on data from the CHAT survey, 102 (77%) of the responders indicated being members of the A.M.E Church for more than 10 years; 17 (13%) were found to be members for 1-6 years. When the project looked at the responders based on age, the data showed that:

- 2% of the CHAT responders were 20-29 years of age
- 7(5%) were 30 -39 years of age
- 22(16%) were 30-39 years of age
- 22(16%) were 40-49 years of age
- 30(23%) were 50-59 years of age
- 49(37%) were 60-69 years of age
- 22(16%) were 70 years of age and older

In addition, the data showed that while 18(13%) of the responders had masters or doctorate degrees, and 41(31%) a college degree; 70(53%) were high school graduates, and 3(2%) were without high school diplomas. The age distribution of the church leaders and their varied educational levels highlight the need for 1) strong leadership, and 2) a focused training curriculum for church leaders. The next section will focus on leadership,

What constituents expect of leaders? According to Carroll, constituents (followers or subordinates) expect someone who is challenging, who shares an inspiring vision, someone who can enable others to act, can model the way, and encourage the heart.²⁶ These are the practices that emerge from personal-best leadership cases. But they paint

²⁵ Robert Clinton, *the Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1988), 203.

²⁶ James M. Kouzes and B. Z. Posner, *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), 19.

only a partial picture. The portrayal can be complete and vivid only when constituents see their own views represented, because leadership is a reciprocal process between those who choose to lead and those who choose to follow. Any discussion of leadership must attend to the dynamics of this relationship. Strategies, tactics, skills, and practices are empty unless we understand the fundamental human aspirations that connect leaders and constituents.

Werning asserted that “the responsibility of leadership is to serve, to guide, to initiate, to accept responsibility, and to discipline. In addition, it is the responsibility of the spiritual leader to reproduce and multiply them.”²⁷ Posner and Schmidt presented the findings of their study of 20,000 business and government executives.²⁸ They were asked what values (personal traits or characteristics) do they look for and admire in their superiors. In response to that question, the managers identified more than 225 different values, traits, and characteristics. Subsequent content analysis reduced these items into fifteen categories. In a subsequent study participants were asked to rate the qualities they would be looking for if they had the responsibility of selecting seven persons for a leadership council from a pool of twenty candidates, all of whom possessed ideal qualities. Respondents were then asked to select the seven qualities they “most look for and admire in a leader, someone whose direction they would willingly follow.” The survey results are presented in table 20.

²⁷ Werning, *Visions and Strategy*, 59.

²⁸ B. Z. Posner and W. H. Schmidt, “Values and the American Manager: An Update,” *California Management Review* 26 (3) (1984): 202-216.

Table 20. Characteristics of Admired Leaders

| Characteristics | 1995 Respondents: Percentage of people Selecting | 1978 respondents: Percentage of People Selecting |
|------------------------|---|---|
| HONEST | 88 | 83 |
| FORWARD-LOOKING | 75 | 62 |
| INSPIRING | 68 | 58 |
| COMPETENT | 63 | 67 |
| Fair-Minded | 49 | 40 |
| Supportive | 41 | 32 |
| Broad-Minded | 40 | 37 |
| Intelligent | 40 | 43 |
| Straightforward | 33 | 34 |
| Dependable | 32 | 32 |
| Courageous | 29 | 27 |
| Imaginative | 28 | 25 |
| Caring | 28 | 34 |
| Determined | 23 | 26 |
| Mature | 17 | 20 |
| Ambitious | 13 | 23 |
| Loyal | 13 | 21 |
| Self-Controlled | 11 | 11 |
| Independent | 5 | 13 |

Table 20 suggests the majority of persons surveyed admire and are willing to follow leaders who are 1) Honest; 2) Forward-Looking; 3) Inspiring, and 4) Competent.

Leaders must be Honest:

Based on their research findings, Kouzes and Posner found that people are more inclined to follow a leader who they have determined to be worthy of their trust (someone who is honest) someone who is truthful, ethical, and principled. The survey suggests that people are most concerned about the integrity of their leaders.

Leaders must be Forward-Looking:

Being able to look ahead is another significant characteristic that emerged from the Kouzes study. A similar finding was found in a follow-up study conducted by Korn and Ferry.²⁹ These findings would suggest that people are willing to follow a leader who has a sense of direction and a concern for the future of the organization. This expectation, according to Korn, directly corresponds to the ability to envision, a dream, a calling, a goal, or a personal agenda. Leaders must know where they are going if they expect others to willingly join them on the journey.

Leaders must be Inspiring:

The survey conducted by Kouzes and Posner suggests that followers expect their leaders to be enthusiastic, energetic, and positive about the future. In a word, followers expect their leaders to be inspiring. Leaders must be able to communicate the vision that encourages followers to sign on for the duration.³⁰ Terkel quoted Nora Watson who

²⁹ Korn/Ferry International and Columbia University Graduate School of Business, *Reinventing the CEO* (New York: Korn/Ferry International and Columbia University Graduate School of Business, 1989), 90.

³⁰ J. M. Kouzes and B. Z. Posner, *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), 23.

expressed the sentiment that “most of us are looking for a calling not a job. Most of us... have jobs that are too small for our spirit. Jobs are not big enough for people.”³¹

Leaders must be Competent:

Competent leaders must be able to model the behavior they expect of those following them. In addition, they must be “willing to do what they say they will do.”³² To set an example, leaders must be clear about their values. They must know what they stand for, that’s the “say” part. Then they must put what they say into practice: They must act on their beliefs and “do.”

Church leaders must understand and work to educate their lay leaders that Christian leadership (leadership in the church) is much different than that performed in the secular world of politics and business. The reality is God is not looking for leaders, at least not in the sense that we generally think of leaders. Rather, He is looking for servants (Isa. 59:16; Ezek. 22:30).

God is looking for leaders who truly believe He will do what He says, leaders who constantly commune with God to understand His design for their lives and His congregation. It is Blackaby’s thesis that “Christian leaders who know God and who know how to lead in a Christian manner will be phenomenally more effective in their world than even the most skilled and qualified leaders who lead without God.”³³

³¹ S. Terkel, *Working* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), xxiv.

³² Kouzes and Posner, 21.

³³ Henry T and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing, 2001), 14.

6) *Servant leadership Development:*

The data from the Church Information Survey indicated that 90% of the pastors interviewed do not meet with their lay leaders more than once per month. The data shows that 100% of these meetings were for Monthly Official Board Meetings. This would indicate a major shortcoming in the A.M.E. Churches located within the Virginia Conference. In addition, the CHATS survey showed that 3% of the responders did not have high school diplomas, while the largest segment, high school graduates constituted 53% of all responders. These statistics would indicate that the churches have a responsibility for providing skills training, and leader development workshops for their lay leaders.

Recommendations Based on Findings from the Church Information Survey

The Church Information Survey identified areas that pastors of the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference are not currently addressing in an effective manner. Some of the areas indicated show that pastors are not:

1. Engaging in daily personal prayer
2. Employing the team concept for worship preparation and execution
3. Preparing and executing long range strategic plans
4. Preparing long and short range financial plans
5. Establishing effective mission statements
6. Employing sound budgeting principles
7. Establishing program evaluation criterions
8. Conducting periodic evaluations of ministry and mission activities

9. Identifying and training potential leaders for leadership roles
10. Fostering the assembling with other believers
11. Planning for effective ministries and interventions outside the church
12. Maximizing the computer's potentials as a communication and management tool
13. Leading and/ or managing their churches effectively

- **Daily Prayer:**

Earley in his book, *The Small Group Leader Toolkit: Ten Power Tools for Personal Leadership Development*, purported that leaders, particularly church leaders must live a life steeped in daily, fervent prayer. He asserted that that “prayer is the most important task of a spiritual leader”³⁴ because the leader needs spiritual power and protection to engage the enemies of God in a spiritual battle. Prayer, in addition to providing protection, is a powerful weapon in the arsenal of the spiritual leader’s arsenal.

Charles Spurgeon in one of his sermons expressed that:

Sometimes we think we are too busy to pray. That also is a great mistake, for praying is a saving of time... God can multiply our ability to make use of time. If we give the Lord His due, we shall have enough for all necessary purposes. In this matter seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things shall be added to you. Your other engagements will run smoothly if you do not forget your engagement with God.”³⁵

In this same sermon Spurgeon deduced from 1 Thes. 5: 17 that there is no special place/ location that one needs to occupy in order to pray, e.g., the Bible records the Apostle Paul praying on Mars Hill (Acts 17:23).

³⁴ Dave Earley, *The Small Group Leader’s Toolkit*, 18.

³⁵ Charles Spurgeon, *Pray Without Ceasing*, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, A sermon delivered on Sunday, march 10, 1872, <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/1039.htm>, (accessed February 12, 2011).

Church leaders are intercessors for the “believers,” the people whom they serve, therefore, they should make time in their daily schedules to go before God in prayer, petitioning on the people’s behalf that God would forgive their sins, heal their bodies, provide for their needs, grant protection, and keep them in His care. These prayers are in addition to any other special prayers that may be requested. This responsibility was demonstrated by Moses in Numbers 21:7.

Several authors have addressed the importance of prayer in the life of church leaders. Duewel, the missionary wrote “{church leaders} you have no greater ministry or no leadership more influential than intercession.”³⁶ According to S. D. Gordon “True prayers never stops in petition for one’s self. It reaches out for others.”³⁷

Fausset in his dictionary described prayer as “God’s predestinating power. Mankind, he asserts, is made a free moral agent; and God who predestines the blessing predestines prayer as the means to that end.” Nehemiah 4:9 explains that mankind’s weakness drives us to cast ourselves on God’s fatherly love, providence, and power. Jesus in Matt. 6:8 in teaching about the need for prayer explained that God, our Father knows what things we need before we ask of Him.

Bubeck asserted that “believers are engaged in a daily “spiritual battle.” Therefore it is important that they know what to do and how to proceed in their responsibility to be

³⁶ Wesley Duewel, *Mighty Prevailing Prayer* (Grand rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 22.

³⁷ S. D. Gordon, *Quiet Talks on Prayer* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, reprinted 1980), 44.

strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (Eph 6:10, KJV).³⁸ He further noted the enemies of God and believers to be:

- a. *The flesh* – the sin nature inherent in mankind to act contrary to God. This sin nature was inherited from Adam’s fall or violation of God’s Holy Law Mt 15:19; Mk 7:21-23, KJV). Paul cautioned his readers about the flesh in Romans 8: 7-8, “the (fleshly) mind” {He said} “is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (KJV).
- b. *The world* - This is an organized system made up of a set of ideas, people, activities, and purposes; or the age of time in which we live (Jn 15:19; 1 Jn 2:15, KJV).
- c. *Satan* – “the spirit being who controls a vast and highly structured kingdom of personal spirit beings who have the same wicked intent and purposes as Satan in opposing God’s will and plans.”³⁹

Ephesians 6:12 informs its readers that Satan and his demons are very structured, organized and disciplined. Table 21 (*taken from Quiet Talks*), in addressing the matter of prayer, presents Gordon’s composite outline of Christ’s prayer life.

³⁸ Mark I. Bubeck, *The Adversary: The Christian Versus Demonic Activity* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), 16.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 26-28, 45, 69

Table 21. Gordon's Composite Picture of Christ's Prayer Life:

| Christ's Prayer life | Demonstration |
|--|---|
| <i>His times of Prayer</i> | His regular habit was early in the morning (Mk. 1:35; Isa 50:4-6; Jn 8.28) Other opportunities for secret prayer: 1) Late at night and 2) before important events |
| <i>His places of Prayer</i> | Quiet places: 1) The desert; 2) The mountains, and 3) in a solitary place |
| <i>His Constant spirit of Prayer</i> | Jesus was never out of the spirit of prayer: 1) Prayed when surrounded by a crowd (solitude of spirit) |
| <i>He prayed in the great crisis of his life</i> | 1) Before His battle with Satan in the wilderness; 2) Before choosing the 12 apostles; 3) Before His final departure from Galilee to Jerusalem, and 4) in Gethsemane |
| <i>He prayed for others by name</i> | |
| <i>He prayed with others</i> | |
| <i>The greatest blessings of His life came during prayer</i> | 1) The Holy Spirit came upon Him; 2) He was transfigured; 3) Three times a heavenly voice of approval came, and 4) In His hours in the Garden of Gethsemane a heavenly messenger came to strengthen Him ⁴⁰ |

Table 21 makes the case that Jesus Christ demonstrated the importance of prayer during the three years of His earthly ministry. This should be a blueprint for pastors of the A.M.E. Churches within the Virginia Conference. Jesus, the son of God, prayed for strength, prayed often for others, He also prayed whenever He was faced with major decisions and or trials.

⁴⁰ Gordon, *Quiet Talks*, 171-172.

This project credits Anderson for communicating that “The power of temptation is directly related to the strength of the mental strongholds and the carnal desires which were developed when we learned to live independently of God.”⁴¹ This author went on to describe how independence from God can easily result into negative syndromes. These are presented in table 22.

Table 22. Caution: Conversion of Good Things God Created into Sinfulness

| | |
|---|--|
| Physical rest becomes laziness | Quietness becomes non-communication |
| Ability to profit becomes avarice and greed | Enjoyment of life becomes intemperance |
| Physical pleasure becomes sensuality | Interest in the possessions of others becomes covetousness |
| Enjoyment of food becomes gluttony | Self-care becomes selfishness |
| Self-respect becomes conceit | Communication becomes gossip |
| Cautiousness becomes unbelief | Positiveness becomes insensitivity |
| Anger becomes rage and bad temper | Loving-kindness becomes overprotection |
| Judgment becomes criticism | Same sex friendship becomes homosexuality |
| Sexual freedoms becomes immorality | Conscientiousness becomes perfectionism |
| Generosity becomes wastefulness | Self-protection becomes dishonesty |
| Carefulness becomes fear | |

⁴¹ Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker: Overcoming Negative Thoughts, Irrational Feelings and Habitual Sins* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2000), 136.

Table 22 outlines the changes that could result in a believer's life as they move away from depending on God, and seeking His will for their life to relying on their own strength, and following their personal wills.⁴²

Table 23. Assessment Tool: Dependence on God versus Dependence on Self

| Self-Check | Areas that Would Indicate Self Dependence Rather than Dependence on God |
|------------|--|
| | Having a stronger desire to do my will than God's will |
| | Leaning too much on my own understanding and experience rather than seeking God's guidance through prayer and His Word |
| | Relying on my own strengths and abilities instead of depending on the power of the Holy Spirit |
| | Being more concerned about controlling others than in developing self-control |
| | Being too busy doing "important" things to take time to do little things for others |
| | Having a tendency to think that I have no needs |
| | Finding it hard to admit when I am wrong |
| | Being more concerned about pleasing people than pleasing God |
| | Being concerned about getting the credit I feel I deserve |
| | Thinking I am more humble, spiritual, religious, or devoted than others |
| | Being driven to obtain recognition by attaining degrees, titles, or positions |
| | Often feeling that my needs are more important than another person's needs |
| | Considering myself better than others because of my academic, artistic, or athletic abilities and accomplishments |
| | Other ways I have thought more highly of myself than I should |

⁴² Ibid., 137-138

Table 23 presents an assessment tool that church leaders could use to conduct self-assessments regarding their level of self-will versus their dependence on God. At the conclusion of the assessment, church leaders ought to present the areas of independence before God, requesting that he would grant them the strength and discernment to turn away from their disobedience, and that He would assist them to move back into His will.

- ***Strategic Planning:***

This is another area that the Church Information Survey found to be in need of improvement. Planning a strategy is basically a process by which the church plans for the future by bringing its present assumptions, policies, objectives, and goals under constant criticism and review.⁴³ The church needs to *develop* a strategy that encompasses all activities from beginning to end. In its analysis church planning needs to address four areas, these include:

1. **Analysis:** This is accomplished by using *objective evaluation data* to determine *where* the church is presently.
2. **Goal Setting:** This determines *what* the church should do
3. **Program:** This addresses *how* the church moves ahead
4. **Evaluation:** This *measures* the level of success and *forms the basis* for future planning.

