

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

A STRATEGIC PLAN TO DEVELOP A HEALTHY CHURCH

A Thesis Project Submitted to  
The faculty of Liberty University School of Divinity  
in Candidacy for the degree of  
Doctor of Ministry

by

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Lynchburg, Virginia

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Thesis Project Approval Sheet

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As Always I Remain

## ABSTRACT

Not all churches are healthy; however, to be effective, churches must be healthy. The purpose of this thesis project is to assist pastors in developing strategies for church health. When the work of evangelism is a stated goal, the greatest catalyst for the community is the presence of a healthy church. This thesis project will clarify the biblical definition and purpose of the church and describe the characteristics of church health as suggested by experts. This thesis project will also share a brief history, vision, and ministry example of church health, and analyze and evaluate the current condition of Mount Morris Baptist church based on *Becoming a Healthy Church*, written by Stephen Macchia. Pastors will be interviewed to assess their church health. Finally, this thesis project will produce strategies that will develop church health.

Abstract Length: 134 words

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

One of the hottest issues throughout the world is health. As a result of being concerned about this subject, the writer of this thesis goes to the gym, while working as a full time minister at a church in Hume, VA. In the beginning of being concerned about this area, the writer's weight was 257 pounds; before taking a serious look at the area of physical health. The effect of developing a better diet along with consistent exercise, has the writer's weight at 220 pounds.

When this writer first started to work as a full time minister at the church, the writer did not have time to exercise, due to a busy daily schedule. The office hours were from 9 AM to 5 PM, which included visitations, funerals, office administration, and cutting the grass on the church campus and cemetery area. By doing these types of activities, much of the writer's free time was spent sleeping and not exercising. Also, the writer would eat food on the run, which resulted in an unhealthy diet and serious weight gain. Therefore, the writer became overweight and would lose stamina quickly; which resulted in having to see the doctor.

Now, the writer goes to the gym on a daily basis to exercise and stay fit. The particular exercises can include swimming, aerobics, racket ball, basketball, and weight training. The outcome of practicing a more consistent healthy lifestyle has produced weight loss, increased energy, and the removal of some prescribed medicines. Although it is often said that thin people suffer less adult diseases than persons who are overweight, the important value about health is to do some type of daily exercise, along with having a well-balanced healthy diet, for the purpose of producing a healthy body. Not only will exercise and weight loss help one move towards physical fitness, eating a well-balanced healthy diet is important also.

### **Statement of the Problem**

When the human body is operating out of order, doctors call that disease. Likewise, when the body of Christ becomes unbalanced, that is a disease also. Many of the diseases of the church are illustrated and identified in the seven churches of the Book of Revelation. According to Rick Warren, author of *The Purpose Driven Church*, “Health will occur only when everything is brought back into balance.”<sup>1</sup> Warren further suggests that “the key issue for churches in the twenty-first century should be church health, not church growth.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, healthy churches do not need gimmicks to grow, they are designed to grow naturally. The purpose of this thesis project is to assist pastors in developing strategies for a healthy church.

### **Statement of Limitations**

As is evident in the title of this thesis project, this work has limitations. First, this thesis project will share general information about overall church health. It will also provide a biblical definition and purpose of church health. The biblical definition of church health will provide a foundational structure for this project. Although the author will present the history, vision, mission, and ministry of (Mount Morris Baptist Church) MMBC, the details of the systems of the church will not be provided in this project.

Second, this thesis project is designed to understand the brief history, nature, and functions of church health. It will also research the characteristics of church health that are given by experts in this field. However, this thesis project will not analyze the detailed views and arguments or give the impression that each answer is conclusive.

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<sup>1</sup> Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 16.

<sup>2</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 17.

Third, this thesis project will do a detailed study of what a healthy church is. In order to accomplish this, questionnaires will be distributed to the members of (Mount Morris Baptist Church) MMBC and other local churches and the data will be analyzed and evaluated. Also, a brief history of this church will be included in the paper, and the result of the evaluation will be shared to help insure church health.

Finally, the reader of this project will be given the principles and strategies that (Mount Morris Baptist Church) MMBC will use, for the purpose of attaining church health. However, these principles and methods will only be applied to churches that are under similar circumstances as (Mount Morris Baptist Church) MMBC.

### **Theoretical Basis for the Project**

As a reaction to traditional health care, traditional faith offers the practice of church health. This idea should lead people to a different understanding of health, healing, and wholeness. In other words, being healthy or achieving wholeness does not mean a final or perfect state of being. A healthy church involves the realization and continuous acceptance of the limitations of being a finite creature in a divinely created, but fallen order. Being whole means integrating pain, sickness, and death into life's meaning. Therefore, becoming healthy and whole is a difficult passage where good and evil, suffering and joy, sickness and being well, are all intertwined.

Today, people are searching for the source and avenue in which a perfect and balanced blend of the spirit, mind, and body will illustrate church health. Therefore, Christians have an opportunity to know and proclaim that source of wholeness to be God, and its avenue to be the surrender of spirit, mind, and body to God through Jesus Christ.

In order for people to fully realize and attain the benefits of a Christian model of health, healing, and wholeness, there must be a call to repentance leading to conversion in the Spirit that will open up all persons to a transformed perspective. At this point, Christians believe one's conversion to be the route that leads to wholeness. Healthy churches must demonstrate to a broken and searching world that the certainty of spiritual health is only found in the restoration process that is offered through a real relationship with God. This process includes redemption, justification, repentance, reconciliation, salvation, and sanctification.

Traditionally, society has defined health, healing, and wholeness in two ways. The technological model defines health, healing, and wholeness functionally. Health is robust physical fitness, whereas disease is a breakdown, an invasion or corrosion of the physical system. Healing is functional restoration, the conquering of an alien destroyer; while repair is the goal. Wholeness lacks definition in this scheme, which is an inherent weakness of the technological model.

The holistic model defines health and wholeness as the balance of body, mind and spirit. Disease is defined as the disruption of that balance. Healing is defined as the restoration of balance. In the technological model an inordinate emphasis on the individual as the source and sustainer of his or her own life weakens the holistic model.

When the technological and holistic models are reviewed simultaneously, they are devoid of essential Christian elements. Therefore, there is a great need for setting forth the Christian perspective of what church health is. A Christian model of church health involves health, healing, and wholeness; and defines church health as the state of a person in Christ, a new creature made whole by spiritual conversion, which is a dramatic turning point or change of heart. In the Christian model, true healing is a process that may include repair and/or restoration

of balance, but must also include or be based on conversion. Therefore, the healthy church represents a dynamic conversion process, incorporating repair, restoration of balance and the transformation of perspective through the power of the Holy Spirit; which leads the church closer to the reign of God.

In the Old Testament, the concept of health was viewed as the state of well-being, completeness and wholeness, which resulted from being in a right relationship with God. This state of health was expressed in obedience to God's law, which produced strength and long-life.

First, the Old Testament Scriptures reveal the concept of health as being in a right relationship with God. This was the concept of righteousness. God is righteous (Ps. 129:4; 145:17), and knows the ways of the righteous (Ps. 1:6). Health as shalom resulted from a right relationship with God (Isaiah 32:17). "Righteousness and peace (shalom) will kiss each other" sang the psalmist, using a vivid metaphor for this intimate connection (Ps. 85:10 RSV).

Second, the Old Testament Scriptures reveal the concept of health as being obedient to God's law. There is substantial Old Testament evidence that faithful obedience to God's law resulted in God's blessing, while disobedience resulted in liability to disease (Ex. 15:26, 23:20-26; Lev. 26:14-16, 23-26; Deut. 7:12-15; 28:27-29, 58-62; and Prov. 3:7-8).

Third, the Old Testament Scriptures reveal the concept of health as being strength and long life. The mark of strength was equated with shalom (Ps. 29:11), while also including included physical health. A second indication of health was longevity. This is illustrated by God's promise to Abraham of both shalom and good old age (Gen. 15:15 RSV). The lengthening of days was God's reward for those who kept God's law (Deut. 6:2; I Kings 3:14; Ps. 34:12-14; Prov. 3:12; 9:10-11).



In the New Testament, the word health appears only twice in the New Testament (Acts 3:16, 3 John 1:2; however, the additional concepts of abundant life, blessedness, holiness, maturity, and healing, are added to the already established Old Testament concepts.

In the New Testament, the statement by Jesus in John's Gospel, "I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10 RSV); has often been taken as a description of health. The life Jesus offers is eternal life, without limits of time or space. Relationship with the living God that is evidenced in believers will produce wholeness.

Next in the New Testament, the Sermon on the Mount shares the spiritual well-being of Jesus (Matt. 5:3-12). The Beatitudes also present the qualities of the citizens of the reign of God that are a complete reversal of earthly values. Here, health is defined by God-given standards that are not conformed to earthly values.

Finally, in the New Testament Paul's letter declares his aim as a pastor to bring believers to a state of maturity or completion in Christ (Col.1:28). The standard of full spiritual development is Christ himself (Eph. 4:13). Paul acknowledges that he himself has not yet fully arrived at maturity, but is still growing (Phil. 3:12). By implication, health is seen not as static, but as dynamic movement toward God's design for us.

### **Statement of Methodology**

This thesis project will be accomplished through the following steps. First, chapter one will work as an introductory chapter, for the use of sharing the purpose of this research project and offer some general information that is related to this project. This chapter will also provide a history, vision, and ministry example of what a healthy church is. Also, this chapter will attempt to clarify the biblical definition and purpose of church health.

Second, chapter two will introduce and describe the research efforts for this project. It will also share the characteristics of church health, as suggested by experts of church health. The research will contain a survey that asks general questions to the pastor of a selected church, as well as, conducting an interview with the same pastor for the purpose of evaluating their church health, according to the characteristics of a healthy church. Interviews will be conducted with pastors for the purpose of gaining information from their leadership perspective.

Third, chapter three will reveal the results of this research effort and use the information to evaluate the current condition of (Mount Morris Baptist Church) MMBC in Hume, Virginia; based on experts in this field of ministry. This evaluation will provide a brief history, vision, mission, and ministry of (Mount Morris Baptist Church) MMBC and will also provide results that will assist (Mount Morris Baptist Church) MMBC towards church health.

Last, chapter four will give an overall conclusion to this research project. It will summarize all of the major points that have been made, and share a conclusive statement regarding church health. Also, it will present the strategies of church health that will assist the current condition of (Mount Morris Baptist Church) MMBC in Hume, Virginia; as well as, offer other suggestions for the purpose of further development on the subject regarding church health.

### **Literature Review**

In completing this thesis project, the writer thoroughly reviewed a number of sources, The Holy Bible, and multiple publications. To support this project, the writer used the Bible, published books, scholarly articles, theses, and internet sites. The following list and review are the sources utilized to complete this project.

## Books

*Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*<sup>3</sup> outline fundamentals to training, consulting, and strategizing. This source was needed in getting key strategies for success in building projects. Aubrey Malphurs walks the reader through the process of nine ministry questions. Malphurs provides useful ideas for developing a strategy, outlines a practical guide to develop a ministry model, and offers a step-by-step planning process for vision and mission. These items were extremely helpful in designing a ministry blueprint for building.

*Church Leadership: Conversations with Effective Practitioners*<sup>4</sup> present useful models of leadership and ministerial practices with interviews with Leith Anderson, Fred Craddock, David Chadwick, Steve Chang, Robert Cupp, Gary Harrell, Brian McLaren, Erwin McManus, Mickey Rapiere, Bob Russell, Michael Slaughter, and Lance Watson.

*The Essential Engstrom: Proven Principles of Leadership*<sup>5</sup> combine a compilation of wise lessons and stories on leadership success in business. Engstrom's material is considered to be timeless in understanding what leadership is, strategies for effective planning, motivating, communicating, and cultivating habits of successful people in management.

*Team Leadership in Christian Ministry: Using Multiple Gifts to Build a Unified Vision*<sup>6</sup> focuses on team leadership and management. In the model utilized, leadership is shared with

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<sup>3</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books), 2005.

<sup>4</sup> John P. Chandler, *Courageous Church Leadership: Conversations with Effective Practitioners*, (St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press), 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Ted W. Engstrom, *The Essential Engstrom: Proven Principles of Leadership*, Edited by Timothy J. Beals, (Colorado Springs, CO: Authentic and World Vision), 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth O. Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry: Using Multiple Gifts to Build a Unified Vision*. Rev. ed. (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers), 1997.

fellow team leaders. Paul, Barnabas, and Jesus are used as examples. The ultimate goal is to provide illustrations and suggestions for servant leadership and examples of leader with and through others.

*The Purpose Driven Church*<sup>7</sup> focuses on church health, as well as church growth. It gives practical application for real church health and church growth principles, which come from a scriptural model. The author of this book stresses the issue is church health, not church growth. Warren suggests that when your church is healthy, growth will occur naturally. Consistent growth is the result of balancing the biblical purposes of the church.

*Natural Church Development*<sup>8</sup> is a book that has tremendous potential for helping church pastors and leaders assess and revitalize their congregations. Schwartz presents the practical conclusions drawn from the most comprehensive study ever conducted about the causes of church growth. The research results confirm what many leaders have known intuitively—that healthy churches are growing churches, making more and better disciples in loving obedience to God. This book does not focus on numerical growth, but it concentrates on qualitative growth, while it also provides a greater understanding of how God wants his church to becoming a healthy, growing, and reproducing church.

*9 Marks of a Healthy Church*<sup>9</sup> Dever helps believers to recognize the key characteristics of a healthy church: expositional preaching, biblical theology, and a right understanding of the gospel. Dever calls church leaders to develop these characteristics in churches, by following the

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<sup>7</sup> Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1995.

<sup>8</sup> Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, (St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources), 2003.

<sup>9</sup> Mark Dever, *9 Marks of a Healthy Church*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books), 2013.

example of New Testament authors. This work is done by addressing church members from pastors to pew sitters, challenging all believers to do their part in maintaining the local church.

*7 Vital Signs of a Healthy Church*<sup>10</sup> Wagner examines this subject by examining the nine spiritual diseases that can attack any church. This book provides nine of the most common diseases that afflict churches. Also, it is suggested that these diseases hamper church growth and will cause the death of churches. It also diagnoses the health of church, and applies the proper treatment to restore congregations to health.

*Becoming a Healthy Church: Ten Traits of a Vital Ministry*<sup>11</sup> equips the reader with the understanding of the nature and principles of healthy churches; as well as, provide the characteristics and skills that will help the church realize its spiritual health. Macchia suggests that the essential ingredients that stand out as essential to a healthy ministry are the Word of God and prayer.

*Deliberate Simplicity: How the Church Does More by Doing Less*<sup>12</sup> discusses the issues of church growth and health by presenting ideas about simplicity. This insight is about doing church on a minimal basis, while maximizing ministry efforts. This idea allows for a strategic plan to be developed and for streamlining to take place, which assists in a more effective, efficient, and healthy ministry.

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<sup>10</sup> C. Peter Wagner, *7 Vital Signs of a Healthy Church*, (Ventura, CA: Regal Books), 1996.

<sup>11</sup> Stephan A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books), 1999.

<sup>12</sup> Dave Browning, *Deliberate Simplicity: How the Church Does More by Doing Less*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 2009.

*Church Conflict: From Contention To Collaboration*<sup>13</sup> deals with the nature of conflict and the responses to conflict. When it comes to the area of conflict it is due to a church that is preparing for change, as well as, specific responses that are imbedded in many of the emotional responses of a church, because the church is made up of human beings, who operate in a spiritual realm. When it comes to the nature of conflict, the major strength for any church is to provide ways for church health to be examined, before moving further in the change process.

*Celebration of Discipline*<sup>14</sup> suggests that the nature, purpose, process, and product of the spiritual disciplines are a celebration of one's relationship with Christ. This celebration has to do with the heightening and maturing aspect of the spiritual life, which will mature persons as disciples in their inward, outward and corporate lives. Persons find that the nature, purpose, process, and product will operate as a guide into an even deeper relationship with God, which results in greater spiritual health.

*Humilitas: A Lost Key to Life, Love, and Leadership*<sup>15</sup> reveals that humility is critical for leaders and prominent persons in society. This book explores ways of developing humility and reveals how it transforms personal relationships, as well as, assists professional interactions among individuals.

*Partners in Prayer*<sup>16</sup> gives church leader's concepts how to unleash the potential of prayer on behalf of themselves, one another, and the church. Maxwell gives practical insight into the fundamentals of prayer, improving personal prayer life, praying for others including

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<sup>13</sup> Norma Cook Everist, *Church Conflict: From Contention To Collaboration*, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon), 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, (New York, NY: Harper Collins), 1998.

<sup>15</sup> John Dickson, *Humilitas: A Lost Key to Life, Love, and Leadership*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 2011.

<sup>16</sup> John Maxwell, *Partners in Prayer*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson), 1996.

church leaders, building a prayer partners ministry in the local church, and encouraging prayer revival nationwide. According to Maxwell, prayer is the bridge that allows pastors and lay people to partner together effectively in ministry.

*The Essentials of Prayer*<sup>17</sup> suggest that prayer involves the entire man, humility, devotion, praise and thanksgiving, trouble, God's Work, standards, compassion, and missions. These ingredients take the aspect of the mind, soul, and body, which point to the idea of Holiness. All of these essentials are tools that shape ones' prayer life and matures the pray-er to become disciplined to the call of prayer, while developing spiritual healthiness.

*Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*<sup>18</sup> outlines a guide to planning effective ministry organization. Since skilled organization is needed to accomplish specific tasks, a leader must train and motivate workers in progress and effectiveness. Also, church administration is important to the health of the church, because this is where the marching orders come from. If church administration is off track, the ministry will be diseased.

*Preventing Ministry Failure*<sup>19</sup> is a personal guidebook for pastors and other caregivers to prepare them to withstand common pressures in the ministry God has called them to. It shares a complex mix of factors both internal and external that test the limits of ones' ability to minister over the long haul. It outlines common experiences and reveals patterns that consistently contribute to burnout, ineffectiveness, and moral failure. This collaborative effort is designed to assist the leader from unhealthy practices and the results that lead to ministry failure.

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<sup>17</sup> E. M. Bounds, *On Prayer*, (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House), 1997.

<sup>18</sup> Robert H. Welch, *Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman), 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Michael Todd Wilson and Brad Hoffman, *Preventing Ministry Failure*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press), 2007.

*The Kingdom Agenda*<sup>20</sup> describes how God provides the authority and dynamics to spirituality synergy in every area of life. This book presents clear lessons that apply to daily life, by illustrating what the kingdom of God looks like by using the church as an example. This book will be used to help illustrate the importance of how the function of the church is the epicenter of health for the community. It will share practical reasons why synergy the church should hold this position.

*The Peace Making Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church*<sup>21</sup> is a practical book that describes the nature and kinds of conflict that can be encountered in pastoral ministry. This book brings to light the necessity for the ministry of reconciliation, and it offers practical steps on how to perform conflict resolution. This book will be used in this project for the purpose of providing a plan to facilitate peacemaking, for the purpose of achieving church health.

