

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

Developing A Pathway for Ministry Leaders at Southside Church of the Nazarene

A Thesis Project Report Submitted to
the Faculty of the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

by

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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This action research project created a leadership development pathway to produce more ministry leaders at Southside Church of the Nazarene. A five-step leadership development pathway culminating in discipleship integration was designed and implemented. This pathway produced a statistically significant increase in the number of new leaders in one quarter of a calendar year compared to the quarterly average of new leaders in the previous three years. Data was collected through surveys, interviews, and roundtable discussions, and reviewed by multiple researchers to help remove bias.

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To my Jesus, Sovereign Lord, Your calling never ceases to amaze me. Thank you for bestowing on me the great privilege of serving You in ministry and through my education. May this project serve as an offering of thanksgiving and a sacrifice of praise that it might in some small way advance the coming of Your kingdom.

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Abbreviations

CoK	<i>Church of a Thousand</i>
DMIN	<i>Doctor of Ministry</i>
IRB	<i>Institutional Review Board</i>
NIBC	<i>New Interpreter's Bible Commentary</i>
VDCN	<i>Virginia District Church of the Nazarene</i>

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The need for developing ministry leaders is as old as the church, and manifests in new ways with every generation. This action research project addresses this need by developing an effective Leadership Pathway for Southside Church of the Nazarene in Chesterfield, Virginia. Southside Church has lacked leaders, both lay and clergy, to lead all its ministries effectively. The church's structure and context make it difficult to overcome this problem. Therefore, a plan was created and implemented to develop more ministry leaders within the systems already in place at Southside Church to address this problem relative to this specific time and context.

Ministry Context

Southside Church is located in Chesterfield County, Virginia. However, it shares much of its ministry context with three other local congregations. Each congregation is a Church of the Nazarene and a part of the Virginia District of the Church of the Nazarene (VDCN). These four congregations share a similar problem and predominant ministry context that this action research project was designed to address. The areas addressed in the ministry context are location, size, structure and polity, and culture. While this action research project will be conducted at Southside Church, all four churches will be used as a reference point when considering the greater context of the problem and identifying any need for systemic change.

The researcher is on staff as the director of discipleship at Southside Church of the Nazarene. The implementation plan was designed and implemented in that congregation as a model that could be implemented at the other three large congregations in the Virginia District.

The first contextual detail to be considered is the location. Southside Church is in a large suburban area. Chesterfield County, by and large, is a suburb community of Richmond, Virginia, with a growing population of more than 378,000 people.¹ This is a similar setting to the other three large Nazarene congregations in Virginia. Each of the four churches is in a large suburban setting in the state of Virginia. The first, and the one attended by the researcher, is outside of Richmond. The second is outside of Fredericksburg. The third is outside of Harrisonburg. The fourth and final congregation is in Lynchburg. Each of these churches is in a large suburban setting where sizeable, well-managed, and staff-driven churches are more standard than in a rural setting.

The location also drives some of the expectations by the congregation toward the staff members of these four churches. In a suburban setting, people are more likely to work in a white-collar position or hold a blue-collar job in a large corporation. In these settings, a top-down hierarchy is typical, where most of the decision-making happens by upper management. This mindset often carries over into the church in large suburban settings, and ministry is expected to be done by the professional staff who are hired, trained, and paid to carry it out. This expectation works against the notion that average church attenders can step up to meaningful leadership roles or that these roles would even be open to non-clergy members who do not have a formal ministerial education.

Moreover, in a setting where the work is done by professionals, the church may not have even developed key leadership roles into which lay people are expected to grow. If key lay leadership roles have not been developed, then certainly, there is no clear pathway to help lay

¹ “Chesterfield County, Virginia,” Quick Facts, United States Census Bureau, accessed November 19, 2023, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/chesterfieldcountyvirginia>.

people to step into those roles. With no roles and no pathway, then there is no system to encourage and empower lay people to become leaders. This disconnect will perpetuate the gap between professional ministers and lay people doing the work of ministry.

In these four congregations, some effort has been made to address the gap, but it is not adequate or systemic enough to solve the underlying problem this action research project will address. These four churches do suffer the effects of their location on the ministry context. This creates a divide between the laity and the professional ministers, which inhibits the laity from rising to many leadership roles. The present roles, including leading a small group, teaching a children's or student class, or serving as a board member, are not adequate to fill the leadership needed in the local church, and even these roles are short of people to fill them.

The next issue contributing to the specific ministry context of Southside Church is its size. Like the other three large Nazarene congregations, Southside averages around 1,000 in worship attendance. Each of the four churches is substantially larger than the others in the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene. The district has eighty-six congregations that are active and reported statistics. If the four largest churches are removed, the other eight-two congregations account for 6,509 people attending worship on an average for the 2022–2023 fiscal year. This breaks down to an average congregation size of seventy-nine people. The four largest churches totaled 3,573 in average worship attendance in the same time frame with a congregational average of 893. The leadership dynamics and structure of a church that averages around eighty in worship attendance are often radically different than those for a church that averages around 900 in attendance.

A common moniker used in the Nazarene denomination for churches of around 1,000 in average worship attendance is CoK (pronounced coke) churches. For the purposes of this project, these four large churches will be referred to as CoK churches.

CoK churches have a very different leadership dynamic than small churches, and attendees may find it overwhelming to know where to get involved in serving, especially in leadership roles. Also, there is a frequent assumption that larger churches have all their leadership roles filled do not need the help, skills, or giftedness of other individuals in the church. While this is the opposite of the truth because large churches need many more gifted leaders, it is a common assumption and one that hinders the process of raising new leaders.

Another factor related to church size that hinders leadership development is that it is easier to hide in a large congregation. People may attend for weeks or even months before they get to know anyone and may not stand out in a large crowd. This makes it more difficult to identify people with leadership gifts and potential or to put them on any kind of leadership development pathway. Some people intentionally seek out a large church where they can attend and not feel compelled to get involved or lead. Southside Church certainly suffers from this contextual factor. It often has guests identify themselves as new through the connection system yet, when interviewed, they respond that they have attended for several months or been at several large events over the past year.

The next factor in describing the ministry context is the structure and polity of the local church. Southside Church is a part of the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene, or VDCN, and it has made the shift from a board-led church to a staff-led church model. This is significant for several reasons. In the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene, a board-led ministry model is

prescribed.² In this model, the church board takes responsibility for all the ministry and management of the local church in partnership with the senior pastor. The local church board is divided into stewards who maintain and run all the ministries of the church, and trustees who maintain the property and finances of the church. When a church is small, such as under 80 in average worship attendance, it is highly likely that every family in the church will be represented in a leadership role, whether it is serving on the board or in a smaller ministry capacity. This is especially true since the polity of the Nazarene Church allows for up to twenty-five people to serve on the local church board.

Churches that average around 1,000 or more in worship attendance have shifted away from a board-led model and into a staff-led model. While this model is not prescribed in the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene, a provision is included that simply says the board members will care for any ministries not already provided for by a staff member. However, there is no real guiding instruction for what this provision is to look like or a description of how such a model is expected to function. This is significant because it means that no defined staff-led model is outlined in the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene to be used as a reference for these large churches to follow. While most of the Manual is to still be applied as written, this does lead these large churches into relatively uncharted territory for the denomination at large, and particularly for the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene. When no prescribed structure for a staff-led model exists, a leadership development pathway for large churches neither exists nor is implied in the polity.

² Church of the Nazarene, *Manual 2013–2017* (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 2013), 84–93.

These four large churches still have a church board, but many of the ministry assignments the stewards on the church board once oversaw now have been handed off to paid staff pastors. This is true at Southside Church, which employs multiple pastoral staff members who oversee children's ministry, youth ministry, young adult ministry, discipleship, worship, executive functions, connections, outreach, and many other ministries. Some CoK churches have multiple staff members working together to fulfill the same role. These large churches hand off the trustee roles of managing the property and finances to paid staff members and outsourced service companies.

When the board leadership roles are diminished in scope, yet still limited to the same twenty-five members as a small church board, and much of the local church ministry is handled by paid staff, then it is far less likely that a family will be represented in any form among the leadership of a large church. This further reinforces the stereotype that large churches do not need the help of laypeople and that all the ministry is to be done by paid professionals, widening the gap between the needs of the ministry and the potential leaders who could fulfill those needs. Families may feel the need to serve within the local church but are less likely to think they are needed in leadership in the local church.

The final aspect of the ministry context is the culture of the local congregations. While much about the congregation's culture has been expressed in the discussion above, there is still more to the local church culture that impacts its ability to develop and empower new leaders. Part of that local church culture is expressed through its discipleship model. Each of these CoK churches has strived to employ small groups as the primary way a person is discipled outside of the preaching that occurs during the weekend worship services. Southside Church has taken small groups seriously and has long incorporated them into its overall discipleship process,

seeing as much as fifty percent of its congregation engaged in a group at various points over the last three years.

While small groups have been helpful in making disciples, they have a few drawbacks that negatively impact the leadership culture of large local congregations, including Southside Church. The first is that these groups have little structure, and the group leader is allowed to lead them as they see fit. This provides maximum flexibility within the group but also negates having a centralized pathway for developing leaders that can be employed through the small group ministry. Also, most of these groups are teaching-based groups in which one person teaches and the remaining group members listen. This further reinforces a consumer mindset rather than a contribution or leadership mindset. Those who are taught to consume instead of to contribute will be unlikely to step into leadership roles.

Another significant impact that small groups have had on the local congregation at Southside Church is unintentional and almost counterintuitive. Small groups have set the standard for what lay leadership looks like in the church because it is far more common to be a group leader than it is to be a board member or to hold a larger ministry role. This has reinforced the idea that any kind of senior leadership, or upper management to use the correlating business term, is in the domain only of the paid professionals. This has served to widen the gap between the pastoral and ministry leaders and the average church attender.

Outside of a small group leader or a board member, there are almost no leadership roles that are not managed by professionally trained ministers. This means that not only are there few good examples of lay leaders, but there are also no pre-defined available roles for lay leaders to embrace, let alone for volunteer ministers to step into. Instead of creating a leadership pathway,

these large congregations have unintentionally created a larger divide between the ministry staff and the lay leaders within their local church.

Problem Presented

The staff-led, large church model that Southside Church follows is significantly different from the average congregation in the Church of the Nazarene. This is a large denomination with 2.5 million members globally, but most of its churches are small. At the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene, the average worship attendance is 117 per congregation reporting. As stated previously, the average drops to seventy-nine if the largest four churches are removed from the equation.

These smaller churches use a leadership model of being led by a church board consisting of trustees and stewards who select a pastor, oversee the ministry plans, and administer the functions of the local church. The CoK churches on the Virginia District have shifted toward a staff-led model instead of a board-led model. However, there is little prescribed structure for a staff-led church in the Church of the Nazarene, as its manual prescribes a board-led model. While Southside Church has found provision within the Manual to operate with a staff-led model, the denominational structure has gaps that do not inform or direct large local churches on how to be staff-led.

These large staff-led churches function in a model that causes the congregation to overly rely on staff pastors to do the vast majority of the ministry work of the local church. This culture prevents new people from recognizing the need to step into leadership or feeling responsible to step into ministry positions. It has also conditioned the staff to not open doors to leadership roles for volunteers and not focus on training volunteers to be leaders.

The divide goes deeper at Southside Church and its large church cohort in that the paid staff want to accomplish their work during normal business hours, and the volunteer leaders want to do most of their ministry work outside of business hours. This limits the time staff and volunteers are available to work together as leaders. It also creates issues with the amount of time volunteer leaders can be mentored, with the expectations placed on volunteer staff compared to those placed on paid staff, and how to resource volunteer leaders outside of normal business hours when staff are less available. Each of these struggles widens the gap between paid and volunteer leaders.

Another, and perhaps the most significant, issue that hinders raising up leaders is that the ministry leadership structure of Southside Church is not necessarily tied to the discipleship model of the church. As such, leadership development is not seen as an essential part of the mission. The Leadership Pathway, or lack thereof, is also not directly connected to the discipleship model of Southside Church, which makes leadership development a side project rather than an essential and systemic part of what the local church is called to do as a part of fulfilling its mission. This has created the self-propagating problem of not producing enough ministry leaders. Therefore, the problem at Southside Church of the Nazarene is that it is not producing enough ministry leaders.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this DMIN action research project is to design and implement a ministerial leadership development pathway to produce more leaders at Southside Church. The presented problem of not producing enough ministry leaders is detrimental to the effectiveness of Southside Church in fulfilling its mission to make Christlike disciples. Therefore, several key steps must be taken simultaneously and systemically to help the church effectively overcome this

problem and fulfill its mission. These steps create a leadership development pathway designed to produce ministry leaders, whether lay or clergy, volunteer or paid, that could effectively administer all the key ministries of Southside Church. This model could potentially solve the leadership development problem for all large local congregations at staff-led churches on the VDCN, and this will be considered in the conclusion.

This ministerial leadership development pathway must be woven intricately into the discipleship process of Southside Church with the intention of fulfilling the local congregation's mission to make disciples. It cannot be a disconnected initiative. This pathway will be designed according to Southside Church of the Nazarene's specific needs, to raise enough ministry leaders for this local church. The leadership development pathway will help Southside Church minister effectively to Chesterfield County, Virginia, as it continues to fulfill its mission of making Christlike disciples who impact families to transform their world.

Basic Assumptions

The researcher for this action research project assumes there is not only a biblical precedent for developing leaders in the local church but also a direct biblical calling to develop leaders. This calling is the foundational impetus for pursuing this research project. The calling also provides a level of authenticity and integrity in seeking the help of other church leaders to engage in this action research project.

This researcher assumes that the pastor of Southside Church and the ministerial staff serving alongside him see the need for more ministry leaders. They are confronted with vacant leadership roles and a plethora of ministry ideas that are not able to get off the ground due to the lack of a ministry leader. This makes the need for ministry leaders abundantly obvious.

This researcher assumes that pastoral leaders in the local congregations selected for this project desire to see the number of ministry leaders increase and ensure these leaders are equipped and developed in healthy and meaningful ways. As such, they will be willing to help in the development process by investing in the lives of those in their congregations who have received a calling and gifting to lead.

The researcher assumes that developing leaders will need a clearly defined system so that it is consistent and repeatable. While leadership development can happen in other avenues, systems produce consistency and repeatability. There will need to be a system for leadership development that creates an ongoing and consistent result that can outlive this action research project to provide a sustainable shift in producing ministry leaders.

The researcher also assumes a decisive plan to make a significant positive change in the total number of ministry leaders developed at Southside Church. Since systems make results repeatable, a leadership development system will provide consistent opportunities to develop leaders and produce consistent positive results that will increase the number of ministry leaders.

This researcher assumes the results of this system will demonstrate progress in producing more ministry leaders within the thirteen-week implementation plan. While more fruit from these efforts will undoubtedly occur after the initial implementation plan, the researcher expects to see measurable results quickly within the implementation period for this project.

This researcher also expects that the lead pastor and staff of Southside Church of the Nazarene will be willing to participate for the duration of the thirteen-week implementation plan. The researcher has already had conversations with every pastoral staff member about creating and implementing leadership development, and the desire to see positive change is unanimous.

The researcher also assumes, pending positive results from the implementation of this research project, that Southside Church will be willing to use the information learned to help the other large churches on the VDCN to develop more leaders as well. Southside Church already partners with other churches in the district to help with leadership development in various other ways and is receptive to that partnership with the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene.