In order for any church to experience growth there must be an effective strategic plan working in the background to: (1) guide the participants, (2) pre-determine the course and (3) plan of action for possible outcomes and eventualities. In addition, the strategic plan will dictate (1) who does what, (2) when, and (3) how success will be

⁴³ Werning, 52.

determined. George Peters offers eight elements as being necessary for an effective strategy of evangelism:

1. The setting of clearly defined long-range and short-range goals
2. Preparation of a realistic timetable to achieve these goals
3. The discovery of all possible resources to realize the goals
4. The mobilization of personnel and other means to actualize the work toward the goals.
5. The designing of an appropriate training program of all mobilized personnel to assure the unity, the effectiveness, and coordination of the work and the accomplishment of the goal
6. The adoption of the most efficient methods to effect the goals.
7. The setting up of an appropriate organizational structure in keeping with the dynamic function of the Holy Spirit to carry through the program and consummate the goals.
8. The gracious operation of the Holy Spirit in all personnel involved and in all methods and means employed.⁴⁴

Developing a Strategic Plan:

When the term Strategic plan is mentioned some questions immediately comes to mind. These would include: (1) what is a strategic plan? (2) Why is it important for churches to develop one? And (3) what are the steps to developing such a plan?

⁴⁴ George Peters, "A Mission Program that Succeeds," *Action* (Summer 1975), 12.

Differences between a Strategic and Operational Plan:

What is a Strategic Plan? Entrepreneurs, business managers, and church leaders are often so preoccupied with immediate issues they lose sight of their ultimate objectives. That's why a business review or preparation of a strategic plan is a virtual necessity. This may not be a recipe for success, but without it a business (congregation) is much more likely to fail. A sound strategic plan should:

- a. Serve as a framework for decisions or for securing support/approval
- b. Provide a basis for more detailed planning
- c. Explain the business to others in order to inform, motivate & involve
- d. Assist benchmarking and performance monitoring
- e. Stimulate change and become building blocks for the next plan

A strategic plan is not the same thing as an operational plan. The former should be visionary, conceptual and directional in contrast to an operational plan which is likely to be of shorter term, tactical, focused, implementable and measurable. As an example, compare the process of planning a vacation (where, when, duration, budget, who goes, and how travel will travel) are all strategic issues. In contrast, the final preparations (tasks, deadlines, funding, weather, packing, transport, etc.,) are all operational matters. A satisfactory strategic plan must be realistic and attainable so as to allow church leaders, in their roles as managers to think strategically and act operationally.

Some church leaders confuse the *Business plan* with the *strategic plan*. There are some distinct differences between the two. The first difference is there is a significant

difference in intent. A strategic plan is focused on improving a company's (church's) performance, exploiting opportunities and building market share.

A Business Plan is most often used at the beginning of a company's (church's) existence to define the initial goals and objectives of the company, its structure and processes, products and services, financial resources, staffing/talent needs and all of the basics which go into forming a company (church) and getting it functioning.

Second, usually a business plan is an overall guide to setting up your business (church), although some will use it as a more detailed one year plan based on the Strategic Plan. Often there is considerable overlap between the two plans inasmuch as they will often cover similar ground. Generally, however, we envision a business plan as the blueprint for setting up your company (church) and getting it started, and a strategic plan as the ongoing game plan to continually improve operations, Ministry, missions, and grow the congregation spiritually and numerically.

The intent of a strategic plan is to develop a much more targeted vision of: (1) where you want to take your congregation in the future, and (2) how you will accomplish your strategies, goals and objectives, once the church is established and ongoing. In your strategic planning, your focus turns more toward looking at (1) the current situation, (2) analyzing what your strengths and weaknesses are, (3) determining how best to build on your strengths, and (4) avoid being trapped by your weaknesses.

Figure 9. Collaborative Infrastructure Planning

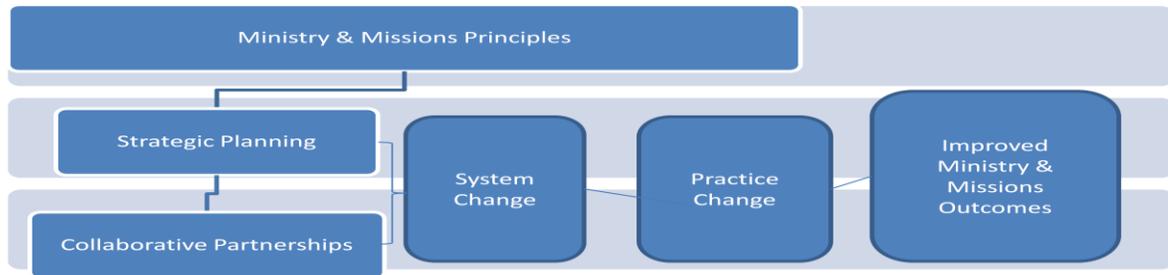


Figure 9 outlines the planning process involved to ensure the quality of the services provided, Ministry activities, and Missions activities are of the quality and nature that will bring Glory to God.

When strategic planning is done in a collaborative framework with community partners the activity would benefit the church, and the best system possible will emerge. In addition, as the governing principles are implemented the entire ministry activity and or mission program will experience improvements, which would translate into better outcomes.

Stewardship:

This project, in recommending stewardship, is reminding church leaders of its significance and importance in the overall schemes of long-range and short term financial planning. The significance of stewardship must be transferred and made a part of the teaching and training curriculum for church members. This training should not be relegated to just certain times during the church year, but interwoven into the church's

environment throughout the year. Auer, in defining Stewardship Ministry explained it to be:

1. A plan that promotes a lifestyle of giving, of sharing our resources of “time, talent and treasure.” This is (proportionate giving and tithing, funding/sustaining the life and work of the congregation, planned giving, time and abilities, economics and money management, and general lifestyle
2. Stewardship Ministry is building on what is biblical and theological about seeing resources as gifts and ourselves as givers, and sharers
3. The ideal plan is to keep stewardship awareness, opportunity, encouragement, and challenge before the congregation throughout the year
4. A special area of Stewardship is for the Apportionments – which represent the Stewardship of the connection – District, Annual Conference, the whole Church – and beyond!” One recommendation provided was to break apportionments out into categories of the ministries they support, then to ask persons or groups to “adopt” ministries in each category
5. Reminding parishioners that “The life of giving and sharing is pretty basic to who we are as people of God, stewards of creation, followers of Jesus Christ, and partners with the Holy Spirit “making all things new!”⁴⁵

The Evangelical Lutheran church in America developed a workbook that church leaders could use to establish and/ or improve the area of financial stewardship in their

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http://cnumc.org/console/files/oFiles_Library_XZXLCZ/How_to_improve_financial_stewardship_EL_CA_MIYQUTSG (accessed 2/12/2011)

churches.⁴⁶ The take home points are 1) churches must teach stewardship throughout the year; 2) Churches must develop a plan to reach every member and give them the opportunity to make a financial commitment; 3) Church leaders must ask for a commitment, and 4) This must be done every year. In developing the processes needed, Church leaders must:

1. Increase financial stewardship
2. Organize a response program
3. Select leaders
4. Set goals
5. Decide on a response model
6. Conduct Mission education
7. Establish and maintain communication
8. Conduct follow-up

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http://cnumc.org/console/files/oFiles_Library_XZXLCZ/How_to_improve_financial_stewardship_EL_CA_MIYQUTSG (accessed 2/12/2011)

*Stewardship Assessment:***Table 24. Tool to Evaluate Christian Stewardship**

| Area | <i>Evaluation and /or Education in Christian Giving:</i> |
|-----------|--|
| 1 | What activities do you carry on in order to bring the message of Christian giving to all your members? ____ a. Every Member visit? ____ b. Group Meetings at church? ____ c. Worship Services? ____ |
| 2 | How would you characterize the stewardship activity of your congregation? _ a. Fund raising? ____ b. Begging? ____ c. A Christian response to God? ____ |
| 3 | Is a face to face conference conducted with each member annually? ____ Is the goal of these meetings to seek commitments beyond the dollar and cents response? ____ |
| 4 | How many members pledge? ____ a. How many do not pledge or make a commitment? ____ |
| 5 | What is the average giving per member? ____ a. List the figures for the last five years, is there adequate growth? b. What do you feel are your basic problems in achieving better financial success? ____ |
| 6 | What is your congregation's giving potential on the basis of a tithe? ____. a. What is the difference between the tithe potential and the congregation's actual offering? ____ |
| 7 | What is the giving habit of your members on the basis of the "pattern of weekly giving?" ____ a. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the present financial situation that this study reveals? |
| 8 | How are proportionate giving and tithing taught in your congregation? a. Are you reaching all members with this message? |
| 9 | How the congregation is assured that its budget is set and spent and spent on the basis of basic priorities for the Christian mission? |
| 10 | How does the church provide practical information in money management and Christian principles to members to assist them to better budget their incomes? ⁴⁷ |

⁴⁷ Taken from Waldo J. Werning, *Vision and Strategy for Church Growth*, 110.

The questionnaire in table 24 (taken from Waldo J. Werning, *Vision and Strategy for Church Growth*) is a tool that church leaders could use to assess the effectiveness of their stewardship ministry or to evaluate the level of Christian giving by the church.

Table 25. Questionnaire to Assess the Level of Stewardship

| <i>Areas</i> | <i>Questions to Assess the Level of Service and General Stewardship:</i> |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Is there a concentrated effort to enlist the time and talents of members in the work of the Lord? a. Has the church used an enlistment or commitment program to uncover and enlist the talents of your members? b. Do you keep a record of the talents available? |
| 2 | How many members are active in some service activity for the Lord? c. How many undertake no activity? |
| 3 | Do you hold special leadership training meetings? |

Table 25 (taken from Waldo J. Werning, *Vision and Strategy for Church Growth*) presents a questionnaire that church leaders could use to assess the level of stewardship in their congregations.

- ***Maximizing the Full Potential of the Computer:***

Data from the Church Information Survey revealed that 85% of the pastors interviewed indicated using the computer in one form or another during the execution of ministry, educational and administrative related functions. The survey indicated that 67% use the computer to maintain financial records and membership information while 22% use it to provide announcements to church members.

The survey revealed that a significant number of churches (66%) do not use the church computer for e-mail communication, while 94% do not use it as a tool during their worship services. In addition, 83% of the pastors interviewed indicated not using the computer as a tool to solicit financial assistance/ contributions for the church. This survey did not probe for reasons why, or how the various decisions were derived.

This project wants to caution pastors and church leaders that although there are tremendous benefits to be gained from installing and using computers in their churches, there are also some drawbacks that they must be aware of, and actively take steps to prevent as they consider adopting and incorporating the computer as a significant management and communication tool within their church environment. The website “StartChurch” provides information about churches setting up computers and protecting users from using them inappropriately. In their August 25, 2009 post the site provided information that highlighted some of the areas church leaders may not have considered as they move to implement computer technology into their church environment. The information highlighted the fact that technology has revolutionized the way churches connect with members and the community outside the church. This includes the use of the church’s website, email, blogs, and even social networking sites.⁴⁸

Rivera indicated that many churches allow members to access the Internet through church computers. In this venue, church administrators assume that because it is a "church computer," no one would ever use it to commit a crime. Some examples given include: 1) Church staff using the computer to access pornographic materials, 2)

⁴⁸ Raul Rivera, “Your Church and the Internet”
<http://www.startchurch.com/blog/view/name/your-church-and-the-internet> (Accessed 1/6/2011).

inappropriately downloading materials without adhering to copyright laws, and 3) staff using the internet to present dissenting views regarding church matters and or decisions. Therefore, as church leaders move toward implementing computer technology in their churches they are to give appropriate considerations not only to the kind of computer and software, but also to the security systems to put in place. The author cautioned pastors and church leaders of their responsibility for protecting the church from potential litigations resulting from inappropriate material acquisitions.

Introduction of computers into the church requires a paradigm shift. Kuhn defines a paradigm as “the entire constellation of belief, values, and techniques, shared by the members of a given community and used by that community to define legitimate problems and solutions.”⁴⁹ A paradigm is a view of life that is more or less coherent and agreed upon, so when a paradigm shift occurs, there is a revolutionary break with the accepted and generally unquestioned norms.

Following this break it is usually impossible for the changed community to return to their pre “paradigm change” way of doing business. As indicated earlier, the new paradigm can be problematic, requiring faith, courage and humility. An example of this is Martin Luther King who served as an early adopter to the paradigm shift in his time. He expressed this aptly when he stated “An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.”⁵⁰

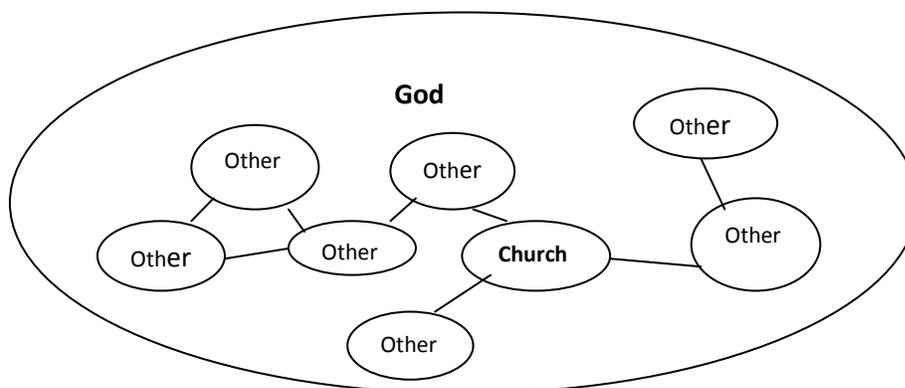
⁴⁹ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 175.

To better understand the paradigm shift that the computer is likely to have on the church, leaders must have a clear understanding of what a healthy church looks like to them. What does effective ministry and mission look like. Then, they can introduce computers, and use it as a tool in the new church environment.

Part of the equation is the church deciding how much they want to remain in a stand-alone posture or be connected throughout the body and with the community outside the church. This means church leaders must see the connection of theology, Scripture, science, and network as working together to touch people's total senses (heart, mind and soul).

Churches need to change their static view of their ministry and missions activities, and embrace a view of God's kingdom being a connected whole of networked entities. In other words, churches should begin to consider themselves as social structures made up of nodes (individuals) that are linked together with others to form a complex web of relations in the church and with the broader community outside the church.

Figure10. Graphical Depiction of the Networking Theory



⁵⁰ Coretta Scott King, *The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: New market Press, 1987), 3.

Figure 10 shows a graphical depiction of the network theory and the computer's ability to link the church effectively with several entities. These various entities could be boards and organizations existing within the church or in the community beyond the walls of the church. This kind of connectivity will allow church leaders the ability to touch and influence persons within their congregations, even those outside the church in the broader community beyond its walls. Embracing the computer and utilizing the Web-system will benefit churches by:

1. *Providing the ability to connect with persons inside and outside the church:*

By using computers the church will gain the ability of connecting with persons within their community and with those in the broader community outside the church. Through this medium the church can develop web-empowering ministries. The benefit of web-empowering ministries is that they are available 24/7. Persons with questions about Christ have access to information whenever, and from wherever they are located.

2. *Providing a 24 hours a day/7days a week venue for information sharing and witnessing:*

Persons outside the church community may be afraid to visit the church location for a number of reasons, so the system, once developed and deployed, would allow for interaction between "seekers" (persons seeking Christ) and the church staff responsible for witnessing, and responding to questions via the interactive web site.

3. *Providing a venue for broadcasting church related information including upcoming events (24/7):*

The computer is also an excellent source for providing information about the church and its upcoming events. This is extremely useful for persons who may be visiting in the community and are looking for a place to worship, attend Bible study or share in a church activity while away from home.