#### Handout

*Healthy Church Check-Up*<sup>22</sup> is a handout that measures the health of the systems in the church. These systems include: Evangelism, Fellowship, Serving, Discipleship, and Worship. Using a scale of 1 – 10, it analyzes the internal love level in the church, based on participation in ministry and ones' spiritual growth.

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<sup>20</sup> Tony Evans, *The Kingdom Agenda: What a Way to Live*, (Nashville, TN: World Publishing), 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Alfred Poirier, *The Peace Making Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group), 2006.

<sup>22</sup> DSMN 500 Discipleship Ministries Class Handout.



## Scripture Passages<sup>23</sup>

### Old Testament

#### *Genesis 15:15*

The ancients conceived of death as a time when they would rejoin their departed ancestors. There was evidently little understanding of what lay beyond the grave at this time in history. This scriptural reference will be in used in the thesis project to describe how God's promise to Abraham is the initiation of the healthy believer whom God secures for His own.

#### *Exodus 15:26*

The words of God in verse 26 explain the statute and regulation just given. The Israelites would not suffer the diseases God had sent on the Egyptians/experience His discipline, if they obeyed His word as they had just done. God was teaching His people that He was responsible for their physical and spiritual wellbeing. While doctors diagnose and prescribe, only God can heal. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe that obedience to God is the entry way to wholeness and health.

#### *Exodus 23:20-26*

God gave the Israelites promises and precepts relating to their conquest of the Promised Land. It concluded with an explanation of the benefits that would come to the vassals if they obeyed the king's commands and the difficulties they would experience if they disobeyed. That is characteristic of this section of the covenant, though the emphasis is positive. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the aspects of obedience versus disobedience, in reference to church health.

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<sup>23</sup> All Scripture passages are from the New American Standard Bible.

*Leviticus 26:14-16; 23-26*

This scriptural section continues the emphasis on life in the land by spelling out the blessings and curses that Israel could expect for obedience and disobedience to the covenant. These punishments would come on the Israelites not for individual errors and sins but for a settled contempt for the whole covenant. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the blessings of church health, when it comes to obedience.

*Deuteronomy 6:2*

This verse continues to announce the commandments and it gives the reason for obeying them: God's blessing. God's blessing would come in the form of long life, peace and prosperity, and numerous descendants. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the characteristics of church health.

*Deuteronomy 7:12-15*

This section announces that obedience would bring blessing. Here, Moses enumerated the blessings for those who remained completely devoted to God by refusing to practice idolatry. Grain, wine, and oil mentioned in verse 13 represent the three principle food products of Canaan. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the character of God, and his promise to remove diseases of Egypt.

*Deuteronomy 28:27-29, 58-62*

Israel would suffer physical distresses, and her enemies would plunder and oppress her. As freedom from Egypt came to epitomize God's grace, so the return to Egyptian conditions represented His judgment located in verse 27. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe God's judgment and the oppression of sin as a hindrance to health.

*1 Kings 3:14*

Verse 14 gives God's response to Solomon's prayer, which includes long life if Solomon continued to obey God's law. It is simply based on obedience. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe God's insistence towards obedience and His answer to the individual.

*Psalms 1:6*

This verse is a warning that the reader should live his or her life in view of ultimate judgment by God. Not only will the godly way prove the only adequate one now, but it also yields a truly beneficial existence in the days to come. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the importance of obedience, when it comes to living a healthy life for God.

*Psalms 29:11*

The same power Yahweh employs in storms is available to His people. As God can cause a storm to subside, He can also bring peace into the lives of His people. Thus the Lord is not just transcendent over-all and able to control the forces of nature. He is also a resource for those to whom He has committed Himself with covenant promises. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe that God will honor obedience and reveal the concept of health as being in a right relationship with Him.

*Psalms 34:12-14*

God had promised long life to the godly in Israel as a reward for righteous behavior. Therefore, the people are urged to practice truthful speech, good deeds, and peaceful conduct. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe

*Psalms 85:10*

A productive harvest comes when one unites with God. He gives unmerited favor, grace, and honor. This blessing is from walking in obedience to God. Therefore, the person who trusts God will experience His blessing, by practicing intimacy with God and obedience to God. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the importance of a right relationship with Him.

*Psalms 129:4*

By ridding Israel of her past oppressors, God demonstrated that deliverance is in His hand. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe how deliverance is a tool that God uses to bring health to His children.

*Psalms 145:17*

Everything the Lord does is right and kindness is the mark of His deeds. When prayer is offered, God will grant the petitions of believers and will deliver them in times of need. He will protect those who love Him, but will destroy those who do not. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the righteousness of God.

*Proverbs 3:7-8*

Whenever one commits to seeking wisdom from God, it is necessary to acknowledge the omniscience of God. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the importance of knowing God.

*Proverbs 3:12*

Discipline must be practiced, whenever the Will of God is being sought. This will cause the believer to submit themselves to God's way. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the process of being a disciple for God.

*Proverbs 9:10-11*

If a person is open to God and teachable, he will become wise, but if he does not accept this instruction and closes his mind, he becomes a fool. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the importance of accepting God's instruction.

*Isaiah 32:17*

God's justice and righteousness will be everywhere. The effects of this righteousness will be peace, rest, and security. This will come about because people will be right with God. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe completeness and wholeness; which is a result from being in a right relationship with God.

## New Testament

*Matthew 5:3-12*

The Beatitudes deal with four attitudes toward ourselves, toward our sins, toward God, and toward the world. They proceed from the inside out; they start with their attitudes and move to actions that are opposed to God, which is the normal course of spirituality. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the God-given standards for health.

*John 10:10*

Jesus aims not only to bring spiritual life to people, but He came to bring the best quality of life to them. The eternal life that Jesus imparts is not just long, but it is also rich. He did not just come to gain sheep, but to enable His sheep to flourish and to enjoy contentment, and every other legitimate good thing possible. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe a description of health.

*Acts 3:16*

Peter's sermon expounds the name of Jesus. The name of Jesus summarizes everything about Him in this Scripture. Peter attributed the beggar's healing to the power of Jesus and the man's trust in what he knew about Jesus. The name of Jesus gives strength to the weak and perfects the presence of those who accept Jesus in Salvation. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the conversion of wholeness.

*Romans 8:26-27*

Hope will help persons in sufferings and so does the Holy Spirit. The context suggests that weakness refers to the limitations as creatures. The Father understands the Spirit's intercession for the saints, even though the saints cannot hear it. Therefore, believers can be assured that His intercession is effective in securing God's help for His children, because the Spirit prays in harmony with God's Will. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe God's will for the believer.

*Ephesians 4:13*

As each believer exercises the gifts, three things happen: First, the body enjoys unity. Second, it becomes more spiritually mature. Third, it becomes more Christ-like. Therefore, unity of the faith, full knowledge, and maturity constitute the three-fold goal in view. This equals the fullness of Christ. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe that Christ is the standard of measure of spiritual health.

*Philippians 3:12*

This verse shares that Paul has realized that his responsibility should be to pursue greater personal experiential knowledge of Christ, intimacy with Christ, conformity to Christ, and holiness. One of the reasons God has extended salvation, is so His children might enjoy

fellowship with Christ. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the importance of being shaped by Christ.

*Colossians 1:28*

The constant repetition of the phrase “every man” bears testimony that ministry should go beyond only a few members. It should help the whole church. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe that believers are always moving to a state of maturity or completion in Christ.

*3 John 1:2*

The physical and general welfare of others should be of concern to us, as well as, their spiritual welfare. Usually Christians give more attention to the physical than the spiritual. Some see that this verse supports the view that God wants all believers to prosper physically, financially, and spiritually. This scriptural reference will be used in the thesis project to describe the importance of spiritual health.

### **Application to Ministry**

A perspective on the potential outcome for accomplishing the development and implementation of steps towards church health will cultivate and reveal a ministry environment that would produce a healthy church that produces healthy ministry and conflict. Poirier defines conflict as, “difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates someone’s goals or desires.”<sup>24</sup> Conflict, in the sense of church health, is a vehicle that God uses to bring persons into alignment and acceptance of His will. Therefore, conflict will precede church health, but the outcome of a healthy ministry will also produce boundaries, for the purpose of creating areas of delegation in ministry activities. The areas of delegation are further known as boundaries. Wilson and

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<sup>24</sup> Alfred Poirier, *The Peace Making Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), 2006.

Hoffman write, “Boundaries facilitate our ability to live proactively from Christian principles and deeply held convictions.”<sup>25</sup> This idea will enable persons to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, when it comes to knowing how much can be done or how quickly things will be accomplished; because the concept of boundaries connects the idea and purpose of stress management. When boundaries are established and accepted, it leads towards a greater illustration of church health, which gives persons the ability to accomplish a God-given assignment with the least amount of resistance, while using the biological response of increased energy.

According to Sam Davis, another potential outcome for accomplishing the development and implementation of steps towards church health will center on using the principles of pastoral care. “These principles include: sustaining, guiding, reconciliation, and healing.”<sup>26</sup> These four principles of pastoral care will serve as resources that can lead to the outward illustration of a holistic plan that will help the church in its effort towards assisting individuals with consistent spiritual care. These four principles will also serve as resources that will work towards the correcting of spiritual disease and the purpose of doing healthy ministry.

The first principle that will serve as a resource towards assisting individuals for the purpose of doing healthy ministry is sustaining. Sustaining refers to the stabilization of collective brokenness while seeking a diagnosis for a particular cure. The second principle that will serve as a resource towards assisting individuals for the purpose of doing healthy ministry is guiding. Guiding refers to directional knowledge from God, which is designed to assist in

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<sup>25</sup> Michael Todd Wilson and Brad Hoffman, *Preventing Ministry Failure*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press), 2007.

<sup>26</sup> Sam Davis, *When the Multitude Comes: A Guide to Organizing a Growing Church*, (North Augusta, SC: Joyful Sound, 2001), 21.



moving individuals, families, churches, and ministries into a position of peace with God. When the healthy church is at peace with God, it means that God's will is being accepted. The third principle that will serve as a resource towards assisting individuals for the purpose of doing healthy ministry is reconciliation. Reconciliation refers to the tearing down of Satan's strongholds that divide and separate persons from God in an external or an internal perspective. The end result of this principle represents the establishment of God's will on earth. The fourth principle that will serve as a resource towards assisting individuals for the purpose of doing healthy ministry is healing. Healing refers to the facilitation of Godly relationships that form across cultural, gender, and denominational lines. This type of work will represent the unification of the body of Christ.

When these principles are expertly used, they will serve as a model of pastoral care to assist the strategies towards church health. "In this instance, they will serve as a stabilizing effect on the community, that will assist in their relationship to God and others."<sup>27</sup> Also, when church members experience growth in their own individual and family lives, it becomes an evangelistic tool for the community to witness.

So, when the suggested steps to church health are implemented, patience should be part of the tools of leadership. Greear, author of *Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary*, says, "The presence of a healthy local church in a community is the greatest catalyst for the evangelization of that community."<sup>28</sup> Also, "In a healthy church, the

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<sup>27</sup> Sam Davis, *When the Multitude Comes: A Guide to Organizing a Growing Church*, (North Augusta, SC: Joyful Sound, 2001), 21.

<sup>28</sup> J. D. Greear, *Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary*, (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing, 2011), 229-230.

local community should see the glory of the gospel on display.”<sup>29</sup> Just as the human body has the digestive, respiratory, circulatory, central nervous, immune, and skeletal systems, which operate in unity to promote physical health; the church also has a series of systems that promote spiritual health. With the components of church health actively in place, they will assist (Mount Morris Baptist Church) and other ministries to reflect a healthy church that will lead to the production of healthy believers; beginning with healthy leaders, healthy families, and healthy individual members. These four catalysts will serve as witnesses to the community.

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<sup>29</sup> J. D. Greear, *Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary*, (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing, 2011), 230.

## CHAPTER 2

### CHARACTERISTICS OF CHURCH HEALTH

According to the Scriptures, the church is the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27/ Eph. 5:30). In the natural world, one way to learn whether a body is healthy or not, is to take an assessment of certain baseline measurements that indicate health or disease. When the health of the human body is examined, science reveals that it contains the skeletal, respiratory, nervous, muscular, digestive, circulatory, and reproductive systems. When the body is healthy, these systems work in unified support of each other. When an assessment is done on the church, it contains systems as well. If persons are disinterested or lazy about growing and maintaining their systems, they will not produce the desired results. In other words, slack equals lack. “When we become slack in taking care of our systems, we experience lack. Therefore, our systems and our churches will fail to live up to their God-given potential.”<sup>1</sup> When this happens, church health becomes an issue.

Dr. Rodney Dempsey suggests that the church or body of Christ contains seven systems that are relevant to church health. Dempsey suggests that when these systems are operating as designed, the product of the church operates as a healthy body. The systems that Dempsey suggests are the “evangelism (attractual and missional), weekend service worship and preaching), assimilation discipleship – small groups), mobilization (discipleship – ministry teams), stewardship (discipleship – giving), leadership (great commission leaders), and reproductive systems (missions and church planting).”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rod Dempsey, “DSMN 500 Class Lecture,” (lecture given at Liberty Baptist Theology Seminary) Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA., Summer 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Dempsey, “DSMN 500 Class Lecture,” (lecture given at Liberty Baptist Theology Seminary) Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA., Summer 2014.

When these systems work in concern with each other, they illustrate a healthy body; which produces healthy believers. According to Dempsey, healthy systems equal a healthy body.

Another concept of church health deals with how the organizational culture impacts areas like productivity, customer service, operational efficiency, team effectiveness, openness to change, creative flow, and employee fit, satisfaction, and retention. In other words, health is critical to every area of organizational effectiveness. A church's organizational culture might be described as the church's DNA, personality, or simply their own distinct way of getting things done. It is a combination of the visible symbols and the invisible values and expectations that are shared by the people within a congregation. Often in ministry, leaders talk about culture in an external sense by using the term out there; however, culture is brought into the church and is also present within every size and organization in the church. Just as well, the culture within the church is the same as the culture on the outside, because it is brought in by persons with a non-transformed lifestyle. Therefore, this issue makes ministry matters more difficult, and affect the health of the church.

This research project was birthed from the writer's observation of how the combined efforts of adding to the body of Christ, and a lack of the employment of ones' spiritual gifts were inactive in the local church. This combination of continued practices resulted in a church that lacked purpose. Purpose is the driving force that assists ministries in clarifying the business of their spiritual assignment; as well as, allow for a united effort to be performed, when determining their ministry assignment. All of these efforts are wrapped up in a term called mission. Browning calls mission the "purpose for the church's existence."<sup>1</sup> This research project is also

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<sup>1</sup> Dave Browning, *Deliberate Simplicity: How the Church Does More by Doing Less*, (Zondervan), 68.

an opportunity for the writer to examine and apply the importance of strategic planning, when it comes to the purpose of the work of the ministry, as ordained by God. This research is designed to provide a brief description of the plan of the local church, and how focused it is to reach the goals, ideas, and objectives of what and how God has called the local church to operate.

The participants for this survey are all members of the Fauquier County and Vicinity Minister's Coalition, which consists of a membership total of 46 local congregations. According to the leadership, the coalition is designed to provide valuable resources for the local church in the areas of training, fellowship, financial literacy, outreach; as well as, providing a venue for understanding and solving the problems of the local community by using a biblical construct. It is from this backdrop that ten members from this ministerial body agreed to participate in this research project.

First of all, the way to experience the benefits of a Christian model of health, healing, and wholeness, there must be a call to repentance leading to conversion in the Spirit, which will open up all persons to a fully transformed lifestyle. In this, the Christian conversion is the route that leads persons to wholeness and health. From this perspective, healthy churches must be able to demonstrate to a broken and searching world that the certainty of spiritual health is only found in the restorative process that is offered through a real relationship with God.

Second, from a traditional perspective, society has defined health, healing, and wholeness in two ways. They are defined as the technological and holistic models. The technological model of health is described as a robust type of physical fitness, whereas disease is a breakdown, an invasion or corrosion of the physical system. Therefore, healing is considered as a functional restoration, the conquering of an alien destroyer, where repair is the goal. Therefore, wholeness lacks definition in this scheme, which is an inherent weakness of the technological model.

In the holistic model, health and wholeness is defined as the balance of body, mind, and spirit. Here, disease is defined as the disruption of that balance. Therefore, healing as it refers to the holistic model, is defined as the restoration of balance. In the technological model, an inordinate emphasis on the individual as the source and sustainer of his or her own life weakens the holistic model.

Just as well, when the technological and holistic models are reviewed simultaneously, they are devoid of essential Christian elements that describe spiritual health. Consequently, there is a great need for setting forth the Christian perspective of what church health is. For this author, a Christian model of church health involves health, healing, and wholeness; and it defines church health as the state of a person in Christ, a new creature made whole by spiritual conversion, which is a dramatic turning point or change of heart. Also, the Christian model describes the true healing process that may include repair and/or restoration of balance, but must also include or be based on conversion. Therefore, the healthy church represents a dynamic conversion process, incorporating repair, restoration of balance, and the transformation of perspective through the power of the Holy Spirit; which leads the church closer to the reign of God.

According to the Scriptures in the Old Testament, the concept of health was viewed as the state of well-being, completeness, and wholeness, which resulted from being in a right relationship with God. In having a right relationship with God, this would foster a state of health that expressed an obedience to God's law, which produced strength and long-life.

According to the Scriptures in the New Testament, the word health appears only twice (Acts 3:16, III John 1:2); however, these additional concepts outline the themes of abundant life, blessedness, holiness, maturity, and healing; which are added to the already established Old

Testament concepts. Using these examples, the concept of health is defined by God-given standards that are not conformed to earthly values. If any part is not functioning well or diseased, the church will not grow and it will produce unhealthy results. In the next section, the writer will introduce examples that are shared by church health experts, who have the goals and objectives to facilitating church health.

### **Experts**

#### Principles of Dr. Sam Davis

The ultimate goal of church health, is located in the principle of discipleship. It involves the holistic development of every saved person of the church. The ultimate goal of developing holistically is to grow, expand, and touch the mental, social, and physical areas, while encompassing these three within the Spiritual area. Figure 1 is an illustration of entry level church health.

Figure 1. Entry Level Church Health<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Sam Davis, *Strategies to Develop Kingdom Citizens*, (North Augusta, SC: Joyful Sound), 2002.

Next, Davis offers another illustration of church health, where maturing faith is involved.

Figure 2. Maturing Church Health<sup>3</sup>

Finally, Davis gives an illustration of the ultimate goal of the healthy church.

Figure 3. The Ultimate Goal of the Healthy Church<sup>4</sup>

The goal of the healthy church is a life that is encapsulated by the guiding force of the Holy Spirit. When this level is attained by the church, it becomes a healthy ministry example to the saved and unsaved. This is the example that influences the community to image Christ.

