

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**THE RISE OF THE PART-TIME WORSHIP LEADER IN THE MID-SIZE SOUTHERN
BAPTIST CHURCH**

By

Donald Oren Blakeney

Liberty University

A THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF WORSHIP STUDIES

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the prevalence of part-time, bivocational, semi-retired and volunteer worship leaders within mid-size Southern Baptist church and the need for further training and education through a denominationally-driven mentor program. The known decline in attendance and financial giving that most Southern Baptist churches have experienced has affected the moneys available to fill staffing needs and thereby require a reassessment of staff positions; the percentage of the budget allocated for staffing and continuing education. Most of these part-time worship leaders are already educated in another field and cannot allot the resources for a return to a theological or worship leadership education. The research question for this paper is two-part. First, what is the scope of responsibilities for part-time worship leaders within the mid-size Southern Baptist church? Second, what are the educational background commonalities of the part-time worship leader in the mid-size Southern Baptist church, and in what ways can church leadership facilitate professional development for part-time worship leaders within the mid-size Southern Baptist church? A number of surveys were distributed as part of the process of writing this paper addressing education, training, denominational support, hours spent on worship leadership, and general feelings about roles within the church and family. This research was conducted with a dual historical/qualitative approach. Through the results of this study, the denomination can learn how to better support these men and women who may not be fully theologically educated but are just as dedicated to weekly service to the Lord.

Key words: bivocational, worship, leadership, Southern Baptist, mentoring

Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

Much like other mainline Protestant congregations, the mid-size Southern Baptist church has seen a decline in recent years. “Even though accurate data is unavailable, it is still obvious to many Southern Baptist leaders that bivocational ministry makes up 50 percent or more of our total profile—and it is growing.”¹ This decline has led to a drop in the monies available for staffing costs and continuing education, especially for secondary staff such as the worship leader. “Forecasts of total membership, amount of giving, worship attendance, and so on are that of decline for mainline Protestant churches.”² Due to the medium size of the church, the congregation is often able to fully fund a senior pastor, but often the secondary ministers will fall into one of the part-time categories. These part-time worship leaders are often under-educated and under-trained. They may also be unable to attend seminary or afford a continued education. How can we, as the Church, help to educate and mentor the part-time worship leader serving in the mid-size Southern Baptist church?

In the article “Mentoring Ministers”, Denise Allen-Macartney explains, “Congregational life is not what it was 50 years ago. Back then new ministers often went to vibrant, healthy congregations. They enjoyed the luxury of learning on the job for their

¹ Rudy Gray, “Is Bivocational Ministry the New Normal?,” *The Baptist Courier* (November 6, 2016), <https://baptistcourier.com/2016/11/bivocational-ministry-new-normal/>.

² Christopher E. Hagen, “The Low-Cost Church,” *The Clergy Journal* 76, no. 2 (Nov, 1999): 17, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/230525947?accountid=12085>.

first five or six years. Today, many congregations are on the edge of survival. So we must be committed to congregational renewal.”³ In order to achieve congregational renewal, churches must invest in their staffing.⁴ The basis of this study is questioning if these part-time worship leaders have received an education in theology or music and how the Southern Baptist church can make up for their lack of education with a denominationally-driven mentor program. Are these men and women equipped to perform their duties, even though they may be part-time and not fully-funded?

This study is also based on the assumption that these part-time worship leaders have support from their church and staff for continuing their education (also assuming they are not already educated in the areas of music or theology) in order to gain a greater understanding of biblical theology and worship leadership, even if it is cost-prohibitive. It is also based on the assumption that part-time worship leaders are serving due to the financial strain a full-time or fully-funded worship pastor would put on the church’s annual budget. However, there are many bivocational pastors and worship leaders who choose to serve in such a capacity due to the benefits of the arrangement. This is an interesting area that will be discussed further in this paper.

There are areas other than theology or musical abilities in which a part-time worship leader may need help. “A pastor in a small church has to be comfortable with what I would describe as executive management skills—taking charge and moving and

³ Denise Allen-Macartney, “Mentoring Ministers: No One Can do the Job by Themselves,” (Presbyterian Record, April 2016, 29+. General Reference Center Gold)
http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/ps/i.do?p=GRGM&u=vic_liberty&id=GALE%7CA453507424&v=2.1&it=r&sid=summon#, (accessed July 16, 2018).

⁴ Robert LaRochelle, *Part-Time Pastor, Full-Time Church* (Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2010), 4.

inspiring people to assume and fulfill leadership positions and other duties well.”⁵ It is in these areas that a mentor relationship could potentially help equip the part-time worship leader for service to the mid-size Southern Baptist church. Regardless of education, the Bible tells us to disciple (mentor) each other, and this is a spiritual discipline many part-time worship leaders are lacking.

I have a personal connection to this topic as well. In 2016, I lost my position as a full-time worship pastor at a mid-size Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) church. This led me on a journey to finding work at a Christian bookstore. Through my employment there I met many bivocational ministers of various backgrounds. They worked diligently for their congregations, but many confided in me that they felt abandoned or unfamiliar with their own callings. They were struggling to find resources and training, even as employees and volunteer servants of one of the largest Christian denominations in the world with overwhelming resources and programming for ministers and laity alike.

Many of these bivocational ministers had never even thought to utilize a mentor to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to perform their roles as ministers. Many did not know where to even find one. Some, like myself, had seminary degrees, but even that training did not prepare them for the possibility that they might one day be bivocational. Who leaves seminary thinking they could possibly be employed part-time? These faithful servants of God touched my heart. Eventually, I found another fully-funded ministry position and moved on, but when I began to think about how I could use this thesis process to impact the Kingdom of God, the faces of those sweet saints returned to my mind. They deserved better. We can do better.

⁵ LaRochelle, 106.

Statement of the Problem and Purpose

Many mid-size Southern Baptist churches employ part-time worship leaders; however, many part-time worship leaders may not have sufficient training in terms of theological training and musical skills. The purpose of this qualitative/historical study is to examine the preparedness and support of the part-time worship leaders in mid-size Southern Baptist churches.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant to a great number of people who serve in and alongside mid-size Southern Baptist churches. The first group that this study directly affects is the part-time worship leaders themselves in the areas of education and training. This research should also impact the members of the mid-size Southern Baptist churches as to illuminate where the membership can improve their support to the part-time worship leader and his or her family. This study will also greatly affect the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole, hopefully shedding light on how the Convention can better serve part-time worship leaders through national, state, and associational programing. Finally, this study has the potential to enlighten post-secondary educational institutions as to the lack of educational opportunities specifically designed for the equipping and training of the part-time worship leader.

Research Question and Sub-Questions

There has been a marked decline in church attendance and in monetary giving over the past few decades within the mid-size Southern Baptist church.⁶ This has translated to a need to reduce staffing costs and implement new strategies for utilizing the staffing currently employed within these churches.⁷ ⁸ There is also a definite need for theological and worship leadership training for the part-time worship leader. These questions are designed to elaborate on the scope of part-time worship ministry within the mid-size Southern Baptist church and the need for further equipping and training opportunities.

The following three research questions will be answered in this study:

Research Question 1 (RQ1)

What is the scope of responsibilities for part-time worship leaders within the mid-size Southern Baptist church? RQ1 is significant because it sheds light on the scope of responsibilities of those part-time worship leaders serving in mid-size Southern Baptist churches. This should allow for a better understanding of the scale of the changes necessary to help educate and mentor the part-time worship leader in the mid-size Southern Baptist church. Chris Kopka researched the lack of study of part-time pastors in

⁶ The Barna Group Researchers, "State of the Church 2016," *The Barna Group*, September 15, 2016.

⁷ Warren Bird, "Lean Staffing: Churches That Handle Staff Costs in under 35% of Budget," *Leadership Network*(2010), http://leadnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Lean_Staffing_-_Churches_Spending_Less_than_35percent.pdf.

⁸ Samuel Ogles, "State of the Plate 2016," *Church Law and Tax*, December 1, 2016. <https://www.churchlawandtax.com/blog/2016/december/state-of-plate-2016-report-sheds-light-on-church-giving-tre.html>.

general in “The New Tent Makers,” “According to the data from the Annual Church Profile, some 8,000 pastors report being bi-vocational. But what are the most common ‘second jobs’ for these pastors? . . . Are bi-vocational pastors thriving or just surviving? We know so little about this phenomenon.”⁹ The question is worded so that it includes every possible arrangement of part-time or bivocational worship ministry within this category of churches.

Research Question 2 (RQ2)

What are the educational background commonalities of the part-time worship leader in the mid-size Southern Baptist church? RQ2 draws attention to the background of the part-time worship leader included in the survey. It is essential to understand how much education they have received from secondary educational institutions, denominationally supported institutions, or extra-church institutions. The basis for this question stems from research that shows many part-time worship leaders have not received much education or formal training.¹⁰ Spradlin in his dissertation, “Discipling Worship Leadership: Biblical and Theological Rationale for Discipling Worship Leaders” reports, “There is very little intentional effort, let alone interest in, or awareness

⁹ Chris Kopka, “The New Tent Makers: Two young pastors are finding fresh ways to combine pastor ministry and entrepreneurial ventures, *Leadership Journal*, (Winter 2013, 37+) *General Reference Center GOLD* (http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A318020521/GRGM?u=vic_liberty&sid=GRGM&xid=92cb047f, accessed July 19, 2018).

¹⁰ Dennis W. Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide* (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 20).

of the need for, discipling worship specialists.”¹¹ This question also addresses the training received by the part-time worship leaders included in the study that could have been received from the sources mentioned above or through a mentor/apprenticeship relationship.

Research Question 3(RQ3)

In what ways can church leadership, denominational leadership or post-secondary institutions facilitate professional development for part-time worship leaders within the mid-size Southern Baptist church? RQ3 is a little more open-ended in that it could potentially lead to improvements by post-secondary education institutions, denominational institutions, or by those who could be spending more time personally as mentors to the part-time worship leader. Bickers points out in his book, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry*, “This lack of support [of part-time ministers] is also seen in the absence of resources that have been developed especially for part-time ministers.”¹² It is necessary to address the cost of a post-secondary education for the part-time worship leader. Cost is often prohibitive for the continuing education of a part-time worship leader and their churches and worship ministries could stagnate due to this lack of funding.

These questions are intended to examine on the scope of part-time worship leaders and their backgrounds. But, more importantly they are designed to see where the

¹¹ Byron L. Spradlin, "Discipling Worship Leadership: Biblical and Theological Rationale for Discipling Worship Leaders," Order No. 3504383, Liberty University, 2012. In PROQUESTMS Dissertations & Theses @ Liberty University; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1011329607?accountid=12085>.

¹² Bickers, 20.

institutions can better serve the part-time worship leaders and their churches. There needs to be a greater understanding of the importance of supporting and training the part-time worship leader in order to further the worship ministry in the mid-size Southern Baptist church.

Hypotheses

There are three working hypotheses for this paper. They will be detailed below.

Hypothesis 1 (H1)

There are a large percentage of part-time worship leaders who feel they are undereducated and underserved by the denomination and post-secondary institutions. This survey will show that there are a significant number of part-time worship leaders who meet the criteria for inclusion in this study that feel they could benefit from mentoring or from a greater focus from post-secondary education institutions to provide cost-effective programing specifically designed for the purposes of training the part-time worship leader.

Hypothesis 2 (H2)

This study will expose that the educational background commonalities of the part-time worship leader in the mid-size Southern Baptist churches are theological education, music education, or neither. It is possible that many of the part-time worship leaders surveyed will have secondary educations in a primary field that is not in any worship leadership format. Plank, in “The Relationship between the Discipleship and the Effectiveness of the Worship Leader in the Local Congregation,” explains, “Without the worship leader progressing in discipleship to Christ, what the congregation is being led in

may be something other than Christian worship.”¹³ It is the author’s assumption that these part-time worship leaders will demonstrate a definite need for a Southern Baptist-based mentoring program to fill in the post-secondary educational gap for those surveyed and others like them.

Hypothesis 3 (H3)

The survey will support the idea that the Southern Baptist church leadership can facilitate professional development for part-time worship leaders within the mid-size Southern Baptist churches by providing mentor development, educational development, and theological development. The church could be doing more to support these part-time worship leaders in their attempts to hone their worship leader skills and develop their personal theologies. There is often an attitude of competition among local churches that is hindering mentoring relationships in local communities where larger churches with generally more educated or better-supported worship leaders could be mentoring and sharing resources with those less educated or less supported within their community. Rideout notes in her article, “Value Added,” of church history, “There was never any attempt to encourage the small church to be like the larger church down the street, nor the larger church to be like a cathedral. From the beginning, it was imperative to honor each church for all that it was, to do whatever was possible to encourage vibrant worship

¹³ Michael Plank, "The Relationship between the Discipleship and the Effectiveness of the Worship Leader in the Local Congregation," Order No. 10102707, Biola University, 2016. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1786894695?accountid=12085>.

through music and liturgy.”¹⁴ Cooperation between churches within a set geographical area and the training of a greater volunteer base could benefit the part-time worship leader in the mid-size Southern Baptist church by the sharing of resources, knowledge, and skills.^{15 16}

Method/Design (Historical/Qualitative)

For the purpose of this paper, there will be two research methods utilized. The first is an historical research method. The surveys will look back at the history of the individual churches of those surveyed and the growth/decline in attendance and in financial giving. Tied into the individual histories of the churches is the combined history of the Southern Baptist Convention and the statistics of growth/decline across the Convention. This will give the reader a greater understanding of the background and progression of the growth/decline across the mid-size Southern Baptist churches. This study also looks at the personal histories of each part-time worship leader, including their education, personal discipleship habits, their history working with a mentor, and their relationships both inside and outside the church.

The second research method is a qualitative research method. The survey will attempt to qualify the need for mentoring and continuing education for the part-time

¹⁴ M. Rideout, “Value added: The leadership program for musicians.” *The American Organist*, 49, (2015, 08), Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1700971529?accountid=12085>, 42-43.

¹⁵ Matt Branaugh, “A Closer Look at 'Lean' Church Staffs,” *CT Pastors* (April 2010) <https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2010/april-online-only/leanstaffsurvey.html>.