This researcher expects Southside Church and its pastoral staff will implement the plan with integrity and report the results with honesty. While this implementation plan will require additional work on the part of the pastoral staff, this researcher expects full cooperation from this local church. Rather than giving a half-hearted effort or inflating results, it is assumed that these pastors will demonstrate the honesty and integrity becoming of a minister. The researcher assumes this will be the same honesty and integrity that the staff desire to produce in the ministry leaders they currently still need. Having worked with these pastors as a current staff member of Southside Church for the past seven years, the researcher expects a high level of Christian character to be displayed throughout the implementation plan process.

Definitions

This action research project is focused on creating a system to develop ministry leaders at Southside Church of the Nazarene as a model for other large Nazarene congregations in Virginia. This will be accomplished by creating an integrated system that redefines the leadership structure and development processes as an integral part of the discipleship model of the local church. The following terms are central to that change.

Board-led model of church leadership. This action research project is being conducted in a Church of the Nazarene congregation that abides by the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene. A board-led model of church leadership is prescribed in the Manual. This is a partnership

between the pastor and an elected board of leaders whose lives demonstrate both saving and sanctifying grace and provide for the “interests of the church and its work, not otherwise provided for, in harmony with the pastor.”³ These leaders oversee the ministries of the church, electing a pastor, setting goals, approving a budget, and overseeing the development of pastors and local ministers.

Leadership development pathway. Mac Lake describes this as an intentional process of identifying and developing the giftedness and skillset of leaders who are already in churches.⁴ This helps them step into leadership roles and find fulfillment in doing what God has called and created them to do. This happens by creating a culture of development, a clear structure to guide potential leaders, a system to make the efforts consistent and repeatable, a helpful content base to address the knowledge gap, and empowering the right people who are called and gifted to be identified and equipped.⁵

Limitations

The action research project will face several potential limitations. One such limitation is that ultimately God is in control of calling and gifting people for leadership. While every effort will be provided to engage potential leaders, the thirteen-week implementation process may not line up with God’s timing for calling and gifting new leaders at this local church.

The thirteen-week implementation plan may be too short to measure the results of the leadership development pipeline effectively. Due to the significant steps that must be created to implement a leadership development pipeline, the process will be in place in thirteen weeks, but

³ Church of the Nazarene, *Manual 2013–2017* (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 2013), 84–87.

⁴ Lake, *The Multiplication Effect*, 7.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

measurable results of those stepping into the pathway or into new leadership roles may happen beyond the thirteen-week timeline.

Other potential limitations of the research project could include the pastoral staff not responding favorably to the process. Staff members may exit the project or decide not to implement the pathway well during the prescribed timeline. This implementation could also misalign with other local church initiatives or crises that redirect attention and resources away from implementing the research project.

One final limitation is that the local church will have to reconstruct a baseline of those called into ministry and stepping into leadership roles from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2023. Southside Church has not always tracked these statistics well. Reconstructing them from the memory of pastoral staff members and the available records may produce a false baseline for comparison to the results of this action research project—though every diligent effort will be made to produce an accurate baseline.

Delimitations

This researcher has identified several delimitations. The researcher has chosen to limit the research project to one of the CoK churches of the VDCN, Southside Church. This local church is among the largest four congregations on the VDCN. This imposed limitation will provide focus to the research project and the scope of the implementation plan.

This researcher also has set a delimitation that the leadership development pathway will work within the discipleship model of the local congregation rather than as a separate system. This will add structure over which the researcher is not entirely in control. As a part of the discipleship system, it will compare discipleship and leadership development results and

statistics from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2023, against those numbers produced during the thirteen-week implementation plan.

Thesis Statement

For Southside Church to solve the problem of not producing enough ministry leaders to effectively carry out the ministries of the local church, a new system for developing leaders must be designed and implemented. That system requires properly interpreting the unique ministry context and culture of Southside Church of the Nazarene. This includes being fully integrated into the life of the church through the current discipleship model rather than being externally imposed, as well as overcoming the real and perceived gaps between paid and volunteer staff.

Once the pathway is designed, the local church leaders who administer the pathway should be trained over two weeks on the model's philosophy and key processes, especially on how the pathway is to be systemically integrated into and propagated through the discipleship process. This two-week training begins the thirteen-week research period.

The implementation process includes inspiring, inviting, and equipping current and potential leaders to take a step of growth into a new leadership role. Inspiring the staff, current leaders, and congregation at large to be a part of the leadership development pathway raises awareness of the potential path forward as well as what the church values most. In this case, it values fulfilling the Great Commission through the multiplication of leaders in the local church. This inspiration is offered through sermons, leadership trainings, interest meetings, and other connectional points in the discipleship process such as assimilation and membership classes and through personal conversation.

Implementation also includes training sessions for current and potential leaders on leadership processes and roles, and how each of these roles is integrated into the larger picture of

how the church makes disciples. These training sessions enable current leaders and congregation members to take their next steps into leadership or take on higher-level leadership roles.

The implementation also includes an invitation process. Gifted individuals are invited into the leadership development process and equipping sessions to help train and empower them to step into new leadership roles. This is a key part of developing leaders. The invitation process helps disseminate keys of authority, resourcing, and responsibility to more people who can authentically lead rather than be micromanaged.

Finally, this implementation process includes equipping. The staff is equipped on how to develop new leadership roles within the church and how to delegate not only ministry tasks but also ministry leadership. They also are empowered to adjust their schedules and have more control over their time to work more effectively with volunteer and bi-vocational leaders who step into these new roles. The new leaders are then equipped with the necessary role-specific training to succeed in the specific ministry they serve. This is done through the ministry department they are serving in and larger staff training sessions. Additionally, the training includes ongoing leader enrichment so that new leaders can develop beyond their current ministry.

Once the plan is fully implemented, more leaders will be inspired, trained, invited, and equipped to serve as ministry leaders at Southside Church. This will have a cumulative effect in addressing the problem and fulfilling the purpose of this action research project. If Southside Church of the Nazarene implements this ministerial leadership development pathway, then it will produce more ministry leaders.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will review the thesis' conceptual framework foundations. It will carefully review the literature related to constructing leadership development pathways in local churches and evaluate the differences between the current literature and this thesis project. That review will be followed by sections that provide a theological rationale for why this project is biblically sound, as well as a theoretical foundation for how and why the thesis project will be developed and implemented in the specific context of Southside Church of the Nazarene in Virginia.

Literature Review

A review of available resources is included in this dissertation that compares the intervention this Doctor of Ministry action research project proposes to address to the current scholarly literature on the subject. The following literature review will provide context for why this intervention is necessary and how it addresses the relevant themes. The scholarly resources are assessed, noting where authors agree, disagree, or are silent on the topic this research project addresses. When researching models for leadership development pathways in large local churches, the following themes and literary resources were found to be relevant and formative.

The Need for Leadership Development Pathways

Developing leaders is a universal need among all organizations, including the church. That need seems to be rapidly growing, outpacing the capacity and effectiveness of current development efforts. While principles may be transferable, new methods and models for developing leaders must constantly be adapted.

The church has a long history of developing leaders. Early in Jesus' ministry, He developed followers, and from them soon selected twelve key leaders (Luke 6:12–13). The church has been developing leaders ever since. However, in recent years those pastoral leaders and high-quality ministry leaders have become harder and harder to find.⁶ A new method and model for developing and implementing a ministerial leadership development pathway is needed.

Address the Whole Ministry Leadership Base

A ministerial leadership development pathway must address the entire leadership base. Since the COVID–19 pandemic, there has been a sharp increase in pastors leaving the ministry, and even more pastors who have thought significantly about leaving the ministry as reported by the Barna group, rising from 29% in 2021 to 42% in 2022 among protestant pastors.⁷ However, pastoral leaders aren't the only leaders in decline in the local church. The number of volunteers in churches is also in decline, leaving critical lay leadership roles vacant. Survey results from 2021 show that volunteerism has declined by 14.5% from 2001 and is down a staggering 24% from its peak in 2013. It is clear there is a declining leadership base among both clergy and lay leaders alike. This fact reinforces the need for a ministerial leadership development pathway designed to recruit and empower both lay leaders and pastoral leaders.

Fulfilling the Calling to Lead

To be effective, this Leadership Pathway should help new leaders discover and clarify their calling to lead. Leadership development is a biblical conviction and, as Jared Wilson

⁶ Roger L. Hahn, *Ministry in Ambiguous Times: Pauline Reflections for Pastors and Church Leaders* (Kansas City, MO: NTS Press, 2023), 116.

⁷ "Pastors Share Top Reasons They've Considered Quitting Ministry in the Past Year," Barna, last modified April 27, 2022, <https://www.barna.com/research/pastors-quitting-ministry/>.

teaches, flows directly from the heart of Christ.⁸ This statement highlights the importance of a calling in developing leaders. This is not mere pragmatism. Part of the leadership development pathway must foster faithfulness to the calling of God to step into ministry leadership. Janet Faggart noted in her dissertation that the more deeply someone understands God’s calling on their life, the more likely they were to develop as a leader who can stand in the face of hardship and “complete their ministry journey well.”⁹

This is a necessary part of the pathway and the first step toward leadership. Hwa Yung in *Leadership or Servanthood?* says that every Christian is invited to give their lives away in service to the calling God has placed on their lives, and as they do, that service will necessarily place the Christian in the role of a leader as they impact those they serve.¹⁰

The calling to lead is often connected to a specific leadership vacuum or a vacant role. Instead of the calling being linked to a gap in the organization, Mac Lake suggests that the calling to lead is birthed in God’s heart and is a need in the life of a disciple. Therefore, the church should help equip people to answer the calling to lead regardless of a vacancy in leadership that exists in the local church.¹¹ This means fulfilling the calling to lead is less about crisis management and more about discipleship. Leadership development that helps an individual answer the call on their life must be woven into the discipleship process and naturally bolsters the leadership development pathway.

⁸ Jared C. Wilson, *Gospel Driven Ministry: An Introduction to The Calling and Work of a Pastor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Reflective, 2021), 143.

⁹ Faggart, “Discovering, Developing, And Deploying Emerging Ministry Leaders in the Assemblies of God,” 140.

¹⁰ Hwa Yung, *Leadership or Servanthood?: Walking in the Steps of Jesus* (Carlisle: Langham Creative Projects, 2021), 132.

¹¹ Lake, *The Multiplication Effect*, 4.

Increased Capacity

The problem this Leadership Pathway intends to solve is a shortage of leaders to do the work of ministry; however, it must also increase the capacity of the local church to do ministry by engaging people in ministry, not just learning about ministry. Dan Ebner addresses this needed capacity when he states, “At some point, you will discover that the change you want to see is too big for one person to lead. You will find that you need more leaders rather than followers. Leaders lead change.”¹² Developing leaders through the practice of engaging them in ministry as they learn is essential to immediately increasing the base of people available to accomplish the ministry of the local church.

That is a necessary shift this leadership development pathway will foster for churches that have only or mostly pastoral staff leading the work of fulfilling the mission. Dix notes that this model “would begin to open the door to greater training and leadership development as the mission of the church will not be accomplished through the staff only but through the congregation at large.”¹³ Engaging potential leaders in ministry leadership immediately as part of the pathway will enable them to gain valuable experience and model for those new leaders how to participate in creating leaders.

Structures for Developing Leaders

Since a leadership development pathway is needed, it clearly must be well structured to accomplish the stated purpose of raising up new ministerial leaders. Aubrey Malphurs in

¹² Dan R. Ebner, *Pastoral Leadership: Best Practices for Church Leaders* (New York: Paulist Press, 2018), 127.

¹³ Timothy Michael Dix, “An Examination of Leadership Development to Ascertain the Effectiveness of the Discipleship Ministry at CrossLife Church and Improve Multiplication Strategies” (DMIN project, Liberty University, 2022), 114.

Ministry Nuts and Bolts says, “It’s imperative that you have a strategy to develop a ministry dream team.” He goes on to give a clear warning that, “your ministry will only be as good as the people who minister and lead it.”¹⁴ This means it is essential that local churches have a defined process for developing the most effective leaders.

Leadership Development Pathway

The process by which a local church produces leaders should be intentional, robust, and effective at creating not just opportunities for people to step into leadership, but a clearly defined pathway by which leaders are developed.¹⁵ Geiger and Peck stress that this pathway needs to be systematic to intentionally produce quality leaders on a consistent basis.¹⁶

The calling of Jesus on every life is to go and make disciples (Matt 28:19). So, creating a system to develop leaders who influence others to follow Jesus—developing disciples who can go and make disciples—becomes the central work of the church. If this is the central work, it is imperative every church have a clear pathway for making disciple-makers.¹⁷ Since it centers around the work of making disciple-makers, it stands to reason that this Leadership Pathway should develop out of the local church’s discipleship process.

The foundation of this leadership development pathway is fairly simple. Leadership in the local church is influencing people toward Christ.¹⁸ That means the pathway will be a natural

¹⁴ Aubrey Malphurs, *Ministry Nuts and Bolts: What They Don’t Teach Pastors in Seminary* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2019), 117.

¹⁵ Dix, “An Examination of Leadership Development,” 111.

¹⁶ Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 14.

¹⁷ Dix, “An Examination of Leadership Development,” 111.

¹⁸ Wilson, *Gospel Driven Ministry*, 143.

outgrowth of the local church's discipleship model and will be fully integrated into the life of the church.

A leadership development pathway that rises out of the discipleship process would make the pathway available to everyone in the church. This correlates with what Asifatu says, "Everyone can learn leadership in the church because it flows out of discipleship."¹⁹ The primary method of discipleship in large churches on the Virginia District is participation in a discipleship group. These groups will help provide the first rung of leadership and the primary recruiting ground for encouraging engagement with the leadership development pathway.

One necessary structure that needs to be built into the discipleship process is a means of giving keyway access, or the authority to open doors to leadership roles that may have once been closely guarded. *Growing Young*, uses the example of offering keys to young leaders to get them involved.²⁰ This means not just assigning jobs or tasks to potential leaders but giving away the authority to lead and to make decisions. The leader is offered a role with all the resources and decision-making authority that goes with it instead of just a task that can be micromanaged. This allows the new leader to feel valued and equipped.

Miller and Duckworth propose a similar idea of empowerment for developing leaders. They wisely state that volunteers want to work with leaders who can bring out the best in them and this contributes to the overall sense of value they bring to the table as a volunteer.²¹ By setting clear parameters based on the vision of the church, but also giving a lot of leeway for

¹⁹ Sikiru A. Asifatu, "Leadership Culture: An Effective Leadership Strategy for Church Growth and Spiritual Maturity" (DMIN diss., Liberty University, 2022), 107, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/5049/>

²⁰ Kara Powell and Jake Mulder, *Growing Young: Six Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016), 44.

²¹ Sue Miller and Adam Duckworth, *Leading Not Normal Volunteers: A Not Normal Guide for Leading Your Incredible, Quirky Team* (Cumming, GA: Orange, 2016), 52.

volunteers to own the mission and fulfill it in creative ways through their service, they are being invited into leadership in meaningful ways and will desire to continue learning and growing.²² Getting out of the way and giving keyway or decision-making access for volunteers within the discipleship process creates a Leadership Pathway that inspires and equips new leaders.

Defined Leadership Roles

Offering clearly defined leadership roles appears to be a significant part of creating an effective leadership development pathway. Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre dive into this topic in *The Volunteer Project*. They posit that the central image for developing ministry leaders is found in Ephesians 4 and is the image of preparing someone for service.²³ This preparation should be a full process that helps someone find a place to serve and develop the skills necessary to serve in that role. In order to prepare someone well, there must be a defined leadership role for which they can prepare.