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<sup>3</sup> Sam Davis, *Strategies to Develop Kingdom Citizens*, (North Augusta, SC: Joyful Sound), 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Davis, *Strategies to Develop Kingdom Citizens*, (North Augusta, SC: Joyful Sound), 2002.



### Principles of Dr. Rodney Dempsey

Dr. Rodney Dempsey is a discipleship professor at Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA. Not only has he focused on the principles, but he applies the principles to the actual church (Thomas Road Baptist Church) and influences church in a healthy way.

Developing a healthy church and reproducing it involves the process of discipleship life cycle. The first step of the discipleship life cycle is an intentional, church-wide strategy. The second step is the development of small groups, and the third step is the development of the leaders. After developing both small groups and leaders, the church makes a commitment to the mission, and finally, it engages in evangelism that works. Then the discipleship life cycle repeats over and over again in order to reproduce healthy churches. The following figure illustrates the discipleship life cycle.

Figure 4. Discipleship Life Cycle<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Rodney W. Dempsey “Discipleship Life Cycle,” DSMN 997-Small Group Ministries, (lecture given at Liberty Baptist Theology Seminary), Lynchburg, VA., Summer 2015.

## Intentional Church-Wide Strategy

For the purpose of creating healthy churches and church growth, the church should develop an initial strategy that is not open only for leaders, but to the church as a whole. “The strategy for making a healthy church should be based on highly organized and well-planned strategies that are intentional.”<sup>6</sup> Also, the church is responsible for planning strategies that will reflect the vision and purpose of the church ministry.

## Development of Small Groups

Small groups within the church operate with the same purpose as cells in the human body. For health purposes, cells enable the human body to function in a healthy way; just as small groups enable the church body to function in a healthy way by exhibiting healthy growth. Small groups or cell groups are groups with a small number of people. The cell group acts as a miniature of the church and it has the function of the church as a spiritual family community. The small groups may not be big in size, yet it is effective for the church growth. “Small groups enable people to have a better relationship with others, and they provide opportunity to display spiritual gift within the group; furthermore, the small groups make the people to have attachment towards the church.”<sup>7</sup>

According to Dempsey, there are five different structure models for the small groups, which include the: “meta-model, free-market model, mid-sized connection/ community model, fractal/organic/house church groups, and groups of 12 (G/12) groups.”<sup>8</sup> In this idea, the church

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<sup>6</sup> Rodney W. Dempsey “Discipleship Life Cycle,” DSMN 997-Small Group Ministries, (lecture given at Liberty Baptist Theology Seminary), Lynchburg, VA., Summer 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Dempsey “Discipleship Life Cycle,” DSMN 997-Small Group Ministries, (lecture given at Liberty Baptist Theology Seminary), Lynchburg, VA., Summer 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

is responsible for not following the trend of the small group structure, but carefully choosing which structure model would suit the church.

First, the meta-model is a pyramid structure with overseers of 5's and 10's. With a strong centralized training and leadership, the meta-model multiplies effectively. Second, the free-market model is a group that forms around interest and affinity. Since it is built around the topic, passion is the key for growth. Third, the mid-sized connection/community model is an ordinary group that is built around geography, affinity, and social connection. This model is generally effective for the church, but it risks experiencing a lack of growth, as the group is not built around strong interest and affinity. Fourth, the fractal/organic/house church groups are a reproduction of specific groups within the small group. A replica of this group shares the original group's interest and identity. Fifth, the groups of 12 or (G/12) model, works by gathering 12 people to form a leadership group. Just as well, the number 12 is based on the Scripture, as it pertains to the disciples. Here, each member encourages and takes care of each other, then they create another group of 12 people or less. These examples are suggested ideas that revolve around the concept of creating healthy churches, as well as, church growth. Using these examples, it is the health of the individual, which fosters healthy growth for the whole.

#### Development of Leaders

The leader's role for making a healthy church is crucial, and the leader must be qualified before leading the church. According to Dempsey, "there are eight habits of effective small group leaders, including dreaming, praying, inviting, contacting, preparing, mentoring, fellowshiping, and growing."<sup>9</sup> Here, the leader must practice the combined efforts of dreaming

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<sup>9</sup> Rod W. Dempsey, "8 Habits of Effective Small Group Leaders." (notes, DSMN 630, Liberty Theological Seminary, Summer Semester 2015) Lynchburg, VA.

to have a God-sized vision for the church and continual prayer for fulfilling the vision and purpose of the small groups, as well as, for the church. Also, the small group leader is responsible for contacting people to stay in a close relationship with them, because an intimate relationship between the leader and the members builds a strong bond. This type of effort can become a driving force for the small group. The next habit of effective leadership includes preparation for the small group, both inwardly and outwardly, because this step is essential for the effective growth of the small group. Another quality for the small group leader is being an effective mentor. As a mentor, the leader must become an example to the members. When the small group leader puts value and effort into fellowship, then close relationships with the members will establish the unity of the small group. When the combination of these eight qualities of effective leadership are working in harmony from leadership, they promote unison and reproduce health throughout the individual, the family, and the church.

#### Commitment to the Mission

“Even though the church has great strategies for church growth and developing small groups and leaders, if there is no commitment, church health cannot be achieved.”<sup>10</sup> In order to reproduce healthy churches, it is crucial for the church to make a commitment to the mission; for the mission is a way to help the church grow, both numerically and spiritually. In this aspect, the church is responsible for remembering the Great Commission of Jesus Christ and committing itself to make disciples to the ends of the earth.

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<sup>10</sup> Rod W. Dempsey, “8 Habits of Effective Small Group Leaders.” (notes, DSMN 630, Liberty Theological Seminary, Summer Semester 2015) Lynchburg, VA.

## Evangelism that Works

The final step for the discipleship life cycle is doing evangelism that works. A disciple is someone who follows Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ commanded the disciples in Matt. 28:19 to “Go and make disciples of all nations.” In this instance, the church which is an assembly of the disciples of Jesus Christ, is responsible for carrying out the work that Jesus has commanded. “Therefore, with the development of both small groups and leaders within the church, the church should leap out for the job of evangelism and make the church healthy by growing both numerically and spiritually.”<sup>11</sup> There are various ways to evangelize and bring many people to God, but it is crucial to realize that the tools for evangelism should not be the purpose of evangelism. It is the Word of God that attracts, persons to Christ; not gimmicks.

### Principles of Stephen A. Macchia

As the church continues to grow and develop, there should always be a concern for the development of healthy individuals, which will make healthy churches. Stephen A. Macchia, the author of *Becoming a Healthy Church: Ten Traits of a Vital Ministry*, illustrates several key principles that are important to the growth and health of a church. If the outlined characteristics are applied, they can make the difference between a healthy vibrant church and a church that is on life support. The 10 characteristics of a healthy church are ranked from one to ten, according to the survey shown in Table 1.

Table 1. 10 Characteristics of A Healthy Church<sup>12</sup>

1. God’s Empowering Presence
2. God-Exalting Worship

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<sup>11</sup> Rod W. Dempsey, “8 Habits of Effective Small Group Leaders.” (notes, DSMN 630, Liberty Theological Seminary, Summer Semester 2015) Lynchburg, VA.

<sup>12</sup> Stephen Macchia, *10 Characteristics of A Healthy Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 1999), 23.

3. Spiritual Disciplines
4. Learning and Growing in Community
5. Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships
6. Servant-Leadership Development
7. An Outward Focus
8. Wise Administration and Accountability
9. Networking with the Regional Church
10. Stewardship and Generosity

Macchia's ten characteristics are grouped into three basic levels. They are: "How I relate with God," "How I relate with my church family," and "How my church ministers and manages."<sup>13</sup> The eventual effect is suggested to be the growth of healthy individuals who breed healthy families. Therefore, these families will lead to healthy churches, which will produce healthy communities, which ultimately will render a healthy nation.

In order to assist in becoming a healthy church, Macchia suggests these points in reference to designing a strategic plan. Here, some church leaders find planning a formidable exercise; however, the planning process is simple when answering these seven key questions:

Table 2. Questions for the Strategic Plan<sup>14</sup>

1. Spiritual Needs Assessment: What are the greatest spiritual needs of our church and community?
2. Strengths and Weaknesses: What are the greatest strengths and weaknesses of our church?
3. Opportunities and Threats or Barriers: What are the most significant ministry opportunities for and potential threats (or barriers) to our church, given the answers to the first two questions?
4. Ministry Options: What appear to be the most viable options for strengthening the ministry of our church?
5. Ministry Platform: What is the primary ministry platform on which our specific ministries should be built? Included in the ministry platform are our statement of faith, vision statement, mission statement, philosophy of ministry, and listing of ministries.

<sup>13</sup> Stephen Macchia, *10 Characteristics of A Healthy Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 1999), 23.

<sup>14</sup> Macchia, *10 Characteristics of A Healthy Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 1999), 23.

6. Ministry Goals: What goals is the Holy Spirit leading us to strive for to enhance our church's ministry over the next year? The next two to three years?
7. Action Steps: What action steps must we accomplish to achieve these goals?

### Principles of Gary Thomas

The book entitled *Every Body Matters* written by Gary Thomas, deals with the subject of spiritual growth, by engaging the areas of physical and spiritual fitness. Thomas addresses this topic from an inside-outside approach, where the spirit is presented as the initial point of fitness; with the continuous support of physical fitness. Thomas suggests that “Christians have emphasized the growth of ones’ soul, to the detriment of not addressing a lack of physical discipline.”<sup>15</sup>

Thomas suggests that the practice of stewardship with ones’ body is a key component to the idea of overall health. Thomas contends that ones’ vessel and the care given to that equipment is equally important to the spiritual aspects of health for the believer. This process assists God’s church towards spiritual growth and the purpose of living out its calling. Here, the author suggests that the refinement process will result in “instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master, prepared to do any good work.”<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the developing of a refined soul involves the refinement process, which includes cleansing. Just as well, the importance of physical discipline and the positive influence it has in relation to spiritual growth, will produce an outcome that is transformative and attractive to persons who desire to develop a healthy church.

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<sup>15</sup> Gary Thomas, *Every Body Matters*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 12.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas, *Every Body Matters*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 15.

## Principles of Peter Scazzero

The book entitled *The Emotionally Healthy Church* written by Peter Scazzero, deals with the subject of becoming emotionally and spiritually healthy, for the purpose of impacting leaders and building mature disciples of Jesus Christ. Scazzero suggests that “Emotional and spiritual health are inseparable. This is an issue that is applicable to the leaders, along with the church. “It is not possible to be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature.”<sup>17</sup>

Whenever church health is being considered, it must consider an assessment for emotional health. Scazzero suggests that “Leaders have long been urged to maintain their spiritual vitality, physical exercise, and intellectual growth. However, less emphasis has been placed on the emotional well-being of persons. Since the bible does not overlook the emotions of humanity, neither should the church ignore this area either. It is inherently important that the church design steps on how to proceed on the journey of becoming a growing church that is emotionally healthy and mature. Scazzero says, “In the same way, our growth into Christlikeness requires we get rid of our old, hard, protective shells and allow God to take us to a new place in him.”<sup>18</sup> Therefore, when the steps of emotional health are integrated into the overall health of the church, lives actually change and church health is achieved.

### Scriptural Principle’s from the Book of the Revelation

Table 3. Analysis of the 7 Churches in Revelation<sup>19</sup>

To the Church	Commendation or Praise of the church	Complaint or Rebuke	Warning	Promise
Loveless Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7)	Hard work Patient endurance Reject evil	You have forsaken your first love	Repent and do the	You will eat from the tree of life

<sup>17</sup> Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 10.

<sup>18</sup> Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 217.

<sup>19</sup> Duvall Hays, *Grasping God’s Word*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 301.



	Persevere		works as you did at first	
Suffering Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11)	Endure your suffering and poverty, yet you are rich	None	Remain faithful even when facing prison, persecution, or death	I will give you the crown of life You will not be hurt by the second death
Wordly Pergamum (Pergamos) (Rev. 2:12-17)	Loyalty to Christ Refuse to deny Him	Tolerate cults, heresies, idolatry and immorality	Repent	Hidden manna and a stone with a new name on it
Wrong Doctrine Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-29)	Deeds, love, faith service Patient endurance Constant improvement	Tolerate cult, idolatry, and immorality	Judgment coming Repent Hold fast until I come	I will give you authority over the nations and gift of the morning star
Spiritually Dead Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6)	Some have kept the faith	Church is dead	Wake up, repent Turn to Jesus again strengthen what little remains	Faithful will walk with Jesus and not be blotted out of the book of life
Spiritually Alive Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-13)	Kept my word Have not denied my name	None	I have placed before you an open door I will keep you from the hour of trial	I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God
Complacent Laodicea Rev. 3:14-22	None	Neither hot nor cold You rely on riches but don't realize your condition	Turn from indifference and repent	I will invite those who overcome to sit with me on my throne

This analysis of the 7 churches in the book of the Revelation chapters 2-3, the scripture shares the message of Jesus towards each church. The four areas include a (1) commendation or

praise of the church, (2) complaint or rebuke, (3) warning, and (4) promise.<sup>20</sup> These scriptural descriptions give the diagnosis and health prognosis on an actual church. It also gives God's answer to the corrective methods that will determine how to get back on track towards church health. The idea is to focus on which of the seven churches are presented positively and which are presented negatively. It is from these scriptural examples of the local church that one can discover and design a strategy towards church health.

### Principles of George Barna

George Barna is the founder of Barna Group, “a visionary research and resource company located in Ventura, California; where it is considered to be a leading research organization focused on the intersection of faith and culture.”<sup>21</sup> In his book, *The Power of Vision: How You Can Capture and Apply God's Vision for Your Ministry*, Barna defines highly effective as “churches that are doing a great job in regard to the” six dimensions that “characterized the Early Church. They are: worship, evangelism, Christian education, community among the believers, stewardship, and serving the needy.”<sup>22</sup> He says churches that do an excellent job in each of these elements of ministry are actually being the church Christ planned it to be.

Barna identifies the following nine habits of highly effective churches. “First, rely upon strategic leadership. Second, organize to facilitate highly effective ministry. Third, emphasize developing significant relationships within the congregation. Fourth, congregants invest

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<sup>20</sup> Duvall Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 301.

<sup>21</sup> George Barna, <https://www.barna.org> (accessed on April 20, 2016).

<sup>22</sup> George Barna, “About Barna Group,” <http://www.barna.org/about/about-barna-group>, (accessed April 20, 2016).

themselves in genuine worship. Fifth, engage in strategic evangelism. Sixth, get people involved in systematic theological growth. Seventh, utilize holistic stewardship practices. Eighth, serve the needy people in their community. Lastly, equip families to minister to themselves.”<sup>23</sup> Since this author’s research deals with the development of a healthy church, interest was developed about what Barna had to say in reference to designing strategies for becoming a healthy Christ-centered congregation.

#### Principles of John MacArthur

John MacArthur is the pastor-teacher of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, as well as, an author, conference speaker, and president of The Master’s College and Seminary. MacArthur is also president and featured teacher with the Grace to You media ministry. In his booklet, *Marks of a Healthy Church*, MacArthur outlines twelve characteristics of a healthy church. These characteristics are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Twelve Marks of a Healthy Church<sup>24</sup>

1. An Emphasis on Godly Leaders
2. An Emphasis on Functional Goals and Objectives
3. An Emphasis on Discipleship
4. An Emphasis on Penetrating the Community
5. An Emphasis on Active Church Members
6. An Emphasis on Concern for One Another
7. An Emphasis on Devotion to the Family
8. An emphasis on Bible Teaching and Preaching

<sup>23</sup> George Barna, *The Habits of Highly Effective Churches*, Ventura, CA: Regal Books), 1999.

<sup>24</sup> John MacArthur, *Marks of a Healthy Church*, (Chicago, ILL: Moody Press), 1990.

9. An Emphasis on a Willingness To Change
10. An Emphasis on Great Faith
11. An Emphasis on Sacrifice
12. An Emphasis on Worshiping God

In judging the success of any church, size is not a factor to consider since God has blessed some churches that are very small, while some very large churches have little to no spiritual fruit. A church's spiritual health cannot be measured by its numbers, because it is far more difficult to make disciples than attracting people. According to McArthur, God may be fully honored when the twelve marks of an effective church become the basis of every Christian church.

#### Principles of Thom Rainer

Thom S. Rainer is the president and CEO of Life Way Christian Resources. He was the founding dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism, and Church Growth at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the author of many books including *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched*, *The Unexpected Journey*, and *Breakout Churches*. Rainer has researched over 2,000 healthy churches in North America to find unifying features of healthy churches. From his research, he has determined seven major principles that healthy churches pursue. According to Rainer, the North American Church is unhealthy. Thus, his prayer is that God may provide the churches with everything they need to be effective and healthy for God's glory. Table 5 below shows Rainer's *Seven Secrets of Healthy Churches*.

Table 5. Seven Secrets of Healthy Churches<sup>25</sup>

1. The church's leadership and laity have a high view of Scripture
2. The churches and their leaders seek to be relevant.
3. The church leaders hold to the primacy of preaching.
4. The churches have a healthy small group structure.
5. Healthy churches emphasize corporate prayer and church prayer ministries.
6. Churches that are healthy take membership seriously.
7. The healthy churches are highly intentional about evangelism.

#### Principles of Rick Warren

Rick Warren is a pastor, global strategist, theologian, and philanthropist. He is the author of *The Purpose Driven Church*, which is listed in “100 Christian Books that Changed the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.” Forbes magazine called *The Purpose Driven Church* “the best book on entrepreneurship, management, and leadership in print.”<sup>26</sup>

According to Warren, a healthy church will naturally grow. When a church has a biblical message and balanced mission, church health will occur. Warren also asserts that the main issues to consider in the areas of church health and growth are the following; “Who is our master? what is our message? What is our motive? There are also secondary issues of church health and growth, which include: Who is our market, What are our models, and What are our

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<sup>25</sup> Thom Rainer, “7 Secrets of Healthy Churches,” <http://www.churchleaders.com/outreach-articles/seven-secrets-of-healthy-churches>, (accessed on April 20, 2016).

<sup>26</sup> Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House), 1995.

methods?”<sup>27</sup> Referring to Acts 2:42-47, Warren records the following five dimensions of healthy church growth, as shown in table 6.

Table 6. Five Dimensions of Healthy Church Growth<sup>28</sup>

1. Churches grow warmer through fellowship.
2. Churches grow deeper through discipleship.
3. Churches grow stronger through worship.
4. Churches grow broader through ministry.
5. Churches grow larger through evangelism.

Warren also believes that the foundation for a healthy church is a clear purpose that “builds morale, reduces frustration, allows concentration, attracts purpose, and assists evaluation.”<sup>29</sup> Therefore, based on the Great Commandment found in Matthew 22:37-40, the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20, and other scriptures, Warren proposes five purposes Christ has given to His church that, when followed faithfully, will grow a healthy church. Christ’s five purposes for His Church are shown in table 7.