¹⁶ Martin E. Hawkins and Kelli Sallman, *The Associate Pastor: Second Chair, Not Second Best* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 106.

worship leader.¹⁷ These ideas and questions are subjective and not easily measurable. This will be done through questioning of the part-time worship leaders and asking them to disclose their feelings about their own knowledge base and educational background. It will also ask them to speak to their relationships with the denomination and other extra-church organizations, as some may feel left out or left behind by the Southern Baptist church and its programing.¹⁸

Research Plan

The research plan consists of surveys sent out to willing part-time worship leaders who are currently serving a mid-size Southern Baptist church. A list of part-time worship leaders and their email addresses will be compiled through educational, denominational sources, as well as through a general appeal on social media. A survey and consent form will be emailed to the survey participants through Survey Monkey. A weblink is available to be shared and sent if survey participants do not wish to list their email address. The survey replies will be compiled by the author and kept confidential, both physically and electronically. The replies will then be printed and numbered, as to ensure confidentiality. The results of this survey will be analyzed to understand the scope of part-time leadership and the education and training each part-time worship leader has received. The results will inform as to each part-time worship leader's interest in pursuing a mentor/apprenticeship relationship with another, more experienced worship leader. The individual results will be compiled in a spreadsheet to look for trends and outliers in the

¹⁷ Daniel C. Richardson, "Mentors," *The Christian Century*, (Jan 22, 2014. 22), <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1476490378?accountid=12085>.

¹⁸ Bickers, "Coaching Bi-vocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness, 17."

data. After the federally-mandated retention period, all survey information will be destroyed.

Definition of Terms

Part-Time Worship Leader

Any employee, regardless of job title, who leads weekly worship in a Southern Baptist-aligned church and is compensated for less than 35 (thirty-five) hours per week. Their roles must include weekly corporate worship leadership but may contain other duties as assigned by their church. This term is often used interchangeably with “bivocational/bi-vocational.” The choice of the spelling “bi-vocational” in this paper was chosen due to the Southern Baptist Convention’s usage of the same spelling, as opposed to the non-hyphenated spelling.

Mid-Size Southern Baptist Church

A church that averages 200-400 in attendance for all weekly services over any consecutive four-week period during the previous calendar year, regardless of staffing arrangements or financial health. This specific size was chosen to define the mid-size church due to the categories set by the Southern Baptist Convention¹⁹ and the Bivocational & Small Church Leadership Network.²⁰ This church must also be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, usually through alignment with the 2000 Baptist

¹⁹ <https://caskeycenter.com/>.

²⁰ <https://bscln.net/>.

Faith and Message²¹ or by giving to the Cooperative Program.²² However, the Southern Baptist Convention defines an aligned church by four criteria:

- The church is missionally and formally identifies itself as part of the Southern Baptist fellowship of churches.
- The church is cooperatively affirms its willing cooperation with the Convention's purpose, processes, missions, and ministries.
- The church is doctrinally embraces the biblical faith and practice by which Southern Baptists have historically identified themselves.
- The church is financially provides regular financial support for the Convention's work as part of the church's adopted budget.²³

Post-Secondary Education

Any secular or religious-based education received after high school, including associate's, bachelor's, master's or post-graduate degrees, regardless of whether or not a degree was obtained. The main post-secondary institutions discussed in this paper will be the six seminaries operated by the Southern Baptist Convention, although many other post-secondary institutions have educated and trained the staff of the Southern Baptist churches.

²¹ <http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp>.

²² <http://www.sbc.net/cp/>.

²³ <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/legal/constitution.asp>, Articles III and IV.

Mentoring

Any apprenticeship relationship that involves a more experienced worship leader meeting regularly with a less-experienced worship leader for the purposes of education, discipleship, and personal growth.

Programming

Any method or means utilized by the Southern Baptist Convention or its entities to engage believers in discipleship or theological, evangelical, or worship training.

Examples of this include state conventions, Lifeway worship conferences, associational meetings and training events, etc. that are sponsored by denominational entities. For the purposes of this paper, programming, with few exceptions, will involve denominationally-sponsored mentoring and worship leader training events.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Fundamental Concepts

There are several fundamental concepts that appear in scholarly literature when researching the increasing trend of the part-time worship leader. In order to better understand the categories of various research, it is necessary to define several fundamental concepts that are presented in this paper.

Part-Time Worship Leader

Although churches label worship pastors with several different titles, for the purposes of this paper, he or she will be identified as a part-time worship leader. The part-time worship leader is someone who works on staff at a church and is a functioning part of the ministry, but is paid as a part-time employee. The hours and pay of this staff member may vary, as well as his or her assigned tasks for each week. For the purposes of this paper, part-time and bivocational are often used interchangeably by many of the sources cited here. However, the same principles apply, regardless of the employment label.

Decline in Southern Baptist Churches

A marked decline is evident to anyone who attends or serves a mid-size Southern Baptist church. This decline is well documented. “Approximately half of Southern Baptist pastors are now bi-vocational, and this does not include the many other bi-vocational ministers serving in staff positions within their church.”²⁴ In a time when

²⁴ Bickers, “Coaching Bi-vocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness, 20.

financial giving is in decline, monies available for church staffing needs are stretched thinner and thinner. Hagen acknowledges in “The Low-Cost Church,” “At a time when church membership, donations, and worship attendance are declining among mainline denominations, a different approach to structuring ministry is needed.”²⁵ This restructuring of staffing dollars frees up the funds to make ministry possible.

Mid-Size Church

Although some of the same challenges affect churches of all sizes, in order to better define who is affected by this phenomenon, I have defined the mid-size church as 200-400 in average attendance. This is due to the fact that smaller churches are more likely to have a part-time or bivocational senior pastor, although other staff may be categorized as such also. Although larger churches are not immune to this phenomenon (and probably will be more so if the current trend of decline continues), they are more likely to have full-time or fully-funded secondary staff. Perkins notes in his thesis,

125 or fewer is better definition of small congregation. The growing agreement [is] that an average worship of 125 or more is the contemporary minimum to be able to economically afford . . . a full-time and fully credentialed resident pastor . . . [and] to be able to mobilize resources to meet the expectation that younger generations bring to church. With 125 or fewer as the definition of small church . . . approximately 225,000 of the 325,000 Protestant churches in America are small churches.²⁶

²⁵ Hagen, 17.

²⁶ Phillip R. Perkins, “Pastoral Teams and Congregational Health in Smaller Churches: Order no. 3292931” (diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2007), in PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/304714725?accountid=12085>, 22.

Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, we will look at the larger portion of the defined “smaller church” but include up to the maximum of 400 in average attendance.

Growth in Part-Time Worship Leadership

With staffing dollars being stretched further and further in mid-size churches, congregations and church leadership are finding it necessary to get creative with staffing structures. LaRochelle reports in *Part-Time Pastor, Full-Time Church*, “The reality is that congregations generally have limited resources and, because of the limitations within which they have to live, are forced to make decisions about how best to formulate a staff so as to meet the real needs of the local church.”²⁷ There is a growing trend of blurring the lines between laity and clergy. We are all called to the same task, but with many gifts and talents. Perkins speaks of this in his thesis,

The unfinished task regarding the Protestant Reformation emphasis on the priesthood of all believers is the “radical transformation of self-perception of all believers so we see ourselves as vital channels through whom God mediates his life to other members of the body of Christ.” For the church to view itself as an organism and not an institution, there needs to be a change in mindset and language. Ogden emphasizes a ‘one people/one ministry’ approach that breaks down the separation of clergy and laity. Therefore, he proposes to ‘remove the terms *clergy* and *laity* from our vocabulary.’²⁸

Many churches are calling on laity to fill the roles of clergy on a part-time or volunteer basis. For example, even something as simple as taking out the garbage may have once been the job of a paid staff member but may be now performed by a volunteer layperson.

²⁷ LaRochelle, 122.

²⁸ Perkins, 56.

Lack of Support for Part-Time Worship Leadership

Bickers holds many denominations accountable for this phenomenon in all his works. He reports in his 2010 thesis, “Despite being told by various denominational leaders that their numbers of bi-vocational ministers were growing and are expected to keep growing, I could find no denomination with a staff person specifically designated to work with bi-vocational ministers and their churches.”²⁹ Even as of July 2018, the North American Mission Board (NAMB), the arm of the Southern Baptist Convention responsible for evangelism and church support within North America, had no designated staff member responsible for ministering to bivocational or part-time church staff.³⁰ The last full-time staff member designated to this post retired in 2003. NAMB has yet to fill that vacancy.³¹

Lack of Post-Secondary and Denominational Resources

Although this is changing somewhat, over the past few decades there has been a growing consensus among post-secondary institutions that a fully-funded or full-time ministry is the goal of any seminary graduate. Although a large percentage of those graduates will serve bivocationally or part-time, post-secondary institutions do an inadequate job of preparing students for this reality. “The lack of training (in theology for worship leaders) at a seminary level has been called ‘a central impediment to worship in local churches’ that does ‘incalculable harm.’”³² Many institutions struggle with whose

²⁹ Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, 20.

³⁰ Bickers, “Coaching Bi-vocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness,” 22.

³¹ Cindy VanKempfen (Endorsed Missionary Services, NAMB), emailed to Donald Blakeney, July 26, 2018.

responsibility it is to train and equip part-time secondary staff. This has led to the onus being placed on the local communities of believers and individuals, forming and maintaining mentoring/apprenticeship relationships. “As has often been the case, the religious world has been slower to grasp the importance of something the rest of the world has understood for several years. Coaching can be a great tool to use to assist persons in ministry positions.”³³

Mentoring can play a key role in aiding the education of these part-time ministers. “Despite the biblical and historical precedent for bi-vocational ministry, such ministry has not been widely supported in more recent times. Few resources have been developed that address the specific concerns bi-vocational ministers have.”³⁴ However, a lack of support does not take away the responsibility of denominationally financed post-secondary institutions that are failing to provide flexible and affordable coursework to aid the part-time or bivocational worship leader.

Challenges in Supporting Part-Time Worship Leaders

Training and equipping bivocational or part-time worship leaders come with their own set of challenges. Many have busy work and family schedules and cannot take time off secular employment for additional training or education. Sometimes training is not cost-effective for many churches. “Most denominational leaders have discovered how difficult it is to bring bi-vocational ministers together for training. . . . Coaching does not depend on bringing together groups of people but provides a one-on-one approach to

³² Plank, 8.

³³ Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, 40.

³⁴ Bickers, “Coaching Bi-vocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness,” 9.

helping solve the problems bi-vocational ministers face.”³⁵ The challenge continues to be finding ways to train and equip this widely diverse set of worship leaders. “There is little doubt among denominational leaders that the numbers of bi-vocational ministers will continue to increase and grow in importance. The challenge is to find ways to help them be more successful in their ministries.”³⁶

Need for Mentoring Relationships

Since many of the institutions equipped to train and equip part-time worship leaders are failing to provide proper avenues for training, the individuals and communities are carrying that burden. One-on-one mentoring and discipleship can play an invaluable role in any believer’s life, but both are especially valuable to the part-time worship leader. Sharp tells us in *Mentoring in the Ensemble Arts: Helping Others Find Their Voice*, “Mentoring involves an intense relationship whereby a senior or more experienced person provides two functions for a junior person; one function being advice or modeling about career development behaviors, and the second function being personal support, especially psychosocial support.”³⁷ Although mentoring cannot replace a proper education, it can allow for the priceless passing on of key information and techniques. Bickers reports in his thesis, “This paper will not advocate that coaching is preferred to a seminary education but will recognize that many bi-vocational ministers may not be able to pursue a formal seminary education due to financial and time constraints. Even those

³⁵ Bickers, “Coaching Bi-vocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness,” 111.

³⁶ Ibid., 115.

³⁷ Tim Sharp, *Mentoring in the Ensemble Arts: Helping Others Find Their Voice* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2011), 44.

who have received a seminary education will profit from a coach to help them work through the issues and the unique challenges they currently face.”³⁸

Biblical Concepts

As many of the previously mentioned concepts have biblical implications, it is crucial to discuss what the Bible says about bivocational ministry and the Church. First of all, bivocational ministry is not a new construct. Examples in the Old Testament and New Testament show believers today that this form of ministry was viable and supported even then. There are a few specific examples of bivocational ministry mentioned in the Bible that will be outlined here.

Amos

First is the prophet Amos. Amos identifies himself in Amos 1:1 as “among the shepherds of Tekoa.” Being classified as a shepherd in the eight century BC in the Southern kingdom of Judah would have placed Amos at the bottom of society, not anyone who would have been accepted as a prophet to the great kings. Amos, himself, reiterates this point, “I was no prophet, nor a prophet’s son, but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs. But the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel’” (Amos 7:14-15).³⁹ Whether or not Amos used his vocation as a herdsman and fig farmer to fund his calling to prophesy to the people of Israel is almost irrelevant here.

³⁸ Bickers, “Coaching Bi-vocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness,” 7.

³⁹ Amos 7:14-15, ESV. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the *English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008).

What is important to remember is that God called someone so unqualified to bring His message to the people. God took one of the oppressed to identify with the people and to speak against their oppressors. God calls many today to bivocational ministry that feel unqualified. However, He utilizes their individual gifts and stories to bring His message to the people.⁴⁰

Nehemiah

The next example of bivocational ministry in the Bible is the prophet Nehemiah. Nehemiah was a prophet in the fifth century BC while the people of Israel were being held captive in Babylon. Nehemiah vocation was as a cupbearer in the court of the Babylonian King Artaxerxes. However, Nehemiah's call was one to rebuild the wall surrounding Jerusalem and the nation of Israel. As cupbearer, Nehemiah was well-respected in the courts of the King and among his own people. The historian Herodotus tells us that "The wine steward (cupbearer) is a man of recognized dignity in court circles, entirely trustworthy, the king's confidant and next in rank of princes."⁴¹ God positioned Nehemiah to be employed in the court of King Artaxerxes so that Nehemiah could use his connections to rebuild Jerusalem and to return the people of God to their rightful home in the city.

⁴⁰ Rosario Picardo, *Ministry Makeover: Recovering a Theology for Bi-Vocational Service in the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015), 23-24.

⁴¹ Raymond Brown, *The Message of Nehemiah* (Leicester, UK: InterVarsity, 1998), 31.

Paul

Paul is a prime example of a bivocational minister. We refer to his ministry as “tentmaking” as he was employed as a tentmaker while he traveled, evangelized and wrote. Acts 18 tells us this,

After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks (Acts 18:1-4).