4. Providing a 24 hours a day/ 7days a week venue for sharing sermon messages:

The web-site is also an excellent place for the church to post sermons. These can be accessed by members who may be unable to attend service, or who may be travelling. These sermons could be mounted in several formats (e.g., PDF files, and podcasts) so as to minimize the restrictions for persons accessing them.

5. Providing a means whereby persons could request prayers:

Prayer is another valuable part of the Christian ministry. Churches, through their web sites could make it possible for members and non-members to request prayers. Persons requesting prayer could then send an e-mail with such a request to the church.

6. Providing expanded teaching opportunity (to expand or add classes):

The web site is an excellent venue for teaching. The church can offer classes online, and students would access the class information at their convenience. There is no need for students to drive to the church, and the church can reduce the burden associated with finding teachers for several classes. Churches desirous of implementing this method must either create original teaching materials or get permission from the publishers if

they plan to use copyrighted materials. Another benefit to the church is that the web could be used as a way to provide materials that parents could use to teach their children.

7. Providing a way to broadcast devotionals:

The web site is an excellent medium for posting devotionals. These are short writings or Bible verse that helps visitors focus on God on a regular basis. This could be a powerful tool for personal growth for both adults and youths.

8. Providing a place where the church can post opportunities for service:

The web site is an excellent place for the church to post ministry opportunities that are available. This medium will give the church the ability to extend ministry opportunities to persons outside the walls of the church.

9. Providing for empowering evangelism:

The church is called to offer Christ to the world. What better way to reach the world than through the web. The church, through the web could effectively communicate the message of Christ through words, sound, graphics, animation, and video. These messages could be created in formats best suited for their specific target audiences.

10. Providing a means for persons involved in Ministries and Missions to share activities and /or experiences:

The web is a powerful tool for sharing mission experiences and or conditions that are prevailing in a specific mission field to church members and/or supporters in the

home country. The web has the ability to vividly bring-home pictures of conditions in the mission areas so that persons in the home congregation and supporters could get a firsthand view.

11. Allowing ministry teams to maintain contact and/or exchange files:

The web is a valuable tool for housing meeting minutes, training materials, policy information, and other pertinent materials for church Boards, auxiliaries, staff, and other groups within the church. Members of these boards, and other church organizations would have password access to their information, thereby locking out unauthorized persons.

12. Providing a way for churches to publish and archive Newsletters:

Newsletters present a powerful forum for leaders to communicate with the congregation, and other friends of the church. The pastor could communicate messages to various sub groups by using blogs. A blog is a blend of the term Web Log. It is a type of website or part of a website. Blogs are usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary. Most blogs are interactive, allowing visitors to leave comments and even messages. It is this interactivity that distinguishes blogs from other static websites. For this communication medium to be effective church leaders must be committed to keeping their blogs updated.

13. Allowing churches to advertise and build event participation:

Churches are always concerned about the level of participation in their events. The website is very much suited for this purpose. Events could be announced and described on the website. In addition, events could be placed on an online calendar and programmed to be displayed based on the categories defined by the visitor to the site.

- ***Building (or Maintaining) Church Facilities:***

Based on the findings from the Church Information Survey, 71% of the pastors indicated having no plans for building church facilities. Some pastors indicated no plans were in place because they do not foresee having funds to undertake a building project. This survey was not intended to drill down into this area. However, planning and building church facilities is not restricted to the construction of an entirely new worship center. It also includes planning for the upkeep and maintenance of existing church owned buildings and facilities.

This project recommends that Churches consider and include building upkeep and maintenance as part of their strategic plan. This would allow the congregation to develop guidelines regarding maintenance schedules, developing funding streams that would allow the church to proceed with the planned maintenance when the schedule indicates without creating a financial emergency on the congregation or drain on the resources of the church.

Some congregations may not have plans to build or expand their facilities; however, they continue to meet in the facilities that existed when the congregation was

established several years ago. This project is recommending that pastors in these facilities revisit the suitability, convenience and functionality of these facilities. According to McCormick, “buildings that are well planned, functional and effective tools can bless a church for many years. Conversely, buildings that are poorly designed, inadequately planned, and improperly constructed can restrict and burden a church for generations.”⁵¹ The author went on to express that successful building programs can assist in strengthening and enriching the fellowship of the entire church.

Some pertinent questions that leaders of the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference must pose to their respective local church leaders are:

1. Are the existing facilities meeting the current ministry needs of the church?
2. Are the current facilities meeting the people needs?
3. Are the current facilities meeting the ministry needs and outreach challenges of the church?
4. How is the current facility affected by traffic flow?
5. What is the current seating and parking capacity?
6. What is the church’s capacity to accommodate growth including associated impacts such as parking, meeting space, adequate classrooms, etc.?
7. How accessible are the buildings to persons of all ages?
8. How energy efficient is the buildings?

⁵¹ McCormick, *Planning and Building Church facilities*, 9.

- ***Outreach into the Community outside the Church:***

Based on data provided in the Church Information Survey, 71% of the pastors indicated that their churches have not established collaborative relationships with any of the schools within a five mile radius of their church. This is an important source for reaching the young (Busters) and establishing a link with the adults (Boomers and Builders) in the community.

Before reaching out and building collaborative relationships with the schools, churches will first require some reprogramming of attitudes, ways of communication, and probably changes to the way and manner of the worship services. Gary McIntosh in *Three Generations* recommended some practical steps the congregation could take in their effort to welcome “Busters” into their midst. These include:

1. Playing down titles and using first names
2. Eliminating church sounding words such as, foyer, vestibule, nave, narthex, etc.
3. Provide excellent child care facilities
4. Explain everything the church does so unchurched “Busters” will have some idea of what is going on
5. Use music they like to listen to in their cars
6. Dress casually
7. Remodel the church so it reflects contemporary colors, fabrics and styles
8. Install equipment busters expect, such as air conditioning, computers, overheads, sound system, etc.
9. Do not call attention to busters as guests. Welcome as a group.⁵²

⁵² Gary McIntosh, *Three Generations: Riding the Waves of Change in Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1995), 156.

The generational terms such as “Builders,” “Boomers” and “Busters” are significant. Church leaders must recognize and understand their generational “bent” or peculiarities if they are to successfully communicate with them, win them into the inner, functional parts of their congregation, and successfully develop church programs and ministries that would appeal to the specific needs of each sub-group.

The “Builder” generation is made up of persons who were born prior to 1946. Persons in this generational group lived through WWI, WWII, and the great depression years. They are more inclined to be savers, they understand hard work, and are dedicated to family, values, country, and church. This is the generation that fixed things when they were broken rather than replacing them. The words to describe persons in this generational group would be dependable, loyal and faithful.

The "baby Boomer" generation on the other hand, consists of persons born between 1946 and 1959. They make up a large segment of the population. Persons in this group were raised to be "nice," cooperative and well liked. Getting along with others meant getting ahead in the workplace. The younger generation, known as “Busters” comprise of persons born between 1969 and 1978. These persons were raised, and they thrive on being individualists. As children they played with computers, manipulating information and images.

According to Elmer Towns, in *21st Century Tools and Techniques*, as church leaders make plans to reach out to the “boomers,” they need to ensure the church’s internal environment is ready and equipped to receive and nurture this generation. Some of the expectations of the boomers include:

1. Programming for young adults, singles, and young families
2. A genuine welcome and acceptance of their nonconforming dress code
3. Sermon messages that address their needs, and provide insights for solving their problems
4. Flexible schedules
5. Opportunity for fellowship and building relationships
6. Support groups to assist them through their personal problems
7. An opportunity to express faith- in their own way- to God
8. Participatory learning opportunities and workshops
9. Drama, use of Audio Visual (AV) and an excellent sound system
10. A relaxed worship and general church atmosphere⁵³

In addition to the generational differences that exist among the church membership based on their generational peculiarities. Elmer Towns presents another facet to the complexity facing churches. He highlights the awkward situation that exists between the *young single person* and the congregation. The snippet below, taken from Elmer Town's e-book '*Ministering to the Young Single Adult*' vividly presents the struggle in stating that:

The average church member is not aware of the deep differences between himself and the young single adult who attends the services. He recognizes this young person as one who does not talk quite as much as other adults. Usually he dresses in a little more up-to-date style and a little more expensive taste than his married contemporaries. Church members cannot understand why he is not more regular and faithful in supporting all the activities of the church. When the young single adult first attends the services, he is warmly greeted, and the average church member seems happy to see him become a part of the fellowship. Usually, however, his attendance becomes less and less frequent. The average church member still does not understand the reason for this, namely, that the young single adult is different and is keenly aware of

⁵³ Elmer Towns, *21st Century Tools and Techniques* (Lynchburg, Church Growth Institute, no date), 42.

this difference. Church is a family institution and the young adult is single. For the most part, he does not become a vital part of the church fellowship.⁵⁴

By now it should be clear that planning for and building a church community of people with different needs is not a simple task. The task facing church leaders involves creating a community that is sensitive to several needs, and developing ministries, curriculums and programs that are wide and varied enough to meet some of the needs that are most important and urgent to persons in each of the different sub-groups.

- ***Preparing and Training Lay Leaders for Leadership Roles:***

Part of the responsibility of church leaders is to recognize potential leaders within the congregation and train them up to take on leadership roles within the church. In order to prepare someone for leadership, the church leaders must first establish an inventory of ministry and mission areas available within the church. Table 23 displays a template that church leaders could emulate in order to develop a listing of the various ministry areas within their church.

⁵⁴ Elmer Towns,
[http://elmertowns.com/books/online/Ministering to Young Single Adult/Ministering to the Young Single Adult\[ETowns\].pdf](http://elmertowns.com/books/online/Ministering%20to%20Young%20Single%20Adult/Ministering%20to%20the%20Young%20Single%20Adult[ETowns].pdf) (accessed 2/5/2011).

Table 26. Inventory of Ministry Areas Available Within the Church

| Ministry Areas: | Church has this: Y/N | Enrollment | # Eligible for Enrollment | % of Members Enrolled | # of Non-Members Enrolled | # from Group who Joined Church | Ratio of Teachers to Enrollment |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Sun. School | | | | | | | |
| <i>Nursery</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Children's</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Youth</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Adult</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Sat. School</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Christian Day School</i> | | | | | | | |
| Weekday Classes | | | | | | | |
| <i>Children's</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Adults</i> | | | | | | | |
| Organizations | | | | | | | |
| <i>Youth</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>AWANA</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Women</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Men</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Couples</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>YPD</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Sons of Allen</i> | | | | | | | |
| Leadership Education | | | | | | | |
| <i>Sun. School</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Vacation Bible School</i> | | | | | | | |

Table 26 presents a form that pastors could use to maintain statistics for the areas of ministry within their church.

Conclusions

Leaders in what have been called mainline churches are feeling particularly defensive and sensitive about membership losses. Fast-growing congregations and denominations look on the traditional bellwethers—Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational—and say, "Main? More like sideline these days." Mainliners wince. Sometimes we try to kid ourselves about the numbers by talking about how we think they've "bottomed out." Reasons for the declines are as numerous as the commentators. I have heard reasons ranging from "it's because of all the social ministries the mainline got involved in the sixties" to "it's because the mainline is not as aggressive in its social ministries as it was in the sixties."⁵⁵

Church structure is important to fulfilling the purposes and mission of the church.

Based on Easum's observations, several A.M.E. Churches are in violation of this principle. These churches have pastors who serve as ministers and the people as the administrators. These lay administrators are appointed, nominated or elected to serve in various positions that equate to "running the church."⁵⁶ This situation is contrary to God's arrangement for His church. In God's arrangement the pastor's role is twofold. These roles are (1) to equip the people for ministry, and (2) to lead the people. In this environment the membership will be the ministers and pastors administrators.⁵⁷

One of the most pressing questions for the church today is: "are the conditions and attitudes that created successful churches in the 1900 and early 20th century still in place today? The answer to this question according to Barns is "no." George Hunter in his book, *How to Reach Secular People* asserted that the first characteristic of a person in

⁵⁵ Loren B. Mead, *Transforming Congregations for the Future* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 1994), 1.

⁵⁶ William Easum, *Sacred Cows make Gourmet Burgers: Ministry Anytime, anywhere, by anybody* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 69.

⁵⁷ Rick Warren, *the Purpose Driven Church: Growth without Compromising Your Message & Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 376.

the modern world is that he or she is essentially ignorant of basic Christianity. For instance, “Generation X, those persons born between 1963 and 1977, “are the first generation to grow up in a postmodern context, lack even the memory of a hope-giving gospel.⁵⁸ In addition many people according to White, struggle with the concept of Christ’s deity.

To build effective (healthy) churches leaders must begin to build ministries and missions into the communities outside the church, worship and leadership teams similar to the Nehemiah strategy for rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem, or as Jesus did with his disciples.⁵⁹ Persons on these teams will bring various gifts and expertise beneficial for supporting the purpose and mission of the church. These self-directed teams will also possess the flexibility to adjust based on new information and challenges.⁶⁰ This project also recommends that the A.M. E. Churches within the Virginia Conference carefully examine the needs of the un-churched people in the communities around them.

Church leaders must begin to work more collaboratively with their Ministry leaders in planning for, and executing worship services. These worship experiences will then become more coordinated with each aspect building on the last, thus producing a spirit filled worship experience for the worshippers.

Church leaders must begin to prepare and execute strategic plans along with long and short- term goals. The project understands the principle of “pastoral appointments” as part of the A.M.E. landscape. However, the focus should be on the church, rather than the

⁵⁸ Andres Tapia, “*Reaching the First Post-Christian generation*,” Christianity Today, September 12 1994, 18.

⁵⁹ Barna, *User Friendly Churches*, 153.

⁶⁰ Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, *the Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1993), 18.

specific plans of the newly appointed pastor. Therefore, when the newly appointed pastor arrives at the congregation, he/she should make the assessment and review of the congregation's strategic, and respective long and short - range plans a priority in their initial meeting with lay leaders.

The project also recognizes that some churches within the Virginia Conference may not be currently in a position to undertake some of the recommendations. However, each congregation can begin to make some of the recommended assessments to determine where they are, then move to develop their strategic plans. Following the development of these plans, pastors should work with their lay leaders to develop their respective short term (annual) and long-term plans.

This project recognizes that the leadership of the Virginia Conference has the burden and responsibility of making pastoral appointments they consider most suited for the various congregations. Prayerfully, the appointees, when accepting these appointments, will understand that the responsibility for the spiritual growth and development of the people is in their hands, so is the responsibility for numerical growth, ministries, and mission work of the congregation. Pastors in turn must accept the responsibility and challenges that accompanies working with the lay leaders and congregations to improve the effectiveness of their respective congregations.

To improve the health (effectiveness) of their congregation, pastors would need to use their influence and leadership skills, to motivate lay leaders and congregations to recognize that, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, they do possess the power to turn the state of affairs in their congregation around; the power to restore effectiveness to their congregation so that it would become effective in shaping lives; lives of the persons

within the congregation, and those in the community outside the church. To accomplish this, pastors, lay leaders and the congregation must share some specific goals:

1. Pastors must want their church to grow and be willing to pay the price
2. The people must want the church to Grow and be willing to pay the price
3. The church must agree that the Goal of evangelism is to make disciples
4. The church must not have a terminal illness (it must have corrected the CHAT areas in need of improvement)
5. Pastors must be committed to Biblical teaching and training up (producing) leaders within the church
6. Pastors, lay leaders, and the congregation must be willing to move out of their comfort zones and begin planning soul-winning ministries, and mission activities in the community outside the church
7. Church leaders must understand that “What gets measured gets done.” This is important for church leaders to remember since (a) it points to the importance of conducting periodic evaluations on all church activities, (b) it highlights the importance is sharing the findings with persons who have responsibility for carrying out the daily functions related to the specific ministry or mission area being evaluated, and (c) Pastors, lay-leaders and lay-members must work on developing corrective solutions for areas found to be in need of improvement. This cycle of evaluating, informing, developing and implementing corrective strategies must be conducted with an eye on the bigger mission (goals) of the church.