Table 7. Christ’s Five Purposes for His Church<sup>30</sup>

1. Love the Lord with all your heart
2. Love your neighbor as yourself
3. Go and make disciples

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<sup>27</sup> Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 71.

<sup>28</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 49.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 86-95.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 103-105.

4. Baptizing them
5. Teaching them to obey

Next, table 8 shows five key words used at Saddleback church to summarize Christ's five purposes for His Church. According to Warren, when churches exhibit the five purposes Christ has given to His Church, "your church's growth will be healthy, balance, and consistent."<sup>31</sup>

Table 8. Key Words to Summarize Christ's Purposes for His Church<sup>32</sup>

1. Magnify: We celebrate God's presence in Worship
2. Mission: We communicate God's Word through Evangelism
3. Membership: We incorporate God's family into our Fellowship
4. Maturity: We educate God's people through Discipleship.
5. Ministry: We demonstrate God's love through Service

This writer agrees with the simple precepts that Warren used for the Saddleback church and led the church to apply these five purposes, just as Christ has given to His Church. The result of this plan has assisted the ministries at Saddleback to enable the church to become a healthy growing congregation. In order to become a healthy Christ-centered church, persons must embrace and accept the five purposes Christ has given to His Church.

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<sup>31</sup> Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 108.

<sup>32</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 107.

### Principles of Leith Anderson

Leith Anderson is an author, conference speaker, and the senior pastor of the Wooddale Church in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. In his book *A Church for the 21st Century*, Anderson proposes six signs of a healthy church in the chapter entitled, “Is This Body Healthy?” These six signs of a healthy church are displayed in table 9.

Table 9. Six Signs of a Healthy Church<sup>33</sup>

1. Glorify God – is what the church is supposed to do.
2. Producing disciples – is what the church is supposed to do.
3. Exercising of spiritual gifts – is one of the clearest New Testament characteristics of church health.
4. Relating positively to one’s environment - healthy people do not live in isolation.
5. Reproduction – is an evidence of health in the animal life and in the church.
6. Incorporation of newcomers – may be one of the most identifiable and measureable signs of health in a church. Healthy churches assimilate new people into the life and leadership of the congregation.
7. Openness to change – is more difficult to measure. We should assimilate that . . . churches are resistant to change.
8. Trusting God – The unhealthy extremes are self-dependence and corporate pessimism.

### Principles of Christian Schwarz

Christian Schwarz is the author of *Natural Church Development* which discusses eight characteristics for healthy church growth. In this book, Schwarz asks the following: What makes a church grow? What creates church growth? Are members responsible for growth of the body of Christ? He states that when Christians focus on removing the barriers to church growth and

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<sup>33</sup> Leith Anderson, *A Church for the 21st Century*, (Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany House Publishers, 1992), 125-142.



reproduction within the church, “then church growth can happen ‘all by itself.’ God will do what he promised to do. He will grant growth (I Corinthians 3:6).”<sup>34</sup> His growth principle is assumed from Jesus’ analogy from farming in Mark 4:26-29, which explains the method by which the kingdom of God grows. Once the farmer sows the seed, it grows by itself. Although fruit comes mysteriously from the planted seed, the farmer has to work hard to prepare the ground for productivity. So, like the farmer, how do Christians plant and water so that God would cause growth in his kingdom? In the book, *Natural Church Development*, Schwarz answers this question based on research from more than 1,000 churches in 32 countries. Schwarz identifies the following eight characteristics that must exist in a church to experience healthy growth.

Table 10. Eight Quality Characteristics of a Healthy Church<sup>35</sup>

1. Empowering leadership—church leaders who concentrate on multiplying themselves by preparing others for Christian ministry.
2. Gift-oriented ministry—a ministry where Christians served according to their gifts.
3. Passionate spirituality—a situation where church members lived committed lives and practiced their faith with joy and enthusiasm.
4. Functional structures—development of structures which promotes an ongoing multiplication of ministry.
5. Inspiring worship service—the effect that the Holy Spirit has on how a worship service is prepared and conducted, which includes the entire atmosphere of a gathering which enable believers to show that it is fun to go to church.
6. Holistic small groups—groups that do more than just discussion of Bible passages and apply what they learn to their everyday lives by ministering to the needs of its members.
7. Need-oriented evangelism—Christians using their spiritual gifts to serve unbelievers with whom they have personal relationship whilst sharing the gospel with them and inviting them to church.
8. Loving relationships—church members sincerely spending time with each other outside official church sponsored events, caring, supporting, and laughing with each other.

<sup>34</sup> Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*, 4th edition ed. (Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2000), 10.

<sup>35</sup> Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*, 4th edition ed. (Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2000), 22-37.

The above-mentioned eight characteristics of a healthy church have been universally found to positively correlate to numerical church growth. In order to provide a quantitative measure for these characteristics, Schwarz developed a number of questions for each of the eight areas to fulfill two criteria: (1) they had to show an empirically demonstrable connection (as determined by factor and time analysis) to the other questions for the same quality characteristic, and (2) they had to show a demonstrably positive connection to the quantitative growth of the church (criteria validity).<sup>36</sup> The combined scores from each set of questions produced an index value for each characteristic. According to the study, an index value of fifty or more would represent the combined score for an “average” (mean) or growing church, while an index value below fifty would represent the combined score for a declining church. Index values for all eight characteristics were used to calculate a quality index.<sup>37</sup>

Many other books have been written on the subject of church health; however, for the purpose of this research the above cited characteristics are sufficient. With the following presented studies, practices, and research, these experts, as well as, many others have promoted their characteristics of a healthy church. As much as these characteristics may be biblically based and theologically informed, a careful comparison of these characteristics reveals some similarities and differences. Therefore, what constitutes a healthy church for one author is different from what is to be a healthy church from another author.

Since Scripture must be the primary reference for determining the characteristics of a healthy church, all the characteristics about church health mentioned in this chapter must be

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<sup>36</sup> Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*, 4th edition ed. (Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2000), 38.

<sup>37</sup> Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*, 4th edition ed. (Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2000), 38.

compared to the characteristics of the church found in the book of Acts. In the Book of Acts God brings into being the numerical healthy growth of His Church when believers focus on obeying His Word and applying it to their daily lives.

In Acts 2:42-47 Luke writes:

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity – all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.<sup>38</sup>

According to the book of Acts, the characteristics of the church are as follows: (1) obedience to the Lord (1:4-5, 12, 13); (2) commitment to prayer (1:14; 2:42); (3) empowered by the Holy Spirit (2:4); (4) saved and baptized members (41,47); (5) devotion to teaching the Word (42); (6) commitment to community (42, 44, 46); (7) devotion to the ordinances (42); (8) radical generosity (45); (9) large corporate gatherings (46); (10) lifestyle of praise and worship (47); (11) effective evangelism (47); (12) spirit-filled leadership (6:2-4); and (13) natural healthy growth (1:8; 2:47; 6:1, 7).

After doing a comparison with each one of the church health experts noted in this chapter, along with the shared characteristics of a healthy church from the book of Acts, this writer has noticed that the eight quality characteristics of a healthy church identified by Schwarz and Natural Church Development are much more consistent with the characteristics of a healthy church that are found in the book of Acts.

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<sup>38</sup> Acts 2:42-47.

## Summary

This chapter discusses the experts' principles concerning church health. The experts included Sam Davis, Rod Dempsey, Stephen Macchia, Gary Thomas, Peter Scazzero, Scriptural Principle's from the Book of the Revelation, George Barna, John MacArthur, Thom Rainer, Rick Warren, Leith Anderson, and Christian Schwartz. The key for church health is to remove the barriers that prevent a church from putting forth efforts to become healthy, based on biblical standards. Possible barriers to a healthy church can be human problems, societal problems, or spiritual problems. If the church is not able to remove these barriers on its own, it is crucial for the church to pray earnestly to God so that He can remove the barriers. However, no matter how the church applies any great principles for church health, the church must realize that God is the one who makes the church healthy.

Also, by analyzing the information that was shared by the church health experts, the researcher formed a conclusion that in order to develop a healthy church, it is important to focus on the individual areas of personal health, family health, and ministry health. By focusing on each one of these areas, it will position the church and lead to the mindset and skills for supporting the whole person, as well as, ministry.

## CHAPTER 3

### SURVEY RESPONSE, ANALYSIS, AND INTERVIEWS

Churches that are faithful in practicing the essential principles of church health will experience a consistent form of building healthy relationships within the church body. According to Dr. Dave Hirschman, “two of the essential practices that assist in the formation of a good foundation are Scripture and prayer.”<sup>1</sup> It is from this foundation that the essential ingredients for a healthy ministry are birthed. By practicing the discipline of Scripture memorization and prayer, individuals will become more and more healthy. Also, as persons operate in this realm, it will promote and develop a community of healthy believers and churches, which will start from individuals, families, communities, and the world. Acts 4:32-37 is a scriptural representation of church health.

And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one *of them* claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them. And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales and lay them at the apostles’ feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need. Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet.<sup>2</sup>

This example is an illustration of the healthy community.

Chapter three will reveal the results of the applied research that involves ten pastors for the purpose of examining church health in an active ministry context. The measuring

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<sup>1</sup> David Hirschman, “EVAN 950 Class Lecture,” (lecture given at Liberty Baptist Theology Seminary) Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA., Spring 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Acts 4:32-37.

instruments in this study consists of a survey or questionnaire and an informal interview. These measuring instruments were developed by the researcher. The survey and the interview was directed towards ten individual pastors who are currently active in the pastoral ministry.

First, the survey questions elicited a response about the importance of creating an organizational chart, years in the pastoral ministry, number of active and inactive membership, participants in Christian education, and a definition of their organizational structure. The results of the survey questions will be illustrated in a graph. Second, the interview process will reveal specific answers by participants that respond to the state of their church, a description of their church, characteristics of a healthy church as stated by the pastor, the pastor's responsibility towards shaping a healthy church, and the causes that lead to the decline of a healthy church.

The results of the informal interview will be shared in a combined narrative form to illustrate the answer for each question. Finally, the results of this research effort will be used to inform and evaluate the current condition of Mount Morris Baptist Church MMBC in Hume, Virginia, along with the experts in this field of ministry. The results of this research will be used to assist Mount Morris Baptist Church MMBC in Hume, Virginia, towards the process of attaining a healthy church.

### Pastoral Survey Responses

1. Do you have an organizational chart at your church?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

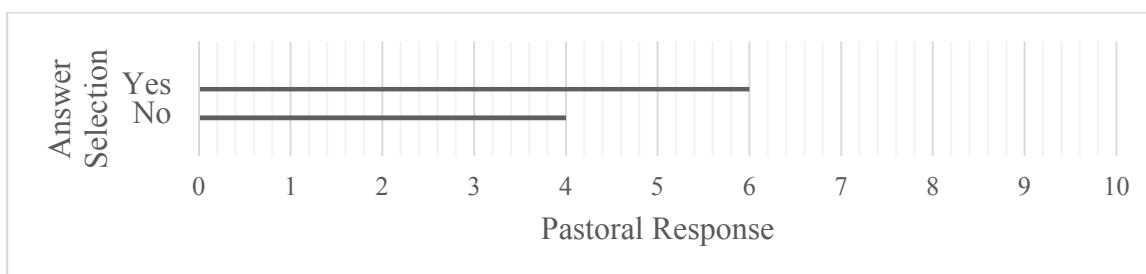


Figure 5. Organizational chart response

Table 11. Pastoral responses to question 1

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Pastoral Response</b>
Yes	6
No	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**Figure 3.1 Q:1** gives the pastoral responses on the graph from Pastor 1, Pastor 5, Pastor 6, Pastor 7, Pastor 9, and Pastor 10 answering yes; while Pastor 2, Pastor 3, Pastor 4, and Pastor 8 answered no; when it comes to having an organizational chart. This question addresses a component of the organizational analysis, by addressing the idea of having a focused plan to carry out the work of ministry, as well as, describing specific resources that would be needed for the purpose of accomplishing the vision, mission, goals, and objectives of the church ministry. An organizational chart will assist ministries with the challenge to serve the present age, while also simultaneously appreciating and celebrating the bridges that have brought the church over. The work of designing an organizational chart will assist the church in its pursuit of the momentum that is needed for the purpose of bringing in new leadership, providing unity, identifying needed resources, and making an initial assessment about who will be on board. According to Welch, at least four distinct functional groupings can be identified. “They are: pastoral, education/discipleship, music/worship, and support.”<sup>1</sup> He further states that “Organizational structure should be developed to enhance the strengths of the church and to propel or continue whatever has caused the church to grow and be healthy.”<sup>2</sup> The suggestion is that methods, models, and curriculums alone will not be enough to facilitate ministry health.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert H. Welch, *Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 73.

<sup>2</sup> Welch, *Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 73.

It is through administration, with the assistance of organization that the purpose of the church is realized.

2. How many staff persons are at your church?
  - a. None
  - b. 1
  - c. 2
  - d. More than 2

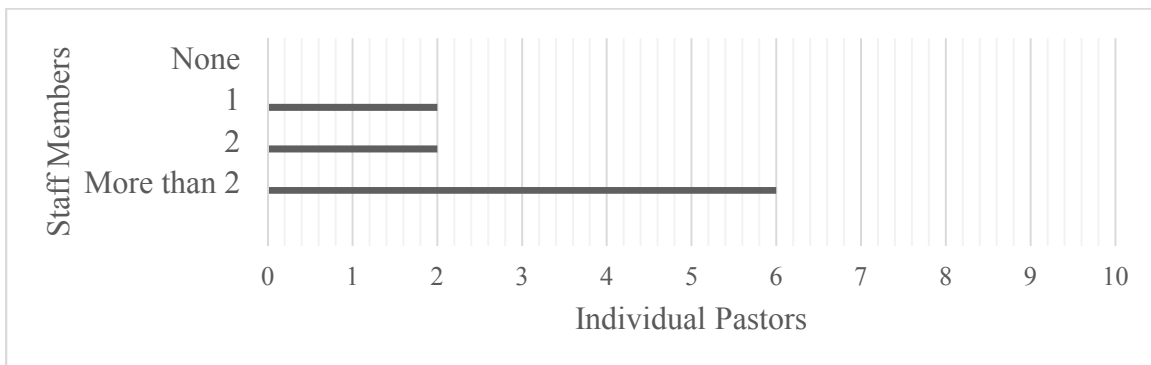


Figure 6. Staff members

Table 12. Pastoral responses to question 2

Answer Choices	Pastoral Response
None	0
1	2
2	2
More than 2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**Figure 3.2. Q:2** shows that among the individual pastors surveyed, the graph for this question shows that Pastor 1, Pastor 2, Pastor 5, Pastor 6, Pastor 9 and Pastor 10 answered more than 2; Pastor 4 and Pastor 7 answered with 2; and Pastor 3 and Pastor 8 answered with 1; when it comes to having staff members at the church. In order to build a solid staff, it is important that pastors surround themselves with saved persons of various backgrounds. In making these choices, the spiritual health of each individual is important. Just as well, Gary Thomas writes



that “An understanding of the body being used as an instrument will include the assessment of ones’ physical and mental capacities as well. This idea gives a strong emphasis to the growth of the total person.”<sup>3</sup> In order for the health of the church to be consistent, there must be a realization that one person does not have everything; therefore, a competent staff is important for the overall health of the leadership and the church ministry.

Normally, the size of the church is a strong indicator of what the size of the staff should be. However, in the initial process, the staff should always be considered as a complimentary piece to the overall health of the ministry. Of the ten pastors who responded to the survey, they all agreed that the addition of some type of staff was instrumental to relieving the weight of the administrative area of their church ministry. Exodus 14:15-16 says, Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward. As for you, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land.”<sup>4</sup> In this scriptural passage, Moses used the staff that God provided him, for the purpose of opening the Red Sea. The suggestion is that the staff is a resource that God gives leadership, for the purpose of reaching difficult places. Here, the various backgrounds and personalities will lend to such an extension of this particular idea. Also, by having a church staff, the church can do more ministry from a healthy context, because all of the work is not on one person.

3. Are there any paid staff persons at your church?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

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<sup>3</sup> Gary Thomas, *Every Body Matters: Strengthening Your Body to Strengthen Your Soul*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Exodus 14:15-16, New American Standard Bible.

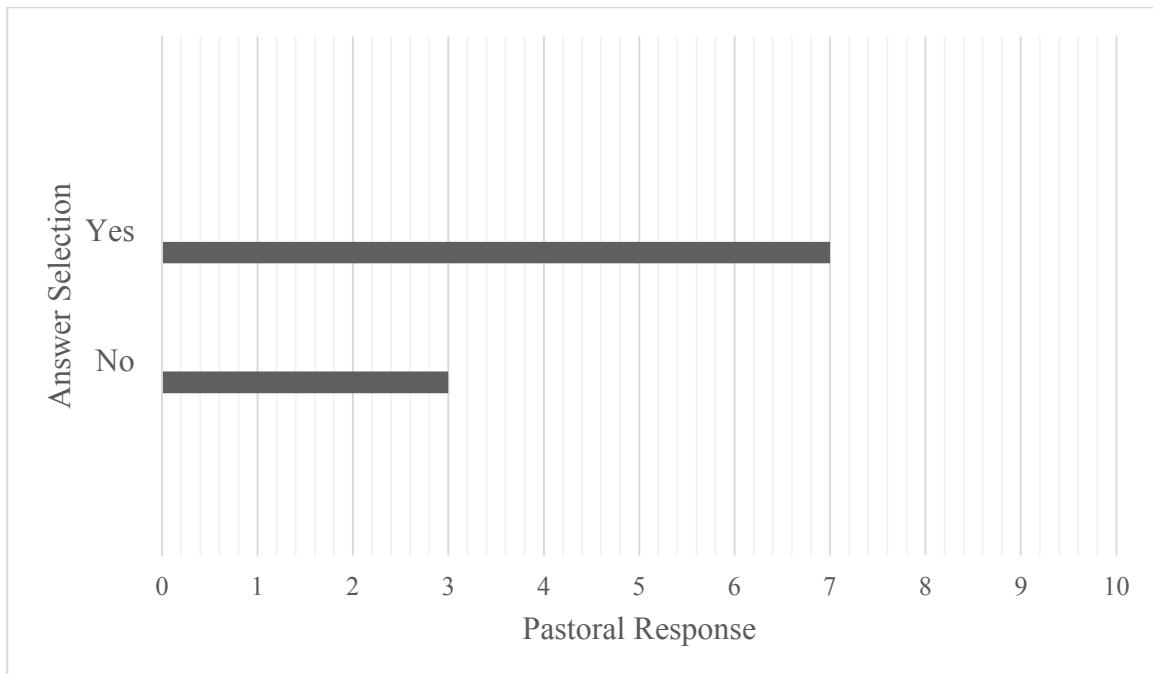


Figure 7. Paid staff persons

Table 13. Pastoral response to question 3

Answer Choices	Pastoral Response
Yes	7
No	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**Figure 3.3 Q:3** illustrates the pastoral responses on the graph for this question by Pastor 1, Pastor 2, Pastor 3, Pastor 5, Pastor 6, Pastor 9, and Pastor 10 who answered yes; while Pastor 4, Pastor 7, and Pastor 8 answered no; when it comes to having paid staff at the church. In response to this question, the idea of paid staff is an area that is composed from a ministry's ability to afford paying this person for a skill that is necessary to the work of the ministry. Whenever the church ministry can add competent staff members to assist in the work of the ministry, it can bring a sense of relief to the pastor. In terms of having paid or volunteer staff, "it

should be something that looks to the future needs of the church.”<sup>5</sup> Therefore, this type of assistance can plant seeds for healthy church development, because all of the work of ministry is not on one person. Anytime that ministry work can be delegated, it will minimize the stress that leads to frustration. Just as well, the function of a paid staff member will bring a greater sense of accountability, along with the ability to carry out their given assignments. This component is also a demonstration of how the organization of the church is one that is shared and not owned by the pastor.