Tentmaking, as a vocation, allowed the Apostle Paul the freedom to travel and earn money anywhere his skills were found useful. In Paul’s time this was not uncommon. Rabbis had to have supported themselves outside of their work in the Temple.⁴² It is likely that Paul, like the Rabbis of his time, would have used his weekday vocation as a tentmaker to build relationships with Jews and Gentiles alike. This helped him stand out from the other religious leaders of the time. In the same way, bivocational ministers of all categories use their daily work outside of the church to build relationships and impact the Kingdom of God.

Priscilla and Aquila

Priscilla and Aquila were a married couple mentioned in Acts and Romans. They are described as a major evangelical presence in the early church. According to the Roman historian Suetonius they are first mentioned in Rome being expelled from the city

⁴² Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Hendrickson: Peabody, 1994), Acts 1.

for supporting “Chrestos” (Jesus Christ.)⁴³ ⁴⁴ Priscilla and Aquila then met Paul while living in Corinth. However, they strategically moved their business to Ephesus to engage the synagogue there under Paul’s direction. Paul then left them in Ephesus to build relationships and engage the Ephesians for the gospel. Paul praises Priscilla and Aquila for their efforts in Ephesus in his second letter to Timothy, to the church at Corinth, and his letter to the Romans.⁴⁵

Priscilla and Aquila, though bold for the gospel, are tentmakers, the very same as Paul. “And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade” (Acts 18:2-3). Priscilla and Aquila are a great example of what a modern church planter looks like. They relocated their home and business to evangelize another people group, holding church meetings in their own home.

Jesus

Finally, no discussion of bivocational ministry in the Bible would be complete without discussing the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Many know Jesus to be the Son of God and trained as a carpenter. Mark 6 tells us that Jesus was identified as a carpenter by those who had heard of His ministry⁴⁶. James Merritt tells us,

⁴³ Suetonius mentions the expulsion of the Jews from the city of Rome under the emperor Claudius (*Claudius* 25.4), although he does not provide a definite date for this act.

⁴⁴ Acts 18:2.

⁴⁵ Romans 16:1, Corinthians 16:19, and 2 Timothy 4:19.

⁴⁶ Mark 6:3.

Jesus had a day job. Jesus was a hard worker. Probably not strictly a carpenter . . . Many scholars surmise that lack of heavy forested land in Jesus' region meant He probably worked with both wood and stone, possibly even some metal. Until He began His full-time ministry at around age 30 we know He worked, in the Jewish tradition from his early teen years and into adulthood. Because little is said of this time period in Jesus' life, we don't make much of it, but the reality is that Jesus spent the majority of His earthly life as a simple worker in service to the needs of others.⁴⁷

It is important to note that Jesus did not spend much time in the Synagogues teaching or preaching. He was out in the streets ministering to the needs of the lowly and sick. His “work” took Him outside the defined walls of the church and into the lives of the community. Jesus' ministry is a clear picture of what bivocational ministry can and should be for those who serve in this way today.

Prior Research

Included in the five categories is the scope of the current research into this phenomenon of the rise in part-time worship leadership. Other than what has been covered in the current research, there is very little that has been written specifically about this phenomenon. There is no scholarly source that has been written about the rise in part-time worship leadership and the need for more educational and mentoring support. I can only piece together the research that has been conducted on the individual elements of this topic and information that has been written about topics outside the parameters of this study such as senior pastors or another denomination. The research completed through this Worship Leader Survey will seek to unite the studies carried out by others

⁴⁷ James Merritt, “Jesus: The First Bivocational Pastor,” *Touching Lives* (blog), August 8, 2017, <https://touchinglives.org/2017/08/08/jesus-first-bivocational-pastor/>.

pertaining to the decline in mid-size Southern Baptist churches and how this decline has affected secondary staff, such as the position of worship leader.

As mentioned above, several sources could fit into more than one research category. This is the case with the two works by Dennis Bickers. They have been an invaluable source of knowledge through the writing of this paper, as has my personal correspondence with Dr. Bickers regarding his work that followed the publishing of both texts. One of the goals of this paper is to take Dr. Bickers' research with bivocational (what he and others label "bi-vocational") senior pastors in smaller churches and translate that same methodology to the secondary staff, namely, worship leaders, in the mid-size Southern Baptist churches. Along with other sources, it has been my goal to take Dr. Bickers' work to the next stage for the furtherance of our institutional and denominational support of the part-time worship leader.

Literature Review

There has been much more written about the rise of bivocational or part-time senior pastors and the importance of mentoring senior pastors than the same topics for any other category of secondary staff member, including that of the worship leader. There is a lack of literature available that pertains specifically to the exclusive parameters set forth in this paper. Therefore, the author has divided what literature was available into five categories, with many sources that could easily overlap into more than one category, or all of the categories:

The Rise of Part-time Worship Leadership

The research in this category looks at the trend of the rise of the part-time worship leader and how this phenomenon came about. It will look at the changes that have transpired over the last few years that have led to the decline in the Southern Baptist church and how this decline affects the mid-size churches. This includes decline in financial giving and the decline in church attendance.

Included in this category are two pertinent theses, one by Dennis Bickers and the other by Phillip Perkins, and a couple of insightful journal articles. Bickers offers some noteworthy facts about the rise in bivocational leadership across the denominational lines, but specifically within the Southern Baptist Convention. He researched much about the decline in worship attendance and monetary contributions and how this trend will continue to be a detriment to staffing costs, and therefore a detriment to ministry costs within the smaller to mid-size churches.

One of the key points in Bickers' thesis is the reasoning for part-time worship leadership. For many churches, the transition to part-time or bivocational worship leadership is a financial one. Many churches simply cannot afford to have full-time secondary staffing, and yet most churches expect them to fulfil the same responsibilities as a full-time staff member. "Some churches call bi-vocational ministers and pay bi-vocational salaries but expect the services of fully-funded pastors. Unless someone challenges that thinking, pastors are likely to burn out trying to meet those expectations and do serious harm to themselves and other family members."⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Bickers, "Coaching Bi-vocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness," 152.

However, there are those who always have intended to be bivocational or part-time. The “tent making” model of ministry has become more commonplace as those who are trained or employed in another trade are called to vocational ministry. Kopka notes in “The New Tent Makers,”

Today, seminarians from even well-known schools are starting to talk openly about the “stark realities” of bi-vocationalism. Some of the conversation around bi-vocationalism is driven by the weak job market. Seminary students aren't exactly bombarded with well-paying jobs upon graduation. On the other hand, some see bi-vocational-ism as a ministry plus, a way to keep one foot planted in the secular world.⁴⁹

Perkins researched in his thesis the leadership models that the church has utilized over the course of history, and he gives some strong definitions of what each category of church size actually looks like inside and outside the denomination. The Hagen article also gives great insight into the decline of the mid-size Protestant church and how that will affect the future of staffing costs and the roles utilized by paid church leadership. The Kopka article also discusses the rise of bivocational or part-time secondary staffing positions, but it also addresses the lack of seminary training available to those seeking or already involved in part-time church leadership of any category across denominational lines.

Background on Denominational Support

This research category was essential to understanding what operational support the Southern Baptist Convention has in place to support and equip the bivocational minister, of any category. While this paper specifically deals with part-time worship leadership, there has never been a Convention office to deal with that specific of a

⁴⁹ Kopka, “The New Tent Makers.”

ministry category. Therefore, it was necessitated to lump part-time or bivocational worship leaders in with the other categories of bivocational church staff.

Importance of Mentoring Worship Leaders

The research in this category discusses the importance of mentoring the part-time worship leader. It will also look at the educational and training gaps that exist in the current denominational and post-secondary educational institutions and how those gaps affect the part-time worship leader. Many sources in this category also discuss strategies for mentoring worship leaders and ministers of all categories.

The research in this category differed greatly than the others. This category includes many more personal interviews and phone calls than written sources. In 2006, a group of pastors calling themselves the Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association voted to send a proposal to the North American Mission Board (the domestic missions arm of the SBC) asking for a funded office of bivocational ministry at the denominational level. They cited the fact that “bivocationally-led existing churches baptize more new believers per 100 members than churches led by full-compensated pastors.”⁵⁰ At the following meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, held a week later, the Convention “resolved to express our gratitude . . . and pledge our prayers.”⁵¹ While worthy efforts on the part of the Convention, no operational changes were made in response to the request of the Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association.

⁵⁰ Connie Davis Bushey and William Perkins, “Bivocational Ministers ask NAMB for Office to Support their Work,” *Baptist Press*, June 7, 2006, <http://www.bpnews.net/23417/bivocational-ministers-ask-namb-for-office-to-support-their-work>.

⁵¹ <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/year/2006>.

An article from 2010 cited the “affirmation” bivocational pastors received from the North American Mission Board in a meeting held between Convention leaders and local pastor in an article that speaks to the general feelings about bivocational work in the Convention. “Bivocational pastors, often called ‘part-time’ and perceived as something of a transitional step toward becoming a ‘real’ pastor, typically have not been seen as leading churches that can be ends in themselves, freeing up members and staff to be flexible with funds and engaged with their community.”⁵²

For the purposes of research, I did reach out to the Southern Baptist Executive Committee for comment on the operational support of bivocational ministers in the Convention. I spoke with Dr. Roger S. Oldham, the Vice President for Office of Convention Communications & Relations for the SBC Executive Committee, the governing body of the Southern Baptist Convention. He could not name any entity or personnel strictly devoted to the support of the bivocational minister in the Southern Baptist church. He did, however, point me to two parachurch entities: the Caskey Center for Church Excellence at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary⁵³ and the Bivocational & Small Church Leadership Network.⁵⁴ After extensive review of their website and literature, I could not find any information intended to serve churches over 200 in attendance, only “small” churches, specifically designated as under 200 in attendance. The Caskey Center’s research and statistics includes only churches under 200

⁵² Adam Miller, “Small Church, Bivocational Work Gets Affirmation at NAMB Conference,” *Baptist Press*, November 29, 2010, <http://www.bpnews.net/34164/small-church-bivocational-work-gets-affirmation-at-namb-conference>.

⁵³ <https://caskeycenter.com/>.

⁵⁴ <https://bscln.net/>.

in attendance.⁵⁵ The Bivocational & Small Church Leadership Network notes on their website, “The primary constituencies of the BSCLN are pastors, spouses, and ministry leadership teams of congregations with 200 or less in average worship attendance, or similar measurements.”⁵⁶

While it is understandable that additional resources have and should be allocated to churches under 200 in attendance, the issue is how can the Convention serve secondary staffing who are faced with the same prospects of bivocational ministry, but in a larger congregation that may not meet the requirements for study? There is a definite gap in resources, literature and research for the bivocational secondary staff member serving at a church over 200 in attendance.

Importance of Mentoring Church Leadership

As very little has been written specifically on the importance of mentoring worship leaders, this category was slightly more difficult to research. Therefore, this category has been expanded to include the importance of mentoring *any* church leader. This expansion allowed for more texts to be included that utilized tools that could be employed for mentoring worship leaders especially.

This category of research includes several interesting theses, articles, and books. Two theses by Plank and Spradlin looked into the importance of providing opportunities for discipleship and providing opportunities for personal growth and development for worship leaders. The articles by Allen-Macartney and Wakeman examine the methods

⁵⁵ <https://caskeycenter.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/mission-praxis-in-smaller-membership-churches.pdf>.

⁵⁶ <https://bscln.net/about/constitution-2/>.

utilized by Jesus and Paul, particularly how they both used personal discipleship/mentoring to grow future church leaders. These authors' insights into the biblical models of discipleship/mentoring have proven invaluable to maintaining a biblical perspective on this process.

Finally, the books by Bickers and LaRochelle afford the reader clarity as to the pressing need of providing resources for smaller to mid-size churches that may not be able to afford continuing education budget line items to further aid their entire staff. Bickers speaks to specific instances where churches and part-time church staff could benefit from outside denominational or educational support. LaRochelle confirms smaller and mid-size churches can integrate a bivocational model to further their ministry budgets and provide opportunities for personal growth and mentoring through the bivocational model. This would require staffing sacrifices on the part of individual church leaders and a major overhaul of the church's views on what staffing is actually necessary for church maintenance and growth.

Strategies for Mentoring Worship Leaders

The research in this category will look at the specific strategies set in current literature for mentoring part-time worship leaders. It will also discuss case studies where worship leaders are mentored. It will look into the educational gaps and how other denominations or pastoral groups have overcome them. In this category, Dr. Bickers' thesis and text are invaluable sources of information on how to begin the mentoring process with anyone called to serve within the Body of Christ.

The Rideout article offers an excellent example of a denominationally-driven mentor program for the untrained worship leader and how this program was formed and

run. The Rhyno and Wakeman articles provide understanding into what it is to mentor someone by including biblical examples and key Scripture passages for the mentor relationship. Kraeuter details how mentoring creates a cyclical pattern, much like an apprenticeship relationship, continually birthing and growing new worship leaders by the passing on of knowledge and tradition. Sharp's text is much more of a guidebook for pastoral mentors on how to build and maintain the relationship with the younger church leaders God places in their path.

Statistics

The research in this category will most prominently display statistics about church decline and the rise in part-time ministry positions. While statistics may be presented in research listed in other categories, the research presented in this category will focus primarily on statistics.

The sources on statistics are different than those utilized above. Although some sources include other areas of research, the two that most specifically pertain to statistics are listed in this category. The first is a thesis by Perkins. It includes some vital statistical information regarding the decline of full-time (he utilizes the term "fully-funded" as a better moniker for this delineation) church staff. Perkins looks pointedly at the different configurations of church staff and how these configurations could benefit or harm the long-term future of the church. He questions the traditional model and addresses how churches can reconfigure it to better suite their particular needs. He also addressed how to keep staffing costs low in order to further the ministry dollars of the church. Perkins cites the statistic that churches are better able to support their ministry efforts when staffing

costs are kept below 35% of the total budget.⁵⁷ The Branaugh article delves into the cost of church staffing and how churches that spend less on staffing costs can utilize their funds for ministry efforts. This article also provides tips on how to decrease staffing costs for the benefit of the church.⁵⁸

Second, three published works by the Southern Baptist Convention or its ministry arms have played a significant role in the writing of this paper. The Lifeway Compensation study has brought about key statistics and trends that are relevant to Southern Baptist churches and are timely in their publishing, especially when researching a particular state or geographic region. The ability to view the denominations own published work on the nature of ministry compensation and the trend of bivocational and part-time pastors has been invaluable. Second, the work entitled *A Shift Towards Total Compensation: A Pastors Primer*, published by the SBC on Guidestone's website has given great insight into the thought process that goes into building a compensation package for ministry team members. However, the majority of this text published by the SBC is spent educating the reader on how to negotiate to a fully-funded status instead of how to educate the employer in the benefits of a bivocational or part-time employment status.⁵⁹

Third, the Annual Church Profile has been pivotal in the formation of the definitions of church size used in this study. Each year Lifeway (the publishing and

⁵⁷ Perkins, 56.