8. Pastors and lay leaders must evaluate and embrace technology in ways that will enhance communication, improve management functions, and create an environment where accountability prevails.

Christ created the church, and then commissioned it to “--- Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28: 19-20, NIV).

This project strongly recommends that leaders of the A.M.E. Churches within the Virginia Conference develop an awareness, willingness and flexibility to evaluate the changing tides in the community around the church, in so doing they could better adjust their strategies to maintain relevancy, freshness, and appropriate ministries that are relevant to the lives of persons from all generational populations.

Other benefits to such assessments would result in (1) worship services that are uplifting, fresh, alive, and pleasing to God, (2) Evangelistic work and missions that are effectively winning souls to Christ and (3) ministries and religious training that result in changing the lives of the people.

This project is prayerful that the findings and recommendations provided will stir the leaders to reevaluate the current conditions prevailing within the churches located in the Virginia Conference. Further, that the recommendations offered would prove to be beneficial as church leaders move to assess their current position, develop strategic plans, and take steps to enhance the areas found to be in need of improvement.

The encouraging words from the Word of God, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he

will make your path straight” (Proverbs 3: 5-6 NIV) should serve to restore enthusiasm in church leaders who may have drifted from their initial love for God’s services.

May God continue to bless the leaders of the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference as they work on building the health (effectiveness) of these churches, thereby, rendering them more effective and efficient as witnesses for God; and change agents for God in the lives of His people.

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APPENDIX

A. CHURCH INFORMATION TOOL

1. **Do you have a standing prayer time daily?** Yes _____ No _____
 Do you have a prayer-team/ partners? Yes _____ No _____
 If so, how often do you meet with them during the week? _____
2. **How many hours do you spend each day in personal prayer?** _____
3. **Do you prepare a sermon schedule for the conference year?** Yes _____ No _____
 If no, what schedule do you use? Weekly __, Monthly __, Quarterly __, no set schedule __
4. **With whom do you plan your worship services?** Check all that apply:
 1. Minister of music _____
 2. Sunday school teacher(s) _____
 3. Sunday school superintendent _____
 4. Bible study teachers _____
 5. Choir Director _____
 6. Others (please list) _____
5. **Who usually selects the music for the Worship service?**
 1. Pastor _____
 2. Minister of Music/ Musician _____
 3. Other (please indicate position in church) _____
6. **Do you have a printed bulletin in your worship service?** Yes _____ No _____
7. **What is your average length of your Worship service?** _____ (Hours)
8. **Are the announcements read in your Worship services?** Yes _____ No _____
9. **What is the average time spent on all announcements?** _____ (minutes)
 What day _____ and time _____ do you have Bible study?
10. **What other teaching opportunities are available to the membership during the week?** _____
11. **Does the church have written Job descriptions for each leadership position?**
 Yes__ No __
12. **How many schools within a 5-mile radius does the church work with?** _____
13. **Does your church have a computer?** Yes _____, No _____
 If yes, when was it purchased Year _____
 What is the operating system on your computer? _____

14. **How do you use the computer in your church?** Check all that apply:
1. To maintain and manage membership roles _____
 2. To maintain financial data _____
 3. To prepare financial records _____
 4. To provide information to church members _____
 5. To provide information to the general public _____
 6. For church announcements _____
 7. To solicit financial contributions _____
 8. As a teaching tool _____
 9. As a reservoir for past messages _____
 10. For email communications _____
 11. To stream your worship services via the web _____
15. **When are you planning to upgrade your computer system?** this year __, next 2-3 years __, No current plans __
16. **Do you use the computer in your worship services?** Yes _____ No _____
If yes, check all that apply:
1. To broadcast upcoming events and activities _____
 2. To protect information during the message _____
 3. To provide the words to the songs/hymns being sung _____
 4. As a Bible study teaching tool _____
 5. Other _____
17. **Does your church have a five-year strategic plan?** Yes _____ No _____
If No, please select all responses that apply below:
1. We don't know how _____
 2. We don't think it's important _____
 3. We never considered developing one _____
 4. We thought about it, but never got around to it _____
 5. We developed one, but never used it _____
 6. We operate day by day, and don't see the value _____
 7. We have one for a shorter timeframe _____
18. **Does the church have a long range (multi-year) financial plan?** Yes ___ No _____
19. **Does the church have a long range building plan?** Yes _____ No _____
20. **Does the church have a mission statement?** Yes _____ No _____
21. **On a monthly basis, how often do you meet with your Church lay-leaders?** _____
22. **How many seminars or church related workshops did your officers attend last year?** _____

B. CHURCH HEALTH ASSESSMENT TOOL (CHAT) QUESTIONNAIRE:

Participant Demographics

Please fill out the following information. Please be assured that your responses will be kept strictly confidential and your name will NOT be associated with your responses once this paper version has been entered into the database. *If you would prefer not to use your real name, use "John Doe" or "Jane Doe."*

Important: Please be sure to answer every question. Skipping any question will render your survey invalid.

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

| <u>Gender:</u> | <u>Ethnicity:</u> | <u>Number of years attending this church:</u> |
|----------------|-------------------|---|
| Male | Black | Less than one year |
| Female | Asian | 1-3 years |
| | White | 4-6 years |
| | Hispanic | 7-10 years |
| | Native American | More than 10 years |
| | Other | |

| <u>Age:</u> | <u>Level of education completed:</u> | <u>What is your current role at the church:</u> |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Under 20 | No high school degree | Church attendee/ Member |
| 20 – 29 | High school degree | Church leadership team |
| 30 – 39 | College degree | |
| 40 – 49 | Masters or doctorate earned | |
| 50 - 59 | | |
| 60 - 69 | | |
| 70 or older | | |

Marital Status:

Single

Married

Divorced

Widowed

Let's Get Started!

Please try to answer each question candidly and honestly making only one selection 1-5 or "I don't know". Your first reaction is usually best so try to move swiftly through the assessment without bogging down and overanalyzing your responses. This should take 15-20 minutes to complete. With your help, we can identify the strengths as well as the soft spots and pursue all that God has intended for our church.

INSTRUCTIONS

The questions provide a response scale from 1 to 5 (1 = Very Poorly to 5 = Very Well). Please check the most appropriate box for each question.

1 = Very Poorly 2 = Poorly 3 = Somewhat Well 4 = Well 5 = Very Well

Characteristic 1: God's Empowering Presence

The healthy church actively seeks the Holy Spirit's direction and empowerment for its daily life and ministry.

1. How well does our church depend on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit for our shared life and ministry?
1 = Very Poorly 2 = Poorly 3 = Somewhat Well 4 = Well 5 = Very Well
2. To what degree does our church emphasize self-reliance instead of God-reliance within our shared life as a church? 1 = Very Poorly 2 = Poorly 3 = Somewhat Well 4 = Well 5 = Very Well
3. How well does our church create enthusiasm about being a part of the kingdom of God? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
4. How well does our church encourage prayer for God's initiative and anticipate that God will act?
1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
5. How well does our church encourage members to embody the fruit (i.e., love, joy, peace, patience) of the Spirit in their daily lives? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
6. How well does our church encourage members to seek the gifts of the Spirit (i.e. serving, teaching, encouraging, and mercy)? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
7. Overall, how effective are we at living out God's empowering presence in our church and in our daily lives? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Characteristic 2: God-Exalting Worship

The healthy church gathers regularly as the local expression of the Body of Christ to worship God in ways that engage the heart, mind, soul and strength of the people.

8. When we gather to worship together, how well are we as a church invited to engage in prayer? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
9. When we gather to worship together, how well are we as a church invited to listen attentively to the reading of Scripture? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
10. When we gather to worship together, how well do we as a church emphasize biblical and relevant preaching? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
11. When we gather to worship together, how well are we as a church focused on the importance of baptism? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

12. When we gather to worship together, how well are we as a church focused on the importance of communion? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
13. When we gather to worship together, how well are we as a church invited to engage in singing songs and hymns that praise God and encourage us as believers? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
14. When we gather to worship together, how well are we as a church invited to engage in giving our tithes and offerings as a reverent act of worship? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
15. Overall, how effective are we at living out God-exalting worship in our church? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Characteristic 3: Spiritual Disciplines

The healthy church provides training, models, and resources for members of all ages to develop their daily spiritual disciplines.

16. How well does our church encourage and equip its members to live out the practice of studying the Bible? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
17. How well does our church encourage and equip its members to live out the practice of personal confession? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
18. How well does our church encourage and equip its members to live out the practice of petitioning God, through prayer, for ourselves and others? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
19. How well does our church encourage and equip its members to live out the practice of reflective disciplines (such as journaling, prayerfully reviewing the day's events, etc.)? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
20. How well does our church encourage and equip its members to live out the practice of listening to God's voice? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
21. How well does our church encourage and equip its members to live out the practice of pursuing God's will? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
22. Overall, how effective is our church at encouraging and equipping our members in the spiritual disciplines? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Characteristic 4: Learning and Growing in Community

The healthy church encourages believers to grow in their walk with God and with one another in the context of a safe, affirming environment.

23. How well does our church provide opportunities to help people discover God's will and calling? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
24. How well does our church provide opportunities to equip people to follow God in every aspect of life? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
25. How well does our church provide opportunities to encourage people to discover and use their God-given abilities? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

26. How well does our church provide opportunities for mentoring? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
27. How well does our church provide small group Bible studies and discipleship groups? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
28. How well does our church provide opportunities for members to come together for teaching, prayer, and sharing (i.e., adult, youth, and children's education)? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
29. Overall, how effective are we at learning and growing in community in our church? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Characteristic 5: A Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships

The healthy church is intentional in its efforts to build loving, caring relationships within families; between members and within the community we serve.

30. How well does our church serve as a place for supporting marriage and family life? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
31. How well does our church serve as a place for supporting the needs of single adults? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
32. How well does our church serve as a place for supporting the needs of senior adults? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
33. How well does our church serve as a place for supporting the needs of those who come from dysfunctional families? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
34. How well does our church serve as a place for supporting those who come with diverse ability, ethnicity, or economic status? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
35. How well does our church build relationships with one another through open communication? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
36. How well does our church build relationships with one another through forgiveness and conflict resolution? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
37. Overall, how effective are we at living out a commitment to loving and caring relationships in our church? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Characteristic 6: Servant-Leadership Development

The healthy church identifies and develops individuals whom God has called and given the gift of leadership and challenges them to be servant-leaders.

38. How well does our church develop a sense of shared leadership among both lay leaders and pastoral staff? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
39. How well does our church encourage a healthy amount of transition in lay leadership while maintaining stability in lay led positions? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

40. How well does our church seek to unify the congregation around its leaders? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
41. How well does our church create an environment in which members are motivated to develop into servant-leaders inside and outside our church? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
42. Overall, how effective are we at living out servant-leadership development in our church? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Characteristic 7: An Outward Focus

The healthy church places high priority on communicating the truth of Jesus and demonstrating the love of Jesus to those outside the faith.

43. How concerned is our church for lost souls in our community? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
44. How well does our church intentionally and creatively explore ways to make our presentation of the gospel relevant to unbelievers? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
45. How well does our church train and equip our members to effectively present the gospel to those outside the Christian faith? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
46. How committed is our church to the passing on of our faith to the next generation? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
47. How well does our church demonstrate acts of love, justice, and mercy to people who are in need (outside of our church but within our reach)? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
48. How well does our church develop a strategy for global awareness and international mission involvement? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
49. How well does our church attend to the needs of the world's most impoverished people? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
50. Overall, how effective are we at living out an outward focus in our church? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Characteristic 8: Wise Administration and Accountability

The healthy church utilizes appropriate facilities, equipment, and systems to provide maximum support for the growth and development of its ministries.

51. From your perspective, how well does our church strive for excellence, effectiveness, and efficiency in its management practices? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
52. How well does our church create the infrastructure (i.e. technology, facilities, equipment, administrative support, etc.) to properly carry out our ministry? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

53. How well does our church appropriately provide for its staff (i.e. employment package, ongoing training, etc.) 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
54. How well does our church plan for the longevity of the ministry and for leadership transitions? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
55. How well does our church think and act strategically? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
56. How well does our church evaluate our ministry effectiveness (according to our vision and mission) and make appropriate adjustments for the future? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
57. Overall, how effective are we at living out wise administration and accountability in our church? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Characteristic 9: Networking with the Body of Christ

The healthy church reaches out to others in the Body of Christ for collaboration, resource sharing, learning opportunities and united celebrations of worship.

58. How well does our church develop ministry specialties that meet the needs of our community without overlapping or competing with other churches? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
59. How well does our church foster interdependence among other Christian churches in our community? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
60. Do you have the impression that the pastors within our city or town meet regularly enough to pray for and encourage each other? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
61. Do our ministry leaders receive training for their specific ministry with other leaders from other churches? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
62. How often does our church join area-wide celebrations where Christians from other churches worship God together? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
63. Overall, how effective are we at networking with the body of Christ in our church? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Characteristic 10: Stewardship and Generosity

The healthy church teaches its members that they are stewards of their God-given resources and challenges them to be sacrificially generous in sharing with others.

64. How well does our church provide instruction on stewardship (of time, talent, and financial resources) for our members? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
65. How well does our church provide instruction on financial generosity (giving joyfully and sacrificially) for our members? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
66. How well does our church give generous portions of the annual budget to local and international missions? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

67. How well does our church provide abundantly for those in need within our fellowship of believers, including the unemployed, the widowed and single parents? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
68. From your perspective, how well does our church operate within the church's annual budget? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
69. From your perspective, how well does our church operate with financial integrity and accountability? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*
70. Overall, how effective are we at living out stewardship and generosity in our church? 1 = *Very Poorly* 2 = *Poorly* 3 = *Somewhat Well* 4 = *Well* 5 = *Very Well*

Questions 71 & 72 breaks from the 1–5 scale-rating format and ask participants to choose the three traits that are strengths of the church (71) and the three that need the most improvement (72). **Use an 'X' to mark your answers.**

| Choose three (3) characteristics you feel are the greatest strengths of your church | Choose three (3) characteristics you feel are in most need of improvement in your church |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> God's Empowering Presence | <input type="radio"/> God's Empowering Presence |
| <input type="radio"/> God Exalting Worship | <input type="radio"/> God Exalting Worship |
| <input type="radio"/> Spiritual Disciplines | <input type="radio"/> Spiritual Disciplines |
| <input type="radio"/> Learning and Growing in Community | <input type="radio"/> Learning and Growing in Community |
| <input type="radio"/> Commitment to loving and caring relationships | <input type="radio"/> Commitment to loving and caring relationships |
| <input type="radio"/> Servant-leadership development | <input type="radio"/> Servant-leadership development |
| <input type="radio"/> An Outward focus | <input type="radio"/> An Outward focus |
| <input type="radio"/> Wise administration and accountability | <input type="radio"/> Wise administration and accountability |
| <input type="radio"/> Networking with the body of Christ | <input type="radio"/> Networking with the body of Christ |
| <input type="radio"/> Stewardship and Generosity | <input type="radio"/> Stewardship and Generosity |

73. What is your current leadership position in the church? (Choose only one answer).

Pastor ___; *Steward* ___; *Trustee* ___; *Sunday school Superintendent* ___; *YPD Director* ___; *Musician/Minister of Music* ___; *Director of Christian Education* ___

C. GUIDANCE FOR SURVEY RESPONDERS:

To Pastor:

Greetings! This is a request from Reverend Orin Gill (former pastor of Greater Bethel AMEC, Chesapeake) seeking your assistance to complete the Thesis phase of the Doctor of Ministry (D. Min) degree at Liberty Theological Seminary. This research project aimed at evaluating the health (effectiveness) of the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference was vetted by the Thesis Committee at Liberty University. In addition, it received approval from Bishop Richardson, the Episcopal Bishop; and from the Presiding Elders of the Districts involved.