4. How long have you served as pastor at your current church?
- a. 6 months-2 years
  - b. 3-5 years
  - c. 6-10 years
  - d. 11-15 years
  - e. 16 years +

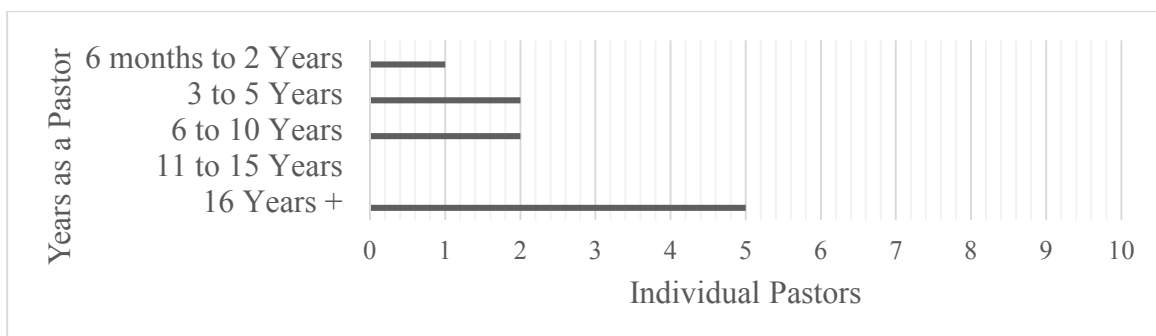


Figure 8. Years as pastor

Table 14. Pastoral response to question 4

Answer Choices	Individual Pastors
6 months to 2 Years	1
3 to 5 Years	2
6 to 10 Years	2
11 to 15 Years	0
16 Years+	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

<sup>5</sup> Robert H. Welch, *Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 77.

**Figure 3.4 Q:4** illustrates the individual pastors surveyed for this question. This graph shows that Pastor 2, Pastor 5, Pastor 7, Pastor 8, and Pastor 9 give an answer of 16 years +; Pastor 1 and Pastor 3 answer with 6 to 10 years; Pastor 4 and Pastor 6 answer with 3 to 5 years; and Pastor 10 answer with 6 months to 2 years; in the area of serving as pastor at their current church. The answers to this question represents the time period differences of those serving as pastor. According to Macchia, “God has placed us where he wills, and our job is to cooperate with his design for our lives, while encouraging the members of the body to do the same.”<sup>6</sup> The time served as a pastor is a time period that allows for the development of the vision for ones’ ministry. Just as well, it is also a time period that leads to relationship building with a congregation and the community. These two aspects will serve as spiritual capital for the pastor, particularly one who has an excellent reputation where service is given.

5. What is the number of active members?
- 25-50
  - 51-100
  - 101-200
  - 201-500
  - 501 +

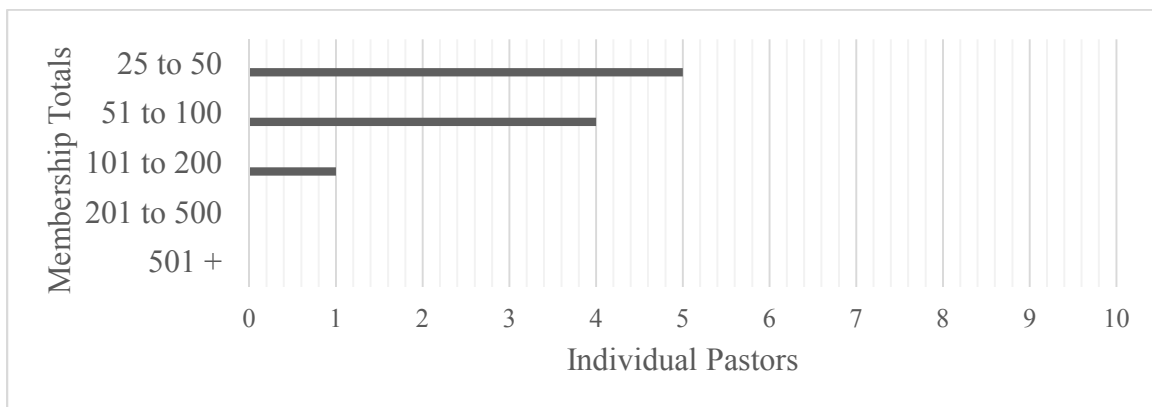


Figure 9. Membership total

<sup>6</sup> Stephan A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 216.

Table 15. Pastoral response to question 5

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Individual Pastors</b>
25-50	5
51-100	4
101-200	1
201-500	0
501 +	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**Figure 3.5 Q:5** charts the answers from the individual pastors surveyed for this question, by showing that Pastor 2, Pastor 3, Pastor 4, Pastor 5, and Pastor 10 answered 25-50; Pastor 1, Pastor 6, Pastor 7, and Pastor 8 answered with 51-100; and Pastor 9 answered with 101-200. This question describes the opportunity for persons who can become active in the overall business of the church, with the purpose of kingdom building as a goal. However, there are some persons who pursue discipleship that often become relegated to counting themselves out, because the nature of being involved in ministry is not clearly communicated by pastors. Too often, pastors give the impression in their invitations to becoming active in the church, that the ministry assignments are for perfect persons, instead of persons who are willing to be perfected. This idea alone, is one that is misunderstood by parishioners and aids in the decisions of many who become active in ministry. It also gives persons with low self-esteem the opportunity to be over something. Scazzero says, “Contemporary discipleship models often esteem the spiritual more than the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual components of who we are.”<sup>7</sup> In other words, persons are chosen for ministry based on a particular portion of who they are; whether it be spiritual, physical, emotional, social, or intellectual. So, when it comes to developing a

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<sup>7</sup> Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship that Actually Changes Lives*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 51.

healthy church, active members should be representative of leaders who make a holistic choice, in the process of developing active members. There should also be encouragement for volunteers to continue in the process of growth. Finally, the function of any active member of a church ministry is one that images Christ-like character.

- 6. What is the number of inactive members?
  - a. 25-50
  - b. 51-100
  - c. 101-200
  - d. 201-500
  - e. 501 +

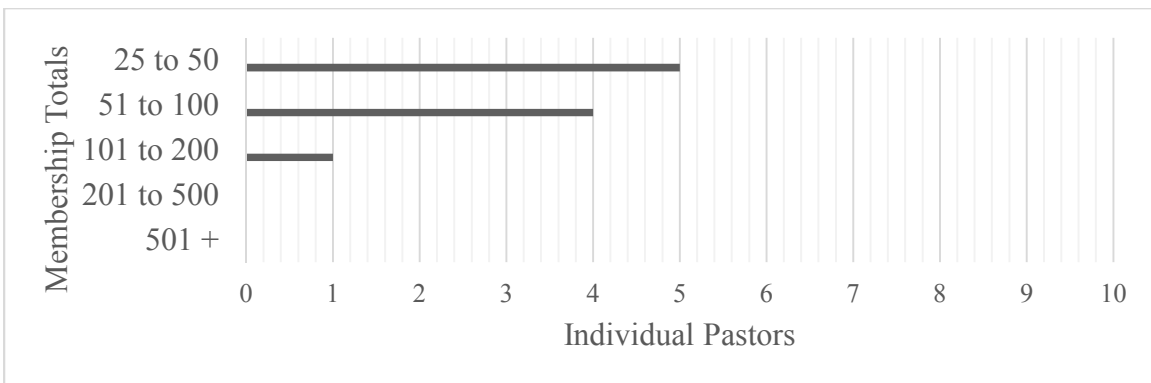


Figure 10. Number of inactive members

Table 16. Pastoral response to question 6

Answer Choices	Individual Pastors
25-50	5
51-100	4
101-200	1
201-500	0
501 +	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**Figure 3.6 Q:6** has the individual pastors surveyed for this question showing that Pastor 2, Pastor 3, Pastor 4, Pastor 7, and Pastor 10 answered 25-50; Pastor 5, Pastor 6, Pastor 8, and Pastor 9 answered with 51-100; and Pastor 1 answered with 101-200; when it concerns the number of inactive members. This survey question shares that inactive membership is prevalent

throughout each participant and their ministry context. Although the number of inactive membership varies, there is a cause for concern in this area. Malphurs says, “As many as 80 to 90 percent of the typical congregation’s members are sitting on the shore, watching a faithful few racing their boats in the ministry lake.”<sup>8</sup> When inactivity is a concern in the church, this concern can be solved by the process of helping persons to discover their spiritual gifts, assimilation, and the effective birthing of new ministries.

One of the key ways to assist members from being inactive, is to help in the discovery of their spiritual gift(s). When this process is taken on, it will illustrate the importance of what a member has to offer the church ministry. C Peter Wagner comments, “A spiritual gift is a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the body of Christ according to God’s grace for us to use within the context of the Body.”<sup>9</sup> The discovery of ones’ spiritual gift helps pastors and the inactive member identify their own creative identity and purpose.

Next according to McCalep, “Assimilation is that process which makes new and existing members an accepted, valued, and comfortable part of the church.”<sup>10</sup> This effort is one that offers spiritual employment to an inactive member, as a way to becoming productive in the church. Anytime there are inactive members, the ministry of the church is not efficiently operating as God desires. This in turn, can cause one or more persons to do more than necessary in the ministry, therefore, causing the health of active members to become deficient. Pastors

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<sup>8</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2005), 231.

<sup>9</sup> C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1979), 42.

<sup>10</sup> George O. McCalep Jr. *Faithful Over A Few Things: Seven Critical Church Growth Principles*, (Lithonia, GA: Orman Press, 1996), 87.

must assure that the assimilation process works well, because the inactive member is symbolic of ministry inactivity and a lack of church effectiveness.

Finally, the birthing of new ministries can assist the pastor in effectively making assignments to inactive members. It will give insight to any new ministry possibilities that are needed with the person(s) who are gifted to operate in this particular area. Using this type of delegation, will become a helpful tool in aiding the church to be one that is healthy, based on the scriptures. Therefore, a solution to this area is to assist the congregation to understand its role in the mobilization process of ministry employment.

- 7. What is your average Sunday attendance?
  - a. 25-50
  - b. 51-100
  - c. 101-200
  - d. 201-500
  - e. 501 +

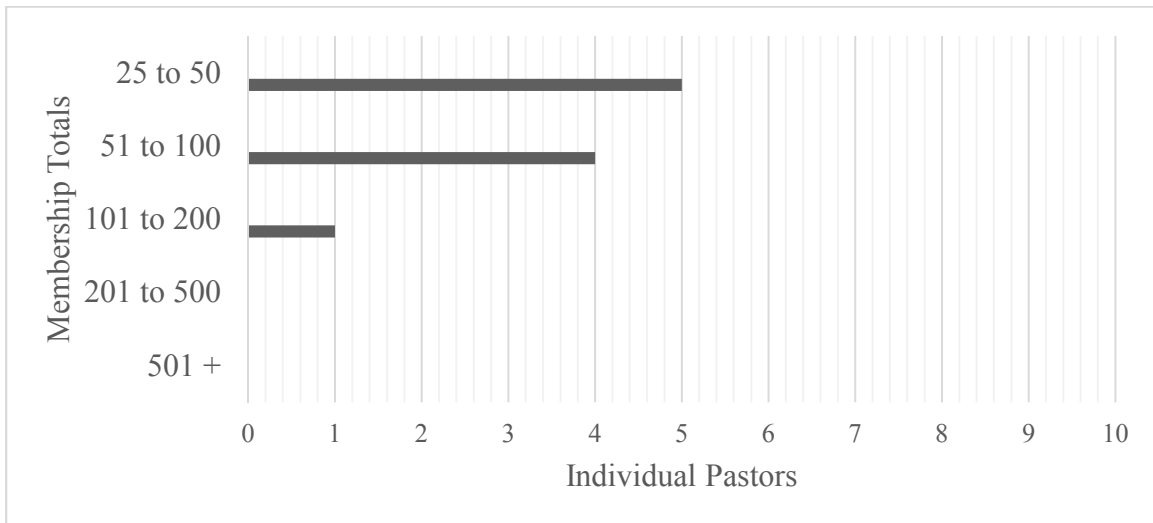


Figure 11. Average Sunday Attendance

Table 17. Pastoral Response to Question 7

Answer Choices	Individual Pastors
25-50	6
51-100	3
101-200	1
201-500	0
501 +	0



<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>
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**Figure 3.7 Q:7** has the individual pastors surveyed for question 7, showing that Pastor 2, Pastor 3, Pastor 4, Pastor 5, Pastor 7, and Pastor 10 answered 25-50; Pastor 1, Pastor 6, and Pastor 8, answered with 51-100; and Pastor 9 answered with 101-200; when it comes to average Sunday attendance. One of the ways that the pastor communicates to the congregation is by using the formal method of Sunday worship. This method is a one-way communicative effort that involves the use of bulletins, newsletters, personal letters, video presentations, and skits. In a direct sense, the mode of communication is through sermonic presentation, which is the Word of God. As the survey numbers indicate varying degrees of Sunday attendance, a combination of these examples of communication will involve an attempt to make comprehensive communication efforts in the Sunday worship attendance. When these types of efforts are made to the congregation as a whole, it will show persons who are absent from Sunday worship that they are indeed valuable to the ministry health of the church and present a cause for the gaining of people's trust. Robert J. Morgan suggests that "Worship is important, because it is an activity that God initiates with His creation in order to maintain a relationship with them."<sup>11</sup> Regardless of the chosen method, pastors will show that they are interested and invested into developing a growing church during Sunday worship, for the purpose of developing a church that is healthy in every area of the ministry.

8. What is your average Bible study/prayer meeting attendance?
- a. 25-50
  - b. 51-100
  - c. 101-200
  - d. 201-500
  - e. 501 +

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<sup>11</sup> Robert J. Morgan, *Can't Wait for Sunday: Leading Your Congregation in Authentic Worship*, (Indianapolis, IN: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2006), 37.

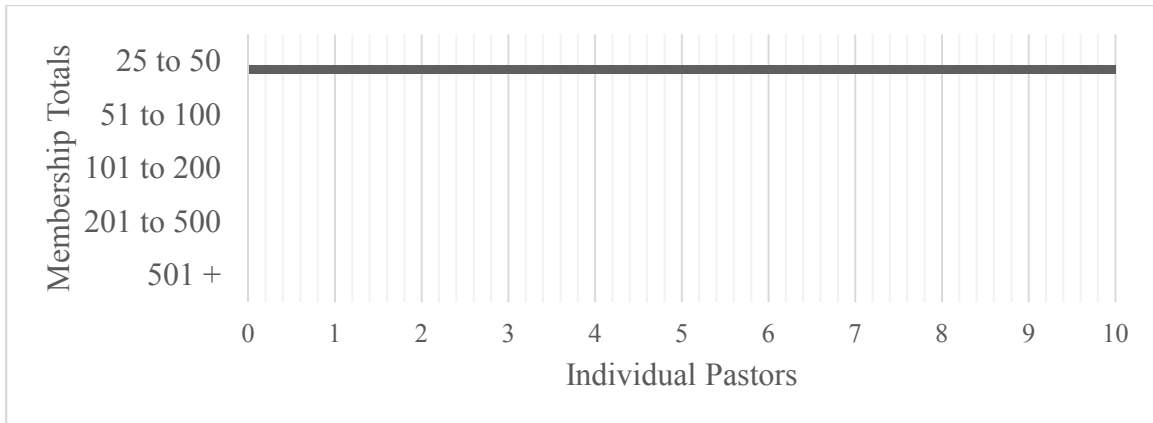


Figure 12. Bible study/prayer meeting

Table 18. Pastoral response to question 8

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Individual Pastors</b>
25-50	10
51-100	0
101-200	0
201-500	0
501 +	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**Figure 3.8 Q:8** reveals that the individual pastors surveyed for question 8, give the same answer on the graph, which shows that all Pastor's 1 – 10 answered 25-50; when it comes to the average Bible Study/Prayer meeting attendance. This method represents an informal way of communicating with the congregation that involves the proactive effort of communicating. The Bible Study/Prayer meeting sessions allow for members to grow from sharing and asking their own questions about the scriptures. It is also a way for believers to facilitate understanding, as well as, help to develop a deeper understanding of the teaching of the Bible. This session is an extension for questions to be asked and answered for all who are present to hear. Ultimately, this session will enhance in the development of disciples for Christ, who are maturing and developing in a healthy way. Galindo says, “Authentic Christian teaching instruction

acknowledges the distinctiveness of teaching the faith.”<sup>12</sup> Galindo continues by saying, “Using small groups consistently in Christian teaching will allow learners to better avail themselves of what their faith community has to offer.”<sup>13</sup> Therefore, the role of the scriptures will serve as the guiding force for believers who desire to embrace the characteristics of becoming a mature believer and one who is moving towards discipleship. A disciple is someone who has accepted Jesus Christ, is a follower of the ways and acts of Christ, and shows the love of Christ. These precepts are the actions of the healthy believer.

9. Is there any organizational structure at your church?  
 a. Yes  
 b. No

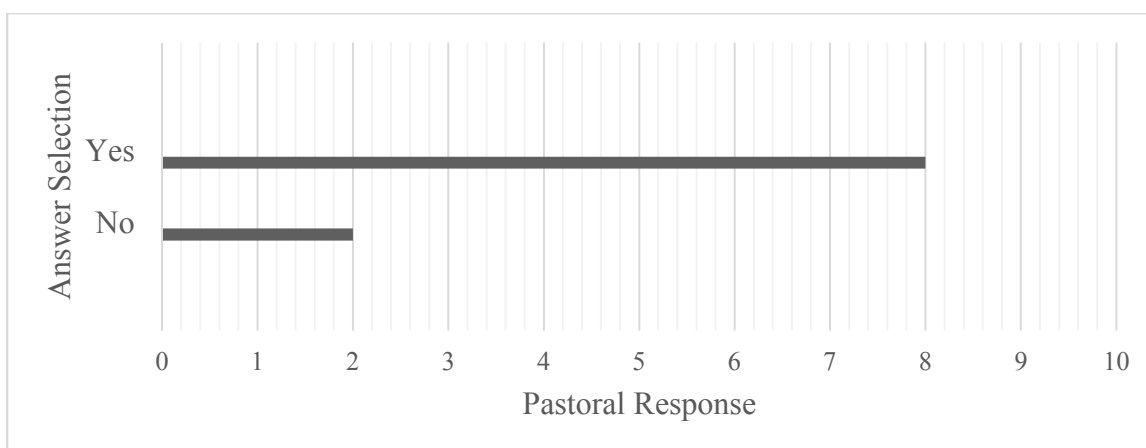


Figure 13. Organizational structure

Table 19. Pastoral response to question 9

Answer Choices	Pastoral Response
Yes	8
No	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

<sup>12</sup> Israel Galindo, *The Craft of Christian Teaching: Essentials for Becoming a Very Good Teacher*, (Indianapolis, IN: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2006), 137.