The process of defining roles is an essential part of delegating that frees up the time and ability of the leader who is delegating. Therefore, creating clearly defined roles that a leader can delegate to someone else helps to elevate the level of both leadership and accomplishment of the entire organization or church. This begins by having a clearly written job description.²⁴ This description should be developed into a list of competencies that the volunteer can focus on as points of growth to develop into the leadership role.

Miller and Duckworth build on this idea of the importance of clarity in these roles. They state that people are desperately looking for clarity that adds value to what they are doing and do

²² Miller and Duckworth, *Leading Not Normal Volunteers*, 56.

²³ Darren Kizer, Christine Kreisher, and Steph Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project: Stop Recruiting. Start Retaining* (Atlanta, GA: 181 Publishing, 2015), 84.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 85.

not want to just be a body filling a vacant spot.²⁵ In fact, people want to be challenged have opportunities to use their unique skills and expertise to contribute to the overall mission.²⁶ This is radically easier for volunteers when they have a clear description of the leadership role and the needed competencies to fill that role. This demonstrates a desire for a deeper, more significant ask, rather than a simple and less meaningful ask. Miller and Duckworth say this contributes to engagement from leaders and can help ward off boredom in a leadership role, which is key for developing leaders instead of burning them out.²⁷

Catalytic Processes for Moving Leaders Through the Pathway

Need for Catalytic Processes

A major area of concern in creating effective leadership development pathways is creating a catalytic process that moves a person through the pathway. Many researchers and commentators have noticed a problem with creating a system of available tools for growth and development but need to translate those tools into a plan where people continue moving forward using those tools or opportunities. Justin Joy addresses this issue by creating a catalytic event for each step of his leadership development process.²⁸ These events catalyze or stir up a desire to move forward that incentivizes growth.

Mentoring for Leadership Development

²⁵ Miller and Duckworth, *Leading Not Normal Volunteers*, 52.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 52.

²⁸ Justin Trevor Joy, "Establishing A Leadership Development Process for Gospel-Centered Multiplication at The Village Church, Flower Mound, Texas," (D. ED. MIN. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), 63.

A highly specific and meaningful catalytic experience is mentoring within the leadership development pathway. In *The Mentoring Church*, Phil Newton says that Jesus provides the master image of what it looks like to mentor leaders in the church and that this mentorship provides the reinforcement necessary for people to apply what they are learning through education and development.²⁹

Newton stresses that mentoring includes sending, so the mentor becomes a catalyst in the life of the new leader to keep growing and applying what they have learned of doctrine and praxis.³⁰ For this application to be fruitful, it requires the mentor to be overtly truthful. Baysee et al. state that even when it means that a protégé must be corrected or redirected at times when they have felt like a success, the mentor must tell the truth to help the young leader see themselves clearly and see how to grow and advance from where they are.³¹ They go a step further and suggest that it is foolish not to be radically honest with any Christian leader in the process of being mentored, offering them adequate supervision and accountability to keep them growing and walking with integrity.³²

Integration Into the Discipleship Process

This leadership development pathway is specifically for the local church, so it must be focused on fulfilling the mission of the local church. This necessitates a development pathway that is integrated into the discipleship process. Every believer in Jesus is on a journey of growth as a disciple. One of the outcomes of that growth should be intentional leadership development.

²⁹ Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church: How Pastors and Congregations Cultivate Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2017), 41.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 26.

³¹ Jason Byasee, Craig Kocher, and James Howell, ed., *Mentoring For Ministry: The Grace of Growing Pastors* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017), 56.

³² Byasee, Kocher, and Howell, *Mentoring For Ministry*, 52.

Geiger and Peck state that churches that produce good leaders have the conviction, culture, and constructs necessary to intentionally build good leaders because they see this being grounded in God's desired plan for his followers.³³

This integration naturally adds layers to the catalytic events in a new leader's life as they are supported by the overall structure of the church that promotes and trains people for growth. One part of the discipleship system that reinforces this is the small group structure. Ebener states in *Pastoral Leadership* that groups are essential for developing leaders as they keep people grounded in the body of Christ and foster personal connections necessary for healthy growth.³⁴

Joy also follows this line of thinking, saying that groups become the primary catalytic experience for keeping leaders moving through the Leadership Pathway.³⁵ He focuses on group-leader training as a catalytic tool to help someone move from leading self into leading others within the group context. While Joy and Geiger both focus on the group as a primary catalytic event, they at times seem myopically focused on the group experiences as if it consumes the entirety of the discipleship process, and focus almost exclusively on it as the catalytic event to keep people moving forward at the beginning of their leadership journey.

A more holistic approach to integrating a leadership development pathway into the discipleship process would provide many other catalytic experiences to keep someone moving forward and growing as a leader within the pathway. Faggart notes that several aspects of the discipleship process can help young leaders develop such as formal education, mentoring, understanding their call, practical ministry experiences, and team-based application

³³ Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 14.

³⁴ Dan R. Ebener, *Pastoral Leadership: Best Practices for Church Leaders* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 2018), 129.

³⁵ Joy, "Establishing A Leadership Development Process," 70.

experiences.³⁶ Each of these ministry experiences, along with the rest of the discipleship process of the local church, must have the leadership development pathway fully integrated into them in order to provide a wrap-around care structure that creates a catalyzing agent in the growth and development of leaders in the local church.

Vision Casting Through Promotion

One consistent struggle with developing leaders is that the church needs to find ways to let the potential leaders it wants to develop know about the opportunities and processes the local church offers. This struggle most frequently occurs when leadership development becomes a side project for someone in the church rather than it being a fully integrated part of making disciples. When developing leaders is a shared responsibility among all current leaders, and efforts are made for developing leaders to be a centralized goal, the entire organization becomes more effective. This was demonstrated through a case study on multi-generational mentoring where shared focus among current leaders to mentor new leaders increased organizational productivity.³⁷

The same principle applies to other areas than just mentoring. When there is a widespread focus with a clear goal that everyone knows about and is working toward, it will produce greater effectiveness. Betts claims that Nehemiah demonstrated this in the Bible by encouraging everyone around him to join in the task both through public proclamation and through noble example.³⁸ As his passion for leading them to accomplish God's vision burned bright and he fully

³⁶ Faggart, "Discovering, Developing, And Deploying Emerging Ministry Leaders in the Assemblies of God," 138–43.

³⁷ Joshua D. Henson, ed., *Biblical Organizational Spirituality: New Testament Foundations for Leaders and Organizations* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 306.

³⁸ T. J. Betts, *Nehemiah: A Pastoral and Exegetical Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 39.

engaged, that promotion inspired others to join in, even taking leadership roles to oversee construction at sections of the wall to see that vision fulfilled.³⁹

Miller and Duckworth note that promoting leadership roles with clearly defined expectations increases involvement and excitement in those who are serving.⁴⁰ Not only does promoting roles increase involvement, so does a training event for those interested in leading. While events can be cumbersome if done too frequently, occasional events present an opportunity to promote leadership roles where a ministry is headed and reveal who is needed to get there.⁴¹

Another way promotion becomes a catalyst for engagement in the leadership development pathway is by helping to celebrate the things that matter for developing leaders in the local church. Promoting leaders and completing projects shows what the church values and what can be accomplished by those who engage in the leadership development process.⁴²

Stage promotion from key leaders allows the body to celebrate together. This adds another layer of confirmation to the validity of what is being celebrated because it moves from a personal celebration to a corporate celebration. These moments should be used to tell the victory stories, whether small or large, and show off the leaders, volunteer or paid, as the heroes of the local church.⁴³

Methods for Equipping Leaders

³⁹ Ibid., 41.

⁴⁰ Sue Miller and Adam Duckworth, *Leading Not Normal Volunteers: A Not Normal Guide For Leading Your Incredible, Quirky Team* (Cumming, GA: Orange, 2016), 52.

⁴¹ Ibid., 57–58.

⁴² Ibid., 42–43.

⁴³ Ibid., 42.

In order to keep these heroes serving well, they need to be properly equipped. Leaders who are not properly equipped will quickly fall behind and no longer be effective leaders. Leaders must be able to adapt to change in new environments and circumstances. The more they are equipped for change, the better job they can do of leading through it.⁴⁴ Equipping leaders happens in several important ways.

Leadership Training

Every leader should be equipped with the specific skills required to do the job well.⁴⁵ In order to develop those skills, specific leadership training for the leadership role at hand must be implemented. This is done through “appropriate educational opportunities and exposing [leaders] to important developmental experiences.”⁴⁶

As a part of training, several authors agree that growing leaders need to be given a core purpose instead of just a job.⁴⁷ By sharing purpose, the new leader is empowered to own the bigger mission and find creative new ways to accomplish it. It allows the leader to participate in making the vision become reality rather than just doing what they are told, allowing them to use their gifts and skills to accomplish something meaningful for themselves and for the ministry in which they lead.

Effective training should be done through the most effective medium. When training must be done in person, the sessions should be short, infrequent, meaningful, and fun in order to

⁴⁴ Cockerell, *Creating Magic*, 6.

⁴⁵ Miller and Duckworth, *Leading Not Normal Volunteers*, 57.

⁴⁶ Cockerell, *Creating Magic*, 115.

⁴⁷ Cockerell, *Creating Magic*, 118; Dave Ramsey, *EntreLeadership: 20 Years Of Practical Business Wisdom From The Trenches* (New York: Howard Books, 2011), 280.

keep leaders engaged and growing without feeling bogged down or like they are wasting their time.⁴⁸

Leadership Enrichment

A growing area of interest is leadership enrichment. The key idea is that leaders are invested in not just the role they fill for an organization but also because they are people worthy of investment. Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre ask a critical question to guide this process: “Have you added value to their life outside of what they do for your organization?”⁴⁹ In a Christian setting, this is all the more poignant of a question because every person is valued as a bearer of God’s Image. People will feel this value most in a work setting when they are invested both in their professional and personal growth.⁵⁰

Team members feel loved and appreciated as individuals when they are invested in as people, not just doers of tasks. This is easily accomplished by offering opportunities for team members to go to additional training, conferences, and networking events.⁵¹ These can be formal opportunities offered through the local organization or outsourced. When every leader knows that they are valued and their organization is willing to invest in their continued growth, it not only will “improve their performances but also bolster their self-confidence and inspire in them a profound sense of commitment.”⁵² This both honors the person and helps the organization. It is truly a win-win scenario, adding value to both parties.

⁴⁸ Miller and Duckworth, *Leading Not Normal Volunteers*, 59.

⁴⁹ Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 51.

⁵⁰ Jim Clifton and Jim Harter, *Wellbeing At Work: How To Build Resilient And Thriving Teams* (New York: Gallup Press, 2021), 139.

⁵¹ Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 56.

⁵² Lee Cockerell, *Creating Magic*, 118.

Synergizing Steps for Pathway

The process of creating leadership development pathways is more effective when every aspect of the pathway is working in tandem with the other related elements to produce a synergistic effect that increases the efficacy of the pathway. This synergistic effect will be supported by the following tactics.

Multifaceted Approach

When creating a pathway for growth, the more areas that are working together, the greater the potential growth. Gallup demonstrates this by identifying five key elements of wellbeing. They note that when one area of wellbeing is high, the net effect on happiness or satisfaction is lower than when all five areas of wellbeing are elevated. A small increase in each area produces a larger net effect on the happiness of the employee than the sum of the other increases. It has a synergistic effect that boosts accomplishment more than predicted.⁵³

John Maxwell demonstrates this same principle by describing a growth environment. He lists ten key layers that work together to create a growth environment that he insists is conducive to growth, giving an amplified result to the team member's efforts. This is such a helpful principle; he advises team members to work toward creating the necessary structure for this environment if it is not provided for them.⁵⁴ This environment with multiple methods of reinforcing leadership development all synergizing together will help team members grow to new levels of leadership in an accelerated way.

Scaffolding for Leading On Level

⁵³ Clifton and Harter, *Wellbeing At Work*, 33.

⁵⁴ John Maxwell, *The 15 Invaluable Laws Of Growth: Live Them And Reach Your Potential* (New York: Center Street, 2012), 98–99.

As people lead at different levels according to their gifting, skillset, and maturity, they will need adequate scaffolding to allow them to step up to the next level. General educational methodology applies to adult learners as much as it does to younger students and is applicable when learning new leadership strategies in a ministry setting.

Cognitive development in a specific area increases and a leader grows through interactions with more capable people, or leaders who have led previously in a similar setting. These more capable people keep new leaders from feeling alone in the discovery process and serve as guides to help the new leader to step up to the level of their current capacity to lead.⁵⁵ Scaffolding is described as, “giving information, prompts, reminders, an encouragement at the right time and in the right amounts, and then gradually allowing the students to do more and more on their own.”⁵⁶ Scaffolding can emerge as training material is adapted to be on the level the new leader is capable of receiving, when problems are walked through with a mentor, relevant examples are shared and talked through, and students try out new skills and receive helpful feedback to improve performance.

This type of scaffolding parallels the mentoring process of walking with students or new leaders through watching, participating, and doing. However, scaffolding can include additional structure and support designed by the team leader to help catalyze the learning and implementation process the mentor is facilitating. Scaffolding offers additional support and encouragement that is designed to help the new leader step into the next level of leadership, living up to their potential. Scaffolding supports the student while they learn a new skillset and then encourages them to employ that skill under the supervision of a mentor until it is developed

⁵⁵ Anita Woolfolk, *Educational Psychology*, 10th ed. (New York: Pearson Education, 2007), 48.

⁵⁶ Woolfolk, *Educational Psychology*, 49.

enough for them to lead on their own. This kind of scaffolding ensures the student or new leader is never alone in the process and provides a clear line of communication should the learner need to revisit a problem or get advice on a new one.

Message Reinforcement

Another way synergy happens in leadership pathways is when the same message is conveyed by multiple avenues. When an organization has a central mission that drives why they develop leaders, it should communicate that mission through every part of the leadership pathway. When this central message is reinforced through multiple avenues, the efforts of developing leaders are synergized because everyone is focused on the same end. Dave Ramsey says this synergistic focus on mission across departments in his organization drives success by defining what his organization is and is not, which drives what his leaders will and will not do.⁵⁷

The value of regular huddles is highlighted in *The Volunteer Project*. The purpose of these huddles is to reinforce the message of why the team exists and what they are serving together to accomplish.⁵⁸ By reinforcing the message regularly at strategic times, it keeps everyone working together and moving forward.

When the message being communicated at every opportunity is that leaders need to be developed and deployed, it synergizes the pathway by connecting missional value to every aspect of the development process. This can be seen through reinforced messaging in job descriptions, mission statements, weekly goals, and training outcomes. Anywhere the message can be reinforced to bring cohesiveness to the pathway will synergize and amplify the results of the whole.

⁵⁷ Dave Ramsey, *EntreLeadership*, 28–29.

⁵⁸ Kizer, Kreisher, Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 65.

Leadership Development Culture

There are many strategies and avenues of leadership development; however, they are difficult to implement as separate initiatives. A more effective route for developing leaders is to establish a leadership development culture. Peter Drucker is famously quoted as saying culture eats strategy for breakfast.⁵⁹ While several strategies for leadership development have been evaluated in this review, shifting culture is the intended goal.

Establishing New Norms

Shifting culture must move past strategy enforcement to a place of establishing new norms. One way to establish norms is through a clear mission statement. If the mission statement is significant and moving, it creates culture by highlighting a shared value that drives behavior.⁶⁰ When every action a team member makes is tied to that mission, it makes it easier to have a culture of leadership development because every leader knows what they are being asked to champion. It also adds moral or ontological significance to the tasks of leadership.