⁵⁸ Branaugh, "A Closer Look at 'Lean' Church Staffs."

⁵⁹ Christian Messemer, *A Shift Towards Total Compensation: A Pastors Primer* (Southern Baptist Convention), https://www.guidestone.org/-/media/Retirement/WhitePapers/96075_PastorsCompensationWhitePaper.pdf?la=en.

statistical arm of the Southern Baptist Convention) surveys the aligned churches and includes their statistics in this annual report. This report has also provided the statistics for bivocational churches within the Convention.⁶⁰

Finally, there are research groups that specifically function to understand the trends that affect churches and Christianity today. One of those groups is the Barna group, whose research has been paramount to the building of this paper. Their facts and figures arise in many other sources throughout this paper.⁶¹ Second, the National Congregation Study by Dr. Mark Chaves and the Department of Sociology at Duke University has also been helpful. Although it does not research bivocational pastors or even trends in pastoral compensation, it does illuminate trends and the growth/decline of specific denominations and beliefs down to the county/municipality level.⁶²

⁶⁰ <http://www.bpnews.net/51932/annual-church-profile-and-more-of-the-sbc-story>.

⁶¹ <https://www.barna.com/>.

⁶² <http://www.soc.duke.edu/natcong/>.

Chapter 3

Methods

Methodology

The first step in the survey process for this paper was obtaining institutional approval from the Internal Review Board (IRB) of Liberty University. After the comprehensive application process and a few minor revisions, approval was granted and the survey process began.

The next step in the survey process was forming the questions. As the research was both historical and qualitative in nature, a mixture of question formats was necessary. The prior research was thoroughly analyzed, and the following questions were written with the corresponding answer options:

1. Are you 18 years or older?
 - Yes
 - No*
2. Is your church affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention?
 - Yes
 - No*
3. What is your church's average worship attendance? (Average over four consecutive Sundays of all combined services)
 - 0-199*
 - 200-299
 - 300-399
 - 400+*

4. Describe your church employment.

- Full-time*
- Part-time
- Bivocational (employed at church and at least one other)
- Semi-Retired (Returning to Worship Leadership after retirement)
- Non-paid Volunteer
- Full-Time Student and Church Employee

5. How many hours per week are YOU PAID for church-related work?

- 0-14
- 15-24
- 25-34
- 35+*

6. How many hours per week do YOU SPEND on church-related work?

- 0-14
- 15-24
- 25-34
- 35+

7. Select which answer is closest to your staff title.

- Minister of Music/Worship
- Music/Worship Pastor
- Creative Arts Director/Pastor
- Worship Leader
- Associate Pastor of Music/Worship

- Other (please specify) *(with space to type an answer)*

8. Age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

9. Have you received any of the following? *(with checkboxes next to each answer)*

- Some college credit in Music (did not graduate)
- Bachelor's Degree in Music
- Master's Degree in Music
- Some college credit in Theology (did not graduate)
- Bachelor's Degree in Theology
- Master's Degree in Theology
- Denominational Training in Music
- Denominational Training in Theology

10. Describe any training or educational support you have received from the denomination or state/local organizations. *(with space to type an answer)*

11. Do you receive any healthcare benefits from your church?

- Yes
- No

12. Do you receive any education/continuing education benefits from your church?

- Yes
- No

13. Do you feel that your church's financial state has declined over the past ten years? If so, list your reasons here. *(with space to type an answer)*

14. Do you have a Worship Leadership Mentor you meet with on a weekly/biweekly basis? Describe that relationship here. *(with space to type an answer)*

15. In what areas do you feel that you could benefit from a Worship Leader Mentor?

Check all that apply. *(with checkboxes next to each answer)*

- Work/Home Balance
- Personal Spiritual Growth
- Worship Leadership
- Musical Skills
- Theology/Biblical Understanding
- Personal Finances
- Marriage/Family Issues
- Church Traditionalism/Generational Challenges
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Other (please specify) *(with space to type an answer)*

*Selecting this answer would trigger the Skip Logic, and the participant would be automatically sent to the "Thank You" page, ending the survey.

Question Reasoning

The first few questions in the survey are qualifying questions to ensure that the survey participants fit the criteria for participation in this study. These qualifiers include meeting the legal requirement of 18 years of age or older, being employed with a church affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, fulfilling the requirement of the 200-400 range in attendance, and being categorized as employed as any other category than full-time.

The next set of questions deal with categorizing the worship leader as an employee. The questions include hours paid for and hours spent on work, church title, and age bracket. These questions also address educational background, denominational support, healthcare benefits, and educational support. The questions are intended to demonstrate the background of each participant and to give some insight into why they provided their specific answers to the next set of questions. It will also help the survey readers to gain a more complete picture of the service and ministry of each survey participant.

The final set of questions are more subjective and address the participants' views on their ministry and support. Data gained includes information on the financial background of the church, the bivocational worship leader's mentor relationships, and areas in which they could benefit from a mentor relationship. These questions intend to gain a better understanding of how the previous answers provided have affected the participant's views on church and ministry.

Survey Process

The survey process was a very simple one. After the proposal was approved and IRB approval received from Liberty University, the survey questions were inputted into Survey Monkey and published on the internet. The author collected responses by one of two means. The first method was through emails sent out to provided email addresses with the survey link attached. The second method was through the supplying of a link to the survey via social media posts.

The survey participant then clicked on the link that they were supplied, and they were taken to the IRB-approved consent form. After the form was read and the participant clicked the “OK” button, indicating they consented to taking the survey, they were taken to the actual survey questions on a separate page. If they completed the entire fifteen questions without triggering the Skip Logic function, the survey was submitted. They were then taken to the “Thank You” page, and the Survey Monkey webpage was closed.

Once the survey answers were compiled, Survey Monkey provided analysis of the answers through their website capabilities, including a list of the participants that tripped the Skip Logic function and were disqualified from the survey. Survey Monkey compiled the answers and provided the means to view the answers through several different filters. Several emerging trends arose once the surveys were collected and analyzed. Those trends and various outliers will be discussed further in the following chapter. The complete survey results can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MR7VLT98/>.

Participants

As previously mentioned, the survey sought out participants that met the prior stated criteria. Over all, 55 survey responses were included in this study. The survey participants were varied in many ways, but those who were allowed to continue in the survey process met all of the following criteria:

- Over the age of 18
- Serving at a church affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention
- Serving at a church that fit the definition of a mid-size church
- Employed in any category other than full-time
- Compensated by the church for less than 35 hours a week

Emerging Trends

Through the 55 survey results, several interesting trends emerged in the data results. The first theme was that many worship leaders are dedicating more hours to their church-related work than they are compensated for. This trend could lead worship leaders to feeling underappreciated or under-compensated for their time and talents.

The second emerging trend was that of a lack of benefits participants received from churches. No participant received health care benefits and very few received continuing education benefits. Although this is consistent with part-time, bivocational or volunteer work, it does give evidence to the theory that churches could do more to support the educational goals of their ministry team members.

The third emerging trend was that of financial decline within the churches that the participants serve. Although this was explained in various terms and differing justifications were given for each individual church's decline, the trend of financial

decline was seen in 31 of the 55 churches represented. It has been hypothesized that this decline in the church's financial state could lead to a rise in part-time or bivocational worship leadership.

The final trend is a lack of mentoring relationships. Only 4 out of the 55 worship leaders surveyed meet with another worship leader in a regular mentor relationship. Again, various answers were given as to why there were a lack of mentoring relationships but many simply answered "No."

Chapter 4

Research Findings

Research Summary

After reviewing the survey results, it was discovered that, with few exceptions the findings fundamentally supported the three hypotheses. The basic principles of a lack of support, lack of training resources, and a lack of mentoring relationships were overall confirmed by the research findings. The most surprising finding was the response to Question 15 where each participant listed areas of concern in their own lives and ministry. The survey results will be broken down by questions and then a few selected survey participants will have their specific survey results outlined. This will aid in forming a more complete picture of their individual views on life and ministry as a part-time worship leader.

Research Overview

Questions 1 and 2

The first two questions in the survey qualified participants as over the age of 18 and as serving at a church affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. These were simply qualifying questions to ensure participants met the survey criteria. 100% of participants met the criteria as there was Skip Logic applied to each question. These questions were written to protect the integrity of the study and to follow the guidelines set by the university.

Question 3

Question 3 qualified all survey participants as serving in a mid-size church with 53% serving in a church of 200-299 in average attendance and 47% at a church of 300-399 in average attendance. This question is another qualifying question, ensuring the participant's church met the survey criteria. Anyone not serving in either of these categories was automatically disqualified through the Skip Logic function available on the Survey Monkey website. The almost even division of the smaller and larger church sizes seems to promote a balanced study among mid-size Southern Baptist churches.

Question 4

Question 4 categorized each participant's employment as shown in the chart below. This question served as a qualifier, ensuring no participant was compensated for more than 34 hours a week, and therefore considered full-time or fully-funded by their church. This question also served to give the author some insight into the nature of the participants' employment. The most common responses were unpaid volunteer (33%) followed by part-time (31%) and then bivocational (27%) in order to gain an awareness for any outliers or trends in the titles of the participants.

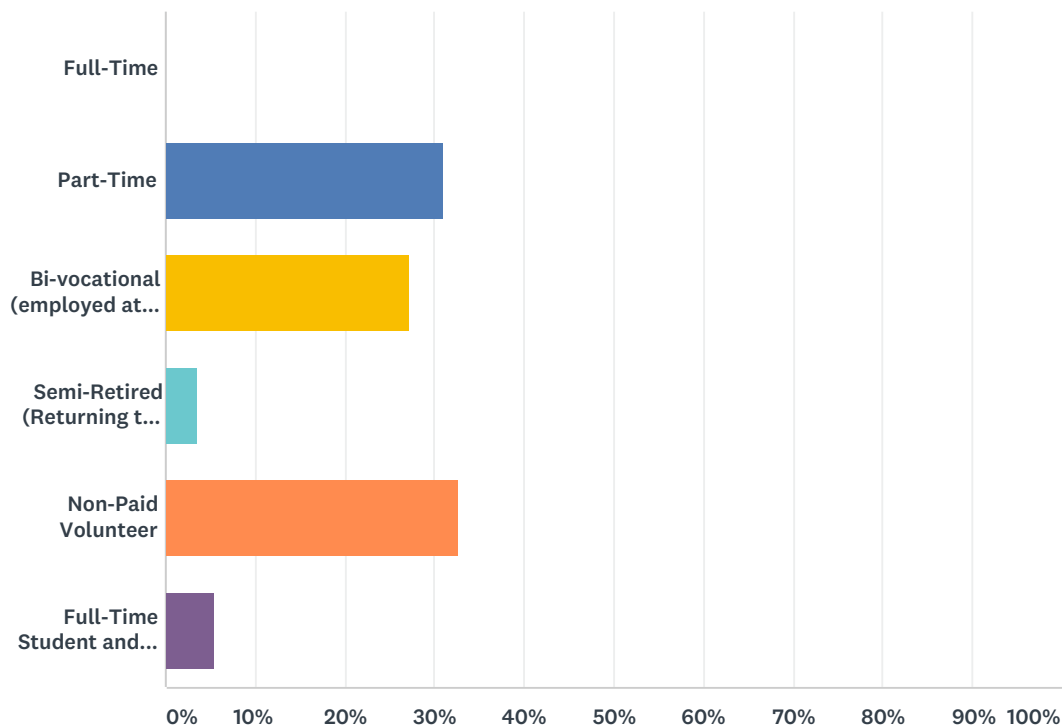


Figure 1. Participants' Employment Categorized

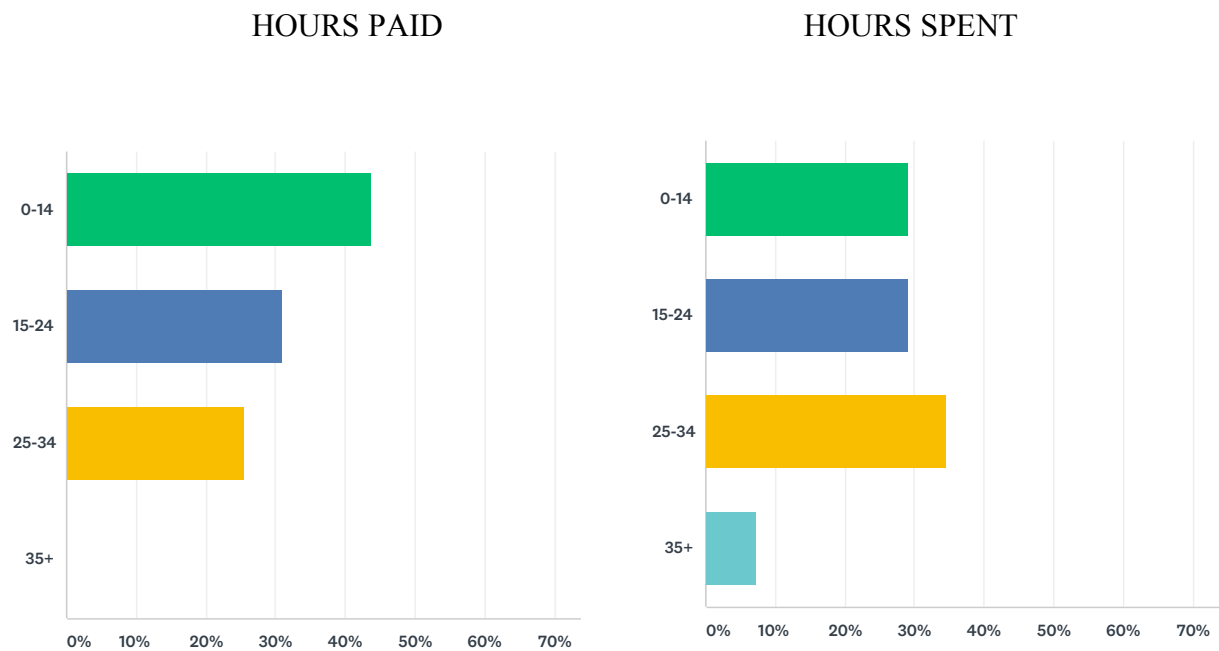
Source: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MR7VLT98/>

Questions 5 and 6

Questions 5 and 6 noted the discrepancies in time paid for church-related work and time spent on church-related work. Eighteen participants, or 32.7% of the survey responses, indicated that the participant spent more time on church-related work than they were compensated for. Two participants listed their “hours paid” as two categories lower than their “hours spent.” This trend reveals part-time worship leaders are often under-compensated for the duties they are asked to perform each week, which may lead to burnout and financial strain in their personal lives.