<sup>13</sup> Galindo, *The Craft of Christian Teaching: Essentials for Becoming a Very Good Teacher*, (Indianapolis, IN: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2006), 137.

**Figure 3.9 Q:9** has the individual pastors surveyed for question 9 illustrated on the graph by showing that Pastor 1, Pastor 4, Pastor 5, Pastor 6, Pastor 7, Pastor 8, Pastor 9, and Pastor 10 answered with yes; while Pastor 2 and Pastor 3 answered no; when it comes to the idea of organizational structure at their church. Romans 12:4-5 says, “For just as we have many and members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, individually members one of another.”<sup>14</sup> From this passage of Scripture, clarity is given for the objectives that are set for the ministry as a functioning body. Therefore, organization of ministry is important to maintain focus and purpose for the ministry. This process is usually guided by a vision statement that gives the directional focus for the church ministry. A sure way of the church becoming unhealthy is by having a visionless ministry. In doing this, ministry becomes an activity that is all over the place. Welch says, “Organizational structure should be developed to enhance the strengths of the church and to propel or continue whatever makes the church operate.”<sup>15</sup> This practice will cause the church to be able to operate in a healthy way.

10. What type of organizational structure/polity is practiced at your church?
  - a. Monarchial – undivided rule by one person
  - b. Episcopalian – rule by church denominational hierarchy
  - c. Presbyterian – rule by regional church elected persons
  - d. Congregational – acts independently from denominational governance and is ruled by its own elected/appointed leaders, with a democratic philosophy
  - e. N/A

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<sup>14</sup> Romans 12:4-5, New American Standard Bible.

<sup>15</sup> Robert H. Welch, *Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 73.

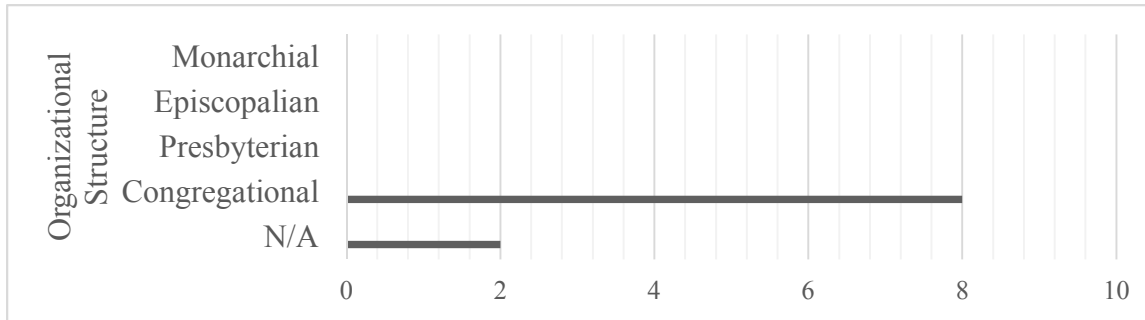


Figure 14. Type of polity

Table 20. Pastoral response to question 10

Answer Choices	Individual Pastors
Monarchial	0
Episcopalian	0
Presbyterian	0
Congregational	8
N/A	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

**Figure 3.10 Q:10** has the individual pastors surveyed for question 10 giving different answers. The graph shows that Pastor 1, Pastor 2, Pastor 3, Pastor 4, Pastor 6, Pastor 8, Pastor 9, and Pastor 10 answered with congregational; while Pastor 5 and Pastor 7 answered not available; when it comes to the type of organizational structure/polity that is practiced at their church. It is important to note the Pastor 5 and Pastor 7 used a combination of the four congregational styles in their leadership. Polity, according to Welch, “describes an organization’s philosophy for conducting business, carrying out commerce, or relating to the public.”<sup>16</sup> A brief description of the congregational form of polity is the ability of the local church or organization to operate and execute its own rules of conduct, while appointing or electing their own leaders, who act on

<sup>16</sup> Robert H. Welch, *Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 66.

behalf of the church. This is the idea of shared leadership. This form of church polity allows for formal and informal relationships to take place, for the cause of sharing and distributing ministry work. When pastor's take on the concept of having to have all of the answers, this is an unhealthy concept. Just as well, the congregational form of church government will distribute leadership, and prevent the mind set of having only one person to be depended upon for all of the answers, for the completion of the tasks of ministry. It is important to have this concept of ministry, because this is where roles are clearly defined. Also, this concept is done by initiating training from the pastor. This model is best illustrated by the Jethro-Moses biblical model of leadership in Exodus 18:13-27.

It came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from the morning until the evening. Now when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?" Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor and make known the statutes of God and His laws." Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you are doing is not good. You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do. Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. If you do this thing and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace." So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. They judged the people at all times; the difficult dispute they would bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves would judge. Then Moses bade his father-in-law farewell, and he went his way into his own land.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Exodus 18:13-27, New American Standard Bible.

This scriptural passage illustrates how the initiating of relationship by Moses, was able to establish organized leadership that would assist him in everything. When Moses established shared leadership throughout the nation of Israel, it was helpful to Moses and aided in him not having to experience potential burnout. It also established a line of authority that was useful in allowing Moses the freedom from having to provide all of the answers, which made Moses more durable and the people more peaceful. This type of leadership will be a reflection of healthiness that begins with the leader, continues throughout the congregants, as well as, the ministry partners.

### **Pastoral Interview Questions**

The results of these informal interviews will be shared in the order of questions one through five, followed by a graph that illustrates the answers to questions six through ten. These answers illustrate the ministry philosophy of these pastors, as well as, define the workings and benefits of what it means to have a healthy church. In this portion of the project, the writer is reminded of the words written by Duane Elmer, author of the book, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility*. He writes, “Learning from others yields understanding that moves us into strong, enduring, and trusting relationships resistant to colonialistic attitudes and dependency. The danger: we may tire of learning from and move into telling the mode; that is, I have all the answers.”<sup>18</sup> The following questions were designed to prod these fellow pastors about church health from their perspective, while not offending their spiritual license to practice a biblical construct. In lieu of their sharing, avenues and relationships were built for the purpose of understanding, as well as, making biblical corrections.

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<sup>18</sup> Duane H. Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility*, (Downers Grove, ILL: IVP Books, 2006), 106.

### Pastoral Interview Responses to Questions 1-5

#### 1. Which state best describes your church? Why?

Among the ten pastors that were interviewed, this pastor group responded with the answer of none of the above, it is alive and active. By analyzing the given answer choices to choose from, they explained that none of these choices fully define or describe the church at this time. Pastor seven and pastor eight responded that all of the given answer choices to this question has defined their church at one time during their service to their local ministries. Pastor five further stated that the dynamic of his church is cyclic, static, horizontal, or integrated for a new departure, and sometimes there are parallel paths that the church is on. With further questions asked about this subject, the researcher asked the participants to define the terms that they used in their given answer.

#### Cyclic

- occurring in cycles; regularly repeated:

#### Static

- lacking in movement, action, or change, especially in a way viewed as undesirable or uninteresting:

#### Horizontal

- merging companies that are engaged in the same stage or type of production:

#### Integrated

- combining or coordinating separate elements so as to provide a harmonious, interrelated whole:

#### Parallel

- to show the identity or similarity of; compare
- (of something extending in a line) be side by side with (something extending in a line), always keeping the same distance:



Pastor five stated that this is his 29<sup>th</sup> year in pastoring, and the answer to this question is being constantly revealed to me. God had me to write the vision from Habakkuk so that the congregation could see it and run with it. Pastor five further stated that the vision was posted in an area of prominence for everyone to be able to see it. At the time of its revelation, I did not fully understand it; but now I understand it better. This is vision seven fold, and because of it the church is in a horizontal dynamic now. Pastor's six through ten related that God has to deal with the pastor, for the purpose of becoming more infused and connected to revelation with Him. This practice has seemed to awaken the congregants who are present; therefore, it has moved from being static.

Secondly, even though pastor's two, three, and ten have small memberships, they still make every effort to be alive for the Lord. Being alive will draw others to their fellowship and bless the community as well. All of this comes from the pastor who is dedicated to a holistic practice that best represents ministering to the whole person. When this effort is made, the weakness of people can become a point of focus and growth will take place.

According to Neil Cole and Phil Helfer, authors of the book, *Church Transfusion: Changing Your Church Organically From the Inside Out*, suggest that, "We are so desperately afraid to admit failure that we will keep the church as we know it alive as long as we can."<sup>19</sup> This statement represents the previous answers to question 1. Ultimately, their answers offer a "theology of safety,"<sup>20</sup> which is designed to preserve the church in its present condition. Cole and Helfer suggest that "Self-preservation is actively choosing an alternative to the life of our

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<sup>19</sup> Neil Cole and Phil Helfer, *Church Transfusion: Changing Your Church Organically from the Inside Out*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 67.

<sup>20</sup> Cole and Helfer, *Church Transfusion: Changing Your Church Organically from the Inside Out*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 176.

God.”<sup>21</sup> Ultimately, church health is more than numbers, it is the ability for disciples to be sent out into the world.

2. Which phrase best describes your church? Why?

Pastor two answered that the church ministry is steeped in traditions and not willing to change with the times. This ministry is still trying to live out the purpose of being a historic church, instead of a growing church where God is moving. The traditional practice of this church makes doing new ministry activities difficult, because it is meant to stretch the congregants. Furthermore, pastor two admits that the traditional practices of this church has put him into a place of complacency. In this, pastor two accepts whatever the congregation accepts. When pastor two leads in a fashion of complacency, he acknowledges that the church becomes toxic and lacks the vision to want to move forward. Therefore, pastor 2 deals with a ministry that is steeped in tradition, and does not have a vision. If the church does not embrace the idea of developing in a healthy way, the ministry will continue to connect the past to any foreseeable future.

Also, according to question two, pastor five says that his church can be described as all of the above at a dynamic time. It is steeped in traditions and not willing to change with the times; it is physically present, but not alive; and it is vision and mission oriented. Pastor’s one and three through ten suggests that tradition is not bad, and change is a dynamic that explains how struggle took place and how the Lord can give tremendous insight. Ultimately, the suggested answers are based on doctrine. In this instance, doctrine is the bible, and the bible is good for us, and doctrine is in the bible.

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<sup>21</sup> Neil Cole and Phil Helfer, *Church Transfusion: Changing Your Church Organically from the Inside Out*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 69.

## Dynamic

- a force that stimulates change or progress within a system or process:
- (of a process or system) characterized by constant change, activity, or progress:

## Doctrine

- the written body of teachings of the church that are generally accepted by that group:
  - God is all-knowing--1 John 3:20
  - God is all-powerful--Psalm 115:3
  - God is everywhere--Jer. 23:23, 24
  - The Bible is inspired by God--2 Tim. 3:16
  - The Bible is the Word of God--2 Tim. 3:16

Pastor nine answers this question as being vision and mission oriented. Pastor nine also suggests that relationships are important, because you have to know how to work with people. Along with being able to work with people, pastor nine suggests that change should not be implemented too quick. First of all, relationship building should start within the church, for the purpose of congregants and the pastor to learn their area of giftedness and how to work together. Then, the church can start to reach out to the area churches and build relationships for the purpose of partnering and reaching larger areas. When the implementation of the vision and mission take place, it will grow the congregants for the purpose of ministry and assist in the spiritual health of the church as well.

According to the interviewee's the phrase that was chosen the most was alive an active; however, phrases that best describe ones' church, often include ideas that are inclusive of institutional and influential success. Cole and Helfer define "Institutional success measures attendance and budgets; while, influential success measures the presence and resulting impact of

our being in the world and bringing the voice of our King.”<sup>22</sup> Some congregations are based on the church budget and the amount of land that is purchased. However, other congregations measure success on the amount of converts that accept Christ. The healthy church is one that is obedient to the command of Jesus to influence the world (Matt. 28:18-20). By following this objective, the church of influence is one that will prepare people for ministry in the world. This is done by following the great commission and never wavering. “The DNA pattern of the Body of Christ must find its beginnings in Christ.”<sup>23</sup>

### 3. What are some of the characteristics of a healthy church?

Pastors one through ten stated that some characteristics of a healthy church include being:

1. Interested and desiring to know the Bible.
2. Willing to work for God.
3. Dedicated to the work of the lord.
4. We are connected with God, because he is the source of our living.

Furthermore, pastor two, pastor three, and pastor ten, who have small memberships, state that the characteristics of a healthy church are not based upon numbers or how high people shout. They should also include:

- When you can see, feel, and share the Word of God by the Spirit of God.
- When you can enter the sanctuary and know that the Lord is present, because if the Lord is there the church is healthy.

Pastor three and pastor four reveal that their congregation consist of mostly younger

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<sup>22</sup> Neil Cole and Phil Helfer, *Church Transfusion: Changing Your Church Organically from the Inside Out*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 176.

<sup>23</sup> Neil Cole, *Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 116.

people and further suggest that characteristics of a healthy church need to include:

- Having a joyful and lively service.
- As people enter the sanctuary to worship, they need to bring something with them.
- It does not have a dead service.
- Have a worship service that encourages people to rejoice in the lord.

The characteristics of a healthy church, according to Macchia, involve the following levels: “Level 1: How I relate with God; Level 2: How I Relate with my Church Family; Level 3: How My Church Ministers and Manages.”<sup>24</sup> Each level has a Godward focus in its foundation. This is the essence of practicing to be interested, willing, dedicated, and connected, with the Word of God and the Spirit of God. From these practices are birthed the elements of spiritual health. Macchia says, “In order for the ten characteristics [of a healthy church] to be realized in the context of community life, they must first be owned by each member and leader.”<sup>25</sup>

#### 4. Do pastors have a responsibility towards shaping a healthy church?

Overwhelmingly, pastors one through ten respond with yes as the answer. They say that it is encumbered upon pastors to be involved in shaping a healthy church, because this work does not come by osmosis. Pastors need to allow themselves to grow in humility, so that they will not be the dominant personality. In this instance, the dominant personality should be the person of Christ. Pastor two continues by saying that the pastor has an absolute responsibility towards shaping a healthy church. This responsibility is critical and mandated by God, because this is

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<sup>24</sup> Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 23.

<sup>25</sup> Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 25.

where the structure and order is involved. Pastors are not able to be God's faithful servant until they become submissive and obedient to the Word of God.

Pastor five indicated that when you are on the obedient side of God, you will have joy; because you will acknowledge His presence with you. He further indicated that pastors are to be the shepherd to lead, because it is based on how believing, loving, serving, compassionate, and caring the church is. The health of the church comes from God, but it flows through the shepherd.

Pastor four said that sometimes in the responsibility of our role as pastor, pastors have to tell the church the truth for God's Will to be done. This truth is to be shared by love and shared in love. This is the more excellent way that Paul talked about. Sometimes, pastors fall down on this. This is part of the responsibility of shaping a healthy church. (SEE: 1 Cor. 12:31b – 13:1-3)

1 Corinthians 12:31b – 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 KJV

[ . . . ]: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Pastor six, pastor four, pastor nine, and pastor ten reveal that pastors need to assess the needs of the church, when it comes to shaping a healthy church. The assessment may reveal something small, but it is important in the overall functioning of the church. Also, the pastor must acknowledge the things that lack in providing a healthy church and begin to give leadership in these areas. It will take wisdom to know how to proceed, thus making church health an important issue. The shaping of church health stems from issues that affect people socially, mentally, physically, and spiritually; however, this is part of the responsibility of the pastor.

Overwhelmingly, pastors one through ten respond with yes in reference to the responsibility of church health belonging to the pastor. Those interviewed also say that it is encumbered upon pastors to be involved in shaping a healthy church. Overall, this question addresses the idea of stewardship. Macchia says, “The healthy church teaches its members that they are responsible stewards of their God-given resources, and challenges them to sacrificial generosity in sharing with others.”<sup>26</sup> This is a suggestion that not only the pastor is responsible for church health, it belongs to everyone who is a part of the body of Christ. The responsibility of church health is not only one for the leadership; it is also an issue of fellowship. Whenever fellowship is involved, church health involves matters of the heart.

#### 5. What are the causes that lead to the decline of a healthy church?

Pastor one, pastor two, pastor three, pastor six, pastor seven reveal that a cause that leads to the decline of a healthy church is when it becomes irrelevant to the community where it is located. In this instance, the people are not able to speak to the issues of the people. Quite simply, the people have lost their influence in the community, because of their witness. When the church ceases to imitate Christ, it will lose the power of influence from the institution that it represents.

Pastor four, pastor eight, pastor nine add that more causes that lead to the decline of a healthy church are:

- When the Holy Spirit is not residing (living, taken residence) there. (This is from the pastor to the people; throughout)
- When the people of God, come to worship without God.
- When the Word is not present.

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<sup>26</sup> Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 197.

- When fellowship is not present.
- When worship is not present.

Pastor ten suggests that there is a couple of real causes that lead to the decline of the healthy church. They are:

1. Jobs affect the attendance, because the membership does not have much opportunity in the area of their church.
2. Housing is not available to every income. i.e., Low-Income to High-Income
3. Location of the church
4. Evangelizing and keeping young people.

In reference to ministering to the 21<sup>st</sup> century community, there is a need for relevant ministry to be done with the concept of church health as a foundation. People who come to church today are not like the people who used to come in terms of needs. The church is serving in the age of paradigm shifts. In answering these questions, each pastor gave some perspectives that reveal their insight to the idea of the healthy church as they understand it.

According to the interviews, some causes that lead to the decline of a healthy church is when it becomes irrelevant and insensitive to the community where it is located. In this instance, the church has lost its the power of influence from the institution that it represents, and its influence to speak to the issues of the people. Also, the church has lost its influence in the community, because of its witness. Other causes include the church ceasing to imitate Christ; the Holy Spirit not residing there; the people of God come to worship without God; the Word is not present; the act of worship is not present; fellowship is not present; and the evangelization is not active. Macchia writes, “If we are to fully understand and experience God’s empowering



presence in our lives, we need to release our independent spirits into his loving care.”<sup>27</sup> This idea suggests that a lack of submission to God’s authority is an implication that will lead to the decline of church health. This spirit will permeate the church community into self-centeredness and individual agendas that are opposite of the Scriptures.