The responses you provide will be handled in a confidential manner. The survey will not present information that reflects the individual church; rather, all information will aggregately reflect findings based on the sixty-one churches in the Virginia Conference.

The survey is designed to be completed online. However, if you prefer a paper copy, one is enclosed. Once completed, please submit the completed questionnaire in the self addressed, stamped envelope provided (*by December 22, 2010*).

The envelope you received contains sealed envelopes addressed to six specific lay leaders in your church. Each envelope contains a letter (similar to yours) that identifies:

- (1) The person conducting the survey
- (2) The purpose of the survey
- (3) Confidentiality in handling the data collected
- (4) The reporting of data
- (5) Instructions for completing and submitting the questionnaire.

Instructions for Pastor:

1. Regarding the addressed envelopes in the packet:

- a. Please present each sealed envelope to the lay leader in your church who holds the position (Title) indicated on the envelope.
- b. Inform each *Lay Leader identified* that:

- An AME pastor is completing the Doctor of Ministry degree and has selected him/her to participate in his research project
- The envelope contains all the information they would need about the survey and the person doing it
- It contains instructions for completing the survey online or paper form
- It contains a paper copy of the survey questionnaire
- It contains an addressed, stamped envelope to return the completed survey

Instructions for Completing the Survey: (Remember you have two Options {electronic or paper})

1. To Complete the Survey on-line: (Option One)

- a. Open your internet browser
- b. Enter the survey link: <http://www.healthychurch.net/surveys/login.php>
- c. Enter the username exactly as given: **amesurvey_lead**
- d. Enter the password: **Moses**

2. To complete the paper survey (Option Two)

- a. For each question, circle your answer on the 1-5 scale for each question.
- b. When completed, place the questionnaire in the self addressed envelope and drop in any U.S. postal service mail box.

Thanks for your assistance in completing the survey.

Respectfully,

Rev. Orin Gill

D. LETTER TO LAY-LEADERS:

Dear Lay-Leader:

Greetings! This is a request from Reverend Orin Gill (former pastor of Bethel, Harrisonburg and Greater Bethel AMEC, Chesapeake) seeking your assistance to complete the Thesis phase of the Doctor of Ministry (D. Min) degree at Liberty Theological Seminary. This research project aimed at evaluating the health (effectiveness) of the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference was vetted by the Thesis Committee at Liberty University. In addition, it received approval from Bishop Richardson, the Episcopal Bishop; and from the Presiding Elders of the Districts involved.

The responses you provide will be handled in a confidential manner. The survey will not present information that reflects the individual church; rather, all information will aggregately reflect findings based on the sixty-one churches in the Virginia Conference. The survey is designed to be completed online, and this would be the completion method I would recommend. However, I have enclosed a hard copy of the survey questionnaire if you would prefer completing the paper version. Once you have completed the survey questionnaire, please send it to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided (*by December 22, 2010*).

The envelope you received from your pastor contains all the information you would need to complete and return the survey. It contains:

1. Information about the person conducting the survey
2. Information relative to the purpose of the survey
3. Information about confidentiality regarding the handling of information collected
4. Information to inform the responder that all findings will be reported on a Conference –wide basis rather than by individual church
5. Instructions for completing and returning the questionnaire
6. A paper copy of the survey questionnaire
7. An addressed-stamped envelope to be used for returning the completed survey

Instructions for Completing the Survey: (Remember you have TWO Options
{*electronic and paper*})

3. To Complete the Survey **on-line**: (Option One)
 - e. Open your internet browser
 - f. Enter the survey link: <http://www.healthychurch.net/surveys/login.php>
 - g. Enter the username exactly as given: **amesurvey**
 - h. Enter the password: **Timothy**
 - i. Complete the Registration Form
 - j. For “First Name” enter the Name of your Church
 - k. For “Last Name” enter your role; (e.g., Trustee, Musician, etc.,)
 - l. Provide an answer for each question
 - m. **When Finished- submit survey**
 - n. **Select X (top right of screen) to close out**

4. To complete the **paper survey** (Option Two)
 - c. For each question, circle your answer on the 1-5 scale for each question.
 - d. When completed, place the questionnaire in the self addressed envelope and drop in any U.S. postal service mail box.

Thanks for your assistance in completing the survey.

Respectfully,

Rev. Orin Gill

E. LETTER TO THE EPISCOPAL BISHOP:

Rt. Rev., Adam Jefferson Richardson, Jr.,
Presiding Bishop
Second Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church
1134 11th Street, N.W.
Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Bishop Richardson:

I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ our risen Savior. I trust you are well. This letter is to inform you that I am a student at Liberty University matriculating through the Doctor of Ministry program with an emphasis on Evangelism and Church Growth.

I am now preparing to embark on my Thesis project. The focus of this thesis project is to develop "*A revitalization and growth strategy for the African Methodist Episcopal churches in the Virginia Conference.*" To this end, I am requesting your permission to survey the pastors and a select set of lay officers at each church located within the Virginia Annual Conference. I have enclosed a copy of the survey for your review and approval. The responders could access the survey tool via the Internet. I will make paper copies available for persons who do not have Internet access. It should not take the responder more than 25-30 minutes to complete the survey.

Be assured that the responses provided by each responder will be kept in a confidential manner, and at no point will a responder's name be associated with any response and/or remark.

With your help, we can identify the strengths as well as soft spots within our churches and pursue all that God has intended for our church.

I do appreciate your assistance in this project. If you need additional information, please contact me at 678-761-2203 or by email at revorin@yahoo.com.

Respectfully,

Rev. Orin Gill

F. LETTER TO PRESIDING ELDERS:

Dear Presiding Elder:

I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ our risen Savior. I trust you are well. This letter is to inform you that I am a student at Liberty University matriculating through the Doctor of Ministry program with an emphasis on Evangelism and Church Growth.

I am now preparing to embark on my Thesis project. The thesis project is focused on developing “*A revitalization and growth strategy for the African Methodist Episcopal churches in the Virginia Conference.*” I have sought and received permission from Bishop Richardson. In like manner, I am requesting your permission to execute the survey among the pastors and select lay leaders within the churches under your direct supervision. I have also included a copy of the survey so you will know what is being asked of your pastors and lay leaders.

The responders could access the survey tool via the Internet. I will also provide paper copies for persons who do not have Internet access. It should not take the responder about 25-30 minutes to complete the survey.

Be assured that the responses provided by each responder will be kept in a confidential manner, and at no point will a responder’s name be associated with any response and/or remark.

With your help, we can identify the strengths as well as soft spots within our churches and pursue all that God has intended for our church.

I do appreciate your assistance in this project. If you need additional information, please contact me at 678-761-2203 or by email at revorin@yahoo.com.

Respectfully,

Rev. Orin Gill

G. LETTER TO PASTORS:

Dear Pastor (Last Name):

I greet you in the matchless name of Jesus Christ. I am currently matriculating through the Doctor of Ministry Program at Liberty University, located in Lynchburg, Virginia. I am about to embark on my thesis project. This project will focus on developing “*A Revitalization and Growth Strategy for the African Methodist Episcopal Churches in the Virginia Conference.*” I would appreciate your assistance in completing the enclosed questionnaire to assist me in the research portion of this project.

This research project will target:

- The Pastor of each church in the Virginia Conference
- The Chairperson of the Stewards Board
- The Chairperson of the Trustee Board
- The Sunday School Superintendent
- The Director of the Young Peoples’ Department (YPD)
- The Director of Christian Education
- The Minister of Music/ Musician

Enclosed is a letter with similar information and instructions that I would like you to distribute to the person who now occupy each of the position mentioned above.

The questionnaire can be located and completed via the Internet. I have included four questionnaires and four stamped addressed envelopes that the pastor could give to responders who do not have Internet access. Once the questionnaire is completed, the responder would place it into the self addressed envelope return it to me.

Please try to answer each question candidly and honestly. Your first reaction is usually best so try to move swiftly through the assessment without bogging down and overanalyzing your responses. This should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Be assured that your responses will be kept strictly confidential and at no point will your name be associated with your responses and/or remarks. With your help, we can identify the strengths as well as soft spots within our churches and pursue all that God has intended for our church.

IMPORTANT: Do not use the browser's BACK button during the survey. Doing so may lock up your computer.

I do appreciate your assistance in this project. If you need additional information, please contact me at 678-761-2203 or by email at revorin@yahoo.com.

Respectfully,

Rev. Orin Gill

H. LETTER TO LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMATIONS:

(Developers of the Church Health Assessment Tool (CHAT))

Rick Anderson
Vice President
Leadership Transformations
P.O. Box 64530
Colorado springs, CO 80920

Dear Mr. Anderson:

I am currently matriculating through the Doctor of Ministry Program at Liberty University, located in Lynchburg, Virginia. I am about to embark on my thesis project. This project is focused on developing "*A revitalization and growth strategy for the African Methodist Episcopal churches in the Virginia Conference.*" To this end, I am requesting your permission to use the Church Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) that you have developed to gather the data for my project.

Please let me know what you would require of me so that I could have access and the use of this tool.

Respectfully,

Orin Gill

I. A.M.E. CHURCH DIRECTORY:

| Church | Street | City- State- Zip | Conference | District |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| St. John's AMEC | 545 E. Bute Street | Norfolk, VA 23510 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Mt. Zion AMEC | 2268 Princess Anne Road | Virginia Beach, VA 23456 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| St. Mark AMEC | 1740 Potters Road | Virginia Beach, VA 23454 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| New St. John AMEC | 5501 Rock Creek Lane | Virginia Beach, VA 23462 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Macedonia AMEC | Post Office Box 132 | Accomac, VA 23301 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| New Allen AMEC | 7026 Bayside Road | Exmore, VA 23350 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Gaskins Chapel AMEC | Post Office Box 447 | Melfa, VA 23410 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Bethel AMEC | Post Office Box 805 | Eastville, VA 23347 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| New Union Chapel AMEC | 1200 St. Julian Avenue | Norfolk, VA 23504 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| New Mt. Olive AMEC | 1953 Campostella Road | Chesapeake, VA 23323 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Ebenezer AMEC | 27054 Cheapside Road | Cape Charles, VA 23310 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Lee's Chapel AMEC | 1097 Bells Mill Road | Chesapeake, VA 23320 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| St. Luke AMEC | Post Office Box 9 | Accomac, VA 23301 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Greater St. Andrews AMEC | 3008 McDonald Road | Virginia Beach, VA 23464 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Bethel AMEC | 40 Boundary Avenue | Onancock, VA 23417 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| New Mt. Zion AMEC | 113 Seekel Street | Norfolk, VA 23505 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |

| Church | Street | City- State- Zip | Conference | District |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Greater Bethel AMEC | 2320 Cedar Bond | Chesapeake, VA 23320 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Shorter's Chapel AMEC | Post Office Box 91 | Machipongo, VA 23405 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| St. Joseph AMEC | | Belle Haven, VA 23306 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| St. Paul AMEC | | Pungoteague, VA 23342 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| St. Luke AMEC | 241 St. Luke Church Road | Chesapeake, VA 23320 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Holly Grove AMEC | 21404 Orbit Road | Windsor, VA 23487 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Mt. Moriah AMEC | 8438 White Marsh Road | Elberon, VA 23846 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Centerville Chapel AMEC | 1116 Fentress Road | Chesapeake, VA 23320 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Macedonia AMEC | 12190 Smith's Neck Road | Carrollton, VA 23314 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Campbell Chapel AMEC | 3252 Indian River Road | Virginia Beach, VA 23456 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Mt. Gilead AMEC | 32552 Monroe Road | Franklin, VA 23851 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| Gordon Chapel AMEC | 1164 Battlefield Blvd., South | Chesapeake, VA 23322 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |
| St. Stephen's AMEC | 511 Jefferson Avenue | Cape Charles, VA 23310 | Virginia | Norfolk/Eastern Shore |

A.M.E. CHURCH DIRECTOR (continued):

| Church | Street | City-State- Zip | Conference | District |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Third Street Bethel AMEC | 614 North Third Street | Richmond, VA 23219 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Emanuel AMEC | 637 North Street | Portsmouth, VA 23704 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Bethel AMEC | 94 W. Lincoln Street | Hampton, VA 23669 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. Paul AMEC | 2500 Chestnut Street | Newport News, VA 23607 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Mt. Zion AMEC | 2128 Melrose Avenue, NW | Roanoke, VA 24017 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Macedonia AMEC | 127 Pine Street | Suffolk, VA 23434 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Campbell Chapel AMEC | 20279 Brewer's Neck Blvd. | Carrollton, VA 23314 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Brown's AMEC | Main Street | Smithfield, VA 23431 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. Paul AMEC | 2400 Chestnut Street | Portsmouth, VA 23704 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. James AMEC | 501 Dinwiddie Street | Norfolk, VA 23523 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Ebenezer AMEC | 1563 Lafayette Blvd. | Roanoke, VA 24017 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| First Trinity AMEC | 1301 Elco Street | Chesapeake, VA 23324 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. Paul AMEC | 428 North London Street | Winchester, VA 22061 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Rehoboth AMEC | 405 Shell Road | Chesapeake, VA 23323 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Union Bethel AMEC | 14080 Bethel Church Lane | Smithfield, VA 23430 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Ebenezer AMEC | 4001 Terminal Avenue | Richmond, VA 23224 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Bethel Cave Spring AMEC | 5056 Pleasant Hill Drive | Roanoke, VA 24017 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |

| Church | Street | City-State- Zip | Conference | District |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Allen Chapel AMEC | 936 Sudberry Street | Staunton, VA 24401 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. Paul AMEC | 406 Gray Street | Danville, VA 24541 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Mt. Zion AMEC | 304 Fayette Street | Martinsville, VA 24112 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. Paul AMEC | 102 Penn Street | Blacksburg, VA 24060 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Meadowview AMEC | 1746 Summit Road | Fieldale, VA 24089 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. John AMEC | 3020 Ivyland Road | Roanoke, VA 24017 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| New Hope AMEC | 153 Clement Street | Chatham, VA 24531 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Bethel AMEC | 385 Diamond Avenue | Rocky Mount, VA 24151 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Beulah AMEC | 115 South Main Street | Farmville, VA 23901 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. Michael AMEC | Post Office Box 1001 | South Boston, VA 24592 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Mt. Pisgah AMEC | 1156 Woodsdale Rd. | Alton, VA 24520 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. John AMEC | | Clarksville, VA | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Bethel/Red Bluff AMEC | 635 East Main Street | Wytheville, VA 24382 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Bethel AMEC | 184 Kelly Street | Harrisonburg, VA 22801 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| St. James AMEC | 445 Prospect Road | Prospect, VA 23960 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Christ Our Redeemer AMEC | Post Office Box 12 | Staunton, VA 24401 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |
| Marshall Chapel AMEC | 1307 Fillmore Street | Lynchburg, VA 24510 | Virginia | Portsmouth/Richmond/Roanoke |

J. CHAT SURVEY RESULTS

Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Empowering Presence | | | | | |
|---|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 26.689 | 5.348 | 10.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Empowering Presence | | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 25.500 | 5.425 | 20.000 | 34.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 27.750 | 3.845 | 21.000 | 35.000 |
| Musician/Minister/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 24.500 | 8.692 | 11.000 | 34.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 27.400 | 3.130 | 24.000 | 30.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 27.524 | 4.445 | 19.000 | 35.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 26.938 | 3.991 | 22.000 | 34.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 26.848 | 5.546 | 16.000 | 35.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 26.632 | 5.590 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 26.500 | 5.662 | 11.000 | 30.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Empowering Presence | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Less than one year | 1 | 1 | 27.000 | . | 27.000 | 27.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 25.500 | 3.873 | 21.000 | 30.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 30.769 | 4.323 | 21.000 | 35.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 24.500 | 6.935 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| More than 10 years | 102 | 102 | 26.471 | 5.135 | 11.000 | 34.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Empowering Presence | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 24.667 | 4.726 | 21.000 | 30.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 26.671 | 5.855 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 27.098 | 4.477 | 16.000 | 35.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 26.167 | 5.480 | 17.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Empowering Presence | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 17.500 | 9.192 | 11.000 | 24.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 21.857 | 8.174 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 25.682 | 6.484 | 16.000 | 35.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 27.900 | 5.081 | 13.000 | 35.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 26.898 | 4.249 | 11.000 | 34.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 27.955 | 3.946 | 21.000 | 34.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Empowering Presence | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 26.568 | 5.488 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 27.333 | 4.597 | 19.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Empowering Presence | | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 26.650 | 5.509 | 11.000 | 35.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 27.024 | 4.714 | 13.000 | 35.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 21.571 | 7.439 | 10.000 | 34.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 29.500 | 3.141 | 21.000 | 34.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Empowering Presence | | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 26.639 | 5.583 | 11.000 | 35.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 26.732 | 5.177 | 10.000 | 35.000 |