The church has been mandated by Paul to care for their leaders and to provide them a livable wage. As Paul informs Timothy, “The elders who are good leaders should be considered worthy of an ample honorarium, especially those who work hard at

preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ‘Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain and, the worker is worthy of his wages’” (1 Timothy 5:17-18).⁶³ For various reasons, churches often struggle to pay their leadership appropriately for the services they provide. While often times this is out of necessity and has been agreed upon, it can lead to various issues, both personal and professional, for church leadership.



Figures 2 and 3. Participants’ Hours Paid and Hours Spent
Source: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MR7VLT98/>

⁶³ 1 Timothy 5:17-18, Holman Christian Standard Bible. Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers.

Question 7

Question 7 categorized each participant's job title as follows:

Minister of Music/Worship	16%
Music/Worship Pastor	25%
Creative Arts Director/Pastor	4%
Worship Leader	38%
Associate Pastor of Music/Worship	5%
Other	10%

This question was intended to demonstrate how each participant is categorized as a church employee and to show any trends in ministry categories by church, specifically with concern to titles and roles fulfilled by each participant. This question was intended to look for any outliers or trends in positions and titles among mid-size Southern Baptist churches.

Question 8

Question 8 asked participants to categorize their age in the designated categories as follows:

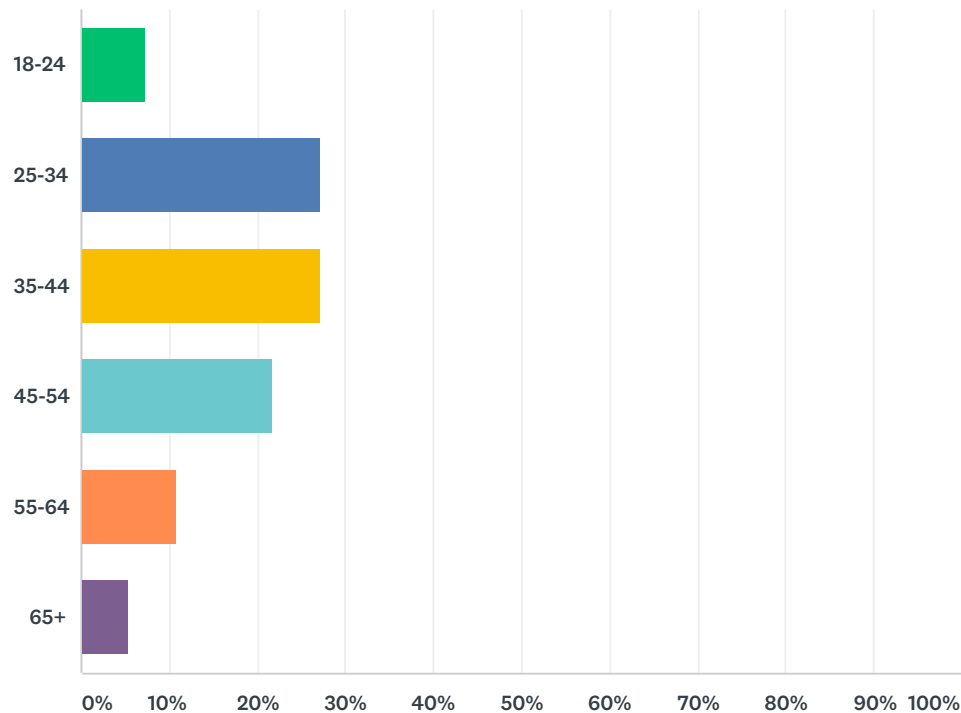


Figure 4. Participant's Age

Source: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MR7VLT98/>

This question gives the author some insight into which stage of life the part-time worship leader is in. It helps create a picture of their life and balancing ministry obligations. This figure shows the part-time worship leader is more inclined to be younger than older. The information gleaned here could be used to correlate the educational background of each participant and demonstrate whether or not the part-time worship leaders were predominately younger and would be inclined to return to a post-secondary education, or

whether they are more mature and less inclined to pursue additional educational opportunities.

Question 9

Question 9 asks participants to indicate if any educational or denominational training they had received. The outcome is as follows:

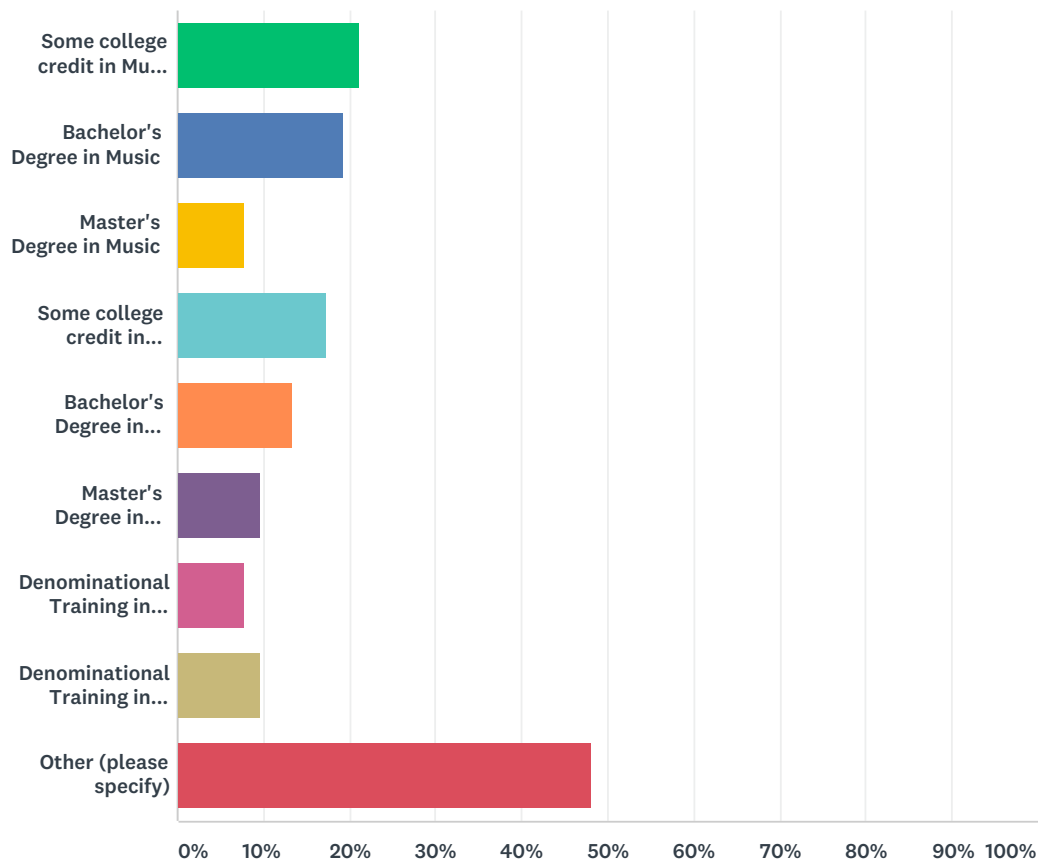


Figure 5. Participants' Education and/or Denominational Training

Source: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MR7VLT98/>

The “Other” category listed some interesting educational backgrounds that do not directly correlate to worship, music or theology. These included training in other areas as accountants, teachers, welders, nurses, electricians, and mathematicians. Overall, almost

half of the participants have not been educated by any formal music or theological program in a post-secondary or denominational institution.

Dennis Bickers has spent the latter part of his career building awareness and developing resources to combat this lack of educational and denominational training specifically designed for the part-time or bivocational pastor. Bickers reveals,

It did bother me that during my pastorate there were few resources developed especially for the bi-vocational church and its leadership. That is why I wrote my first book and why I continue to write today, focusing on issues related to small-church and bi-vocational ministry. There are also few workshops offered that specifically address the issues and challenges of bi-vocational and small-church ministry. . . . Bi-vocational pastors are hungry for encouragement and material they can use.⁶⁴

The issue of a lack of resources developed specifically for the part-time or bivocational pastor has come up in the research again and again. Since Dr. Bickers began his quest to develop resources, there have been others that have written books and articles about this phenomenon. However, no such resources could be found specifically for the part-time worship leader.

Question 10

Question 10 asked for training or educational support the participants may have received from the denomination or state/local church organizations. The responses were varied and interesting. Some listed musical experiences, like time with secular bands or state Baptist choruses. Others listed worship leader conferences such as Music in the Mountains, Prims, or Getty events. A few listed collegiate training or other educational experiences. Sixteen participants (29%) listed “None” or “N/A” or indicated a similar

⁶⁴ Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, 35-36.

response indicating they had never utilized or been offered these services through their church or the denomination.

While there are a great many training resources out there specifically for worship pastors, very few are intentionally designed to include the bivocational or part-time worship leader. Cost aside, many are held during the week or on Saturdays, days utilized by the part-time worship leader for non-church employment. Again, according to Bickers,

Historically, denominational leadership has come from large churches, and they tend to bring a large church perspective with them when they work with smaller churches. Many cannot understand why anyone would want to remain at a smaller church, and like the fully-funded pastors, they may question the commitment of the minister who chooses to be bi-vocational. They often fail to take into consideration the work schedules of bi-vocational ministers when they plan denominational meetings or training events, and then they complain when their bi-vocational ministers do not attend these meetings.⁶⁵

There seems to be a gap in the understanding of the part-time worship leader and their ability to commit to this kind of training and enrichment opportunities. Below is a Word Cloud made from the combined responses to Q10, with the largest words being the most frequently utilized in the participant's responses.

⁶⁵ Bickers, "Coaching Bi-vocational Ministers for Greater Ministry Effectiveness," 14.

associational Area local Worship Leader worship Lifeway training
meetings conferences ministry None state convention
church went state one little event

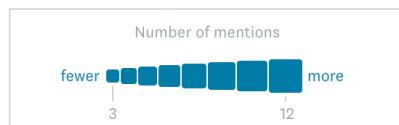


Figure 6. Question 10 Word Cloud

Source: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MR7VLT98/>

Questions 11 and 12

Questions 11 and 12 asked participants to indicate whether or not they received health benefits or continuing education benefits from their church. 100% of the participants received no health benefits. Ten participants, (18.5%) of survey responses, indicated that they receive some form of continuing education benefits from their congregation. This seems to be consistent with what we know of how church leadership is compensated.⁶⁶

Question 13

Question 13 was one of the most informative questions of the whole survey. Participants were asked to indicate whether or not they feel their church's financial state had declined over the past ten years and to explain why. Survey responses varied greatly with over half indicating some form of financial decline. Thirty responses (55%)

⁶⁶ Messemer, *A Shift Towards Total Compensation: A Pastors Primer*.

indicated that the participant felt their church was in a state of financial decline. Twenty-one responses (38%) indicated they did not feel their church was in a state of financial decline. Three responses (6%) responded that they did not know or were not sure. One participant (2%) explained their church was in a state of financial growth. Some of the responses are the following:

- “Yes, we are the result of a church split about a year ago.”
- “I believe the decline is due to the large exodus to an economically-booming region relatively close by.”
- “Yes, the church split right about 8-9 years ago. God has provided some rebound though through various means, but we are not back to where we were financially yet.”
- “Yes. The pastor just retired because the church could not keep up with his pay. The new guy they’re bringing in is part-time.”
- Yes. Our pastor left and split the church. Not much is left.”
- “Yes. I have been at this church for 43 years and I have just returned out of retirement because the young man they hired to replace me was too loose with the credit card spending.”
- “Yes. I used to be full time but all staff but the senior pastor was cut back to half time when the church split over a pastoral indiscretion.”
- “No. However, as a whole, support for music and worship ministries have suffered financially. To be honest, in many churches the move to replace the choir and orchestra has been financially motivated as much as worship style motivated.”
- “Have only been there for a little over a year, so not sure. But they do have around \$1.3 million in the ‘building fund’ that remains untouched—though the current pastor is wanting to build a new building.”
- “Yes. Older members are dying off and the church hasn’t allowed room for new musical styles to take root.”

Below is a Word Cloud made from the combined responses to Q13, with the largest words being the most frequently utilized in the participant's responses.

church split families giving back pastor Ministry new used church
time Yes much decline years due staff old years ago

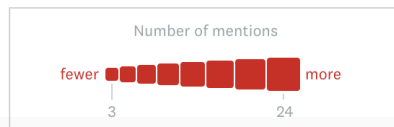


Figure 7. Question 13 Word Cloud

Source: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MR7VLT98/>

Rudy Gray reveals in *The Baptist Courier*,

Some SBC churches are growing, and others are dying. Most are either plateaued or declining. By virtually any measure, we are not growing anywhere near a rate comparable to the population increase. The SBC decline in numbers is not occurring in a vacuum, nor are we the only group of Christian churches losing more people than we are winning. According to Pew Research, “every major branch of Christianity has lost significant numbers—the biggest are the Catholics and mainline Protestants.”⁶⁷

Chuck Kelley, former President of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary recently told the student body, “This is now year 17 of the longest decline in baptisms in the history of the SBC. Unprecedented. And that decline in baptism shows absolutely no sign

⁶⁷ Rudy Gray, “From the Editor: A Closer Look at the SBC’s Decline,” *The Baptist Courier* (February 7, 2018), <https://baptistcourier.com/2018/02/a-closer-look-at-the-sbcs-decline/>.

it is slowing down.”⁶⁸ Kelley then explained to the students that since 2009 the SBC planted 871 new churches. But since 2009, 772 churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention have either closed their doors or voted to disassociate from the convention.⁶⁹ Although there are many reasons for a church’s decline, as indicated in the survey responses, the fact of the matter is research shows that most Southern Baptist churches are plateaued in growth or declining. The rise in part-time worship leadership in the mid-size Southern Baptist church is partly due to this phenomenon, as many of the responses indicated.