### Pastoral Chart Responses to Questions 6-10

Individual Pastor	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Pastor 1	6-10 Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes
Pastor 2	16+ Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes
Pastor 3	6-10 Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes
Pastor 4	3-5 Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes
Pastor 5	16+ Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes
Pastor 6	3-5 Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes
Pastor 7	16+ Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes
Pastor 8	16+ Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes
Pastor 9	16+ Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes
Pastor 10	3 months – 2 Years	Yes	Theocratic	Yes	Yes

### Summary

The presented survey’s and interviews of these participants have illustrated their focus on the area of preparation for the leader and it reveals what their positions are in the ministry.

These questions also help to display the process that these leaders have participated in, for the

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<sup>27</sup> Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 29.

purpose of developing their own idea of a healthy ministry. According to psychologist, Abraham Maslow, every person has a set of needs. He termed them as a “hierarchy of needs.”<sup>28</sup> Maslow suggests that if these inherent needs are deficient or not fulfilled, chaos would be the result of an individual’s life. Therefore, the holistic aim of leadership towards church health should address the social, physical, mental, and spiritual areas of persons in each of these areas, while assisting the leader to maintain balance as well.

Figure 15. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

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<sup>28</sup> Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, (New York, NY: Harper & Row), 1970.

## CHAPTER 4

### A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR A HEALTHY CHURCH

When it comes to making the church healthy, many theologians and church health experts discuss the areas of organizational structure, leadership, relevant ministries, and prioritizing relationships. In lieu of these suggested aspects, it is God who provides health to those persons who are willing to submit themselves to Him. By fully acknowledging that God is in control, is the spring board to church health for those who are willing to follow the Word. It is also worth stating that vision and mission will lead to God-centered goals, which will produce the characteristics of Christ-like believers that will attract others to the fold.

In the task of strategic planning, Aubrey Malphurs, author of the book *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model For Church and Ministry Leaders*, suggests at least three distinct steps. They are: “The Preparation for Strategic Planning; The Process of Strategic Planning; and The Practice of Strategic Planning.”<sup>1</sup> These steps are designed to assess the present situation of the church, as well as, birth the vision of the church.

The following assessment of the Mount Morris Baptist church is a historical and practical narrative of a church that has birthed many other sister churches from this ministry. This assessment reveals how a church family can get off track, when the focus of the ministry is in their church history, rather than the vision. Now, Mount Morris Baptist church has turned the focus of their ministry to glorifying God; therefore, becoming an example to other believers and nonbelievers. Another step that the church has taken is to re-focus its God ordained calling by becoming a true church community, where God is the center of the church and the congregation

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<sup>1</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 23.

In order to make this type of transition, God required that the church leadership give more focus to the goal of the vision and mission of the church. In doing this, the leadership of the pastor is much more effective for encouraging the congregation to participate in the ministry of the church. This type of clarity has begun a healing process that has made church health a much more recognizable goal and has given the church new life. This evaluation will provide a brief history, vision, mission, and ministry of (Mount Morris Baptist church) MMBC and will also provide results that will assist (Mount Morris Baptist church) MMBC towards church health. From the assessment of (Mount Morris Baptist church) MMBC, comes the following strategies for a healthy church, in reference to Mount Morris Baptist church and its ministry context.

### **Mount Morris Baptist Church History and Assessment<sup>1</sup>**

#### Founded

When

In Fauquier County, Virginia, free slaves were permitted to attend a white church by the name of Thumb Run Primitive Baptist church. From this connection, Elder John Clark and Deacon Jonas Cornwell assisted in purchasing a parcel of land from the Mount Morris Farm for the amount of five dollars in 1867. On this one-acre piece of land was a small log cabin, where the Mount Morris Baptist Church was founded in September of 1867 in Hume, Virginia. The stipulation of the sale had its grounds based on an agreement that public worship would be the purpose for the sale and purchase of this land, which Elder Mark Russell and his sons helped to build the original church building. Along with the land for a church, an additional land purchase

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<sup>1</sup> David Hirschman, "Pages 83-94" is the assessment survey outline example from the church health project, EVAN 950 Leading a Healthy Church, (lecture given at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary), Lynchburg, VA., Spring 2014.

was included, adding another three acres that would be used for the purpose of the church cemetery. If for any reason these promises were ever neglected or the church is unoccupied, the land would revert back to the Henry and Charlotte Julius family heirs.

By

The Mount Morris Baptist Church was founded by C. L. Williams, William Roy, and Phillip Washington, who were the trustees of Mount Morris Baptist Church. At this time the church was organized as part of the Baptist Denomination. Upon the call of its first pastor, the church was officially named, (Mount Morris Baptist church) MMBC.

Affiliation

In 1895, Mount Morris Baptist church helped form and became affiliated with the Second National Kettoctan Baptist Association, which is a regional association that covers the states of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

Significant Events

Significant events in the history of Mount Morris Baptist church include the service of eight pastors in the 147-year ministry service of Mount Morris Baptist church. In 1867, under the leadership of Elder Cornelius Gaddis who was the first pastor of Mount Morris, the church began with twenty-four members for worship every fourth Sunday of each month. This also included the recognition of Mount Morris Baptist church as the mother church of the Second National Kettoctan association. Also, Mount Morris Baptist church was the first church in the association to buy additional property for the purpose of having the Second National Kettoctan association conventions.

In 1916 Mount Morris' third pastor, Elder Philip Washington, had a meeting with Dr. R. H. Boyd of the Boyd publishing company and began a relationship for the purpose of securing

teaching material to use for Sunday School class at Mount Morris Baptist church. This was significant, because the Boyd publishing company offered black-authored materials for African-American Baptists. In 1917 under the leadership of Mount Morris' fourth pastor Elder James Bailey, the church organized the Deacon's and Sister Workers ministries. In 1940, under the leadership of their fifth pastor Elder William Gibbs, the church organized the Mount Morris Charity Club for the purpose of acting as an evangelistic arm for the church.

The most significant period of physical and spiritual growth for Mount Morris Baptist church took place under the leadership of Reverend J. P. Baltimore, who was the sixth pastor of the church. Under his leadership, Mount Morris added 185 members, 14 Deacons, 5 Trustees, 2 clerks, organization of the church choir and purchase of the first piano, addition of the dining room, basement, 2 bathrooms, nursery annex, padded pews, hardwood floors, carpet, a public address system, and the first church organ. Mount Morris Baptist church also organized Sunday school classes, the Pastors Aid Club, Cemetery Club, and the Senior and Junior Usher Board. As a spiritual legacy, Reverend Baltimore licensed and ordained 6 ministers for the preaching of the Gospel. In 1967, Mount Morris celebrated 100 years of ministry under the leadership of Reverend J. P. Baltimore.

In 1985, Reverend Edward White the seventh pastor of the church organized a youth and scholarship ministry. Finally, under the leadership of their eighth pastor Elder Lindsay Green, Mount Morris Baptist church celebrated 125 years of ministry service in 1992 with the sale and purchase of an anniversary plate of the church logo and also reinstated Wednesday evening prayer meeting and Bible study in 1994.

## Ministry

The ministry model of Mount Morris Baptist church is an informal organizational structure style that comes from the social, vocational, interest, prestige, or informal recognition of leadership lines. The form of church polity at Mount Morris Baptist church is the Congregational form.

The high attendance for special worship services occur yearly during the Easter sunrise, Mother's Day, and All-Day Meeting services in the spring followed by the weekly revival and Church anniversary worship services in the Fall.

The five-year annual attendance from 2009 to 2013 were an average of 2,000 persons per year, with the church anniversary averaging 250 persons each year as well. The Mount Morris Baptist church anniversary is always the most attended Sunday worship service, with the regular Sunday worship services averaging about forty to fifty persons each Sunday morning.

## Perceived Church Health

### Pastoral Staff

The pastoral staff at Mount Morris Baptist church consists of five people, including the pastor. The age range of the pastoral staff is from 50 years of age up to 100 years old. There are four men and one woman included in this staff, with four ordained and one licensed minister. The pastoral staff is unified and growing, while meeting the local ministry needs; therefore, it is perceived as a healthy ministry.

### Elders/Deacons

The deacon's ministry consists of two active and one deacon in training, along with one deacon who is in emeritus status. The age range of the deacon's ministry is from 53 years of age

to 89 years old, with a young adult who is the deacon in training. Although the deacon's ministry is few in number, it is perceived as a healthy ministry.

#### Paid Staff

The church budget for the paid staff at Mount Morris Baptist church includes eight persons who range from a weekly stipend to a full monthly salary for the paid staff of the church. The paid staff also has the opportunity to participate in a bi-funded retirement program as well. The salary amounts range from thirty-five dollars per week to 1,600 dollars each month. The persons who are included in the budget for paid staff are the pastor, church administrator, church clerk, church secretary, financial secretary, church treasurer, musicians, and custodian. In the above list of persons in the paid staff only the pastor, musicians, and custodian are actually paid. All of the other positions donate their salary portions back to the church. In this analysis, the paid staff is perceived as a healthy ministry.

#### Volunteer Staff

The volunteer staff of Mount Morris Baptist church includes the pastoral staff, church administrator, church clerk, church secretary, financial secretary, church treasurer, and all chair and co-chairpersons of every auxiliary ministry. Along with these listed persons who hold ministry offices, the church body readily awaits to assist the church in all ministry areas wherever needed. When the output and quality of ministry work is evaluated, the volunteer staff is perceived as a healthy ministry.

#### Congregation

The congregation of Mount Morris Baptist church is off of life support and is maturing in the development of spiritual health. It is doing this by the practice of reaching out to others in the Body of Christ for collaboration, resource sharing, learning opportunities, and united



celebrations of worship. This participatory ministry exercise for the church has expanded the congregations' knowledge of others who worship the Lord Jesus Christ, while also partnering in ministry events that edify the local community. These types of ministry efforts have breathed new life into the congregation and a more open expression in their worship services.

### Perceived Ministry Health

#### Strengths

The strengths of Mount Morris Baptist church are fellowship, prayer, teaching, and the image of a loving church. These four ingredients are the keys of attraction, when it comes to Mount Morris Baptist church. A guiding force to these ideas is the long-standing presence of this church in the community it serves. Mount Morris Baptist church is also the mother church to several others in the local area, which points to the reproductive health of this church in the early years of its ministry.

#### Weaknesses

The weaknesses of Mount Morris Baptist church are the lack of ministry efforts for a children's' and youth ministry. This weakness is particularly glaring now that the church has consistent families who visit the church with infants, toddlers, young children, and teenagers.

#### Causes for Optimism

A cause for optimism about the ministry of Mount Morris Baptist church is that new members have been added to the church family and the youth and children are returning, which makes the ministry younger and also gives a boost of excitement and a new enthusiasm about God, which provides a hopeful future for the church.

## Causes for Pessimism

A cause for pessimism is at time periods when persons willingly stop attending worship and Bible study. This concern points to the commitment to continued spiritual growth for those who are members of Mount Morris Baptist church, as well as, the ability of the Mount Morris leadership to continually be able to communicate their importance. A clear understanding of the purpose of worship and study is needed for the health of Mount Morris Baptist church, when realizing its potential.

## **Re-evaluated Church Health**

### Actual Church Health

#### Pastoral Staff

The pastoral staff at Mount Morris Baptist church consists of five active ministers, which includes the pastor. The age range of the pastoral staff is between 50 to 100 years of age. The gender make-up of the pastoral staff includes four ordained men and one licensed woman. In light of the course material, the pastoral staff at Mount Morris Baptist church is unhealthy. It is inherently unhealthy, because of the issue of sin. Also, poor health is exhibited by not having a clear vision. Therefore, the pastoral staff at Mount Morris is perceived as an unhealthy ministry.

#### Elders/Deacons

The deacon's ministry at Mount Morris Baptist church consists of two active deacons and one deacon in training, along with one deacon who is in emeritus status. The age range of the deacon's ministry is between 53 to 89 years of age, with a young adult who 15 years old and in training for the deacon's ministry. The challenge at Mount Morris Baptist church is to help the deacon's ministry to not dwell in the past, for the sake of operating from a place of comfort. This will cause the deacons to develop a ministry partnership with the pastor and bring glory to

God. The deacon's ministry must also be committed to the vision and seek to promote unity in the spiritual and physical functions of the church by assisting the pastor. Just as the church membership grows spiritually and physically, so too should the deacon's ministry as well. A deeper look causes the diagnosis of the actual health of the deacon's ministry to be unhealthy, because of the issue of sin. Also the traditional practice of the church is to simply appoint persons to this ministry, without regard to their spiritual gifts or acknowledged calling. This condition of poor health promotes a distorted sense of calling in the deacon's ministry at Mount Morris and causes confusion to the issue of authority.

#### Paid Staff

The church budget for the paid staff at Mount Morris Baptist church includes eight persons who range from a weekly stipend to a full monthly salary for the paid staff of the church. The paid staff also has the opportunity to participate in a bi-funded retirement program as well. The salary amounts range from thirty-five dollars per week to 1,600 dollars each month. The persons who are included in the budget for paid staff are the pastor, church administrator, church clerk, church secretary, financial secretary, church treasurer, musicians, and custodian. In the above list of persons in the paid staff only the pastor, musicians, and custodian are actually paid. All of the other positions donate their salary portions back to the church. In this updated analysis the paid staff is perceived as being an unhealthy ministry, because of the lack of having a clear vision. Without a clear vision, the paid staff has a tendency to operate in ministry without the discipline of focusing on the vision, and what their role responsibility is.

#### Volunteer Staff

The volunteer staff of Mount Morris Baptist church includes the pastoral staff, church administrator, church clerk, church secretary, financial secretary, church treasurer, and all choir

and co-chairpersons of every auxiliary ministry. Along with these listed persons who hold ministry offices, the church body readily awaits to assist the church in all ministry areas wherever needed. When the output and quality of ministry work is evaluated, it is seen as being one that completes its assignments. However, with the inherent issue of sin and a lack of vision, the proper assessment of the volunteer staff is one that is unhealthy.

### Congregation

In light of the research material and assessments, the congregation of Mount Morris Baptist church is unhealthy, because of several explanations. First, the congregants are happy and content with warming the pews, rather than lending their gifts to the body of Christ. Second, the community outreach is never planned; they would rather have programs for the purpose of fellowship. Third, the people in the church have lost sight of the next generation; therefore, the church family has very few youths who attend regularly. Fourth, the church makes excuses about the way things are, instead of working to embrace a willingness to fix problems or issues. Fifth, the church operates its ministry practices in a way that maintains the status quo, for the purpose of not upsetting cornerstone families or the wife of a deceased pastor. Sixth, the number of baptisms in the church and added member growth has slowed. Most of the new members of the church are transfers. Finally, the volunteer turnover is low, because many of the same people have had the same roles of leadership for decades. After carefully re-evaluating this area in reference to the pastoral survey's, interviews, and research material, these reasons lead to an unhealthy church; because the church lacks a vision that can create a sense of togetherness and organization for the church.

## Actual Ministry Health

### Strengths

The strengths of Mount Morris Baptist church are fellowship, prayer, teaching, and the image of a loving church. These four ingredients are the keys of attraction, when it comes to Mount Morris. A guiding force to these ideas is the long-standing presence of this church in the community it serves. Mount Morris is also the mother church to several others in the local area, which points to the reproductive health of this church in the early years of its ministry. Now, in spite of these listed areas of strength, the greatest strength that is absent is the creation of the vision statement. A clear and cohesive vision and mission statement will take these strengths and make them stronger, because they will have an area of focus.

### Weaknesses

The weaknesses of Mount Morris Baptist church are the lack of ministry efforts for a children's and youth ministry, and an evangelism ministry. These weaknesses are particularly glaring, because the church has consistent families who attend worship and bring their infants, toddlers, young children, and teenagers. These added members are also requesting ministry opportunities that are not active at Mount Morris. Without the clarity of a vision and mission statement, the church just exists instead of growing into its creative purpose.

### Causes for Optimism

A cause for optimism about the ministry of Mount Morris Baptist church is that new members have been added to the church family and the youth and children are returning, which makes the ministry younger and also gives a boost of excitement and a new enthusiasm about God, which provides a hopeful future for the church. The added members that have come are also bringing new ideas and suggestions for the growth of the ministry. Finally, a major cause

for optimism is that the added members express the confidence of God's calling and sending them to Mount Morris. This is cause for the most optimism, because God is still at moving in the church, in spite of the church being visionless and diseased.

#### Causes for Pessimism

A cause for pessimism about the ministry of Mount Morris Baptist church include time periods when persons willingly stop attending worship and Bible study. This concern points to the commitment to continued spiritual growth for those who are members of Mount Morris Baptist church, as well as, the Mount Morris leadership ability to continually communicate the importance of these ministry areas. A clear understanding of the purpose of worship and study is needed for the health of Mount Morris Baptist church, when realizing its potential. Without the development of a vision for Mount Morris Baptist church, the church will lose the members who attend, have funerals for the final generation, the doors of the church close, and the land be given back to the original owners of the land that the church has.

#### Primary Area Needing Change

The primary area needing change that at Mount Morris Baptist church is the development of a clear church vision and mission statement. More specifically, the church must be organized around the vision and mission for healthy growth to take place. Change is needed in this area, because the vision gives rise to the character, ministry style, and emphasis of the church. Once the vision statement is established, then a clear mission statement can be defined. With a defined mission statement, the church will have the operating principles by which goals can be set, and strategies to achieve these goals can be implemented.

### Secondary Area Needing Change

The secondary area needing change is in the administrative area of the church. Upon an initial assessment, Mount Morris Baptist church causes a serious challenge administratively; because the church kept so few business records on campus and ministry leaders opened ministry accounts in their personal names. This area requires change for the purpose of aligning the people and ministry financial resources together for the accomplishment of ministry objectives that are defined by the overall vision and mission statement.

### **Specific Measures to Develop a Healthy Church**

#### Acknowledge Frustration

Initially, the specific measure to develop a healthy church will include an acknowledgement of the frustration to the direction that the church is moving in. Therefore, developing the church vision and mission statements are important. This will include fasting and prayer, for the purpose of a spiritual examination of the insecurity and repeated instances of unresolved problems in Mount Morris Baptist church, as well as, the continued personal issues of the pastor and members of Mount Morris Baptist church. From this exercise, an assessment and listing of the unanswered questions from believers that attend Mount Morris Baptist church who have been wounded, believers who are still at Mount Morris Baptist church and remain on the threshold of deciding to leave or stay, and believers at Mount Morris Baptist church who are trying to decide whether to enlist to serve in ministry or stay on the sidelines; these issues must be addressed. An honest assessment or presentation of the dynamics for the lack of ministry focus at Mount Morris Baptist church can be directly connected to the church and their unwillingness to change. This activity is reflected upon their love and continued grief for the fourth pastor of Mount Morris Baptist church, Rev. J. P. Baltimore.