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| Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics |
|---|

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Exalting Worship | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 32.470 | 6.471 | 9.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Exalting Worship | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 32.125 | 4.734 | 24.000 | 40.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 32.000 | 5.555 | 22.000 | 40.000 |
| Musician/Minister/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 29.083 | 9.940 | 12.000 | 40.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 28.600 | 2.881 | 25.000 | 33.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 35.000 | 4.980 | 21.000 | 40.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 34.313 | 4.316 | 25.000 | 40.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 32.182 | 6.593 | 14.000 | 40.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 33.105 | 7.179 | 9.000 | 40.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 30.600 | 7.058 | 14.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Exalting Worship | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Less than one year | 1 | 1 | 35.000 | . | 35.000 | 35.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 33.000 | 4.967 | 28.000 | 39.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 36.385 | 4.369 | 28.000 | 40.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 29.583 | 9.558 | 9.000 | 40.000 |
| More than 10 years | 102 | 102 | 32.265 | 6.187 | 14.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Exalting Worship | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 29.333 | 5.686 | 23.000 | 34.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 31.714 | 7.343 | 9.000 | 40.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 33.512 | 4.517 | 21.000 | 40.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 33.556 | 6.635 | 17.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Exalting Worship | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 21.500 | 9.192 | 15.000 | 28.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 27.143 | 11.052 | 9.000 | 40.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 30.364 | 8.840 | 12.000 | 40.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 34.567 | 5.124 | 17.000 | 40.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 33.184 | 5.069 | 14.000 | 40.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 32.818 | 3.996 | 23.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Exalting Worship | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 31.982 | 6.628 | 9.000 | 40.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 35.048 | 4.934 | 21.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Exalting Worship | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 33.000 | 6.241 | 14.000 | 40.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 32.976 | 5.459 | 12.000 | 40.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 26.500 | 10.545 | 9.000 | 40.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 34.438 | 4.457 | 23.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Exalting Worship | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 31.820 | 7.159 | 12.000 | 40.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 33.028 | 5.809 | 9.000 | 40.000 |

| |
|---|
| Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics |
|---|

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Encouraging Equipping | | | | | |
|---|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 25.174 | 6.528 | 10.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Encouraging Equipping | | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 22.875 | 5.303 | 17.000 | 32.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 25.875 | 5.139 | 18.000 | 33.000 |
| Musician/Minister/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 22.583 | 8.959 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 26.000 | 2.449 | 23.000 | 29.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 27.143 | 5.498 | 13.000 | 35.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 26.063 | 6.942 | 14.000 | 35.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 24.394 | 6.805 | 10.000 | 34.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 25.895 | 6.411 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 24.800 | 7.376 | 10.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Encouraging Equipping | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Less than one year | 1 | 1 | 27.000 | . | 27.000 | 27.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 26.500 | 6.557 | 20.000 | 35.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 30.000 | 5.083 | 17.000 | 35.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 22.917 | 7.879 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| More than 10 years | 102 | 102 | 24.755 | 6.347 | 10.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Encouraging Equipping | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 21.333 | 7.095 | 15.000 | 29.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 24.886 | 6.934 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 25.951 | 5.617 | 13.000 | 35.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 25.167 | 6.981 | 10.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Encouraging Equipping | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 19.500 | 12.021 | 11.000 | 28.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 21.857 | 8.745 | 10.000 | 34.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 23.227 | 7.982 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 27.067 | 6.113 | 12.000 | 35.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 25.571 | 5.508 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 25.227 | 6.023 | 15.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Encouraging Equipping | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 24.829 | 6.644 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 27.000 | 5.675 | 13.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Encouraging Equipping | | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 24.200 | 7.634 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 25.866 | 5.917 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 20.643 | 8.381 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 26.813 | 4.750 | 20.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Encouraging Equipping | | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 24.115 | 7.125 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 26.085 | 5.867 | 10.000 | 35.000 |

Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Learning Growing | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 24.023 | 6.713 | 9.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Learning Growing | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 21.500 | 5.682 | 17.000 | 35.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 22.125 | 5.817 | 15.000 | 34.000 |
| Musician/Minister/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 21.000 | 8.852 | 9.000 | 34.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 24.200 | 3.271 | 20.000 | 29.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 26.810 | 5.802 | 12.000 | 35.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 25.125 | 6.152 | 14.000 | 35.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 23.485 | 6.305 | 12.000 | 34.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 24.421 | 7.748 | 9.000 | 35.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 24.500 | 7.849 | 11.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Learning Growing | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Less than one year | 1 | 1 | 27.000 | . | 27.000 | 27.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 23.750 | 8.382 | 15.000 | 35.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 30.154 | 6.067 | 17.000 | 35.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 22.750 | 8.508 | 9.000 | 35.000 |
| More than 10 years | 102 | 102 | 23.373 | 6.209 | 9.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Learning Growing | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 17.333 | 3.055 | 14.000 | 20.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 23.814 | 7.047 | 9.000 | 35.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 24.732 | 6.008 | 12.000 | 35.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 24.333 | 7.088 | 13.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Learning Growing | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 14.500 | 0.707 | 14.000 | 15.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 19.571 | 8.541 | 9.000 | 34.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 22.182 | 7.719 | 11.000 | 35.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 27.167 | 6.685 | 9.000 | 35.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 23.918 | 5.488 | 11.000 | 33.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 24.091 | 6.094 | 9.000 | 34.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Learning Growing | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 23.559 | 6.785 | 9.000 | 35.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 26.476 | 5.870 | 12.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Learning Growing | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 24.500 | 7.008 | 11.000 | 35.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 24.378 | 6.394 | 9.000 | 35.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 19.786 | 7.963 | 9.000 | 33.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 25.313 | 6.008 | 14.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Learning Growing | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 23.721 | 7.142 | 11.000 | 35.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 24.282 | 6.361 | 9.000 | 35.000 |

Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Caring Relationships | | | | | |
|--|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 26.144 | 7.451 | 10.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Caring Relationships | | | | | | |
|--|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 25.750 | 6.089 | 20.000 | 40.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 24.875 | 4.643 | 19.000 | 33.000 |
| Musician/Minister/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 23.500 | 9.858 | 10.000 | 38.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 22.800 | 2.775 | 19.000 | 26.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 29.048 | 6.727 | 18.000 | 40.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 26.500 | 6.501 | 17.000 | 39.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 25.182 | 7.338 | 12.000 | 37.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 28.053 | 8.403 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 25.200 | 9.355 | 11.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Caring Relationships | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Less than one year | 1 | 1 | 29.000 | . | 29.000 | 29.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 25.000 | 9.201 | 13.000 | 35.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 32.462 | 6.851 | 20.000 | 40.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 25.417 | 9.491 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| More than 10 years | 102 | 102 | 25.441 | 6.948 | 10.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Caring Relationships | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 16.667 | 4.509 | 12.000 | 21.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 25.743 | 7.949 | 10.000 | 40.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 27.683 | 5.781 | 18.000 | 40.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 25.778 | 8.243 | 12.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Caring Relationships | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 17.500 | 6.364 | 13.000 | 22.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 21.286 | 6.800 | 11.000 | 33.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 25.000 | 8.843 | 12.000 | 40.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 29.533 | 7.785 | 10.000 | 40.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 26.041 | 6.377 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 25.227 | 6.531 | 12.000 | 37.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Caring Relationships | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 25.505 | 7.512 | 10.000 | 40.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 29.524 | 6.242 | 18.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Caring Relationships | | | | | | |
|--|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 26.300 | 8.430 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 26.427 | 6.630 | 10.000 | 40.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 23.071 | 10.126 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 27.188 | 7.626 | 12.000 | 39.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Caring Relationships | | | | | | |
|--|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 25.377 | 7.776 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 26.803 | 7.149 | 10.000 | 40.000 |

Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Leadership | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 16.871 | 4.915 | 6.000 | 25.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Leadership | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 15.250 | 5.203 | 11.000 | 25.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 15.625 | 5.097 | 8.000 | 25.000 |
| Musician/Minister/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 15.250 | 6.497 | 7.000 | 25.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 16.800 | 1.095 | 15.000 | 18.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 19.095 | 3.375 | 14.000 | 25.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 17.500 | 4.705 | 12.000 | 25.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 16.636 | 5.128 | 7.000 | 25.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 16.789 | 5.018 | 6.000 | 25.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 16.400 | 5.680 | 8.000 | 25.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Leadership | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Less than one year | 1 | 1 | 19.000 | . | 19.000 | 19.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 20.250 | 3.594 | 15.000 | 23.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 20.692 | 5.202 | 9.000 | 25.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 15.583 | 5.838 | 6.000 | 24.000 |
| More than 10 years | 102 | 102 | 16.382 | 4.605 | 7.000 | 25.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Leadership | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 13.333 | 2.517 | 11.000 | 16.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 16.500 | 5.180 | 6.000 | 25.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 17.293 | 4.417 | 8.000 | 25.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 17.944 | 5.116 | 7.000 | 25.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Leadership | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 11.000 | 5.657 | 7.000 | 15.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 15.143 | 5.699 | 6.000 | 25.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 15.636 | 5.568 | 7.000 | 25.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 18.767 | 4.939 | 10.000 | 25.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 16.796 | 4.505 | 8.000 | 25.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 16.773 | 4.219 | 10.000 | 25.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Leadership | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 16.432 | 5.059 | 6.000 | 25.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 19.190 | 3.281 | 14.000 | 25.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Leadership | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 16.250 | 5.748 | 8.000 | 25.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 17.183 | 4.436 | 8.000 | 25.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 14.429 | 5.971 | 6.000 | 25.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 18.188 | 4.847 | 11.000 | 25.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Leadership | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 16.852 | 5.269 | 7.000 | 25.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 16.887 | 4.628 | 6.000 | 25.000 |

Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Outward Focus | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 25.864 | 7.570 | 7.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Outward Focus | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 25.875 | 3.980 | 19.000 | 31.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 25.625 | 5.502 | 21.000 | 38.000 |
| Musician/Minister/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 22.083 | 9.756 | 7.000 | 36.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 22.800 | 3.114 | 20.000 | 28.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 28.905 | 6.511 | 16.000 | 40.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 25.875 | 7.658 | 16.000 | 39.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 25.788 | 8.077 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 26.158 | 8.745 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 25.400 | 7.382 | 11.000 | 34.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Outward Focus | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Less than one year | 1 | 1 | 27.000 | . | 27.000 | 27.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 26.500 | 6.351 | 23.000 | 36.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 30.538 | 7.172 | 18.000 | 40.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 23.500 | 9.830 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| More than 10 years | 102 | 102 | 25.510 | 7.271 | 7.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Outward Focus | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 19.000 | 3.000 | 16.000 | 22.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 25.657 | 7.885 | 7.000 | 40.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 26.659 | 6.891 | 16.000 | 39.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 26.000 | 8.153 | 11.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Outward Focus | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 15.000 | 11.314 | 7.000 | 23.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 22.429 | 8.344 | 11.000 | 38.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 23.909 | 8.557 | 11.000 | 38.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 28.233 | 7.528 | 15.000 | 40.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 26.122 | 6.830 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 26.091 | 6.782 | 16.000 | 38.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Outward Focus | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 25.333 | 7.634 | 7.000 | 40.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 28.667 | 6.711 | 16.000 | 40.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Outward Focus | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 24.450 | 7.626 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 26.354 | 6.963 | 11.000 | 40.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 21.786 | 10.116 | 7.000 | 40.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 28.688 | 6.954 | 16.000 | 39.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Outward Focus | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 25.213 | 8.031 | 7.000 | 40.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 26.423 | 7.161 | 11.000 | 40.000 |

Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Wise Administration | | | | | |
|---|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 22.015 | 6.922 | 7.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Wise Administration | | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 20.250 | 4.892 | 13.000 | 30.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 22.875 | 5.592 | 18.000 | 35.000 |
| Musician/Minister/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 19.333 | 8.988 | 8.000 | 33.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 21.400 | 4.159 | 17.000 | 27.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 24.905 | 6.252 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 22.313 | 5.862 | 15.000 | 34.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 20.333 | 7.283 | 8.000 | 35.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 23.895 | 7.378 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 21.700 | 7.454 | 9.000 | 30.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Wise Administration | | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| < one year | 1 | 1 | 26.000 | . | 26.000 | 26.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 24.750 | 7.719 | 17.000 | 34.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 27.692 | 6.550 | 17.000 | 35.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 21.250 | 9.687 | 7.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Wise Administration | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 14.000 | 1.732 | 12.000 | 15.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 21.529 | 7.263 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 23.634 | 6.371 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 21.556 | 6.354 | 8.000 | 31.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Wise Administration | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 14.000 | 4.243 | 11.000 | 17.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 20.857 | 8.214 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 20.227 | 9.149 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 24.600 | 6.610 | 9.000 | 35.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 22.020 | 5.648 | 9.000 | 33.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 21.364 | 6.470 | 12.000 | 33.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Wise Administration | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 21.486 | 6.920 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 24.810 | 6.377 | 7.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Wise Administration | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 20.400 | 7.625 | 9.000 | 35.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 22.354 | 6.235 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 18.929 | 8.974 | 7.000 | 33.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 25.000 | 6.522 | 12.000 | 34.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Wise Administration | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 21.475 | 7.522 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 22.479 | 6.378 | 7.000 | 35.000 |

| |
|---|
| Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics |
|---|

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Networking | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 18.402 | 5.417 | 3.000 | 30.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Networking | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 17.625 | 4.749 | 12.000 | 25.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 19.250 | 6.714 | 13.000 | 30.000 |
| Musician/Minister/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 16.917 | 4.055 | 10.000 | 23.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 17.600 | 2.302 | 15.000 | 20.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 19.000 | 6.148 | 3.000 | 28.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 19.063 | 5.422 | 12.000 | 28.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 18.242 | 5.739 | 8.000 | 30.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 18.789 | 5.893 | 10.000 | 30.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 18.000 | 5.077 | 9.000 | 25.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Networking | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Less than one year | 1 | 1 | 12.000 | . | 12.000 | 12.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 19.750 | 6.238 | 14.000 | 28.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 22.538 | 5.379 | 11.000 | 30.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 18.167 | 6.603 | 10.000 | 30.000 |
| More than 10 years | 102 | 102 | 17.912 | 5.078 | 3.000 | 28.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Networking | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 15.333 | 4.163 | 12.000 | 20.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 18.543 | 5.537 | 9.000 | 30.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 18.829 | 5.084 | 10.000 | 30.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 17.389 | 5.962 | 3.000 | 27.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Networking | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 16.500 | 6.364 | 12.000 | 21.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 15.429 | 8.960 | 3.000 | 30.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 16.500 | 5.747 | 8.000 | 30.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 20.567 | 5.296 | 12.000 | 30.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 18.469 | 4.946 | 9.000 | 27.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 18.318 | 4.087 | 12.000 | 28.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Networking | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 18.324 | 5.275 | 8.000 | 30.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 18.810 | 6.242 | 3.000 | 28.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Networking | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 18.800 | 5.197 | 11.000 | 30.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 18.732 | 5.471 | 3.000 | 30.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 15.214 | 5.250 | 8.000 | 27.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 19.000 | 5.086 | 11.000 | 28.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Networking | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 18.344 | 5.319 | 8.000 | 30.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 18.451 | 5.536 | 3.000 | 30.000 |