The Volunteer Project highlights that culture shifts when people are prioritized over programs. When people are intrinsically valued over their individual contributions to a task, culture shifts toward leadership development, because leadership development is focused on investing in people.⁶¹ This is particularly true in a Christian ministry setting because Jesus gives a clear mission statement that focuses on people when he commands his followers to make disciples, shifting the culture to stay focused on developing people.

⁵⁹ Ken Favaro, "Strategy Or Culture: Which Is More Important?" *Strategy and Business*, May 22, 2014, <https://www.strategy-business.com/blog/Strategy-or-Culture-Which-Is-More-Important>

⁶⁰ Dave Ramsey, *EntreLeadership*, 28.

⁶¹ Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 51.

Another shared value that drives new cultural norms is the idea that everyone grows.⁶² When the cultural norm is to value growth not just in a few select people but in everyone, then more people will grow. Also, when people are the focus, and they are invested in, they feel valued. These people “produce a mission-oriented and irresistible culture of acceptance, friendliness, and fun.”⁶³

A simple action that develops a new set of norms within a leadership development culture is to shift the questions that are asked around leadership. Instead of asking if all the holes are filled, value is added by asking if current leaders are serving in the area they are best equipped and passionate about leading. Allowing people to serve within their passions and gifts makes it easier for them to step forward and lead. It also conveys the idea that they are valued over the task they are currently producing.⁶⁴ This strongly influences a culture toward leadership development.

Room To Fail

Failure is seen as the opposite of success and something that is often feared, avoided, and misunderstood. However, failure is far more common than success in most every facet of life and is a necessary part of the leadership development process.⁶⁵ Within an organization, many people are afraid to fail because they fear their job, title, or respect is tied directly to their performance. People will be afraid to fail if they know their job depends on their success, and ultimately the

⁶² Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 35.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁶⁵ John C. Maxwell, *Failing Forward: Turning Mistakes into Stepping Stones for Success* (New York: Harper Collins Leadership, 2000), 5.

shared mission will fail because the leaders were afraid to take necessary risks. All growth and advancement necessitate some level of risk.

The problem with fearing failure is that it keeps a team from being willing to try new things and take risks that move the team toward the shared mission and vision. A leader needs to provide room for the team and individual leaders to fail, so long as it is intentionally responded to through the development process.⁶⁶

One clear pathway for allowing team members to take calculated risks to reach the mission is to provide a structure of support when they do so. This starts by making it clear who their direct report is and how to contact that person.⁶⁷ That simple structure provides the first safety net for volunteers to take the right risks by being closely connected with their leader and allows them to respond quickly if those actions lead to failure. By proactively providing a discussion and framework for response, as well as a guide if things go wrong, the team member will feel more supported and be willing to take risks to accomplish the mission.

Celebrating Well

Creating pathways to develop new leaders can be daunting but it becomes easier when that pathway is marked by celebration. Celebrating successes and successful leaders helps to paint a picture of what the ministry values. It also makes success more enjoyable and reinforces the behaviors and outcomes the ministry desires to reproduce, especially if it is directly tied to its display of the characteristics and traits the ministry values the most.

⁶⁶ Lee Cockerell, *Creating Magic: 10 Common Sense Leadership Strategies from a Life at Disney* (New York: Currency, 2008), 115.

⁶⁷ Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 83.

A significant way a ministry organization can celebrate a key leader is by compensating them for their work. While the Bible says, “The worker deserves his wages” (1 Tim 5:18 New International Version), there are significantly different ways a team member can be compensated, even if they are a volunteer. The first is through financial compensation. Another is through public accolades in front of the rest of the team. Another way is by investing in their development. The important part of this kind of celebration is that the team member emotionally connects to the compensation, so they count it as valuable.⁶⁸

Theological Foundations

This action research project is specifically for a church setting; therefore, it is all the more essential that it has a solid theological foundation on which to build the proposed implementation plan. This foundation will be comprised of scriptural principles and supporting insights from scholarly sources. The theological foundation will show support for the purpose of this project and justification for the thesis and corresponding implementation plan.

The problem this project seeks to address is Southside Church of the Nazarene is not producing enough ministry leaders. The thesis proposes that an intervention consisting of a leadership development pathway integrated as part of the discipleship process will produce more ministry leaders. Therefore, the theological foundation will begin with a justification for a clear discipleship process with a focus on leadership development.

Biblical Mission

The church has one single mission. In Matthew 28, after the resurrection of Jesus, He appeared to His eleven remaining disciples and commanded them in to, “go and make disciples

⁶⁸ Dave Ramsey, *EntreLeadership*, 280.

of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” This mandate makes it quite clear that the church has one mission, and every activity that the church participates in should be part of fulfilling this mission. The same calling Jesus gave the Twelve, to follow him and become fishers of men, has now been extended to all people.⁶⁹

Having a single mandate necessitates that any perceived problems in the church must be resolved through a solution that helps the church fulfill this mission, actualizing that same mission within its own community.⁷⁰ The perceived problem addressed in this action research paper is that there are not enough leaders at Southside Church of the Nazarene. Therefore, the process of developing leaders must be grounded in the overall process for the local church to make disciples, and the purpose of developing leaders must be for the express end of those leaders being empowered to lead others into discipleship.

Biblical Foundation for Authority

This passage in Matthew 28 is quite specific in what Jesus authorized the church to do. The authority to make disciples, baptize, and teach is grounded in the authority of Jesus demonstrated by the resurrection. Jesus grants that authority to His disciples to do the things He commanded.⁷¹ Nothing outside of that process is given the authority of Jesus, so only in so far as it enables the discipleship process can a church focus on a leadership development pathway.

⁶⁹ M. Eugene Boring., *Matthew*, vol. 8, New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 503.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Developing Leaders

Developing leaders is a possible outcome of making disciples, but because it is not explicitly commanded it must have its own biblical justification. The importance of good leaders is demonstrated throughout Scripture. It begins in Genesis 2 when God said He would create a “helper” (v. 20) suitable for Adam. If Adam is to have a helper, then Adam must learn how to lead.⁷² This is immediately evident by God allowing Adam to name all the living things including the woman He made from Adam’s rib.⁷³

While it comes from the negative, the great value in leadership is demonstrated by the failure that happened in Genesis 3. When Eve disobeyed God, Adam “was with her” (v. 6) yet did not lead her into obedience to God’s command and remained a silent partner while they together fell to the temptation.⁷⁴ The results were swift and severe, leading to the Fall, which damaged every possible relationship between Adam and Eve, the couple and God, God and creation, and humanity and creation.

God repeatedly calls good leaders, or people He later shapes into good leaders, throughout Scripture. Abraham is called to lead his family on a journey with God. Joseph is called to save his family by leading them into Egypt. Moses is called to save his family, now a burgeoning nation, by leading them out of Egypt. Joshua is called to lead his people out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land. Prophets and Judges were appointed to lead God’s people within the Promised Land before the time of the kings. David is called to be king because he is a man after God’s own heart, and to start a dynasty of leaders who would ultimately

⁷² Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Genesis, Leviticus, Exodus*, vol. 1, New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 352.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 353.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 361.

culminate in the King of kings and Lord of lords being born into his family lineage. Jesus continues calling leaders in the New Testament by calling disciples, then apostles, to follow Him and eventually carry out the work of ministry on Jesus' behalf. God calls and uses gifted leaders at every stage of the biblical account.

The leaders God calls are seldom ready for the work to which God calls them. So, throughout Scripture, God is seen developing leaders. In Deuteronomy 6, this process is commanded to begin in the home. God calls the Israelites to love Him with all their heart, soul, and strength. Then He instructs them to impress the teaching of the Ten Commandments on their children. They are intentionally instructed to lead their families in the process of loving God through observing His law and making it the center of their lives.⁷⁵

The men of Israel are appointed lay leaders for their homes.⁷⁶ In order to help them lead well in this ongoing setting, God gives specific instructions. They are told to talk about the law, to make physical reminders they carry with them everywhere, and to write them on the doorframes of their houses and gates (vv. 5–9). Clearly, God is instructing the fathers in an ongoing process of developing them as leaders in their homes and in the faith community of Israel.

Jesus continues the biblical focus on developing leaders. A biblical case study is displayed in Luke 5. Jesus calls on local fishermen to allow Him to use their boats as a platform from which to speak. Sitting on the boat allowed His voice to be broadcast over the water to the gathered crowds standing on the shore.⁷⁷ Simon agreed and put out from the shore. After that act

⁷⁵ Ronald E. Clements, *Numbers*, vol. 2, New Interpreter's Bible Commentary (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 345.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 343.

⁷⁷ Justo L. González, *Luke*, *Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible*. ed. Amy Plantinga Pauw and William C. Placher, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 74.

of obedience in doing something familiar, Jesus stretches Simon's ability to trust him and follow instructions. Then he instructs Simon to go into deep water for a catch. This stretched Simon because it was the wrong time for fishing. He had already been out all night in preferable conditions and caught nothing. Simon eventually relents, taking Jesus at His word, and is immediately rewarded with an excessive catch.⁷⁸ This inspires Simon to be humbled before Jesus and to invite his companions to be a part of what Jesus has done.

Jesus demonstrates a powerful leadership development process. He invited someone to observe, then participate and use their skills in a unique way, then take a step to grow in obedience to God, next to develop character through humility, and finally to enlist the help of others. It is a simple yet powerful process of moving from learning to leading.

Jesus caps off this process by making a clear and distinct ask of Simon: to renounce his old ways and follow Jesus into a new way of life. This new life would be a step of faith, trusting God to work through Simon as he led others to Jesus.⁷⁹ This specific ask also defines the leadership role that Jesus is inviting Peter to take on and does so in ways that Peter can clearly understand. That role is grounded in the overarching process of making disciples that Jesus just demonstrated to Peter and his companions, informing their understanding of exactly what Jesus desired and how He expected them to go about fulfilling the task. So not only did Jesus give a clear ask that defined the leadership role He was inviting Peter to step into, but He also mentored Peter by modeling what He wanted him to do.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Justo L. González, *Luke, Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Amy Plantinga Pauw and William C. Placher (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 74.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

J. Alan Culpepper states that Peter's calling in Luke parallels that of Paul in Acts. In the *New Interpreter's Bible Commentary* (NIBC), Culpepper explains both men are called to lead during the ordinary routines of their day for no specific reason other than that they were chosen by God.⁸¹ This highlights that leadership can be a calling given to anyone at any time, and the church should be offering leadership roles, development, and opportunities to the entirety of the body of Christ. At the moment of God's calling, all these other processes need to be in place so a person can readily step forward to lead.

Several themes in this passage are mirrored in many other passages in Scripture, demonstrating them as consistent biblical principles. One of these is the idea that God calls people into specific leadership roles. This is highlighted in Ephesians 4 when Paul says that it was God who specifically called people into unique leadership roles within the church. Each of these roles has its own specific skillset and gifting that enable a person to lead well. By offering this list of leadership roles to the early church, it would have made it easier for someone to clarify the calling God had placed on their life and helped them to have the framework by which to recognize, understand, and step into that calling.

Elevated Leadership

Not only are there clearly defined leadership roles in Scripture, but there is also a clear principle that those who lead well will be promoted to higher levels of leadership, creating a process or pathway for development and growth. Jesus speaks of this in Matthew 24:45–47. He states that the servant who cares well for his master's household will be blessed and elevated in leadership to be put in charge of many more things.

⁸¹ J. Alan Culpepper, *Luke: New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*, vol. 9 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 118.

This parable is told to counter poor leaders taking advantage of their roles in the Jewish religious community and warning them to follow God’s design for servant leadership.⁸² The authority behind this leadership and structure is a derivative of the authority of Jesus, temporary until Jesus’ return, for the good of other servants, and democratic in that all the servants and leaders are to work together for the common good of God’s calling.⁸³ This provides the practical cause behind the structure of leadership.

This principle of advancement based on a leader’s faithfulness to serve well in their current role can be seen in the lives of many biblical leaders. Joshua was faithful to report the details of the Promised Land and to trust that God could give the land and its inhabitants into Israel’s hands. Joshua was promoted from spy to the leader of Israel. David was faithful in caring for his father’s herds and defending against the bears who attacked. God promoted him to caring for the flock of God’s people, and defending against giants and warring nations. God consistently rewards those who are faithful in small roles by growing them as leaders.

Clear Processes

A key component in creating a leadership development pathway is intentional plans and processes. Despite some protests from those who do not enjoy the planning process or belittle it as not being very spiritual, God encourages intentional planning for ministry. Roger Hahn shows the necessity of intentionality when he states, “Ministry as leadership means taking the church step-by-step through the process of becoming the body of Christ.”⁸⁴ In Luke 6 Jesus encourages the crowd to be like the wise builder who methodically dug out a strong foundation (vv. 46–49).

⁸² Boring, *Matthew*, 448.

⁸³ John Meier, *Matthew, New Testament Message 3* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1990), 293.

⁸⁴ Roger L. Hahn, *Ministry in Ambiguous Times: Pauline Reflections for Pastors and Church Leaders* (Kansas City, MO: NTS Press, 2023), 110.

In Luke 14, Jesus encourages methodical preparation to make sure a person can finish what they start, especially following him faithfully (vv. 25–33).

This same key idea is demonstrated well in the Old Testament example of Nehemiah. Nehemiah carefully observed the damaged walls and then cast a vision for rebuilding them in chapter 2. In chapters 3 through 6, Nehemiah carefully and methodically plans how he will rebuild the walls and enlist the help of all the tribes of Israel to do it.⁸⁵ T. J. Betts says, “There are a lot of people who can easily point out bad situations, but it is a special person who not only sees a problem but also takes on that problem as her own and becomes a part of the solution.”⁸⁶ His leadership skills in planning and organizing are on full display, matched by his ability to delegate and motivate in order to keep people inspired and focused on the work before them.

Vision Casting for Promotion

The final key component is promoting the leadership process. There is at times a push in the local church for things to happen organically and to not be driven by leadership. This is often viewed as more spiritual by some in the congregation. However, promotion as a part of vision casting is a process consistently used by God to bring about change. In a simplified way, this is the entire purpose of the prophets. They were called by God to lead the people in a different direction away from the patterns of this world and to bring them into alignment with God’s ways. They helped people see what was possible, so they knew a better option existed for which it was worth striving.

⁸⁵ Ralph W. Klein, *Nehemiah: New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 3 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 770.

⁸⁶ T. J. Betts, *Nehemiah: A Pastoral And Exegetical Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 39.

In his book, *Prophetic Imagination*, Walter Brueggemann states, “Our culture is competent to implement almost anything and to imagine almost nothing.”⁸⁷ The work of the prophet is to help people imagine a future they do not know how to envision on their own. This forth telling of a new way is a part of promoting God’s agenda in the lives of His people. Promotion in the leadership process works no differently.

As a part of moving people to God’s plans for their lives, leaders must promote the leadership opportunities that are available. Until these opportunities are promoted, many people will not even see the possibility that they could become leaders. Moses does this when he calls for leaders to help judge the people. Jesus does this when, despite Peter’s protest, He tells the fishermen to follow Him, and He will make them fish for people. The apostles do this when they seek out people filled with the Spirit and wisdom to lead the ministry of bread distribution. Casting a vision that helps a developing leader see the possibility that they can grow into a better leader is at the heart of the promotion process within a leadership development pathway.