Question 14

Question 14 asked participants to detail their mentoring relationships. Only four out of the 54 responses indicated a currently active mentor relationship with another worship leader. Many responses indicated a desire for such a relationship or an alternative to gaining some knowledge about worship leadership, including online videos or tutorials or wisdom gleaned from other staff members such as the Senior Pastor. Some of the responses were:

- “Just our pastor. He's trying to keep us relevant, but most of our younger families left in the split.”
- “No. I wish I did have that though.”
- “No, but I have made it a point to seek out worship leader communities online and I pay out of my own pocket because I want to grow.”
- “No. Only a couple times in past 10 years.”

⁶⁸ Bob Ditmer, “7 Years of Decline in SBC Have Members Feeling ‘Blue’,” *Church Leaders* (August 28, 2018), <https://churchleaders.com/news/332036-southern-baptists-are-feeling-the-blues.html>.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

- “No. A couple of college professors I can call with questions and I watch a lot of online videos to get ideas.”
- “No. Not many people around here do what I do.”
- “No. Our pastor used to be a worship leader but he’s also part time so I try not to put too many questions on him.”
- “No. But I would like one. Not many women serving like I do.”

The responses to this question indicated (possibly more than any other question) a desire for help and support from the institutional structures in place today. After reading the responses as a whole, one gets the sense that many worship leaders are discouraged and frustrated with the lack of support they receive from the denomination, postsecondary institutions, and parachurch organizations.

One of the most essential tools a mid-size church can utilize is building relationships. Churches should be encouraging their part-time or bivocational staff to build as many relationships as possible through the networks provided by post-secondary institutions, denominational networks and state and local avenues. There are many sources that encourage the building of mentor relationships and that detail the benefits of those relationships. One such article is “Confessions of a Bi-vocational Baptist Preacher” by M. Greg Thompson. “Bi-vocational ministry allows for the building of relationships that are often deeper than those found in a large church setting. Healthy relationships are essential to the smaller church, and our church members model what it means to become a follower of Christ.”⁷⁰

⁷⁰ M. Greg Thompson, “Confessions of a Bi-Vocational Baptist Preacher,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 40, no. 2 (Spring 2005), http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/ps/i.do?p=AONE&u=vic_liberty&id=GALE%7CA134257565&v=2.1&it=r&sid=summon.

Question 15

Question 15 is the final question and probably the most telling about the emotional state of the part-time worship leaders that participated in the survey. Participants were asked to select the areas in which they felt they could benefit from a worship leader mentor. As expected, the worship leadership categories scored higher than the personal categories. However, many responses indicated a desire for help with personal issues, family issues or spiritual issues. 64% of participants selected the Worship Leadership category while 60% selected the Musical Skills category. However, surprisingly, 47% of participants selected the Church Traditionalism/Generational Challenges category.

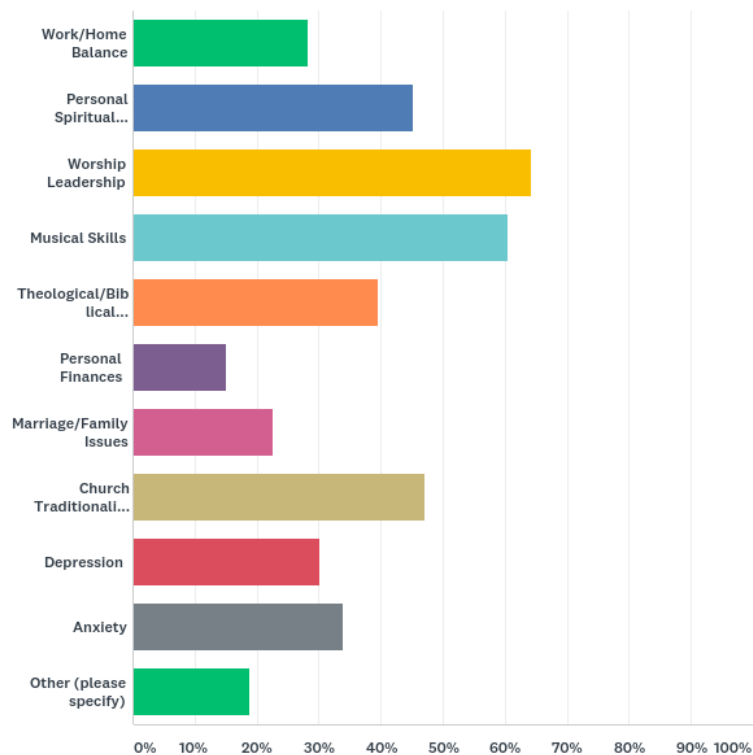


Figure 8. Participant's Areas of Improvement from a Mentoring Relationship
Source: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MR7VLT98/>

When asked if there were any other areas in which participants felt they could utilize a mentor to improve, a variety of other areas were listed, both professional and personal. These areas varied greatly from “evangelism/church growth” and “overcoming obstacles in ministry” to “parenting” and “budgeting.” While the majority of areas listed addressed professional issues, there were a few personal issues addressed as well. Overall, the consensus seems to be that there are areas that seriously need to be addressed in the lives of part-time worship leaders. Mentorship relationships could be highly beneficial those serving in the mid-size Southern Baptist church.

There are many fully-funded pastors that would say that these aspects of ministry affect their personal and private lives, although studies show that bivocational or part-time ministers struggle in greater numbers or in specific areas of their personal and private lives. Miles and Proeschold-Bell write, “In addition to cultural difficulties with a congregation, stressors may also arise simply from the realities of living in a rural area. Pastors in small towns, for instance, are more visible and likely in greater contact with parishioners day to day, which in turn can make it more difficult for them to separate their personal from the professional lives.”⁷¹

Matthew Friedeman gives five disadvantages to bivocational ministry in his book, *Cutting Edge of the Kingdom* that echo many of the results given in Q15. He expounds that time constraint, tight finances, emotional fatigue, marriage pressure and poor self-

⁷¹ Andrew Miles and Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell, “Are Rural Clergy Worse Off? An Examination of Occupational Conditions and Pastoral Experiences in a Sample of United Methodist Clergy,” *Sociology of Religion* 73, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 23-45, https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/stable/41428355?pq-origsite=summon&seq=4&fbclid=IwAR2YGN1RhkErQktCkp0TK8W7AU0QkgPqpKyOT-W3sZBO017oo3YEPOzyWso#metadata_info_tab_contents.

image⁷² are all issues that directly face the bivocational pastor more so than a fully-funded pastor. Although dangerous to ministry, these areas that participants struggle in do not have to mean the end of ministry. He tells readers, “(Disadvantages) need to be extinguished as threats to Great Commission ministry. Bi-vocational pastors are well aware of the assets and challenges particular to their situation. Bi-vocational ministry can be effective, and the God-sent minister will rely on God’s grace to make sure it is.”⁷³

Individual Responses

A few of the details provided by the participant’s answers give the readers some insight into how this phenomenon has affected their ministry and personal lives. As previously mentioned, each participant met the qualifying answers in order to participate in the survey and those answers will not be discussed in this section. In order to fully understand this occurrence, it is important to feature some of the participants to gain a rounded understanding of their experiences.

⁷² Matt Friedeman, *Cutting Edge of the Kingdom: The Necessity of Dynamic Bi-Vocational Ministry* (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 2018), 90.

⁷³ Ibid., 34.

Participant A

Age Bracket: 25-34 years old

Employment Category and Title: Bivocational Minister of Music/Worship

Hours Paid: 0-14

Hours Spent: 0-14

Participant Summary: Participant A did receive some college credit in music and skipped Q10 about denominational support (implying he or she receives none). In response to Q13, Participant A relates, “Yes. The pastor just retired because the church could not keep up with his pay. The new guy they’re bringing in is part time.”

Participant A is not meeting with a mentor and felt that he or she could use a mentor in the areas of Worship Leadership, Musical Skills, Theological/Biblical Understanding and under the Other category added “Staff Relations.” Participant A stood out due to the discouraged nature of his or her response and for identifying the need to gain a greater understanding of relating with other staff members, particularly new pastors.

Participant B

Age: 25-34

Employment Category and Title: Bivocational Music/Worship Pastor

Hours Paid: 25-34

Hours Spent: 25-34

Participant Summary: Participant B has earned a Bachelor's Degree in Music and has attended a "couple of worship conferences through Lifeway and one Prism event." In response to Q13, Participant B clarifies, "Somewhat. Over all, our community is in decline. That same decline has hit the church. Industry and workers are moving out." Participant B is not meeting with a mentor, but indicated that he or she could benefit from one in the areas of Work/Home Balance, Personal Spiritual Growth and under the Other category added "Evangelism, Church Growth and Pastoral Support." Participant B stood out as an example of the other responses that listed community decline as a reason for their church's financial decline. When the community suffers, that financial instability trickles down into many churches. Unfortunately, a loss of industry or community support will affect the financial solvency of many congregations.

Participant C

Age: 18-24

Employment Category and Title: Part-Time Worship Leader

Hours Paid: 15-24

Hours Spent: 25-34

Participant Summary: Participant C is enrolled in Nursing School and has attended one “Getty event.” In response to Q13, Participant C reveals, “Yes. Our pastor left and split the church. Not much is left.” In response to Q14 regarding mentors, Participant C notes, “No. But I would like one. Not many women serving like I do.” In response to Q15, Participant C writes Musical Skills, Theological/Biblical Understanding, Church Traditionalism/Generational Challenges and under the Other category added “Women in Ministry.”

Participant C stood out for two reasons. First, she is the only one who identified as a woman in ministry, seeking out other female mentors. Second, Participant C mentioned a church split, which is seen in some other answers as well. Unfortunately, many churches have or will have experienced a church split that leaves the church in such a condition that hard financial choices must be made in order to keep the church operational.

Participant D

Age: 55-64

Employment Category and Title: Semi-retired Minister of Music/Worship

Hours Paid: 25-34

Hours Spent: 25-34

Participant Summary: Participant D has earned a BA and MDiv and reports in response to Q10, “30 years of ministry in SBC Church.” In response to Q13, “Yes. I have been at this church for 43 years and I have just returned out of retirement because the young man they hired to replace me was too loose with the credit card spending.”

Participant D indicated that he or she does not have a mentor, and responded to Q15 with Church Traditionalism/Generational Issues and Depression. Participant D is interesting because he or she has been in ministry for thirty years within a Southern Baptist church and still could use help with Church Traditionalism/Generational Issues and Depression, even after returning to ministry as a retired individual.

Participant D was selected to be discussed here due to the extent of his or her educational training. Participant D is an outlier in the data due to the extensive experience and education he or she has received. However, that does not mean that Participant D is immune from the struggles and issues that affect part-time worship leaders, as is seen in Participant D’s answers to Q15.

Participant E

Age: 45-54

Employment Category and Title: Bivocational Worship Leader

Hours Paid: 25-34

Hours Spent: 35+

Participant Summary: Participant E has a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree in Music. In response to Q10, Participant E listed "state associational meetings" as a source of training. In response to Q13, Participant E tells, "Yes. Although we have joined with another church in decline so we have actually grown after absorbing them."

Participant E does not have a mentor but responded that he or she could benefit from a mentor relationship in the areas of Home/Work Balance, Personal Finances, Marriage/Family Issues and Anxiety. Participant E is the only response that listed absorbing another church within their own congregation. This participant stood out due to the nature of their church growth. While they were the only ones that listed this kind of arrangement between two churches, Participant E's congregation is setting an example in how churches are rethinking their current arrangements to prepare for their future and the possible decline of the church in general.

Participant F

Age: 35-44

Employment Category and Title: Part-Time Music/Worship Pastor

Hours Paid: 25-34

Hours Spent: 25-34

Participant Summary: Participant F stated that he or she has a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree in Music and has attended "Lifeway Conferences, state convention meetings." In response to Q13 Participant F reveals, "Somewhat. Our community is declining due to job loss and our church has felt that decline. We used to average over 500. The other staff and I got secular jobs to save the church the staffing costs."

Participant F did not indicate a mentor relationship but responded to Q15 with Work/Home Balance, Marriage/Family Issues, Depression and Anxiety. While many responders indicated major adjustments to staffing, Participant F is the only responder that listed the entire church staff moving to bivocational employment to save the church money. Several participants responded indicating financial and social decline in the community surrounding their congregation as a cause for the financial decline of their congregation. Participant F was chosen to be listed here as an example of those who are surrounded by a declining community.

Participant G

Age: 65+

Employment Category and Title: Part-Time Minister of Music/Worship

Hours Paid: 15-24

Hours Spent: 25-34

Participant Summary: Participant G was more of an outlier than any other participant due to the nature and extent of his or her background and education.

Participant G holds a Master's Degree in Music, some college credit in Theology, Denominational Training in Music and Theology and a DMA in Choral Conducting. In response to Q10 he or she notes having attended, "Associational, state, and convention workshops and clinics (Lifeway Worship and Ridgecrest music weeks), Scholarships, Baptist supported college education, Baptist supported seminary education." In response to Q13, he or she writes, "No. However, as a whole, support for music and worship ministries have suffered financially. To be honest, in many churches the move to replace the choir and orchestra have been financially motivated as much as worship style motivated."

In response to Q14, he or she points out, "No. However, I have mentored many younger men in worship ministry and regularly attend an area meeting (lunch) of worship leaders." However, it is interesting that after all of the training and education, Participant G records in response to Q15 Work/Home Balance, Personal Spiritual Growth, Worship Leadership, Musical Skills, Theological/Biblical Understanding, Church Traditionalism/Generational Challenges, Depression and Anxiety. This answer reveals that no matter the background or education, the potential is there for any part-time

worship leader to benefit from assistance, whether this comes from a mentoring relationship or other support systems.

Participant H

Age: 35-44

Employment Category and Title: Part-Time Worship Director

Hours Paid: 15-24

Hours Spent: 25-34

Participant Summary: Participant H has received a Bachelor's Degree in Music and attended an "Extreme Worship Leader Bootcamp put on by the state convention." Participant H is the only response summarized in this section that indicated he or she does receive Continuing Education benefits from his or her church (18.5% of the entire survey population). In response to Q13 Participant H remarks, "Have only been there for a little over a year, so not sure. But they do have around \$1.3 million in the "building fund" that remains untouched - though the current pastor is wanting to build a new building." In response to Q14 Participant H states, "I don't physically meet with them, but I have several worship leaders that I speak with on a regular basis about various topics."