Mean Summary Score on the Ten Characteristics

The MEANS Procedure

| Analysis Variable : Stewardship | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 132 | 132 | 23.735 | 7.304 | 7.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Stewardship | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _Position | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Dir of Christian Ed | 8 | 8 | 23.250 | 5.339 | 15.000 | 34.000 |
| Multiple Roles | 8 | 8 | 21.125 | 6.686 | 14.000 | 33.000 |
| Musician/Min/Dir of Music | 12 | 12 | 19.500 | 8.919 | 7.000 | 31.000 |
| None of These | 5 | 5 | 21.600 | 2.074 | 18.000 | 23.000 |
| Pastor | 21 | 21 | 26.190 | 5.492 | 10.000 | 34.000 |
| SS Superint | 16 | 16 | 25.313 | 6.395 | 16.000 | 33.000 |
| Steward | 33 | 33 | 23.697 | 7.469 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| Trustee | 19 | 19 | 24.684 | 8.473 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| YPD Director | 10 | 10 | 23.000 | 9.463 | 8.000 | 34.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Stewardship | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| _ATTENDANCE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Less than one year | 1 | 1 | 22.000 | . | 22.000 | 22.000 |
| 1-3 years | 4 | 4 | 26.500 | 4.203 | 22.000 | 32.000 |
| 4-6 years | 13 | 13 | 29.308 | 5.329 | 16.000 | 34.000 |
| 7-10years | 12 | 12 | 23.250 | 9.450 | 7.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Stewardship | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _EDUCATION | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| No high school degree earned | 3 | 3 | 19.333 | 7.024 | 12.000 | 26.000 |
| High school degree | 70 | 70 | 23.000 | 7.894 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| College/Univ. graduate | 41 | 41 | 25.220 | 6.287 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| Masters or Doctorate | 18 | 18 | 23.944 | 6.949 | 10.000 | 33.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Stewardship | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| _AGE | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| 20-29 | 2 | 2 | 14.500 | 10.607 | 7.000 | 22.000 |
| 30-39 | 7 | 7 | 17.571 | 7.976 | 7.000 | 28.000 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 22 | 22.591 | 8.573 | 8.000 | 34.000 |
| 50-59 | 30 | 30 | 26.067 | 5.965 | 10.000 | 35.000 |
| 60-69 | 49 | 49 | 24.000 | 7.130 | 8.000 | 35.000 |
| 70 or older | 22 | 22 | 23.909 | 6.346 | 12.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Stewardship | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Staff | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Church attendee/ Member | 111 | 111 | 23.279 | 7.525 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| Church leadership team | 21 | 21 | 26.143 | 5.543 | 10.000 | 34.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Stewardship | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| MARITAL_STATUS | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Divorced | 20 | 20 | 24.600 | 6.916 | 8.000 | 35.000 |
| Married | 82 | 82 | 23.707 | 6.920 | 8.000 | 35.000 |
| Single | 14 | 14 | 20.000 | 9.332 | 7.000 | 31.000 |
| Widowed | 16 | 16 | 26.063 | 7.169 | 12.000 | 35.000 |

| Analysis Variable : Stewardship | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|----|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| GENDER | N Obs | N | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
| Female | 61 | 61 | 23.082 | 7.862 | 7.000 | 35.000 |
| Male | 71 | 71 | 24.296 | 6.794 | 7.000 | 35.000 |

K. UNEDITED COMMENTS FROM THE CHAT SURVEY

| Characteristic | Leadership Team | Congregation |
|---|--|--|
| GEP- God's Empowering Presence | <i>Question two a bit confusing, my church always leans, depends, and relies on GOD!!!</i> | <i>We are prayerfully trying to get there</i> |
| GEW-God-Exalting Worship | <i>Our Pastor encourages very passionately about all aspects of worship it just discouraging to see a member not heed the word of GOD regarding the importance of tithes and offering</i> | <i>My family is evidences of God's grace for our church as it pours out by the Spirit for the benefit of my life and family. I have only been at the church for a little over a year. I am the music minister and I feel that it is hard to exalt God when no one shows up for practice. I personally feel that if God gives us his Best then why can't we. Singing and worshipping God is a form of Exalting him We have bible study but no application strategies are given.</i> |
| SD- Spiritual Disciplines | <i>No Comments</i> | <i>No Comments</i> |
| LGC- Learning and Growing in the Community | <i>So ironic because our church just started a new youth group between the ages of 21 - 41 about six months ago to capture this group and keep this group in the word and will of GOD!!!</i> | <i>Prayerfully we will get there</i> |
| LCR- Loving and Caring Relationship | <i>Our church is family church, I'm a passer through for I realize who church this is, GOD'S!!! Some of the families within this church have yet to realize, I just pray that some day they will. We are striving to do better!</i> | <i>Instead of growing in this area we have decreased in programs that were available</i> |
| SLD- Servant-Leadership Development | <i>This is work in progress, for as a leader you cannot and will not please all. Leaving this in GOD'S hands!!!</i> | <i>No Comments</i> |
| OF- An Outward Focus | <i>Work in progress!!!</i> | <i>Our missionary group gives to certain people within the Congregation. We do make donations to homeless shelters at Christmas and mother's days. Also we do give to the Haiti relief drive.</i> |
| WAA-Wise Administration and Accountability | <i>Overall, we need to pull together better and realize the vision of the pastor which was given to him from GOD!!! It's difficult to formulate responses when it's unclear if we are talking about the local AME Church, or the Conference, District, National Body</i> | <i>No Comments</i> |
| NBC-Networking with the body of Christ | <i>As a church you have the same old faithful few who assist the pastor in carrying out the networking aspect.</i> | <i>This is an area of need</i> |
| SG- Stewardship and Generosity | <i>The Financial team at our church does an outstanding job to ensure there will be place to worship for the future. We can do better with supporting outside of our local area. Many churches are struggling just to make their assessments.</i> | <i>We do not provide abundantly for our unemployed, senior citizens or single parents. Prayerfully we will develop a ministry for these areas</i> |

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N. Sample Outline: STRATEGIC PLAN

I. Problem and Opportunity Recognition:

A. The Mission Statement

1. What programs and services should we be providing?
2. Why do we exist?
3. How are we unique?
4. Who are our customers/users?
5. What are the three to five most important programs we provide, now and in the future?
6. What do we do best, now and in the future?
7. How are we different from the way we were three to five years ago?
8. How are we most likely to be different three to five years from now?

B. Identification of future challenges and opportunities

1. What is the source of the challenges and opportunities to your organization?
2. Why do these challenges and opportunities exist?

II. Identification of Parties:

A. Who is creating problems, challenges, and opportunities for our organization?

1. What internal groups or parties are involved?
2. What is their perspective?
3. How will these parties affect our mission?
4. What external groups or parties are involved?
5. What is their perspective?
6. How will these parties affect our mission?

III. Historical Analysis:

A. What created these problems and opportunities, and how did we get here?

B. How has different levels of our organization and the individuals within the organization responded to key challenges and opportunities in the past?

C. How long has these challenges and opportunities existed?

- D. What attempts have been made at preventing and at exploiting opportunities?
- E. How successful/unsuccessful were these attempts?
- F. How have the parties involved responded to these efforts?

IV. Situational Analysis:

A. Organization Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

- 1. Identify Strengths and weaknesses
- 2. Opportunities and threats worksheets

B. Identifying desired goals

V. Strategy Formulation:

A. Defining and Accomplishing Success, 12-Month Goals

B. Defining and Accomplishing Success, 5-Year Goals

O. Sample Outline: BUSINESS PLAN

Templates for Writing a Business Plan

<http://www.sba.gov/content/templates-writing-business-plan>

What goes into a business plan?

There is no single formula for developing a business plan, but some elements are consistent throughout all business plans. Your plan should include an executive summary, a description of the business, a plan for how you will market and manage your business, financial projections and the appropriate supporting documents.

To help you get started in writing your business plan, we have summarized the essential elements in the following outline.

Elements of a Business Plan

1. Cover sheet
2. Executive summary (statement of the business purpose)
3. Table of contents
4. Body of the document
 - A. Business
 1. Description of business
 2. Marketing
 3. Competition
 4. Operating procedures
 5. Personnel
 6. Business insurance
 - B. Financial data
 1. Loan applications
 2. Capital equipment and supply list
 3. Balance sheet
 4. Breakeven analysis
 5. Profit and loss statements
 6. Three-year summary

7. Detail by month, first year
8. Detail by quarters, second and third year
9. Assumptions upon which projections were based
10. Pro-forma cash flow

C. Supporting documents

1. Tax returns of principals (partners in the business) for last three years, personal financial statements (all banks have these forms)
2. Copy of franchise contract and all supporting documents provided by the franchisor (for franchise businesses)
3. Copy of proposed lease or purchase agreement for building space
4. Copy of licenses and other legal documents
5. Copy of resumes of all principals
6. Copies of letters of intent from suppliers, etc.

VITA**ORIN ECKMAN GILL, SR.****PERSONAL:**

Born: March 1, 1957

Married: Wanda L. Gill, October 30, 2004

Children: Delmarious, Javan, Monique, and Erika

EDUCATION:

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration also Public Administration,
Edward Waters College 1981

Master of Public Administration, Florida Atlantic University 1982

Master of Arts in Evangelism and Church Planting, Liberty Baptist Theological
Seminary 2009

MINISTERIAL:

Ordained: African Methodist Episcopal Church, Houston, Texas 1999

PROFESSIONAL:

Pastor: St Andrew A.M.E. Church, Crockett, Texas 1999-2000

Youth Pastor: Payne Cathedral of Faith A.M.E. Church, Houston, Texas 2000-
2001

Associate Minister: Greater Ebenezer A.M.E. Church, Richmond, Virginia 2001-
2005

Pastor: Bethel A.M.E. Church, Harrisonburg, Virginia 2005-2006

Pastor: Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church, Chesapeake, Virginia 2006-2007

Associate Minister: Turner Chapel A.M.E. Church, Marietta, Georgia 2007- 2010

Associate Minister: Allen Temple A.M.E. Church, Woodstock, GA 2010-present

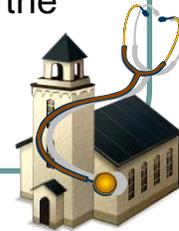
A REVITALIZATION AND GROWTH STRATEGY FOR THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCHES IN THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE

Thesis Oral Defense
Presented by Orin E. Gill, Sr.
April, 2011



Project Goals:

1. Present a biblical and theological foundation for the purpose and mission of the church, and for its growth.
2. Present the Historical environment out of which the A.M.E. Church was born
 - Present the beliefs of the A.M.E Church
 - Present the mission and purpose of the A.M.E Church



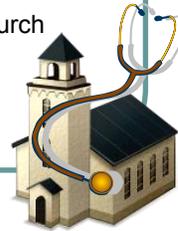
Project Goals (continued)

3. Conduct two surveys:

- The Church Health Assessment Survey (CHATS) targeting pastors and select lay-leaders from each of the 63 A.M.E Church within the Virginia Conference
- The Church Information Survey targeting pastors of the A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference

4. Conduct data analysis relative to:

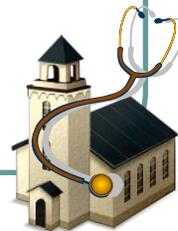
- The health of the churches in relation to the 10 CHAT characteristics presented by Stephen Macchia
- How pastors are adhering to “Best Practices” for church management and for preparing lay leaders



Project Goals (continued)

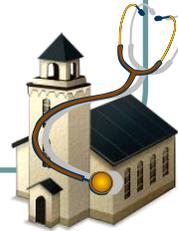
5. Present data findings and strategy recommendations to:

- Develop leaders
- Restore church health and numerical growth in the 63 A.M.E churches in the Virginia Conference.



Findings: Biblical Support for the Church

- We are God's creation, designed to govern the world and have fellowship with Him (Gen 1: 27-28)
- The church is nothing other than a fellowship of persons – The fellowship of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:9) Fellowship with the Holy Ghost (2 Cor 13:13; Phil 2:1) - Professor Brunner
- The assembly of God's people (Acts 7:38)
- A living organism- 1 Cor 3:16
- An organized community – Eph 4:12; Acts 14:23
- A worshipping community – Acts 2:41-47



Findings: Biblical Support for the Church (continued)

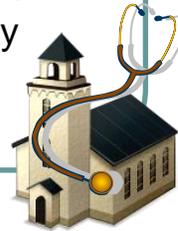
The church is:

- A witnessing community – Acts 1:5
- The Body of Christ – Eph 1:22-23
- Christ is the head of the church – Col 1:18
- The body of Christ on earth – Mt 16:18
- Each member is a part of the church and has an important function “for the body is one...”
Cor 12:13-31



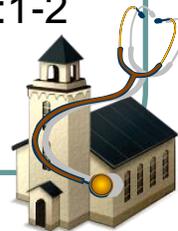
The Work of the Church

- Jesus commissioned the work of the church – Mat 28:19-20
 - “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (NIV).



The Church: Responsibility to Train, Develop and Nurture Lay Leaders

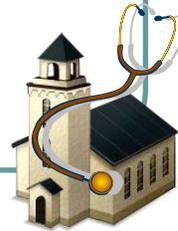
- The Bible addressed the matter of leadership qualities & qualifications – Acts 6:3-5
- Texts that address the fallacy of following one's will rather than the will of God – 1 Tim 3: 1-15; Titus 1:59; Romans 12:1-2



Historic Profile of the A.M.E. Church in the U.S.

● Historic Profile:

- Establishment date
- Social conditions that birth the A.M.E Church
- Theological beliefs of the A.M.E Church
- Ministries and mission



Historic Profile of the A.M.E. Church in the U.S.

■ Historic Profile:

- The A.M.E Church was established after its leaders walked out of St George's Methodist Church in Nov. 1787 after being denied the opportunity to finish their prayers
- Richard Allen, born in 1760 received a license to preach in 1782
- In 1799 Allen was ordained an iterant Deacon, and later an elder at St George's Methodist Church
- Allen was the first Consecrated Bishop in the A.M.E. Church



Historic Profile of the A.M.E. Church in the U.S.

Ministries and mission:

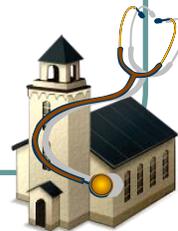
- Richard Allen- the founders father of the A.M.E. Church believed in, practiced and trained itinerant ministers to carry the Gospel Message to Negroes in their plantation environments
- Ministries were instituted to address the needs (e.g., developing reading skills, planning and managing resources) of the Negroes
- Ministries were developed to teach the Negroes about God's love as presented in the Holy Bible.