Theoretical Foundations

To create and implement an effective leadership development pathway, the biblical principles explored in the previous section of this paper should be applied in practical ways to the ministry context. While there are many experts in this field and many more methods and tools to help with developing leaders, the right tools must be used that are specific to the context and supported by these biblical principles.

One of the first theoretical considerations is that the leadership development pathway flows out of the local church discipleship process and is integrated in every area. Mac Lake

⁸⁷ Walter Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001, 40.

points out that most churches only see leadership development as a necessary evil, a means to an end of filling vacant leadership roles. He challenges that the church should see leadership development as a necessary part of developing the gifting God has given someone.⁸⁸ This vantage point helps the current leaders to view leadership development as a part of discipleship, developing the giftedness God has placed inside of a person to do ministry.

Because the church's primary calling is to go and make disciples, developing the giftings of leaders becomes an essential part of what the church is called to do. This means that all leadership development must be a natural outflow of the discipleship process, and it has to happen in every area of discipleship. Specifically, leaders are developed in every ministry area and at all levels or stages of leadership. The expectation becomes that everyone grows, even if it leads them to a different area of ministry or a different leadership role than the one they are in or for which they are currently training.⁸⁹ There must be a process of continual growth in leadership that corresponds to the desired ongoing growth as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Within the discipleship process, there must be clearly defined leadership roles. The Bible lists several specific leadership roles that coordinate with spiritual gifts for ministry. The clearer these roles are expressed, with titles and job descriptions including privileges and responsibilities, the easier it will be for someone to know what leadership is needed and how to best serve to meet the need.⁹⁰ These clear roles also help people plan for development and know that they have opportunities to grow in their local church setting.

⁸⁸ Lake, *The Multiplication Effect*, 4.

⁸⁹ Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 35.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 85.

Creating a leadership pathway necessitates every part of the church be focused on developing leaders, not just a single program or ministry area.⁹¹ A leadership pathway is a fully integrated way of looking at discipleship with a focus on developing leaders who can carry out the mission of the church. Integration with the discipleship process is a central key to the intervention in this paper because many leadership development processes are a part of the discipleship system. By fully integrating, it allows the pathway to retain a personal approach. Every person in the pathway knows who to contact, who to receive instruction from, and who is setting the expectations for them. This allows clear communication and simplifies the growth pathway for the person on it.⁹²

Other researchers have implemented a similar approach to full integration in the discipleship process, but many limit leadership development to the small group process, a mentoring process, or some other small and focused area of discipleship rather than the entire discipleship process.⁹³ This proposal designs the leadership development process to flow through the entire discipleship process so that the equipping of leadership goes hand in hand with the equipping for ministry and the Christian life.⁹⁴ It lives in every part and takes advantage of every discipleship system in the local church.

Within each of the defined leadership roles, there should be a clear process for entering leadership, being trained for leadership, and being encouraged to grow into a larger leadership role. Justin Joy addressed this need and called it a catalyst experience that helped expedite the

⁹¹ Joy, "Establishing a Leadership Development Process," 24.

⁹² Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 83.

⁹³ Joy, "Establishing A Leadership Development Process," 79.

⁹⁴ Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 84.

process of motivating and inspiring people to keep moving through the pathway.⁹⁵ He lists activities like going on a mission trip as helping someone align their passions and desires with their ability to lead in order to help them take the next step.⁹⁶ Since these catalytic experiences need to happen in every ministry area at every stage of leadership, no single experience can be identified either holistically or contextually. Therefore, churches must use a different process that is scalable and transferable consistently in all ministry areas.

At Southside Church on the Virginia District of the Church of the Nazarene, the staff has long noticed it had a process for developing leaders that offered many specific and effective tools. However, very few people were taking advantage of the tools. Much like Joy's need for catalytic events, Southside Church desired to find a way to move people along a pathway and keep them growing that did not depend solely upon the person recognizing their need to grow and signing up for a class.⁹⁷

Several key catalytic processes have proven effective. One such process is pairing the leader with a mentor or coach. A mentor can guide the leader through the process of what tools to use, the right time to use them, and what training they need. It makes the whole process more personalized.⁹⁸ The second process is clearly establishing what the recommended growth plan in a leadership role will be and into what roles the leader will be encouraged to develop. While the overall structure should be set by the pastor over the ministry area, this part of vision casting

⁹⁵ Joy, "Establishing A Leadership Development Process," 77.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 71.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 68.

⁹⁸ Jared C. Wilson, *Gospel Driven Ministry: An Introduction to the Calling and Work of a Pastor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Reflective, 2021), 152.

really allows the prophetic imagination to come to life as a mentor gets to know someone and tailors the process in a way that specifically invests in this new leader's life.⁹⁹

These clear processes should have detailed step-by-step instructions on how to grow out of a given leadership role and into a higher role. These instructions and roles need to be broadcast and vocalized often to get people to care about them and show interest in obtaining them so they can grow and develop as a leader.¹⁰⁰

All of these processes need adequate promotion. Promotion is simply making sure that everyone knows the local church has a process by which it desires to help them grow and use their leadership gifting. This promotion should come from someone with the authority to lead well, which is likely the lead pastor in a worship service. It could also come from another key leader or one of the pastoral directors who regularly serves on the preaching team. This is part of the vision-casting process to imagine a life infused with God's gifting that enables a person to live differently than they do right now. For this specific instance, vision casting would include helping people realize everyone is called to be a leader, all the different roles in which they can serve, which roles they would be good at, and how to take the next steps into one of these leadership roles. This promotion would include underscoring the step-up process that enables a person to transition into the next leadership role.¹⁰¹

Another key aspect of promotion is celebration. Key volunteer leaders should be regularly celebrated in multiple ways publicly. Public appreciation from the stage from the lead pastor or another key leader or promotion through social media keeps the leadership focus front

⁹⁹ Wilson, *Gospel Driven Leadership*, 152.

¹⁰⁰ Joy, "Establishing A Leadership Development Process," 73.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

and center.¹⁰² This teaches the entire congregation that volunteer leaders are appreciated and are set up as an ideal for other volunteers to strive toward. Promoting through not only celebrating a leader but also celebrating the valuable contribution made to the overall mission by a project a leader spearheaded is excellent because it shows the value of what a leader accomplishes for the kingdom and keeps the promotion process kingdom-focused. This helps volunteers connect the dots between the small acts of faithful service building up over time to produce a large impact. When those dots are connected, and they are connected to a faithful leader, it inspires volunteers to remain faithful and step into leadership roles as well, believing that they, too, can make a difference over time, even through small acts of service and leadership.¹⁰³

Christian Formation

Theoretical implementation of leadership development practices in a church setting should always be driven by the full discipleship process. That process guides Christian formation and should make use of the best understanding of human developmental theories such as those offered by Piaget and Vygotsky. When the intellectual development theories of Piaget, which focus on reasoned learning, and Vygotsky, which focus on assimilated communal experiences, are combined into what Kim calls the dual knowledge theory, it provides the learner with a holistic approach to combining rational and relational perspectives on Christian formation.¹⁰⁴ This approach provides a reasonable and relationally grounded faith in which to grow spiritually.

This action research project will give participants opportunities to develop through both methodologies. The pathway will be outlined again below considering the dual knowledge

¹⁰² Miller and Duckworth, *Leading Not Normal Volunteers*, 73.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁰⁴ James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim, *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development* (Nashville, TN: B&H Books, 2010), 66.

developmental theory. First, the Leadership Pathway includes leadership training. Within this training, knowledge is imparted that the participants will need to remember and apply according to the instructions given. This will build upon the faith and training they have already received as a disciple of Jesus and take their understanding of leadership to a higher level in the context of leadership being framed as an outcome of good discipleship. They will also need to grow relationally through that training, as they will be instructed in the context of the Southside Church faith community. The lived experiences of these participants will provide the context by which the training will be framed and implemented. That context will help to form a transformative environment that becomes a catalytic experience for the participants to grow in their faith as they trust Jesus and respond to the call to grow as leaders.

The next part of the Leadership Pathway is enrichment opportunities. These opportunities will be communal experiences in which other leaders are gathered and provided instruction that will help them grow. This is not specific training for a ministry leadership role, but rather investing in the individual as a person called to lead. This will be a transformative experience that will shape the learning and spiritual development of the participant. Also, there will be structured learning that occurs through presented material at the enrichment event that will aid in the rational development of the individual as they memorize and theorize around the material presented. Both schema and thema will be working together to inspire and challenge the participant to grow as they understand the methods and value of leadership better, and are inspired by those around them and the environment of desired growth.

The third part of the pathway is defined leadership roles. While this is primarily a schema-related step because it is learning the defined roles and the duties and requirements that come with those roles, it is also thema based. The roles defined are understood only within the

context of a faith community that is formed and structured in such a way as to require these leaders. The roles formed are also in response to a faith community that desires to provide leadership and provide it specifically in the ways presented through these roles. Defining leadership roles will challenge participants to learn a new structure by which the church can be led and relationally inspire them to see leadership in one of these roles as both possible and impactful.

The fourth part of the pathway is promoting vision. Again, this requires schema in learning the methods, roles, and purposes of the leadership culture being crafted in the local church. It is also *thema* because the local congregation already provides a culture for growth that will be shaped further to add value to leadership roles and those willing to take them up. It will provide an intentional pathway for spiritual formation as a culture of expectation drives participants to take deeper steps of faith in trusting God to lead others in His flock.

The final part of the pathway is discipleship integration. This step, more than the others, will promote spiritual formation because it provides the full framework to view growth in leadership as a growth in the gifting and calling that God has placed on the participant's life, and as an expected outcome of growing in their faith. Catalytic experiences that propel the person forward are thematic expressions derived from the experience of the faith community laying a foundation of expectation. Literally, this intervention is an outgrowth of that culture because the researcher is a part of that congregation. This intervention invites participants to take a deeper spiritual step as disciples by learning a new role and its requirements in the context of equipping them to make other disciples, and that learning and praxis happen in the context of the faith community preparing a pathway for the participant to do so.

Measuring Formation Through Intervention

This action research project will measure in several ways the intellectual development that leads to spiritual formation. First, it will survey pastoral leaders to see how many people responded and stepped into leadership roles. This is the first and easiest way to measure intellectual growth as people understood the ask and were willing to take a risk on faith, rising to the challenge and entering a new leadership role. That same survey will ask the pastors how effective the intervention was from their perspective in shifting culture to encourage ongoing leadership growth through the pathway. The intentional response of the participants and the culture creation that produces leaders will measure through schema and thema the intellectual growth leading to spiritual formation.

The second measurement is through interviewing the new leaders. They will be asked if the intervention assisted in their decision to step into leadership as they evaluate the schema provided through training, enrichment, and defined roles, as well as the thema provided in culture creation and discipleship integration. Their responses will show how effectively each aspect led to their spiritual formation.

The third way spiritual formation will be measured is through a roundtable discussion with the pastoral participants who implemented the intervention. They will evaluate the schema of the implementation process and the thema of how it shifted culture and worked within the culture of the church (or not). These discussions will be focused on whether the intervention shaped lasting spiritual change through faith formation in new leaders. The review of the plan will provide additional schema and the dialogical approach to the roundtable will provide a thema element. This could have additional spiritual formation benefits for the leaders who implemented it, not just offering a measure of the formation effect on the participants who responded to the action research project.

Conclusion

The problem that this thesis intends to address is that there are not enough leaders at Southside Church of the Nazarene to fill all the needed ministry roles. Literature reveals that this is not the entirety of the problem. On a deeper level, the problem is that gifted people do not have ample opportunity to develop the gifts God has given them to lead in the local church, and not enough people are equipped to guide future leaders through the process. An even deeper problem is that no clear process has been developed or implemented to solve this problem. All these factors have contributed to the problem manifesting in a need for more leaders in ministry roles.

The purpose of this research paper is to create a Leadership Pathway that will develop more leaders for these churches. This pathway should address inadequacies in other models, such as focusing on leadership development in only one area of ministry or not integrating leadership development into the entirety of the discipleship process.¹⁰⁵ It also must address developing leaders for filling a need in the local congregation rather than for investing in the lives of leaders in an effort to make Christlike disciples and fulfill the church's God-given mission.¹⁰⁶

The pathway needs to have a catalytic component to keep people moving and growing. Unlike previous models, this catalyst should not be a single activity. It must be relational and tailored to the specific leadership context. This is best accomplished through a mentorship

¹⁰⁵ Joy, "Establishing A Leadership Development Process," 24.

¹⁰⁶ Timothy Michael Dix, "An Examination of Leadership Development to Ascertain the Effectiveness of the Discipleship Ministry at CrossLife Church and Improve Multiplication Strategies," (DMin project, Liberty University, 2022).

process where the leader is given individualized attention and guidance to help them keep growing and taking steps into leadership.¹⁰⁷

The Leadership Pathway must be promoted to fulfill its purpose, the. Vision casting will show people the value of the process and make them aware of what it will require from them. Vision casting will help people see what is possible for them as leaders even when they previously couldn't have imagined it.

If this Leadership Pathway is implemented, Southside Church of the Nazarene will produce more leaders. Because this is a holistic approach, woven into the discipleship process at every level, designed to be an ongoing development process rather than a short-term intervention, the researcher expects the pathway to produce significant and ongoing results. They will be measured in the short-term intervention period but are expected to continue for the life of the implementation of the leadership development process in the local church.

¹⁰⁷ Herman H. Walker, "A Legacy of Millennials: Discovery of a Leader Development Process for Family Church in North Carolina," (DMin project, Liberty University, 2020).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter will present how the intervention will address the problem. The details of the design for the intervention will be discussed in the first section. This will include tasks and steps to complete, people and resources involved, how to collect and analyze data, and a timeline for beginning and progressing through the implementation plan. The second section will detail how the implementation of the intervention, collection of data, and subsequent analysis were conducted and any issues that arose through that process.

Intervention Design

The purpose of this action research project is to produce more leaders at Southside Church of the Nazarene. The following intervention will directly fulfill that purpose through a five-fold intervention plan. Once the intervention is successfully conducted, qualitative and quantitative data will be collected and analyzed to determine the efficacy of the intervention.

The action-oriented intervention plan is designed to work not based on one novel idea but through the combined implementation of several interrelated steps woven seamlessly into the discipleship process. Those steps are training, enrichment, defined roles, and vision casting, all woven into the discipleship process. Figure 1 offers a diagram of these steps that form the Leadership Pathway this action research project will implement.

Leadership Pathway

Five steps of implementation

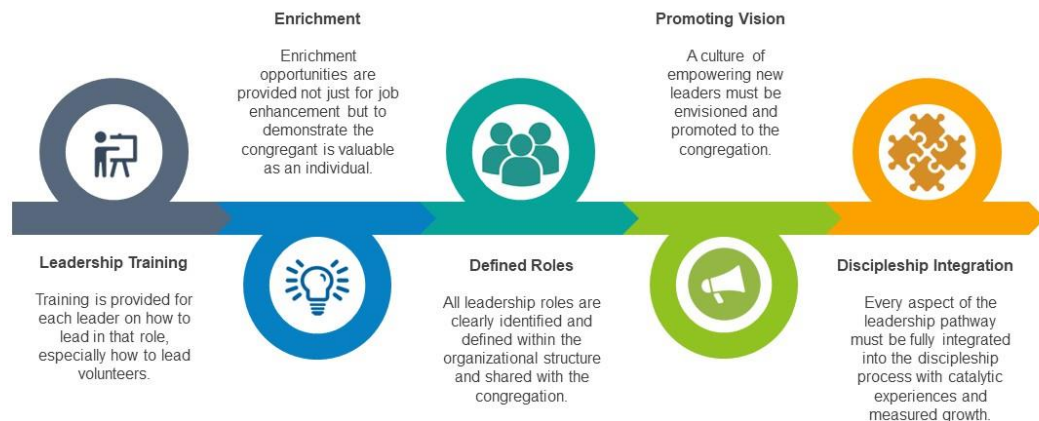


Figure 1. Leadership Pathway

Having received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the implementation plan will be conducted over a thirteen-week period, beginning January 1, 2024, and concluding on March 31, 2024. This will encapsulate one-quarter, during which the efficacy of developing new leaders can be measured and compared to other quarters in recent history, specifically to provide a comparison of raising up leaders in a post-COVID environment.