### Develop a Vision and Mission Statement

Another specific measure to develop a healthy church will include developing the church vision and mission statement. This will include an initial conversation that should take place with the believers of Mount Morris Baptist church, because they are the starting resources through which the vision and mission statement will operate from. Just as well, this dialogue will assist in the healing process of a congregation that is still recovering from the death of Rev. J. P. Baltimore. Since Mount Morris Baptist church has a history of operating with a short-cut mindset, any misinformation or lack of communication could affect the initial dialogue and short circuit the acceptance of developing a vision and mission statement for church.

### Develop Church Administration

The final set of specific measures to develop a healthy church includes developing the administrative arm of the church and discovering the dysfunctional process or the lack of managing order, information intake, and financial stability of Mount Morris Baptist church. These areas of responsibility have lacked order for a number of years. An initial assessment revealed the lack of written records or notes from past meetings held at Mount Morris Baptist church, along with the lack of clarity about the roles that an administrative staff would image.

Dr. Sam Davis, author of *When the Multitude Comes* says, “Role clarification is necessary”<sup>2</sup> Roles, in the context of family, refer to a person’s understood position or place, within the bond of family. Therefore, when God begins to organize people for effective action, we must be God’s people, by way of Salvation and we must acknowledge that God is sovereign. A major issue about the administrative area of Mount Morris Baptist church is the belief that persons will serve this ministry for life. When this happens transitions are difficult, because

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<sup>2</sup> Sam Davis, *When the Multitude Comes*, (North Augusta, SC: Joyful Sound, 2001), 71.



persons have moved to other ministry areas or have died. In this instance, information is not systematically passed on to the next person who will be in charge, because of the territorial nature that has developed in this ministry area. Therefore, believers are left to start a new system for church administration, which in turn frustrates the leaders of the church and causes confusion. This type of dysfunction has existed for the past 20 years at Mount Morris Baptist church, and the suggestion of organization thru administration is one that is a painful process to suggest to Mount Morris Baptist church. Based on these specific measures to develop a healthy church, the following strategies will address the plan of action.

### **A Strategic Plan to Develop a Healthy Church**

#### **Strategy One**

The first strategy to develop a healthy church will involve a commitment to fasting and prayer, in order to receive directional knowledge from God for the purpose of receiving ministry direction for the church. This strategy will assist leadership in the development of the vision and mission statements for Mount Morris Baptist church. In the book, *Deliberate Simplicity: How the Church Does More by Doing Less*, Browning offers the idea of minimality, when it comes to ministry efficiency and the vision. Minimality is an idea suggesting that some of the ministry practices in the current church are off track from the intent of their mission statement. Therefore, a guiding force in determining the mission is to have a clearly defined vision for the church. In essence, the vision statement is the fore-runner to the mission statement, because the vision statement is general and tells where you are going, while the mission statement shows how you will get there. When these two concepts are discovered, the purpose for the church ministry will be more clearly defined. This point is a key concept when determining a healthy ministry.

Browning suggests that a combination of the vision and mission statements represents how “effectiveness is doing the right things.”<sup>3</sup> This is the work of minimality at its best.

### Strategy Two

The second strategy to develop a healthy church will involve obedience and discipline on the part of the visionary. This strategy will assist leadership in their relationship with God. This will require a steadfastness of one’s faith, as well as, believing and trusting God for every phase of the vision to be revealed. The receiving of the vision will also require a type of sacrifice that goes beyond a ministry as usual attitude, because the vision will be the defining of the ministry of the church. Therefore, the church must be organized around the vision and the mission for healthy growth to take place.

### Strategy Three

The third strategy to develop a healthy church will involve an assessment of the circumstances of the ministry. This will involve the pastor to observe the conditions and resources that are presently available for ministry, a time of fasting and praying, and the receiving of the vision. This will also include the petitioning of persons of prayer, who have a heart for ministry. In the book, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, Malphurs suggests a fourfold process in strategic planning. Malphurs says, “A vision from God has the potential to turn a maintenance mentality into a ministry mentality.”<sup>4</sup> This potential is in a dormant status at Mount Morris Baptist church and the lack of

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<sup>3</sup> Dave Browning, *Deliberate Simplicity: How the Church Does More by Doing Less*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 45.

<sup>4</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013), 129.

revelation and connectivity to the church and its ministries allows Mount Morris Baptist church to continue in a maintenance mentality.

#### Strategy Four

The fourth strategy to develop a healthy church will include a planning session for the clarity of the vision and mission statements. This information will come from the learned assessments about Mount Morris Baptist church and its community; in relation to God's direction for the ministry. Cole and Helfer, authors of the book *Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens*, suggests that the "Church is not an organization or an institution, but an organism, a living body."<sup>5</sup> They further suggest that "organizations transition, while an organism grows, matures, reproduces, and dies."<sup>6</sup> These two points express the current mentality of Mount Morris Baptist church as a ministry. The organization of the church is proudly expressed in their name, while church health and church growth are not important. Just as well, the mentioning of change, which precipitates growth; along with reproduction and death, makes this ailing church rebel against what a vision and mission statement will do. However, when it comes to the health of this ministry, the process of discovering the vision and mission statements are imperative. If Mount Morris Baptist church continues at the pace of ministering at business as usual, the older members of the church will die off, while the younger generation will refuse to attend.

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<sup>5</sup> Neil Cole and Phil Helfer, *Church Transfusion: Changing Your Church Organically from the Inside Out*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 25.

<sup>6</sup> Cole and Helfer, *Church Transfusion: Changing Your Church Organically from the Inside Out*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 25.

## Four Operational Principles

Along with strategies 1-4, are four operational principles that will serve as parallel guiding forces towards developing a healthy church. These principles include prayer and fasting, conducting a church analysis, writing down the vision, and setting goals.

### Prayer and Fasting

First, the principle of prayer and fasting is the initial step in the process of receiving the vision and mission statement directly from God. “This discipline is the process of cultivating a relationship with God,”<sup>7</sup> for the purpose of hearing His direction for the Mount Morris Baptist church ministry. It includes the placing of one’s self in a sacrificial position to seek a closer walk with God. It also involves the process of sacrifice, which suggests that one give up anything that stands in the way of the prayer and God.

### Conducting a Church Analysis

Second, the principle of conducting a church analysis, will refer leadership to the growth areas of the ministry and provide a tool for an examination of any favorable and unfavorable conditions. “The church analysis is information about the internal and external aspects of the ministry. It provides various aspects of what the church needs to know about itself.”<sup>8</sup> This tool measures if the ministry is on target in the operation of what it is designed to do, by meeting the ministry needs of those that Mount Morris Baptist church serves. This assessment tool should use the demographics of the community, for the purpose of knowing who and what the church takes into account, when it comes to the auxiliary ministry services that are offered.

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<sup>7</sup> Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 18.

<sup>8</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013), 134.

### Writing the Vision

Third, the principle of writing down the vision is the process of having an informative statement that can be easily shared to the saved and the unsaved. Malphurs defines vision as: “A clear, challenging picture of the future of the ministry, as you believe that it can and must be.”<sup>9</sup> This process will also provide avenues for persons to accept Christ, because the ministry is directed at a specific area of need, as well as, employ those who have a desire to carry out the work of the ministry.

### Setting Goals

Fourth, is the principle of setting goals, which will function as the identifying and measuring of outcomes, while giving direction to the meeting of prescribed focused energy efforts. When the vision and mission statements are developed, it will enhance the quality of ministry from Mount Morris Baptist church and start the church on a journey towards church health. The clarity and direction of these statements will also create an atmosphere that is healthy for the practice of ministry. These defining statements will also influence what Cole author of *Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens* calls, “people of purpose, which is a person of peace.”<sup>10</sup> These persons will assist in giving clarity to the identity of the church and the believers who are employed in ministry outside of the church. This type of drive is born out of reproduction and spontaneous growth. Most importantly, this type of growth will cause the church to be a reflection of Christ, with the realization of the commitment to the ministry

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<sup>9</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013), 134.

<sup>10</sup> Neil Cole, *Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 185.

goals and outcomes of Mount Morris Baptist church that image the fulfillment of the scriptures and draw persons to Christ.

#### Strategy Five

The fifth strategy to develop a healthy church will involve the organizing of persons for an agreed-upon objective, with the use of policies and procedures. Policies and procedures involve a two-fold process. “A policy is a general statement that relates the position of the church on a particular subject, while a procedure relates to the way an organization will implement the policy.”<sup>11</sup> This strategy will include the practice of management. When management and organization are viewed through the lens of ministry, management is a ministry that is to and with people, not the manipulation of people. From initial survey’s and interviews, this statement expresses the key to the pain that Mount Morris Baptist church reacts with, when written reports are requested for the assistance and recording of ministry. A major effort of communication to Mount Morris Baptist church about the administrative area involves a discussion about how this practice is a tool of ministry that will be positive for the purpose of planning, organizing, finding, training leaders and workers, offering guidance, and encouraging discipline. The pain that the Mount Morris Baptist church ministry leaders react to is the idea that their information sharing does not make a difference for the overall ministry of the church, or writing ministry reports is a waste of their time.

#### Strategy Six

The sixth strategy to develop a healthy church will include an overall review of the ministry history and artifacts that are necessary and important for understanding church history.

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<sup>11</sup> Robert Welch, *Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 59.

This step is time consuming, because it requires a review of church meeting notes, current administrative practices and documents, staff positions, financial resources, physical resources, risk management, planning activities, program activities, and support activities. This review will inform the administrator of the task and practices in which Mount Morris Baptist church has carried on the business of the kingdom. Much of what will be revealed will inform Mount Morris Baptist church of the necessity for good organizational practices.

### Strategy Seven

The seventh strategy to develop a healthy church will involve the acknowledgement of resistance. Coutta, author of *A Practical Guide for Successful Church Change* says, “The church leader will need to build trust step-by-step and increase understanding of the change through increased communication.”<sup>12</sup> Mount Morris Baptist church is located in a rural area and reverts back to what makes them comfortable. One of things that causes comfortability for this congregation is being able to verbally express their feelings and issues, without having them written down. Through an assessment of the church, there are persons who lack the education from school to read or write, while there are others who believe that written reports will be used against them. In both of these instances, leadership or the administrator must initiate dialogue to express the purpose of having written reports for administrative purposes. This dialogue should include reasons and assurances of the purpose of this request. Next, any and all questions must be addressed in an adequate way, for the purpose of growth and change to take place. Finally, the administrator should begin a gradual process towards this type of change in a prayerful way,

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<sup>12</sup> Edward Coutta, *A Practical Guide for Successful Church Change*, (Bloomington, IN: Universe, 2008), 32.

acknowledging that believers respond differently, encouraging those who have made the transition, and increasing communication of its importance throughout this process of change.

### Strategy Eight

The eighth strategy to develop a healthy church will involve movement towards the concept of church administration through tasks, necessity of order, and purpose. For the pastor and congregants at Mount Morris Baptist church, the idea of church administration and management is a frightening concept; particularly when it requires a rising of the standards of service in the ministry. Just as well, order and purpose are necessary, because they promote mission and unity. In order to achieve this strategy, a tool that will be used will include a diagnostic measurement of ministry health inside and outside of the church. The specific measuring analysis includes the Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats or (SWOT) analysis, which businesses use for the purpose of measuring and making business practices better, with more efficient outcomes as a goal.

### **The Master's Plan**

Another operational principle that will serve as a parallel guiding force towards developing a healthy church will involve the "Master's Plan."<sup>13</sup> This plan includes: "Identifying the task, articulating the objectives, describing the process, and prescribing the procedures."<sup>14</sup> This plan also lists the steps that are necessary for the facilitation and order of the administrative process. Since administration is working with and through people to get things done, selection and expectation are important factors to consider. Here, leadership must be careful to not assign

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<sup>13</sup> Michael R Mitchell, *Leading, Teaching, and Developing Disciples*, (Bloomington, IN: Crossbooks, 2010), 63.

<sup>14</sup> Mitchell, *Leading, Teaching, and Developing Disciples*, (Bloomington, IN: Crossbooks, 2010), 63.



persons who are not gifted for a particular area of the administrative ministry arm, and yet look for extraordinary results. This has been a struggle for Mount Morris Baptist church; however, with patient implementation of these steps, the believer's passion and giftedness will become an important asset, when it comes to the health of the ministry worker and the church ministry.

Therefore, by acknowledging that God is in control of everything, this information will allow the believers of Mount Morris Baptist church to begin the process of getting rid of the anxiety and lack of trust about administration. For administration to work at Mount Morris Baptist church, "misconceptions must be dealt with by the leadership of the church."<sup>15</sup> In doing this, leadership will lead by example with the implementation and consistent practice of initiating embracing administrative practices. Just as well, administration helps the work of the ministry by assisting persons to specialize in working with people. Also, the dynamics of administration include planning, organizing, leading, and evaluation. Each of these established dynamics can give clarity of functions and offer guidance in church affairs. Along with an established scriptural foundation and a practiced philosophy of beliefs, administration will assist the ministry at Mount Morris Baptist church toward better methods of service, while leaving room for growth and change.

The Master's Plan will serve a dual purpose, with the use of a timeline for the development and implementation of the vision and mission statements for Mount Morris Baptist church. The first step will involve a 1 – 3-month period of reviewing the church history and any other documents that pertain to the identity of Mount Morris Baptist church and its ministry practices. The next step will involve 6 – 9 months of fasting and prayer, for the reception and clarity of the vision. Next, there will be a 9 – 12-month period of introducing the vision and

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<sup>15</sup> Robert H. Welch, *Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 19.

mission statement to the leaders and the overall church family, with the support of specific Bible study lessons along with sermon presentations that will undergird these operating principles. Finally, in 12 – 15 months, Mount Morris Baptist church will begin the process of transforming the church ministry into a focused need-based ministry service for the community.

This plan will also simultaneously include a timeline for the development and implementation of organizing the administrative area of Mount Morris Baptist church. This will involve a 1 – 3-month period of examining the systems of the church. Next, there will be a 1 – 3-month period of building a solid infrastructure that will work well and communicate clearly. Next, will be a 3 – 6-month reorganization of the filing system, to include providing easy access to the necessary resources for the purpose of doing ministry services. Next, will be a 6 – 9-month training period for the staff and ministry leaders, for the purpose of understanding how the new system of administration will work, as well as, share the advantages of how efficient this tool of ministry will be for the church. Finally, in 9 – 12 months, the full implementation of the new administrative process will begin.

### **Outlook for Change**

A perspective on the potential for accomplishing a healthy church, is embedded in the previous eight strategies, as it pertains to the Mount Morris Baptist church. The development and implementation of the vision and mission statements and the reorganization of the administrative area of Mount Morris Baptist church will include an environment for ministry that would produce a healthy church that produces healthy ministry. Poirier defines conflict as, “difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates someone’s goals or desires.”<sup>16</sup> However, conflict is also a vehicle that God uses to bring persons into alignment and acceptance of His

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<sup>16</sup> Alfred Poirier, *The Peace Making Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2006), 29.

will. Healthy ministry will also produce boundaries, for the purpose of areas of delegation in ministry activities. Wilson and Hoffman write, “Boundaries facilitate our ability to live proactively from Christian principles and deeply held convictions.”<sup>17</sup> This idea will enable persons to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, when it comes to how much we can do or how quickly things will be accomplished, because the concept of boundaries connects the idea and purpose of stress management as having the ability to accomplish our God-given assignment with the least amount of resistance, while using the biological response of increased energy.

Therefore, when the suggested plan to develop a healthy church is implemented at Mount Morris Baptist church, patience should be part of the tools for church leadership. Greear, author of *Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary*, says, “The presence of a healthy local church in a community is the greatest catalyst for the evangelization of that community.”<sup>18</sup> Just as the human body has the digestive, respiratory, circulatory, central nervous, immune, and skeletal systems, which operate in unity to promote physical health; there should also be a strategic plan to develop a healthy church.

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<sup>17</sup> Michael Todd Wilson and Brad Hoffman, *Preventing Ministry Failure*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 145.

<sup>18</sup> J. D. Greear, *Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary*, (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing, 2011), 230.

## CONCLUSION

Mitchell writes, “Leaders induce and influence followers to engage in activities that fulfill a mission.”<sup>19</sup> When the church has a clear vision and mission statement, this will influence the administrative area of the church. The outcome of these areas will be the realization of the commitment of the church, as well as, a functional effective and healthy ministry, which will lead to a healthy church. This practice will lead to focused ministry work in the community that will not duplicate the work of other area churches. Mitchell also says, “The church is a fulfillment of the kingdom and the kingdom is a fulfillment of the mission of God; the mission of God springs from His nature and love.”<sup>20</sup> With these components actively in place, they will assist Mount Morris Baptist church in developing a healthy church that will lead to the production of healthy believers; beginning with healthy leaders, families, and individual members. Greear says, [. . .] “love on display is sometimes the most convincing apologetic.”<sup>21</sup> This type of practical application will assist Mount Morris Baptist church in developing and operating with a continued strategy towards providing opportunities for salvation to individuals who can discover and operate within their spiritual gifts, for the purpose of kingdom building. This strategy will develop a healthy church that will inspire believers to image the works of Christ.

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<sup>19</sup> Michael R Mitchell, *Leading, Teaching, and Developing Disciples*, (Bloomington, IN: Crossbooks, 2010), 1.

<sup>20</sup> Michael R. Mitchell, *Innovate Church: 8 Innovate Ways to Lead and Grow the Church*, (Nashville, TN: B & H Books, 2008), 103.

<sup>21</sup> J. D. Greear, *Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary*, (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing, 2011), 231.

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## APPENDIX A

January 14, 2016

Jeffrey Hackley

IRB Approval 2389.011416: A Strategic Plan to Develop a Healthy Church

Dear Jeff,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases are attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

The Graduate School

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## APPENDIX B

## Interview Questions

1. Which state best describes your church? Why?
  - a. Death
  - b. Coma
  - c. None of the above, it is alive and active.
2. Which phrase best describes your church? Why?
  - a. It is steeped in traditions and not willing to change with the times.
  - b. It is physically present, but not alive.
  - c. Vision and Mission oriented.
  - d. Both A and B
3. What are some of the characteristics of a healthy church?
4. Do pastors have a responsibility towards shaping a healthy church?
5. What are the causes that lead to the decline of a healthy church?
6. How long have you served as pastor at your current church?
 

a. 3 months-2 years	d. 11-15 years
b. 3-5 years	e. 16 years +
c. 6-10 years	
7. Is there any organizational structure at your church?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
8. What type of organizational structure/polity is practiced at your church?
  - a. Democratic –the church is an organization with those under God’s name, but not in His name, utilizing democracy as the rite to passage; “for the people by the people”
  - b. Dictatorship – the church is operated and controlled by one primary individual or group and mainly serves the needs of a select few
  - c. Theocratic – the church is a living organism with God as the ruling force and authority; and the church is organized in His name
  - d. N/A
9. Does your church have an active vision statement?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

10. Does your church have an active mission statement?
- a. Yes
  - b. No