Theological Beliefs

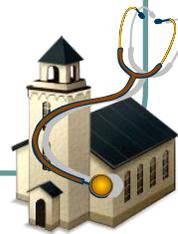
Theological beliefs of the A.M.E Church:

- *The Holy Trinity:*
- *The Incarnation of Christ:*
- *The Resurrection of Christ:*
- *The Holy Spirit:*
- *The Holy Scriptures:*
- *The Old Testament:*
- *Original Sin:*
- *Free Will:*
- *The Justification of Man:*



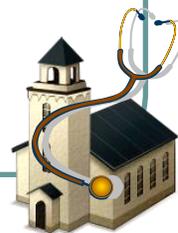
Theological Beliefs (continued)

- *Good Works:*
- *Sin after Justification:*
- *Works of Supererogation:.*
- *The Church:*
- *Purgatory:*
- *Speaking in Tongues:*
- *The Sacraments:*
- *Baptism:*
- *The Communion Elements:*
- *The Sacrifice of Christ:*



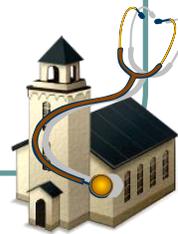
Theological Beliefs (continued)

- *The Lord's Supper:*
- *The marriage of Ministers:*
- *Rites and Ceremonies of the Church:*
- *Regarding the rules of the Government:*
- *Christian and their Possessions:*
- *A Christian's Oath:*



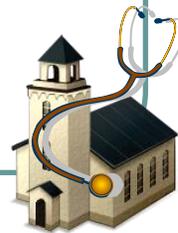
10 Church Health Assessment Tools (CHAT) Characteristics

10 CHAT Characteristics used in this Project



Church Health Assessment (CHAT) Tool

- **GEP - God's Empowering Presence:**
- **GEW - God-Exalting Worship:**
- **SD - Spiritual Disciplines:**
- **LGC - Learning and Growing in Community:**
- **LCR - A Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships:**



CHAT Characteristics (continued)

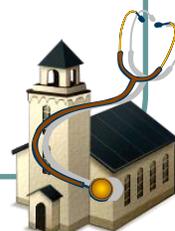
- **SLD - Servant-Leadership Development:**
- **OF - An Outward Focus:**
- **WAA - Wise Administration and Accountability:**
- **NBC - Networking with the Body of Christ:**
- **SG - Stewardship and Generosity:**



Methodology: CHAT Survey

CHAT Responders:

1. Pastors of AME Churches within the Virginia Conference
2. Select Lay Leaders from these churches, to include:
 - Steward pro-tem
 - Director of Christian Education
 - Minister of Music/Musician
 - Chairperson of the Trustee Board
 - Sunday school Superintendent
 - Director, Young People's Department (YPD)



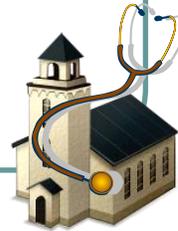
CHAT Methodology (continued)

Actions Taken:

- Inform pastors about the study and solicit their assistance

- Mail survey with instructions for completing and returning surveys

- Follow up Activities:
 - Two email reminders
 - Two phone calls to each pastor



CHAT Methodology: (continued)

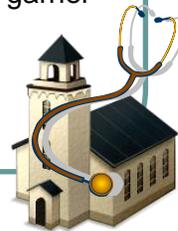
- Request permission from Episcopal Bishop

- Request permission from 2 Presiding Elders

- Secure Web Based CHAT survey from Church Transformations

- Met with Pastors: Inform about pending survey and garner support

- Mailed out survey packets to Pastors



CHAT Methodology: (continued)

- Each Survey packet contained six survey packets for distribution to the lay leaders identified within their congregation
- **Each survey packet contained:**
 - information about the survey
 - Instructions for completing a returning the survey
 - Hard copy of survey and self addressed stamped envelope



CHAT Survey Responders

Leadership Team:

- Pastor
- Steward pro tem

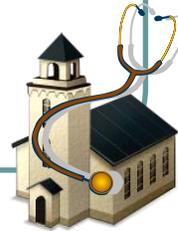
Congregation:

- Chairperson, Trustee Board
- S. Sch. Superintendent
- Min of Music/ Musician
- Y.P.D. Director
- Dir. Christian Education



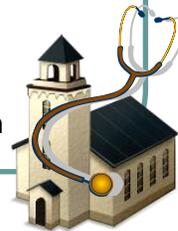
CHAT Survey-Response

- 441 CHAT Survey Questionnaires were mailed out
- 132(33%) were completed and returned
- 35 (8%) of the questionnaires were never delivered to survey recipients. These consisted of:
 - 4 pastor's packets (28 surveys) were returned due to incorrect addresses
 - 1 packet returned (7 surveys) recipient's address missing)



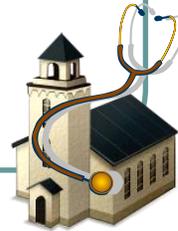
CHAT Responders by Leadership Role

- 33 (25%) were Stewards
- 21 (16%) were Trustees
- 16 (12%) were YPD Directors
- 16 (12%) were Sunday school Superintendents
- 21 (16%) were pastors
- 12 (9%) were musicians/ Ministers of Music
- 13 (10%) were Directors of Christian Education



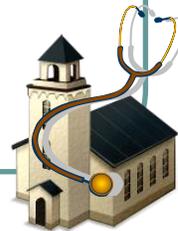
CHAT Responders by Gender

- 71 (54%) were males
- 61 (46%) were females



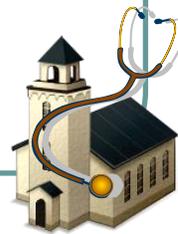
CHAT Responders by Marital Status

- 82 (62%) were married
- 20 (15%) were divorced
- 16 (12%) were widowed
- 14 (11%) were single



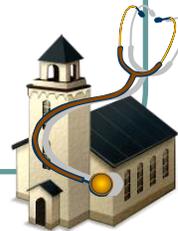
CHAT Responders by Church Membership

- 1 had membership for ≤ 1 year
- 4 (3%) were members for 1-3 years
- 13 (10%) were members for 4-6 years
- 12 (9%) were members for 7-10 years
- 102 (77%) were members for ≥ 10 years



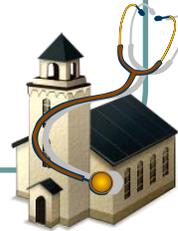
CHAT Responders by Age

- 22 (16%) were ≥ 70 years of age
- 49 (33%) were between 60-69 years of age
- 30 (23%) were between 50-59 years of age
- 22 (17%) were between 40-49 years of age
- 7 (5%) were between 30-39 years of age
- 2 (2%) were between 20-29 years of age



CHAT: Leadership by Level of Education

- 65% of Sunday school Superintendents and 33% of Stewards did not have a H/S diploma
- 3% of the pastors indicated not having a H/S diploma



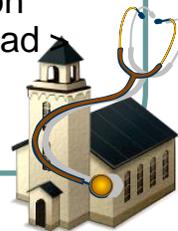
CHAT: Leadership by Years of Membership

- 31% of the Stewards were members for more than 10 years
- 18% were members for 4-6 years, and 7-10 years respectively
- 18% of SS Superintendents were members for \geq 10 years
- 45% of the Trustees indicated being members for 7-10 years, while 11% were members for \geq 10 years



CHAT: Leadership by Years of Membership (continued)

- 18% of YPD Directors were members for 4-6 years; 8% were members for > 10 Years
- 33% of the Ministers of Music were members for 1-3 years, while 11% were members for > 10 years
- 18% of the Directors of Christian Education were members for 4-6 years, while 11% had 10 years of church membership

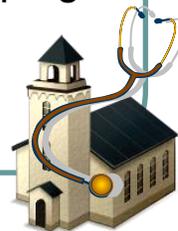


ANOVA Results

Marital Status Toward CHAT Characteristics:

- Significance was determined in 1) God's Empowering Presence, 2) Exalting Worship, 3) Encouraging and Equipping*

* significant at 0.05 confidence level



ANOVA Results

Education Toward CHAT Characteristics:

- The $P_{>F}$ value of 0.8429 is greater than 0.05
- The four groups of educational level toward the CHAT characteristics (dependent Variables) are equal, therefore not significant

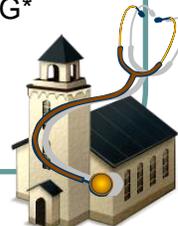


ANOVA Results

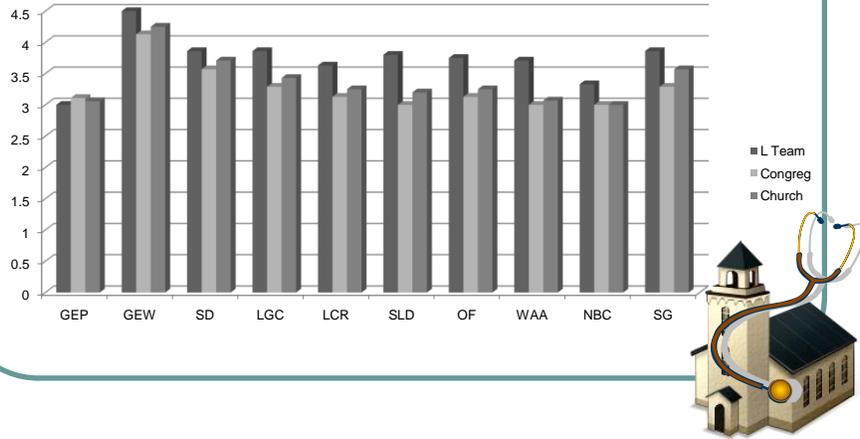
Length of Membership toward CHAT Characteristics:

- The null hypotheses is that the five groups are equal
- The $P_{>F}$ value is 0.0386. Therefore, the project will reject the null hypothesis
- Turkey's test indicate significance in 1) length of Church Membership (4-6 years) and GEP, E&E and L&G*

significant at 0.05 confidence level*



CHAT Comparison: Leadership Team, Congregation and Overall Church Ratings

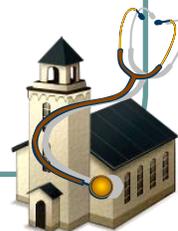


CHAT Findings: Areas Most in Need of Improvement

| Areas Most in Need of Improvement | Leadership Team (Median Scaled Scores) | Congregation (Median Scaled Scores) |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| OF – Outward Focus | 3.75 | 3.13 |
| WAA – Wise Administration and Accountability | 3.71 | 3.00 |
| SLD – Servant Leadership Development | 3.80 | 3.00 |
| LCR – A Commitment to Loving Caring Relationships | 3.62 | 3.12 |
| NBC – Networking with the Body of Christ | 3.33 | 3.00 |
| GEP – God's Empowering Presence | 3.00 | 3.11 |

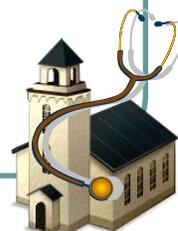
CHAT Findings: Areas of (strength) Health

- **God Exalting Worship:**
- **Spiritual Disciplines:**
- **Learning and Growing in Community:**
- **Stewardship and Generosity:**



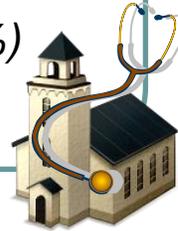
Church Information Survey

Survey Methodology



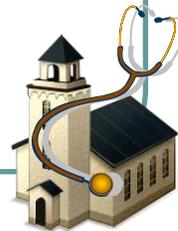
About the Church Information Survey

- **Type of Survey:** *Telephone*
- **Responders:** *Pastors of A.M.E. Churches in the Virginia Conference*
- **Number of Responders:** *21 (33%) out of 63*



Time Spent in daily personal Prayer:

- ✓ Time Spent in daily prayer:
 - 13 (61%) of the pastors spend 1-2 hrs/day in personal prayer
 - 7 (33%) spend <1 hour/day in personal prayer



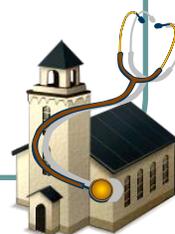
Sermon Preparation Schedule

- 21 (100%) of the pastors do not prepare Annual sermon schedules
- 15 (71%) prepare sermons on a Weekly basis
- 1 prepare sermons on a Quarterly basis
- 1 on a Monthly basis
- 4 (19%) indicated having no schedule



Planning Worship Services

- 11 (52%) plan their worship services with the Minister of Music
- Based on the survey, pastors did not include any other leader in their planning for worship services



Music Selection for Worship Services

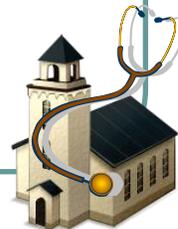
- 24% of the pastors selected their own music for worship services
- 57% indicated that the Minister of music selected the music for worship services



Beneficiaries of this Data

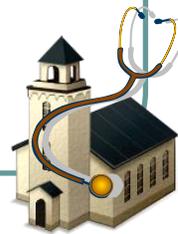
Potential Beneficiaries include:

- ❑ Leadership of the Virginia Conference of the A.M.E Church
- ❑ Pastors of A.M.E Churches within the Virginia Conference
- ❑ Lay leaders of the A.M.E Churches within the Virginia Conference



Recommendations

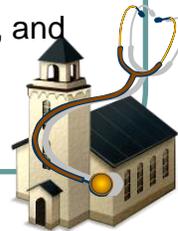
Recommendations Based on Survey Findings



Recommendations: For Leadership Improvement

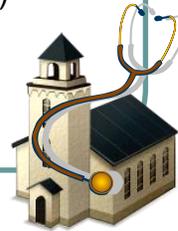
Christian Leaders: based on New Testament

- ❑ Leaders are called to office by God through Jesus Christ (Acts 1:24-25)
- ❑ Leaders possess a firsthand, personal relationship with Jesus Christ (Acts 1: 21-22)
- ❑ Leaders bear witness to the Christian message, and Christ resurrected (Acts 6:2; 7; 8:4-13, 26-40)



Recommendations: For Leadership Improvement (continued)

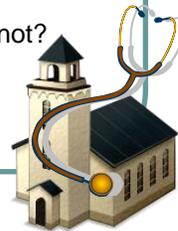
- ❑ Leaders are empowered by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; 6:3)
- ❑ Leaders are examples of Christian faith (Acts 6:3; 7:60)
- ❑ Leaders should receive the approval of the Christian community before they serve (Acts 6:6; 9:1-25)
- ❑ Leaders serve in order to lead (Lk. 22:27; Jn 13:1-20)



Leadership: Questions for Consideration

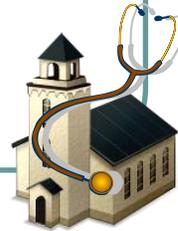
Some Questions for Consideration:

- ❑ How have leaders been selected in your Church?
 - What Criteria has governed their selection?
 - How are Biblical criteria considered?
- ❑ What do you understand as “a Christian experience”?
 - How important is it for Christian leaders to possess a Christian experience?
 - What effect does it have on the church when they do not?



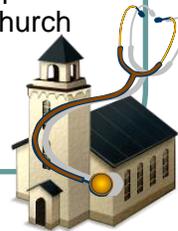
Leadership: Questions for Consideration (Continued)

- ❑ What continuing education does your church currently provide for its members?
 - Would your leaders be open to discussing ways for members to cultivate a more vital relationship with God?
 - How is your prayer relationship with God?



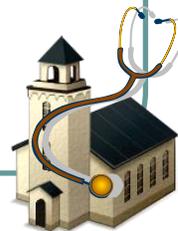
Leadership Improvement Plans

- ❑ For ministries, missions and programs to be effective leaders should be encouraged to commit to performance covenants
- ❑ Pastors and church leaders must begin to examine how they are investing Gods' time
- ❑ Leaders must establish clearly defined objectives through prayer and the leading of the Holy Spirit
- ❑ Church leaders must conduct periodic evaluations of programs, ministries and mission work within their church
- ❑ Define position evaluations



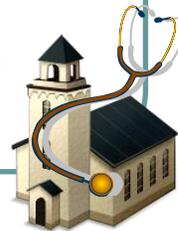
Leadership Improvement Plans (continued)

- ❑ Leaders must clearly outline the long range, intermediate, and short-range objectives for their church (ministry area, etc.)
- ❑ Leaders must provide direction and purpose and lead their church to achieve stated objectives
- ❑ Positions must have written position descriptions and related evaluation criteria
- ❑ Leaders must engage in Goal Setting
- ❑ Leaders must define work roles, tasks and clarify expectations



Leadership Improvement Plans (continued)

- ❑ Work collaboratively with other believers in the Christian community outside the congregation
- ❑ Church leaders must look for ways to introduce and incorporate technology into their churches to enhance communication, improve management functions, and raise accountability
- ❑ Leaders must build a team and begin to plan worship services that will utilize the God given talents of each person
- ❑ Leaders must assess the community outside the church build ministries and establish missions to build bridges to them and the church



End of Presentation

Questions