Before the steps can be implemented, the researcher should request permission from the lead pastor through an official letter (Appendix A). Then, the lead pastor would need to respond through an official letter permitting the researcher to conduct the implementation plan within the local church (Appendix B). The pastoral staff are the participants who would implement the intervention in each of the ministry areas of the church, so they would need to be recruited. This would be a two-step process. First, the idea for this intervention would be proposed to the staff in a weekly staff meeting, and the researcher would ask them to consider being part of this research

study. Later that same day, a recruitment letter (Appendix C) would be sent to each staff member through the local church's online project management platform to follow up on the discussion and to reinforce the value of participation in the study. Attached with the recruitment letter would be the pastoral staff consent form (Appendix D). Staff would be asked to return the form within five days if they are willing to participate. These items would be completed prior to the January 1, 2024, implementation start date.

The first step of implementation is the leadership training. Training is an essential part of change as people must be taught how to effectively do something differently to produce a different result, which, in this case, is the raising up of more leaders. Training will begin with the pastoral staff. The staff will meet one hour a week on weeks one and two of the implementation plan for training. This will occur after the weekly staff meeting on Tuesday mornings.

The first weekly staff training will cultivate buy-in from the staff by asking meaningful questions about how additional leaders might positively impact their area of ministry responsibility. It will be followed by questions about why they do not have those leaders now and what they perceive as standing in the way of that objective. Finally, this intervention will be presented as a solution to the problem of needing more leaders to supply their ministry area fully. This training is outlined in Appendix E.

The researcher serves on staff at Southside Church of the Nazarene as the Director of Discipleship. The pastoral and administrative staff will be recruited and invited to participate, but their participation will not be in direct response to pressure or expectation of the researcher in their ministerial role as a part of the staff. While participation is completely voluntary, this researcher deems a low likelihood of anyone backing out of the implementation plan during the

implementation period. Should a staff member back out, the data for the other ministry areas will be collected and used as the basis for analyzing the effectiveness of the intervention.

At the conclusion of the first week of staff training, the staff will be asked to aid in supplying historical data. The historical data form provided in Appendix F will aid in this data gathering. The staff will be responsible for providing the historical data of how many people served in leadership in their respective ministry areas for the 2021, 2022, and 2023 calendar years. They will also provide the current number of leaders serving in their ministry area at the start of the implementation as of January 1, 2024. These numbers will provide the historical background against which the data from the research project can be compared.

The second weekly staff training will begin by recapping the vision casting from the previous week's meeting. This will highlight the desire of the staff to raise up new leaders and this implementation plan's role in solving that problem for more effective ministry in the local church. This should reinforce the buy-in from the previous meeting and help encourage those who may be struggling to fully embrace the intervention.

The training will quickly move on to how each participant will implement the intervention in their own ministry area. This will include identifying and planning for the necessary training, enrichment opportunities, leadership roles, promoting the vision, and discipleship integration, all within their own area of ministry. A template for how the church will apply the Leadership Pathway, so that each area of ministry can contextualize the model without straying from its direction, is provided in Appendix G. This template has a space for filling out how they will implement the model. This form, or a copy of it, must be returned to the researcher at the latest one week later on the third Tuesday of implementation.

Each successive week of implementation, weeks three through thirteen, the researcher will engage the staff during the weekly staff meetings with three questions to help the team stay focused on the implementation, asking these questions: “Are you still actively implementing the Leadership Pathway?” “Have you encountered any roadblocks with implementation with which you need help?” “Where have you started to get traction with new leaders as a result of the Leadership Pathway?” In addition to engaging during weekly staff meetings, the researcher will schedule one-on-one meetings with pastoral staff as needed to help them think through and check the progress on developing the implementation plan for their ministry area.

Another part of step one in the Leadership Pathway is to provide training to all new leaders who step up during the intervention. Because this training will be done by the individual pastoral leaders, they will create their own training based on the following parameters. Each pastor will set a time for training with every new leader who steps up. That training will include covering all five steps of the intervention: leadership training, enrichment, defined roles, promoting vision, and discipleship integration. These elements will be explained in the new ministry leader’s context, including how the pastor will support the leader in those five ways. Then the new leader will be walked through the process of delivering these five things with the people they will lead. The pastor will take the lead in providing as much of this information as possible for the new leader to synergize training and opportunities. An outline for this new leader training is provided in Appendix H.

A final part of implementing leadership training is pairing all new leaders with a mentor or coach. This mentor will be a catalyzing agent to help the new leader continue growing and progressing, taking advantage of the training and enrichment opportunities that Southside Church will offer. The mentor can be a pastor or can also be a highly gifted volunteer who has leadership

experience in the area the new leader is stepping into. This mentor may be assigned to assist with one leader or be assigned to a team of ministry leaders, such as a mentor to small group leaders.

Step two of the Leadership Pathway provides leadership enrichment opportunities to the church congregation. These opportunities will be available to all potential leaders and will serve two purposes. One is to invest in the body of Christ at the local church to help build them up as potential leaders. This will help shift to the culture that the church expects volunteers to be involved in leadership and not just paid staff. It also shows that Southside Church values individuals and wants to invest in them, even if they are not currently leaders.

The second purpose is to provide a recruitment opportunity for new leaders. At the end of the enrichment opportunity, those who desire to step into leadership will be invited to scan a QR code that will take them to a leadership interest form. The information on that form is provided in Appendix I. This form will gather the personal information of the potential leader and provide ministry areas in search of leaders.

The researcher will then forward the data collected on the interest form to the respective ministry area pastors. The pastors will be tasked with personally responding to each person within five days to help onboard them into the leadership process. This task agreement will be included in the participation agreement in Appendix D.

There are two leadership enrichment opportunities planned to be offered to all leaders and potential leaders at Southside Church during the implementation period. Both are leadership simulcast events. The first is scheduled for rebroadcast on January 13, 2024, for the local congregation. The second is scheduled for a rebroadcast on March 15–16, 2024. The rights to simulcast and rebroadcast these events have already been purchased and added to the church event calendar. This schedule will provide an enrichment event near the beginning and end of the

implementation plan. Additionally, staff pastors are encouraged to offer other smaller enrichment opportunities through their ministry area.

The third step in the Leadership Pathway is clearly defining the leadership opportunities by identifying leadership roles and giving them clear job descriptions. Clearly defining leadership roles is an essential part of delegating. It is the key leader defining all the tasks that need to be accomplished to meet the missional purpose of that ministry, defining success for the role, and then giving someone else the essential training and support to fill it. Without this process, too much of the ministry load either falls on the pastor or is not accomplished effectively.

A base structure for essential ministry roles will be provided and serve as a template for every ministry area even though the specific names may change by area. For example, each ministry area needs group leaders. That level of leadership may be called a small group leader, large group leader, class teacher, or facilitator in a given ministry area, but for the church leadership structure at large, it will be designated as a group leader with a basic job description that will be made more specific in each ministry area. Having this clear structure with well-defined roles allows potential leaders to know there is not only room for, but also an expectation for them to grow into higher levels of leadership. Again, this will combat the culture that paid staff fills all the leadership roles in the church.

The following ministry roles will be used to fill out an overall leadership structure for Southside Church. Some roles are specific to the entire leadership structure and some can be reproduced multiple times within each ministry area. The roles are as follows:

Team members. These people serve as ministers or missionaries and are entry level roles who carry out most of the work of ministry.

Group leaders. These people serve as leaders or teachers in a group setting in each ministry area. They have more responsibility to direct team members and those being ministered to, making sure they stay engaged and grow.

Ministry coordinators. These people are responsible for providing organizational leadership to a ministry area to assure the group leaders and team members are directed to perform their ministry and to give a cohesive missional direction to the ministry area.

Coaches/mentors. These people invest in other leaders and coach them in how to be most effective in their ministry. They do not focus on logistics like the coordinators, but rather in helping those they mentor to improve practices and tactics of being effective in ministry. They are the first call when a problem arises and they help guide a leader through it.

Support pastors. These people feel called into pastoral ministry, have likely served as a ministry coordinator in the past, and work with the coordinator for a given ministry area to provide spiritual leadership rather than organizational leadership as they focus on pastoral care, mentoring, and discipling. This role could be seen as a chaplain role that comes alongside a ministry coordinator to provide additional spiritual leadership. Depending on the structure of the ministry area and whether the leader has a call to pastoral ministry, either a coach/mentor or a support pastor may fill a similar role. However, support pastors generally serve over a ministry area to provide pastoral support whereas a coach/mentor functions like a “lead teacher” on a team, such as a group leader with a lot of experience who mentors other group leaders.

Ministry pastors. These pastors lead the primary church ministries such as children, students, adults, worship, etc.

Pastoral directors. These pastors serve as a team that oversees a missional area such as discipleship, connection, outreach, worship, development, and communication. This team works

with the lead pastor and executive pastor to set the overall plan for living out the church's mission, vision, and values.

Executive pastor. This person oversees the day-to-day ministry operations of the church and offers strategic leadership to the directors and pastors.

Board Members. Within the polity of the Church of the Nazarene, board members are elected officials in the local church, designated as trustees and stewards, who are responsible for meeting at least quarterly to establish a budget, ensuring the mission of the church is being carried out, aiding in fundraising and championing ministry initiatives, and caring for the church property. Board members select pastoral candidates for the church membership to vote on and are also to be examples to the church of high-capacity volunteer leaders who engage in ministry and mission.

Lead pastor. This pastor provides leadership to the church through establishing mission and vision, preaching, teaching, and providing pastoral care and direction. They set the trajectory for the rest of the pastoral team and for the overall direction of the church.

Within each ministry area, there should be roles designated at the leadership levels of team member, group leader, ministry coordinator, and support pastor. These roles should be designated by the ministry pastor with clear job descriptions in writing. Each job description should have clear tasks and expectations, who they report to, who will mentor them, what is the growth plan for that leader, and the missional purpose of their role.

There are two things to consider in role development: the missional purpose of the role, and that every role description needs to include a growth plan that utilizes a mentor. Because a mentor is someone who can guide a new leader through a ministry in which the mentor has already served, they will be the one who sets the pace for the functioning and growth of the new

leader in that role. This person will serve as a catalyst for the new leader to keep them moving forward and will be the go-to person for when the new leader has questions or concerns in ministry.

The mentor will oversee a step-up plan for how the leader is growing toward the next role they can potentially step up into. Every role will include a step-up plan, so if a leader has the potential, giftedness, and calling, a clear pathway to step into the next level of leadership is already available. A generic step-up plan should be set for each level of leadership and then tailored to the candidate by the mentor and ministry pastor.

Second, every role needs a missional purpose. A ministry role serves a function within the structure of the church but it should never be divorced from the missional purpose it accomplishes. For instance, a group leader's primary job is not to teach a curriculum, it is to guide group members into an authentic and growing relationship with Jesus Christ. That is the missional purpose and it is much more fulfilling and significant than just a job description.

Finally, as a part of fulfilling that missional purpose, clear descriptions of authority need to be written into the job description. If these people are allowed to lead, then they need to know what authority they have to do so, and what room they have to experiment for the sake of accomplishing the mission. They need parameters around what risks they are allowed to take and how much of the effective fulfillment of mission they are allowed to own and for which they get to design the pathway to accomplish it. An image of the leadership structure noting the key roles is provided in fig. 2.



Figure 2. Leadership Roles Pathway

The next step of the Leadership Pathway intervention is promoting vision. This step is a more intentional one toward shifting the culture of the local congregation by promoting the leadership development pathway through public vision casting. This is done in several ways. The pastor will preach a sermon on biblical leadership during the intervention period. During that sermon, this intervention plan will be intentionally promoted, and new people will be invited to step into leadership.

The sermon will focus on painting a picture of church leadership where the pastoral staff helps direct and lead a team of lay leaders who are responsible for the primary discipleship efforts of the church. To make disciples well, the local church needs a team of leaders much larger than the paid staff. This sermon will also promote the idea that one does not need to be a professional to lead. One definition of a leader is someone who has been where the church wants

to go and is willing to help the church get there.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, a leader needs to be only one step ahead of someone on the Leadership Pathway or the discipleship journey.

Promoting the vision will also happen from the platform outside the sermon. This will be done by highlighting a different leader at least every other week who is serving well and the difference he or she is making in ministry. These leaders will be invited to be a part of the service through prayer, announcements, offering, or closing the service to be model volunteer leadership.

Additionally, promotion will happen through each ministry area. A monthly newsletter will be sent to their department mailing list, including a celebratory missional victory and the leader who helped make it happen, a missional focus the ministry is working toward, and key leadership roles needed to accomplish that mission. These roles will be actively recruited through this promotion.

The final step in the leadership development pathway is integrating the pathway completely into the discipleship process of the local church. The purpose of this process is three-fold. First, it is to help the congregation see that leadership development is an expected part of growing as a disciple of Jesus. If the church is called to go and make disciples, they will be required to lead people out of one way of life and into another in service to Jesus. Discipling is leading.

This is a shift in the culture of the local church. Instead of leadership being a special path of training or growth for only select individuals, every member will be seen as a potential leader and will be taught basic leadership skills and given opportunities through the discipleship

¹⁰⁸ Paul Becker, Jim Carpenter, and Mark Williams, *The New Dynamic Church Planting Handbook* (Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013), 35.

system. This process emphasizes the church's role in developing leaders who carry out the mission rather than just hiring pastors to carry out the mission. The discipleship process keeps everyone in the church focused on the mission and the best way to fulfill it, including stepping into leadership roles. Even entry-level ministry jobs are then seen as leadership roles because even a greeter plays a role in leading a guest or unchurched person to Christ.

The second purpose of this integration is to provide catalytic experiences. The people engaging in the Leadership Pathway not only need opportunities but a process that keeps them progressing through these opportunities. The discipleship process provides weekly engagement with groups, mentors, and other leaders to encourage and inspire potential leaders to keep growing that does not need to be replicated in a separate Leadership Pathway.

The third purpose of this integration is that the discipleship process also provides a built-in system of accountability through measuring growth as disciples. Southside Church uses an outcome-based discipleship model where spiritual outcomes instead of just attendance are measured weekly through discipleship groups. The form is provided in Appendix J. Disciples are expected to serve according to their gifts, and engage regularly in worship, devotion, and witnessing among other things. These growth measures are taken weekly in the discipleship groups. This expectation makes the leadership opportunities more appealing and an expected part of the discipleship journey.

This integration allows a multifaceted approach to leadership development where everything the church does is working together in the life of a potential leader to help them grow and develop to live up to that potential. This approach has been proven to have a cumulative effect where each small reinforcement works together to produce much more effective results

than the sum of the individual investments in a person's life.¹⁰⁹ This helps the people in the church feel like leaders are valued as people over the programs they lead. This goes a long way in producing a leadership development culture.