In response to Q15, Participant H indicated the categories of Personal Spiritual Growth, Worship Leadership, Musical Skills, Theological/Biblical Understanding and Church Traditionalism/Generational Challenges. Participant H stands out due to the nature of his or her response to Q13. It would appear from his or her answer that staffing costs have come secondary to the church's building fund. While not an uncommon issue for many churches, it does highlight the fact that many churches are forced to choose between ministry costs, building costs or staffing costs. These kinds of tough choices will affect the structure of the church staff and require additional efforts to be made in order to

have operational ministries, such as whether or not the operations of a ministry or the evangelistic footprint of the congregation will suffer in order to decrease staffing costs.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Summaries

Summary of Study

Overall, this study proves that as a denomination and as the Church as a whole, are underserving those worship leaders that choose to serve in a capacity other than full-time in the mid-size Southern Baptist church. There is a growing trend of bivocational/part-time worship leaders, and the lack of resources dedicated to their education and discipleship is severely lacking. This study shows that there are deficits in the Church's support for these men and women of God and their calling to the Body of Christ.

This study also shows a different and, often times, deeper number of issues that affect the part-time worship leader. Through the course of this survey many of these individuals had legitimate concerns regarding educational, spiritual, and physical needs. The heart and well-being of the part-time worship leader needs to be an area of focus for the local church and the denomination as a whole.

At the conclusion of the study, 55 survey participants responded to the survey with answers indicating that they met the basic requirements for acceptance into the study. As highlighted above, these responses allowed the readers to form a complete picture of the background, ministry and struggles of a part-time worship leader, including their background and relationships. Due to the outcome of the study, there are several recommendations to be made to the denomination, state and local associations, and post-

secondary institutions in order to bridge the gap of service for these men and women of God.

Summary of the Problem and Purpose

Many mid-size Southern Baptist churches employ part-time worship leaders; however, many part-time worship leaders may not have sufficient training in terms of theological training and musical skills. The purpose of this qualitative/historical study is to examine the scope, preparedness and support of part-time worship leaders in mid-size Southern Baptist churches.

Summary of Procedure

The surveys were sent out via several social media announcements and through email links sent to interested in participating. The surveys were completed and compiled over the course of seven weeks and then the results were formatted and analyzed for the purposes of this report.

Summary of Findings

Hypothesis 1

As previously mentioned, H1 states, “There are a large percentage of part-time worship leaders who are feel they are undereducated and underserved by the denomination and post-secondary institutions.” 48% of all survey responses indicated educational backgrounds in other fields, other than worship or theology. 52% of the survey responses had never received any formal training from denominational or local/state sources. The need for denominational training or post-secondary education has been clearly displayed.

At the time of publishing, there are very few worship leader certification programs offered in Christian post-secondary institutions that would be accessible to those who lacked formal training and wanted a cost-effective alternative to a traditional post-secondary degree. One such example is the Certificate of Worship Leadership program at Samford University. Samford offers a twelve-hour, four course online certificate program that does not require a prerequisite of a bachelor's degree. This program offers four courses listed as Introduction to Worship Leadership, Designing Creative Worship, Biblical Foundations for Worship, and The Worship Leader as Pastor.⁷⁴

There are other worship leader certification programs, but they are either not entirely available online, not a cost-effective option (costs the same as a traditional post-secondary degree),⁷⁵ ⁷⁶ or not from an accredited post-secondary institution.⁷⁷ Other well-known accredited universities, such as Liberty, offer worship leader certification programs, but they require an undergraduate or bachelor's degree for acceptance into the program, which would require an additional educational step for some of the participating worship leaders.

If 81% of the survey responses are not receiving any continuing education benefits from their churches, there must be denominational or other training that could fill in the gap left by a lack of resources dedicated to bivocational leaders. If mid-size

⁷⁴ <https://www.samford.edu/worship-arts/online-certificate>.

⁷⁵ http://www.shilohuniversity.edu/academics/undergraduate-worship-ministry-certificate/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI5binzZbw3wIVBODIC0EpQ_JEAMYAiAAEgJjo_D_BwE.

⁷⁶ <http://spurgeoncollege.com/academics/aaws/>.

⁷⁷ <http://www.schoolofworship.net>.

churches cannot afford, or do not prioritize, continuing education in their undereducated staff, then there must be resources developed from denominational, state, local or parachurch organizations to help fill in the educational gap. The need has been demonstrated, but the only resources developed have been for bivocational Senior church leadership or full-funded worship staff. There is a gap in the resources available to these men and women called to serve in worship.

While there is no set nationwide denominational training event or program that is geared towards part-time or bivocational worship leaders, there are regional or local events or programs established by local or state denominational organizations. An example of one such event is the Worship Leader Roundtable put on by the South Carolina Baptist Convention. Every few months, in different areas of the state, the SCBC holds roundtable discussions where worship pastors from across the area can get together to trade ideas and build relationships with other worship pastors.⁷⁸ These roundtable discussions can be found in other areas of the country as well and are a great tool to network with other worship leaders for ideas and for the formation of mentoring relationships.⁷⁹ Developing a network of worship leader mentors based on this model would be a cost-effective and potentially groundbreaking practical step for many part-time worship leaders.

Other than roundtable discussions, there are few other opportunities for worship leader training. One opportunity is that of worship leader training events or conferences, such as the National Worship Leader Conference held every year and put on by Worship

⁷⁸ <http://www.scbaptist.org/events/worshipleaderroundtable-columbia/>.

⁷⁹ <http://www.absc.org/events/2018-worship-leader-roundtable-north-east/>.

Leader Magazine. There are always well-known artists and speakers in attendance, but to attend costs a minimum of \$250 plus travel and accommodations.⁸⁰ Such events are popular among worship leaders but may be out of reach for those financially unable to attend or obligated to another employer for that time period.

Another issue facing the part-time worship leader is that the few conferences or events that may be centered around part-time or bivocational worship leaders are not designed to a timetable that is fitting for those who work outside of the church during the week. It is not so far-fetched to say that even a Saturday event would not appease many of the part-time worship leaders as they will have to give up the time with their family during an already busy schedule.

Hypothesis 2

H2 states, “This study will expose that the educational background commonalities of the part-time worship leader in the mid-size Southern Baptist churches are theological education, music education, or neither.” 48% of all participants responded to Question 9 that their education was in something other than worship or theology. While just over half responded that they had some form of formal post-secondary education or denominational/associational training in worship or theology, many are lacking in any formal training for part-time worship leadership. This should be a specific area of concern for anyone wishing to encourage the part-time worship leader in continuing their education.

It would be impossible for every worship leader not educated in theology or music to return to a post-secondary institution. Therefore, mentoring and training

⁸⁰ <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2019-national-worship-leader-conference-tickets-45704904600>.

opportunities are key to helping the part-time worship leaders feel comfortable and succeed in their calling. As Dr. Bickers remarks about mentoring in his book,

Support can come from many avenues. It comes through encouragement, taking time to be with them, taking their schedules into account when scheduling events, publicly recognizing the important roles they play in their churches and in the life of their denominations, and providing them with the resources they and their churches need. . . . (mentoring) can cover each of these avenues.⁸¹

Utilizing an organized denominationally-driven mentor program for the bivocational or part-time secondary staff of church, including the part-time worship leader, would address many of the personal and ministerial needs that the part-time worship leader faces on a daily basis.

Ultimately, if applicable, the Senior Pastor should take the lead in the mentoring process for the part-time worship leader. As the shepherd of the church, he is not only responsible for his congregation, but also the well-being and training of his staff. This may involve, but is not limited to, face-to-face interaction, accountability, communication, etc. This care and concern can also be executed by the elders and the lay people of the church. There is no limit to the necessity of encouraging your staff, regardless of their employment status.

Hypothesis 3

H3 states, “The surveys will support the idea that the Southern Baptist church leadership can facilitate professional development for part-time worship leaders within the mid-size Southern Baptist churches by providing mentor development, educational development, and theological development.” Only 4 out of 54 participants answered Question 10 as having a mentor they meet with regularly. If these part-time worship

⁸¹ Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, 154.

leaders have very little access to formal post-secondary education, very few cost-effective training events or regional meetings, at least the denomination should be fostering mentoring relationships.

There are precedents set by other denominations that foster the building of mentoring relationships within and outside the denominational lines. The Leadership Program for Musicians is one such program established by the Episcopal Church's General Convention. Rideout explains in the American Organist,

The LPM program was designed for those who (1) had not yet had the opportunity to develop their musical skills through long-term education or continuing education, (2) might have studied music in a college environment but did not study how to plan and lead worship or how to select hymns and service music, (3) were members of other denominations yet served in Episcopal congregations and needed to know more specific information, (4) were young musicians with potential for church-music leadership, and (5) desired positive professional relationships with other musicians and clergy.⁸²

Building such a program within the Southern Baptist Convention would be an easy means of providing many underserved worship leaders with the cost-effective and timely tools they need to be better prepared for their ministry. However, as mentioned at the beginning of this dissertation, that idea is simply not on the radar of the Southern Baptist Convention, other denominations have already put mentoring strategies into place. In order to see a lasting monumental change, the denomination must make mentoring and training the part-time worship leader a priority.

⁸² Rideout, "Value Added: The Leadership Program for Musicians," 42.

Conclusions

Several conclusions can and should be drawn from the survey results. While some of the responses supported the hypotheses and the assumptions about what is known regarding the part-time worship leaders serving in the mid-size Southern Baptist churches, there were some other surprising results, such as what could be gained by the individual worship leaders from a mentoring relationship and the prevalence of some of the issues facing part-time worship leaders.

Financial Restraints

It is clear from previous research and from this survey that financial constraints are creating a real problem for churches. Churches are having to prioritize staffing or ministry or overhead costs. Only so many budgeted items are nonessential. LaRochelle echoes this when he clarifies, “It goes without saying that these very real changes have created financial burdens for mainline churches.”⁸³ These persistent budgeting concerns are leading to a decline in the fully-funded worship pastor in the mid-size Southern Baptist church.

It is also clear that churches that do not prioritize ministry needs over staffing or other nonessential spending could potentially see a decline in their evangelical influence in their community. As Hagen previously mentioned, “Most congregations do not have the money, the time, or the human resources to demonstrate a valuable difference from that of entertainment. The church's unique offering of relationship with Jesus Christ, a gift that entertainment will never deliver, can be provided without being different.”⁸⁴

⁸³ LaRochelle, *Part-Time Pastor, Full-Time Church*, x.

⁸⁴ Hagen, “The Low-Cost Church,” 17.

Without the disposable funds to meet every ministry need, the influence of many churches in their community is growing smaller and smaller.

Lack of Support

There is a clearly defined lack of support given to those who serve part-time or bivocationally throughout the Church. Bickers details in his book of denominational training events and gatherings,

Training events or other denominational gatherings are often held during the week when bi-vocational ministers are unable to attend. The message bi-vocational ministers receive when they are invited to the next training event or pastoral gathering on a Tuesday morning is that their presence is not really expected or desired. Unfortunately, even scheduling events on Saturday will not guarantee that bi-vocational ministers can attend. Saturday is often a day they need to finish up sermon preparation or make some church visits or do something with their families. Unless an event's topic really appeals to them or they know the event was developed specifically for them, they more often than not will choose to do something else that day.⁸⁵

This lack of support is also seen in the selection of denominational leadership.

There are very few leaders in the Southern Baptist Convention that were pulled to serve on the denominational level from the ranks of a bivocationally-led church.

Denominational leadership is often selected from well-known mega church pastors or even smaller but still fully-funded church pastors. As of the publishing of this paper, there were no Southern Baptist Convention leaders or officers of the Executive Committee that served in a bivocational role, despite estimates that half of all Southern Baptist ministers are bivocational or part-time.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, 144.

⁸⁶ <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/entities/sbcec.asp>.

Although inroads into growth in denominational support of bivocational ministry have been made, there is still much to be done. There is a lack of awareness for the churches that may not qualify as “small” (less than 200 by denominational standards) but may employ bivocational staff, either as a Senior Pastor or as secondary staff. The assumption is that these churches must have the financial resources to support their staff through continuing education and conference budgets, but, as the survey shows, this is not always the case.

Issues Pertinent to Part-Time Worship Leaders

As previously mentioned in this paper, there are specific issues that directly pertain to part-time worship leaders, even more so than fully-funded worship leaders. Although there has been very little written about this phenomenon, there has been a great deal of resources written about part-time or bivocational senior pastors or ministers in general. Part-time ministers usually have many, if not all, of the same responsibilities as fully-funded pastors, but with less time available for ministry.

Bi-vocational ministers have the same responsibilities as fully-funded ministers. There are sermons to prepare each week, people who seek counsel, conflicts that arise in the church, administrative tasks, meetings to coordinate and attend, congregants who need to be visited, and the various other general expectations people have of ministers, regardless of church size.⁸⁷

Even more than church duties, bivocational ministers often have a harder time balancing home and work life and finding the time for family responsibilities. Matt Friedeman lists several challenges to bivocational ministry that apply to every level of ministry. First, he discusses burn-out. By engaging two employments, many bivocational

⁸⁷ Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, 22.

pastors are overworked and taxed. Many bivocational pastors (worship leaders) see themselves as “less than” for serving bivocationally. “‘Greatness’—if there is such a thing in the Kingdom—should be defined in terms of answering nobly the call of God on *your* life (emphasis his), not somebody else’s and certainly not that of the mega-church pastors and their well-financed methods.”⁸⁸

Next, Friedeman cites time management and isolation as additional challenges to bivocational ministry. Finally, Friedeman looks at how family priorities struggle as a result of this ministry model. “Paul didn’t play games with the matter of family when he was delineating leadership characteristics for his young protégés in the burgeoning movement of the early church. He spends more time noting the importance of the family than all other characteristics mentioned, when factoring both the frequency with which family/wife/children are mentioned and the number of words used to describe the home.”⁸⁹

Benefits of Bivocational Ministry

One of the most surprising conclusions to this research is the advantages seen in a bivocational model of ministry across this research and found in the writings of others. There are many sources that cite the benefits of a bivocational ministry style, and there are many to be discussed. While many are forced into bivocational or part-time ministry, some actively choose to engage in this arrangement, particularly church planters and some senior pastors. One such benefit is the ability to keep a foot in the secular world,

⁸⁸ Friedeman, 27.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 32.

thus allowing for more opportunities to maintain a evangelistic lifestyle. Josh Presley reveals in *Facts and Figures* (a Lifeway publication), “With suspicion toward pastors growing daily in North America, making daily, real-life connections with our communities is more important than ever. There’s no better place to do this than in the marketplace. Working in the marketplace will give pastors a connection to their culture that they’d find difficult to make otherwise.”⁹⁰

Although many bivocational ministers do not intentionally set out to be compensated for part-time work, many do. Many churches are actively embracing and encouraging bivocational staff. Several sources cite the advantages of a bivocational model and encourage other churches and institutions to do the same, especially those bodies of believers that want to financially emphasize ministry or evangelism funding over overhead and staffing costs, such as church planters. This same reasoning can apply to secondary staff in the form of part-time or bivocational worship leaders, associate pastors and children/youth leaders.