At the end of the thirteen-week implementation period, the researcher will gather the data related to the outcome of the implementation. This will be done through surveys, interviews, and roundtable discussions. First, the pastoral leaders will be surveyed for how many new people actively stepped into leadership roles during the implementation period. This expectation will be set in the initial training about how to implement the intervention in their ministry area. They will report this number through the new leaders survey for staff pastors in Appendix K. This same form will be used to survey the pastors on how effective they perceived the implementation to have been for their ministry area, as well as how effective it was in shifting culture and structure to produce an ongoing leadership development pathway.

Second, the researcher will interview the new leaders who stepped up during the intervention, assuming a positive response during this period. At this time, the new leaders will be informed of the details of the thirteen-week intervention. This interview will assess whether the intervention influenced their decision to step into leadership during that time. A questionnaire will be used to guide that interview. The questionnaire is attached in Appendix L. The end of the questionnaire focuses on whether these new leaders desire to reproduce the intervention parameters within their leadership context to continue reproducing new leaders.

Third, the researcher will conduct a roundtable discussion with all the pastoral leaders who assisted in implementing the intervention. The purpose of this roundtable is to have a more open-ended discussion in the hope of gathering how these leaders thought the implementation

¹⁰⁹ Clifton and Harter, *Wellbeing At Work*, 33.

affected their church and the leaders in it. The researcher will also gather feedback as to what these leaders saw as the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation plan and whether they are interested in continuing to use part or all the plan in the leadership development pathway of the local church in the future. This information will be gathered on the form in Appendix M.

To quantitatively evaluate the gathered information for efficacy, the researcher will use following process. The historical data gathered at the beginning of the intervention for the number of new leaders who stepped into leadership in the church for each calendar year including 2021, 2022, and 2023 will be added together and then divided by twelve to find the average number of new leaders who stepped into leadership per quarter for the three calendar years prior to this implementation. This should offer an accurate comparison (as possible) in a post-COVID environment. Then the number of new leaders who stepped up during the thirteen-week intervention will be compared to the historical average. If the number of new leaders in the intervention period is greater than the number of new leaders represented by the historical average, then the intervention will be considered effective. These results can also be validated by a simple T-test comparing the historical data to the data from the intervention period.

The researcher will also qualitatively evaluate the efficacy by reviewing the answers given during the surveys, interviews, and roundtable discussions. This will be evaluated based on whether the respondents gave a generally positive or negative impression through their feedback as to the efficacy of the system in the areas of shifting to a healthier volunteer leader culture, increasing volunteer leaders in their ministry areas, and whether they saw the intervention as favorable enough to continue implementing in whole or in part in the future.

To help discern the results correctly, and to weed out bias, the researcher will differentiate the process of data collection through using multiple forms, in different time periods

through the implementation, and in both individual and group settings. The researcher will also triangulate the process of assessing feedback. The researcher will enlist the help of two other researchers. One is Robin Harper, another pastor on staff at Southside Church who is also a doctoral student in another program. The other is Dr. Elizabeth Auguste, PhD, associate director of the Training and Technical Assistance Center in the School of Education at William & Mary University. These three will assess the qualitative feedback given through the surveys, interviews, and roundtable discussion, as well as insights and experiences noted by the researcher, to determine if the intervention was effective in addressing the purpose of developing more leaders, and to a related area of supporting a healthy leadership development culture in the local church.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

The implementation process began on January 1, 2024. It was designed to run for thirteen weeks, ending on March 31, 2024. To begin implementation, permission was sought in writing from the lead pastor of Southside Church of the Nazarene during the first week of implementation using the letter in Appendix A. He responded affirmatively to that request the same week and submitted the form in Appendix B, allowing the researcher to proceed with the implementation.

Once permission was received, the staff pastors at Southside Church were given the recruiting letter through Basecamp (the project management and communication software the church utilizes for daily collaboration). At the staff meeting during week two of the implementation, the researcher reviewed this recruiting letter with the pastoral staff of Southside Church, explained the intervention briefly, and passed out the consent forms. The researcher

stressed to the staff that participation in this intervention was entirely voluntary and that they were free to not participate for any reason without repercussion or coercion.

Once the forms were passed out and signed by the staff, the researcher began to train the staff using the week-one training outlined in Appendix E. The training took less time than planned, leaving additional time for questions and discussion.

At the end of week two, a leadership enrichment opportunity was offered to current leaders and the invitees leaders thought had leadership potential. Leaders were invited to the event by email and personal invitation, and they were instructed to register for the event through an online registration form. Twenty-one people responded and attended the event. Most of the attendees were already leaders; however, a small number of people were serving as volunteers at Southside Church but not yet as leaders.

The enrichment opportunity was a John Maxwell Live to Lead event that was rebroadcast for this group. Attendance for the event was made free because the church had already purchased rights to the simulcast for a previous community event. Snacks and lunch were provided by the church. At the end of the event, people were invited to step into leadership if they were not already serving in a leadership role within Southside Church. Due to a technical error, the QR code to the leadership interest form (Appendix I) was not shown. Several good conversations about leadership roles and the desire to step into higher levels of leadership took place among the participants.

On week three of implementation, the staff was trained more fully on the intervention using the leadership training provided in Appendix E. The section of the training notes as week-two training was delivered as outlined and the staff responded affirmatively. They were very engaged in answering questions throughout the discussion. At the end of that training, the staff

were given the historical data form supplied in Appendix F. The form was explained, and the staff pastors were asked to complete the form within two weeks.

Also, on week three of implementation, the staff pastors were given the Leadership Pathway Implementation Template provided in Appendix G and asked to fill it out that week. The researcher announced that he would meet weekly with the staff members to work through the material presented in Appendix G and to help them fill out the implementation plan at the end of that form to help them plan for their ministry area.

Most of the ministry areas of the church participated as a pastor for key ministry areas signed up to participate. These ministry areas include children's ministry, student and young adult ministry, adult discipleship, online and creative team, and connection. Two notable ministries excluded from this implementation were the outreach ministry and the worship arts ministry.

Southside Church was hiring a new director of worship services following the departure of the worship pastor about a year before the implementation process began. The outreach pastor was new to his role, beginning just before the implementation period began. Previously, the outreach leaders were led by the adult discipleship team. Therefore, because the interim director of worship services did not have the historical institutional knowledge to compare previous leadership numbers to new leaders stepping forward, that ministry area was excluded from this implementation. Since the adult discipleship team had previously led outreach, those numbers were gathered in the historical data for adult discipleship and not separated for outreach. Outreach did not report new numbers and ministries previously accounted for by adult discipleship continued to report those numbers through this implementation.

As a part of the promotion process, the researcher preached at Southside Church at the end of week five of implementation. The message was on leadership using the text from Matthew 28:18–20. The theme of the message was that being a good disciple means being a good leader. The sermon further explained that while not everyone will hold a high-ranking leadership position, everyone can be a leader because everyone can lead someone to Jesus. Then six key leadership principles were extracted from that passage and shared with the congregation.

The principles were:

- Disciples are leaders – and leaders cast a compelling vision (vv. 18–20)
- Disciples are leaders – and leaders give authority (vv. 18–19a)
- Disciples are leaders – and leaders create catalytic experiences (v. 19b)
- Disciples are leaders – and leaders teach (v. 20a)
- Disciples are leaders – and leaders are guided by core values (v. 20b)
- Disciples are leaders – and leaders are present (v. 20c)

At the end of the sermon, the congregation was invited to respond by praying at the altar about accepting God’s invitation to become a leader. If they had come to believe that truth, then they were asked to scan the QR code in the presentation and respond on the leadership interest form which conveyed the information found in Appendix I. Four people responded using the form and many more came to the altars to pray about such a decision.

It took four weeks from when the form was given instead of two, but all staff members agreed to participate and turned in historical data forms (Appendix F) completed with the required information by week seven of implementation. The researcher continued to meet with the staff to develop the specific action steps of the implementation plan for each staff pastor’s ministry area, including planning a leadership training event, offering enrichment opportunities,

developing a new organizational chart showing key new roles with coordinating job descriptions, methods of promotion, and discipleship integration.

The ministry area implementation planning process was slow going, with much time being taken to develop the new organizational structure, key leadership roles, and clearly defined job descriptions. While this work was rigorous, the staff pastors reported a deep sense of joy and satisfaction in the weekly meetings as they were able to keep this process moving forward. Many expressed that this process helped guide them through making changes that they had desired to make for some time in their ministry areas.

All staff members did not complete the process of creating a new organizational structure, supported by organizational charts and clearly defined roles that included a mentoring plan and a missional purpose, until week twelve of the implementation. While some pastors had finished a little sooner, the process took much longer than planned overall. This meant that some of the training, enrichment, and promotion had to wait longer than anticipated because creating roles and structure was a prerequisite to some of the other implementation requirements.

Having conducted leadership training for the staff pastors who would lead the implementation, they were then tasked with planning leadership training for the leaders in their ministry areas, especially new leaders who stepped forward during the implementation. Every pastor did not set a time to train each new leader with the five-fold implementation process listed in this project, but much of it was woven into leadership trainings and conversations that developed, as well as aspects of it being written into the new job descriptions.

A second enrichment opportunity was offered on week eleven of the implementation process. It was also a simulcast type of event that was directed toward the women of the church. The simulcast consisted of several sessions broken up over Friday evening and most of the day

on Saturday. Several women's event leaders live hosted the event and the challenge was extended at the end of the event to click the QR code and sign up to step into a leadership role (using the information in Appendix I). One person filled out the form to step into a new leadership role. However, several women who did not fill out the form spoke directly to the ministry leaders at the event and expressed a desire to step into a new leadership role.

Part of the promotion plan was to highlight a leader every week from the stage during the thirteen weeks of implementation. This did not go as planned. A leader was identified each week by name and by the leadership role they serve in at the church, but they were not celebrated each week. That happened about every other week during the implementation instead of the planned thirteen times. This was due to several factors including other significant events in the service taking precedence over the celebration and the researcher not being intentional enough in planning each of the thirteen celebrations early enough in the implementation process.

Once the new structure and job descriptions were completed, recruiting for the new roles began in earnest. Most of that recruiting happened by the pastoral staff personally reaching out to people they believed would be a good fit for the leadership roles being offered. Even in the short amount of time left in the implementation after the roles were written, they were able to fill several of those leadership roles.

Discipleship integration happened in many important ways through the thirteen weeks of the implementation. One way is that new guests are invited to attend a three-week group called Southside Start. This three-week group experience includes taking a spiritual gifts test, and the results of that test are shared with the participant along with serve and leadership roles that would match well with their gifting. That test helps lead the staff to those who might be a good fit for the new leadership roles developed during the implementation.

The discipleship process also has expected outcomes for every disciple at Southside Church promoted and encouraged through sermon responses, discipleship-driven events, and small group discussions. One of the outcomes is that everyone is invited to feel a deep sense of belonging by serving according to their giftedness. While not every serve role is a leadership role, that outcome gave the pastors an easy way to have conversations about new leadership roles in a way that naturally connected to growing as a disciple.

This same discipleship integration also assisted in providing enrichment opportunities. Southside Church has a history of offering discipleship-driven events, and the planned enrichment opportunities for this intervention fit nicely into the event system and promotion plan that Southside typically uses. This process made it easy to invite other leaders and potential leaders and set a good expectation for the quality and spiritual significance of what would be offered at the event.

Another key part of the discipleship process integration was utilizing mentoring whenever possible. The researcher offered weekly mentoring for the staff pastors on how to implement this intervention as well as on how to coach the leaders with whom they were working. Similarly, the staff pastors were encouraged to actively engage in mentoring the leaders under their charge while encouraging those leaders to mentor potential leaders in their ministry area. The small group system reinforced that mentoring, as group leaders were required to mentor their group members or to assign a mentor within the group who contacted each member throughout the week. While that did not happen with every person every week, it did provide consistent reinforcement of the ideal that disciples are called to be leaders.

Extra attention to mentoring was given to those who filled out the QR code response indicating that they wanted to be a leader. They were assigned a staff pastor to mentor them and

help them find a place of leadership. Also, those who indicated they wanted to be a leader through conversation at events were connected with a ministry area leader to keep working with them until they were ready to talk to a staff pastor and step into a new role. This engaged many more people in the mentoring process of developing new leaders.

At the end of week twelve of the implementation, the researcher gave the staff pastors the New Leaders Survey For Staff Pastors (Appendix K). They were asked to fill it out and return it to the researcher at the end of week thirteen. All pastors returned the form, and it was used as one significant source of data to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation process.

In the week immediately following the completion of the implementation process, the researcher interviewed each new leader who stepped into leadership during the intervention using the New Leader Questionnaire (Appendix L). The researcher used this data to inform the results and conclusions of the project.

During that same week, the staff pastors who ran the implementation in their ministry areas participated in a roundtable discussion using the questions on the Pastoral Leader Roundtable (Appendix M). The researcher also used that information to inform the results and conclusions of this project.

Following the data collection, a team consisting of the researcher, a member of Southside Church who serves on the faculty of William and Mary University, and another doctoral researcher who serves on the staff of Southside Church, met together to review the data. This process helped to triangulate the data through multiple people reviewing the data, which was coming from both participants and leaders and being reported through various methods such as surveys, interviews, and roundtable discussions. The opinions and insights of this team directly

led to the evaluation of the results that informed the conclusion to this project presented in Chapter Five.

The researcher finished the implementation process by reviewing the notes, forms, and data, and compiling and summarizing it in Chapter Four of this project. That data was compared to the historical data on leaders at Southside Church, and then conclusions were drawn and written into the conclusion section in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Not every plan succeeds, and not every hope is realized. However, the researcher guided this action research project to completion, and it has made a notable difference in addressing the stated problem and fulfilling the stated purpose of this action research project. As a result of implementing the action research project into the ministries of Southside Church on the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene, this researcher has observed a marked increase in the number of new people stepping into leadership roles, a shift in leadership culture, and a more robust integration of a leadership pathway within the discipleship system. To demonstrate the results of the implementation, the baseline statistical data needs to be accounted for and explored in the following section fully.

Historical Baseline

This DMIN action research project was to design and implement a ministerial leadership development pathway to produce more leaders at Southside Church. To measure the project's efficacy, a baseline was established of how many people were serving in leadership and how many new people stepped into leadership each year. The values are reported for the calendar years of 2021, 2022, and 2023. These three years represent the established norm on the other side of the COVID-19 pandemic. The measures taken during the pandemic drastically altered the number of people serving in leadership so a more relevant data set to the current implementation results is compiled by examining the three years before implementation and in which most COVID-19 mitigation measures had ceased.

These historical values were gathered by the pastoral staff participants at Southside Church for their respective ministry areas on the Historical Data Form (Appendix F). The values will be reported without identifying the ministry areas they correlate to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Ministry area A reported twenty leaders serving in 2021, with two new leaders stepping into leadership that year. It reported twenty-nine leaders serving in 2022, with twelve new leaders stepping into leadership that year. Finally, it reported thirty-three leaders in total serving in 2023, with eight new leaders stepping into leadership in that year.

Ministry area B reported forty-eight leaders serving in 2021, with five new leaders stepping into leadership that year. It reported fifty-five leaders serving in 2022, with seven new leaders stepping into leadership that year. Finally, it reported sixty-two leaders in total serving in 2023, with another seven new leaders stepping into leadership.

Ministry area C reported eight leaders serving in 2021, with two new leaders stepping into leadership that year. It reported fourteen leaders serving in 2022, with seven new leaders stepping into leadership that year. Finally, it reported eighteen leaders serving in 2023, with four new leaders stepping up that year.