Matt Friedeman cites seven benefits to bivocational ministry in his book *Cutting Edge of the Kingdom*. All of them warrant a mention here as he looks at the benefits from the perspective of the minister and the ministry. The first advantage Friedeman cites is realism. “Doing ministry exclusively in and through a church all day, every day, can easily devolve into *churchianity*. But *churchianity* is not how upwards of 99 percent of the world lives, and that kind of ministry can insulate pastors from the problems of the

⁹⁰Josh Presley, “7 Reasons Bi-Vocational Ministry Isn't Plan B,” *Facts and Trends* (October 4, 2016), <https://factsandtrends.net/2016/10/04/7-reasons-bi-vocational-ministry-isnt-plan-b/>.

vast majority of their congregations and, more importantly, the problems of the unchurched in their communities.”⁹¹

Next, Friedeman talks about the perspective and that bivocational ministers gain and the lack of perfectionism that bivocational ministers often experience due to lowered expectations. Then Friedeman discusses the natural “follow me” attitude that contributes to the success of bivocational ministries. The pastor is in the trenches and so the congregation often follows that style of leadership. Finally, Friedeman discusses the benefits bivocational ministers and ministries have in the areas of respect, Holy Spirit dependency, discipline and finances. “In all likelihood, the Great Commission future of this nation, and many nations, will rest on bi-vocational pastors who may or may not receive any financial package at all from the local church. They will be blessed for the sacrifice, and the fruit that coincides with the personal cost incurred, for the gospel.”⁹²

Recommendations

For the purposes of this paper, it is imperative that the institutions mentioned in this paper allocate the resources and man hours to develop a strategy or strategies to deal with the growing population of underserved ministers of any category. The growing issues associated with part-time and bivocational church leadership will most likely only continue to rise in the future.

⁹¹ Friedeman, 19.

⁹² Ibid., 24.

Greater Understanding of Bivocational Ministry

The first recommendation to be made is a greater understanding of the need for and needs of part-time worship leaders. Church-wide, there seems to be a stereotype that part-time worship leaders are somehow “less than” fully-funded worship leaders. It has been assumed that these men and women serving part-time are doing so because they are “less than” or somehow lacking in the criteria necessary for service to a bigger congregation. It is essential that the post-secondary institutions, denomination and state/local associations allocate the time and resources to develop a strategy of awareness and support for the part-time worship leader.

A greater understanding of bivocational or part-time church leadership (in any ministry area) would come from a few sources. First, those who choose to be educated in a Christian post-secondary institution or one of the six Southern Baptist seminaries need to leave their education with a greater understanding and support of those who choose to serve part-time, not less. Many of those who graduated seminary or another post-secondary program never intended to serve part-time or bivocationally. Those who are educating the church leaders of tomorrow need to impart on them a healthy respect and understanding of those who will serve part-time, whether intentionally or not. There should be a top to bottom review of policies and attitudes that contribute to the lack of support and understanding of part-time or bivocational ministers of any category, including specific coursework designed with the needs of bivocational church leaders in mind.

Chris Kopka tells the story in his article “The New Tent Makers,” of speaking with a young seminary-trained pastor. “I asked Tim if seminary professors had

introduced him to any role models, mentors or even examples of bi-vocational pastors. In short, the answer was ‘no.’ ‘If you don't have a fulltime, paying role as a pastor, it's somehow treated as a failure,’ he said.”⁹³ The post-secondary institutions that are training the church leaders of tomorrow should be encouraging the acceptance of bivocational leadership as the norm and an acceptable alternative to full-funded ministry.

Greater acceptance of the bivocational or part-time church staff member comes from a greater understanding and appreciation for the smaller church. Many churches choose to intentionally keep their numbers small by planting other congregations instead of building their own rosters. Church planting is a viable and intentional option to church growth, and one that is often vastly understood. Too many churches are trying to think bigger when they should be thinking wider, especially when growing church bodies outside of the predominately church-going Southeastern United States.

There are many other misconceptions about bivocational ministry that should be dispelled by the Christian educational institutions. A greater understanding for the purpose of and necessity of bivocational ministry, across the entire denomination, would go a long way to dispel those misconceptions. “A deeper understanding of bi-vocational ministers could do much to dispel the misconceptions many people-including other ministers- have about the work they do.”⁹⁴ It is essential that Southern Baptist leadership rethink the ways they can encourage and support bivocational leaders, starting with the educational system.

⁹³ Kopka, “The New Tent Makers.”

⁹⁴ Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, 17.

Denominational Support

Denominational support does not end with the post-secondary educational system. It only begins there. Bickers tells readers, “Despite being told by various denominational leaders that their numbers of bi-vocational ministers were growing and are expected to keep growing, I could find no denomination with a staff person specifically designated to work with bi-vocational ministers and their churches.”⁹⁵ As discussed previously in this paper, there is very little bivocational or part-time support for the worship leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, at the national level. Most of the allocated resources have been geared towards the needs of the Senior Pastor of the smaller church (less than 200 in attendance).

Any networks available to the part-time worship leader for enrichment is usually found at the state or local levels. This is why mentoring and coaching opportunities will be key in the future training of the part-time worship leader. Although the secondary institutions and the seminaries have lacked in the preparation of bivocational ministry, the Southern Baptist Convention, as a whole, is responsible for its lackluster effort towards this ministry.

Acceptance of Alternative Models of Leadership

With a greater understanding of bivocational ministry comes the potential for acceptance of new models of leadership for many churches. LaRochelle elaborates in *Part-time Pastor, Full-time Church*, “The bottom line is clear: Those who would argue against part-time or bivocational ministry tend to worry that their church would not

⁹⁵ Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, 20.

receive the quality service it needs were this kind of approach to be embraced and adapted.”⁹⁶ If the Southern Baptist Convention, as a denomination, is going to grow in its acceptance and support of bivocational ministry, then they must make allowances for church leaders who chose to embrace this model. The acceptance of reorganization means that many lay people in the church would then be responsible for duties normally performed by a fully-funded pastor or worship leader. Many additional resources would have to be allotted for their training and equipping. It requires a complete overhaul of what is known and accepted as “church” among many in the SBC. Mark Edington points out,

So here is the hard truth: the question many congregations face today is whether this professional model of ministry is consistent with their future, or with them having a future. Because we have equated a vocation to ministry with membership in a profession called “the ministry,” and because the Standard Model of ministry expects that a congregation must have a full-time member of that profession to be a viable church, we have created a set of economic circumstances that are causing a great many congregations to make hard choices. Will we have to close? Will we have to merge with another congregation across town, or maybe in the next town over? Or maybe-just maybe-might we reimagine the model of ministry we have inherited from the generations of faithful people before us?⁹⁷

Acceptance of a new bivocational model of leadership, whether for senior staff or secondary staffing, requires a complete restructuring of the definition of the church. “But it is not only the ordained minister in a bivocational parish who is bivocational. In fact, in the optimal realization of this model the entire congregation adopts a bivocational understanding of the ministry it is called to do in the world.”⁹⁸

⁹⁶ LaRochelle, 4.

⁹⁷ Mark D W. Edington, *Bivocational: Returning to the Roots of Ministry* (New York: Church Publishing, 2018), 9.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 10.

While there is no set model for bivocational ministry, many assume it looks like one staff member employed by the church and another secular job. However, one such model embraced by many other denominations is that of the shared staff member by differing congregations. This model of ministry requires the cooperation of neighboring churches to compensate and share a staff member, such as a worship leader. Christopher Hagen, a Lutheran pastor, outlines this ministry model in his article “The Low Cost Church.”

At a time when church membership, donations, and worship attendance are declining among mainline denominations, a different approach to structuring ministry is needed. Apart from matters of the faith, the organizing and carrying out of ministry in local neighborhoods must be reconsidered. Recent changes in ecumenicalism, technology, and varieties of services present opportunities for better ministry. . . . With less promotion of the church there can be more proclamation of Christ.⁹⁹

While seemingly impossible for many Southern Baptist churches, many other denominations openly utilize this shared method of ministry for various levels of church staff, including that of worship leader. Regardless of what model is implemented, it is important for area churches to embrace the possibility of some form of a bivocational model. It is necessary for the church, as a whole, not only to embrace this model, but to execute it properly for the continuation of kingdom work.

Mentoring

Without the changes needed in denominational support, another viable option for the part-time worship leader is that of mentoring. Tom Kraeuter gives a great definition for mentoring when he clarifies, “Mentoring is the current trendy term for discipling. In

⁹⁹ Hagen, "The Low-Cost Church," 19.

all honesty, it's the way the kingdom of God is supposed to be built. It's one person pouring into the life of another. It's the way Jesus trained His closest disciples. And it's the model He passed on for us to use."¹⁰⁰ It is the same model Dr. Bickers refers to as "coaching." This model of ministry could be so useful to help bridge the educational gap for many part-time worship leaders.

There are various models out there available on which to format a mentoring program. One of the most successful is the Five-Step Coaching Model Executive by Susan Battley. The five steps are "Define" (identify your coaching goals), "Assess" (analyze your business or professional situation), "Plan" (develop a detailed plan to accomplish the goals), "Act" (begin to execute the plan), and "Review" (evaluate the results to determine if the goals were achieved).¹⁰¹ Battley's approach utilizes a more formal approach to building a mentoring ministry or network. However, mentoring does not have to be so formal. Tom Kraeuter acknowledges,

A big part of my calling as a worship leader is to train others....Paul tells us that the purpose of leadership in the Church is 'to equip the saints for the work of the ministry' (Ephesians 4:12). As a leader, if I do all the work myself, I've missed the point. My job is not to demonstrate how talented and capable I am. It is to help equip others to do the work. As a worship leader, I must be involved in preparing others to lead worship, mentoring them, discipling them.¹⁰²

Mentoring is simply one person pouring into the life of another. This sort of relationship is seen throughout the Old and New Testament and could be easily incorporated into any ministry model.

¹⁰⁰ Tom Kraeuter, ed., *Mentoring Worship Leaders* (Hillsboro, MO: Training Resources, 2015), 45.

¹⁰¹ Susan Battley, *Coached to Lead: How to Achieve Extraordinary Results with an Executive Coach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 85-86.

¹⁰² Kraeuter, 45.

Bickers explains the need for coaching (his term for mentoring),

Coaching is one option that provides a context to help ministers address the challenges they face. Bivocational ministers need encouragement and acceptance. They need someone to come alongside them who appreciates what they do and the sacrifices they make. They need someone who will listen to their needs and offer practical suggestions for self-development tactics they can use to meet those needs. Many of them need a coach.¹⁰³

An ideal model for mentoring the part-time or bivocational worship leader would be for the larger congregations in close proximity to smaller congregations that may employ the bivocational model to share their time and resources. However, many larger congregations still see the smaller neighboring congregations as competition or threats to their success in a given geographic area, refusing to assist or lend time and resources.

Many larger congregations have fully-funded worship leaders who may hold more than one theological or musical degree. Who better to mentor a less-educated part-time worship leader than one who has all of the resources available to learn. “Mentoring involves an intense relationship whereby a senior or more experienced person provides two functions for a junior person; one function being advice or modeling about career development behaviors, and the second function being personal support, especially psychosocial support.”¹⁰⁴ Through the support of larger congregations with more resources at their disposal, many smaller congregations could gain knowledge and experience at a much more feasible cost.

¹⁰³ Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bi-vocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, 39.

¹⁰⁴ Sharp, 44.

In Conclusion

In conclusion, it is time the Church rethink the bivocational or part-time ministry model, especially when it pertains to the worship leadership of the church. It is time that the church work towards a greater acceptance and understanding of these men and women of God and their service to the Lord. Through efforts made by the Southern Baptist Convention, state and local associations and the post-secondary educational community, many great things could be done for the Kingdom of God. Chris Kopka suggests,

Such stories should make us rethink bivocationalism. Is it solely something to adapt to out of necessity? Or, like Tim and Scott, can we also come to see it as a path to greater ministry success? Many still regard bivocationalism as a second-class calling. But given the current economic woes and the challenges of reaching an increasingly secular culture, perhaps it's time to rediscover "tent-making" models of ministry.¹⁰⁵

These men and women need more support than they have been getting from the established institutions of the church. The Southern Baptist Convention, as a whole, should be providing more resources, more energy, and more time into bivocational ministry. This is a trend that is predicted by many to continue. It is time that this ministry model become a priority.

While the need for the part-time worship leader continues to grow, the response continues to lack. The Church can no longer sit idly by and do nothing. It is time to act. It is time for the Southern Baptist Convention, its seminaries, and entities to step up to the plate and provide the support and training the part-time worship leader needs and deserves. The Church should accept the growth in bivocational ministry as its future in

¹⁰⁵ Kopka, "The New Tent Makers."

order to begin preparations now for when more churches and ministers are employed in a part-time situation.

What this paper is proposing is for a complete and fundamental change in the collective thinking. No longer are we seeing the increase in a fully-funded church with a fully-funded staff to support it. This is the future. In order for this ministry to be achieved we must look beyond our programmatic ways and begin to see the need that is before us.

Finally, to the part-time worship leader, as Ed Stetzer expounds, “If you are a bivocational pastor, you are a gift to the kingdom. That is unquestioned.”¹⁰⁶ Thank you for your service to His Kingdom. You are appreciated and respected by so many in the Church and outside its walls. As the Church, it is necessary that we work towards a greater understanding and appreciation for these men and women called by God for service to His church in worship. With a greater understanding comes the support and encouragement these men and women of God deserve. It is time we are thankful for the bivocational or part-time worship leader and how they are serving and supporting the Kingdom of God through worship.

¹⁰⁶ Gray, “Is Bivocational Ministry the New Normal?”

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IRB Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

October 8, 2018

Donald Blakeney

IRB Exemption 3491.100818: The Rise of Part-Time Worship Leadership Within the Mid-Size Southern Baptist Church

Dear Donald Blakeney,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

- (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
 - (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and
 - (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
The Graduate School

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