Ministry area D reported twenty-six leaders serving in 2021, with four new leaders stepping into leadership that year. It reported twenty-five leaders serving in 2022, with two new leaders stepping into leadership that year. Finally, it reported twenty-four leaders in total serving in 2023, with zero new leaders stepping into leadership in that year.

Ministry area E reported five leaders serving in 2021, with zero new leaders stepping into leadership that year. It again reported five leaders serving in 2022, with zero new leaders

stepping into leadership. Finally, it reported four leaders in total serving in 2023, with zero new leaders stepping into leadership in that last year.

Ministry area F reported five leaders serving in 2021, with three new leaders stepping into leadership during that year. It reported nine leaders serving in 2022, with three new leaders stepping into leadership in that year. Finally, it reported fourteen leaders in total serving in 2023, with five new leaders stepping into leadership in that year.

Ministry area G reported two leaders serving in 2021, with two new leaders stepping into leadership that year. It reported six leaders serving in 2022, with six new leaders stepping into leadership in that year. Finally, it reported thirteen leaders in total serving in 2023, with ten new leaders stepping into leadership that year.

That gives a collective baseline of 112 leaders serving in 2021, with eighteen new leaders serving. In 2022, Southside Church saw 143 leaders serve, with thirty-seven new people stepping into leadership. In 2023, it rose to 168 people serving in leadership, with thirty-four new leaders stepping up.

To establish averages by which this DMIN action research project can evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation, the total number of those served each year from 2021 to 2023 needs to be added together, which equals 425. If that number is divided by three, it averages 141.6 people per year serving in leadership roles collectively for ministries A through G listed above.

Similarly, the number of people stepping into new or new-to-them leadership roles needs to be established as a total and quarterly average. The total number of new people stepping into leadership over 2021, 2022, and 2023 equals eighty-nine people. Divided by the three years of the historical sample period, equals 29.66 people per year stepping into leadership. Further

dividing this yearly average into quarterly averages yields a three-year quarterly average of those stepping into leadership of 7.41 people per quarter.

These total numbers and annual and quarterly averages provide the historical baseline by which the qualitative effectiveness of this DMIN action research project was evaluated. Primarily, the project was evaluated by seeking to raise the quarterly average of those stepping into leadership during the three-month implementation period over the quarterly average of the three prior years reported in the historical baseline data. The researcher also compared the total number of those serving in leadership at the end of the implementation period to those serving in leadership at the start of the implementation based on the 2023 total numbers. Third, the total number of those serving during the implementation period was compared to the historical average of those serving in leadership between 2021 and 2023.

Once the researcher compiled each of the above statistics, they were charted out on tables. The researcher then used a T-test to confirm the probability of statistical significance. All those results, as well as additional qualitative data, are reported in the following section.

Collective Results

The results of this Leadership Pathway implementation at Southside Church will be reported in two categories: quantitative results and qualitative results. Both sections will be supported through direct research data collected through questionnaires, surveys, and roundtable discussions.

Quantitative Analysis

This action research project successfully implemented all five key steps including leadership training, leadership enrichment, defined leadership roles, promoting vision, and full

discipleship process integration. Having done so, this researcher made the following quantitative observations in the increase of new leaders through analyzing key data. First, the number of new leaders who stepped into leadership roles during the thirteen-week intervention was higher than the average number of people who stepped into leadership positions per quarter (thirteen weeks) during the three previous calendar years. The researcher also saw the total number of active leaders in the church to be higher than the number of active leaders in the church at the start of the intervention, and higher than average number of leaders serving per year over the three previous calendar years.

1. Ministry area A averaged 1.83 people per quarter during the three-year baseline period and had one person step into a new or new-to-them leadership role during the implementation.
2. Ministry area B averaged 1.58 people per quarter during the three-year baseline period and had four people step into a new or new-to-them leadership role during the implementation.
3. Ministry area C averaged 1.08 people per quarter during the three-year baseline period and had four people step into a new or new-to-them leadership role during the implementation.
4. Ministry area D averaged 0.5 people per quarter during the three-year baseline period and had one person step into a new or new-to-them leadership role during the implementation.
5. Ministry area E averaged 0 people per quarter during the three-year baseline period and had three people step into a new or new-to-them leadership role during the implementation.
6. Ministry area F averaged 0.91 people per quarter during the three-year baseline period and had six people step into a new or new-to-them leadership role during the implementation.
7. Ministry area G averaged 1.5 people per quarter during the three-year baseline period and had four people step into a new or new-to-them leadership role during the implementation.

The following chart depicts the results of total leaders and new leaders by year for the three-year historical period and for the implementation period.

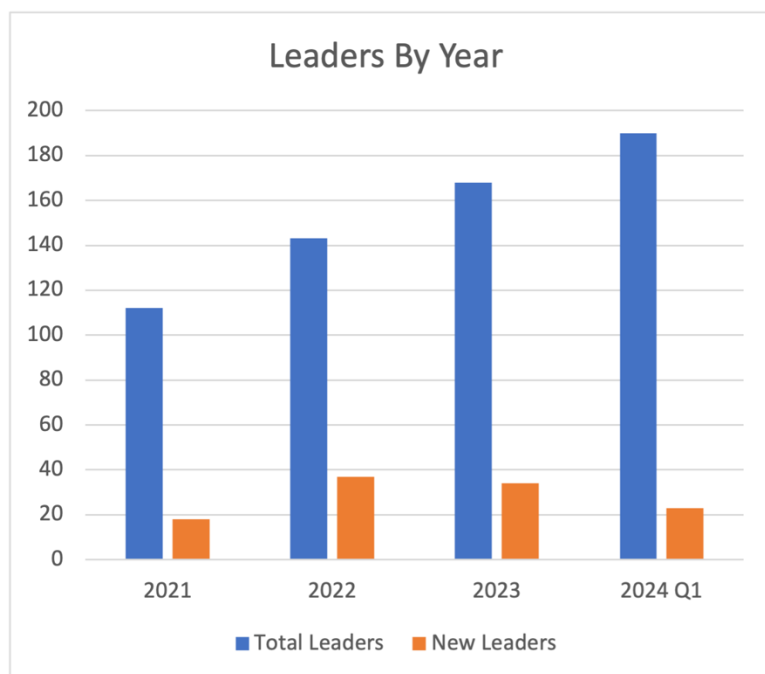


Figure 3. Leader annual comparison

The researcher compared the above averages during the three-year historical baseline for ministry areas A through G to the stated results of the implementation period through a T-test. The T-test was a paired test, as the data from each ministry area had to correlate in the test. It was also a one-tailed test because the question being answered was, “Are the number of new leaders stepping up during the implementation period greater than the number of leaders who stepped up in the three-year historical quarterly average?”

The goal of the T-test was to provide a critical value of less than 0.05, indicating less than five percent probability that the results of the T-test were random. The actual probability or p value was 0.01, which indicates a ninety-nine percent probability that the results of the intervention are statistically significant. This low p-value provides an extremely high level of confidence in the veracity of the results being directly attributed to the Leadership Pathway being implemented at Southside Church. The results of the T-test are demonstrated in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.1. T-test comparing quarterly average of new leaders to new leaders

Ministry Areas Participating	Three-Year Quarterly Average, New Leaders	Implementation Quarter, New Leaders
Ministry A	1.83	1
Ministry B	1.58	4
Ministry C	1.08	4
Ministry D	0.5	1
Ministry E	0	3
Ministry F	0.91	6
Ministry G	1.5	4
T-test p = 0.01		

Compiling all the ministries together, the number of those stepping into new or new-to-them leadership roles was 7.41 people per quarter during the three years prior to the intervention. During the intervention, twenty-three people stepped into new or new-to-them leadership roles. This represents a 210% increase in the number of people who stepped into new or new-to-them leadership roles during the intervention compared to the average of the three prior years.

During the three-year historical data period, at least one ministry per year reported no new leaders per year. Every ministry area reported new leaders stepping forward during the intervention. This is a new benchmark for Southside Church post-COVID for developing leaders.

Another benchmark for Southside Church is the total number of leaders. At the end of the intervention, 190 people were serving in leadership roles at Southside Church. This is a 13.1% increase in the number of leaders serving at Southside Church in just thirteen weeks, up from 168 at the beginning of the intervention period.

The number of leaders serving during the intervention period is even more significant when comparing it to not just the number of leaders just before the intervention, but the average

number of leaders serving annually over the three years prior. The three-year average is 141.66 people per year in leadership, compared to 190 during the intervention. This is an increase of 34.1% over the three-year running average for those serving in leadership.

Quantitatively, the results of the intervention on the number of people stepping into new and new-to-them leadership roles were significant. The number of total leaders compared to the number of leaders prior to the intervention, and the number of leaders during the intervention compared to the three-year running average for those serving in leadership also demonstrate significant gains.

The purpose of this DMIN action research project was a Leadership Pathway that would raise up more leaders at Southside Church. According to the qualitative data and statistical significance of the intervention results, this purpose of this project was accomplished through the intervention period.

To determine if the Leadership Pathway not only accomplished its purpose but is also a process that was beneficial in other ways to Southside Church, then qualitative data also needs to be reviewed. Those results will be explored in the next section.

Qualitative Analysis

The first source of results for qualitative analysis is the Implementation Report for Staff Pastors (Appendix N). This form was given to the pastoral staff near the end of the implementation period as a way of helping them to focus on the essential parts of the Leadership Pathway implementation. It was also intended to help motivate the staff to finish some tasks within the implementation that had taken longer than expected, as they needed to finish the tasks to report on them. This form contained seven items to report on which included each of the five steps of the Leadership Pathway, attaching any new organizational chart if created, and sharing

the missional job descriptions that had been written. Several staff members had not completed all these steps by week ten when the report was shared, and some never finished all of those items; however, the form seemed to really encourage the staff to finish quickly as several staff members made great strides toward finishing the implementation within a few days of receiving the form.

Several responses on the Implementation Report For Staff Pastors are worth noting regarding a qualitative assessment of the implementation. The staff pastors were asked to implement the project only during the thirteen-week implementation period, but many reported that they had already adjusted systems in their ministry area to include parts of the Leadership Pathway so that the system would continue long after the implementation period for this research had ended. This shows that the pastors saw great value in the pathway and desired to implement it in their ministry areas rather than simply agreeing to participate for the benefit of the researcher.

Additional noteworthy responses spoke of how the clarity around structure, job descriptions, and mentoring opportunities within the discipleship process were already opening the door for meaningful conversations with volunteers about stepping into leadership roles. This also opened a feedback loop for the staff pastors to gain insights about the perceived leadership gaps from the perspective of those already serving in their ministry areas. The pastors were quick to find ways to remedy those perceived leadership gaps by utilizing the Leadership Pathway.

The last thing the form asked was to list the names of those who had stepped into leadership at that point in the implementation process. Several names were reported. This encouraged the researcher to know the process appeared to be reaping results even when it was not yet fully implemented. Several pastors reported names even though they did not report

having completed the five steps or even having a robust plan for how to complete all five at the time of their response.

The next source of qualitative data is the New Leader Survey For Staff Pastors (Appendix K). This survey was given to the pastoral staff a few days before the official end of the implementation period with instructions to finish writing out the details on the survey by the Tuesday morning following the end of the implementation. Some of these forms were received a little late on the Wednesday following the implementation.

The first two questions on the form are quantitative in nature, but questions three through eight are qualitative. Some important qualitative responses to highlight include thoughts on perceived effectiveness. While effectiveness is very subjective from pastor to pastor through the implementation, some guidance on determining effectiveness was provided during the initial implementation training. That training expressed that leaders take responsibility to see a ministry accomplished, give organizational oversight to ensure logistical and resourcing needs are met, or inspire others to serve by being visionary storytellers or recruiters for a given ministry area.

Several pastors thought the implementation was effective in helping people step into leadership for the first time or current leaders to step up into a new leadership role. One pastor said that many of the changes in leadership she had been wanting to make for more than two years were finally realized by implementing the Leadership Pathway in her ministry area. That leader created a clear organizational chart with newly defined leadership roles. Each role was given a completed job description with a clear missional purpose. Those roles were shared with potential leaders and were a powerful help in recruiting for and filling vacant leadership roles.

Another pastor responded that it helped to facilitate important discussions with his team around the mission and purpose of his ministry area and the roles within it. This allowed

volunteers to see how their ideas and passions fit within the church's mission, which inspired them to step into new leadership roles. That pastor also stated that it helped other leaders really embrace their roles once they discussed the mission and purpose.

The survey also asked what the pastors would desire to change about the pathway or how it was implemented. The responses about changing the implementation were very insightful, as several pastors mentioned that they wished there had been more time throughout the intervention for each step. They desired more time for training, more time for implementing each step, and more time to see the effects of the work they had done in each area before moving on to the next step.

The survey concludes with a few questions asking about positive takeaways from the implementation. The responses here were encouraging to the researcher and very helpful in understanding where each pastor saw value in the Leadership Pathway. A few pastors mentioned that they have been able to delegate a lot more of their current ministry work to lay leaders because of the clearly defined roles and new leadership structure they had developed. This allowed them to focus their efforts on other areas where they felt their time was better used.

Another pastor said one of the great benefits of the pathway is that it has kept leadership development top of mind. This increased focus has helped to shift the culture of her ministry area and has influenced conversations with volunteers and leaders. That same pastor also highly valued the weekly mentoring meetings with the researcher to help guide them through the process of implementation.

As mentioned earlier, one of the most positive takeaways for the researcher is that every pastor had someone to report on their form who had stepped into a new or new-to-them leadership role. For the previous three years between COVID-19 and the implementation period,

there had always been at least one pastor who had no new leaders step up in a given year. To see every ministry area succeed in this way was significant to the pastoral team and the researcher, which boosted morale and helped the team see additional value in the implementation work.

The most telling qualitative data came from the Pastoral Leader Roundtable Questionnaire (Appendix M). This data was intentionally collected conversationally rather than by asking the pastors to fill out a form. The desire was to provide different options for those who do better having the document and writing in advance versus those who develop ideas better in a conversational setting or are inspired by robust discussion. This played out in the responses, as some of the questions were very similar to the New Leader Survey for Staff Pastors, but garnered different answers in the midst of the conversation.

The first two questions focused on asking what was helpful out of the implementation. Right away, the pastoral staff led the conversation to focus on the perceived value of creating the new leadership roles and the organizational structure charts for their ministry areas. One pastor in particular expressed great frustration with the process of creating the structure chart and was even frustrated about being asked to do it on top of her other ministry requirements. However, once the chart was complete, she thought it was entirely worthwhile. That chart with clearly defined roles helped tremendously with recruiting and empowering those who desired to serve in that ministry area.

Another pastor echoed some of the frustration about defining the structure and roles, but also felt it was a helpful experience once completed. She noted that just the intentionality of focusing on viewing their ministry area through a leadership lens changed the way that she thought about her ministry and the potential of those who were serving in it. This is evidence of

the Simultaneity Principle, as just asking the questions sparked substantive change before the new model was created, let alone implemented, in that pastor's ministry area.

The next question on the Roundtable Questionnaire asked if anything surprised the pastoral staff during the implementation. Again, insightful conversation flowed. One pastor was surprised at just how easy it was to let go of key ministry tasks he had been doing for a long time and to pass that responsibility on to someone else. Having a clear plan with the Leadership Pathway guiding the process made handing off those tasks much easier.

Another pastor was surprised by how many great leadership ideas his volunteers had. Once the pastor completed some leadership training with his team, they started sharing ideas about how to fulfill the mission and started taking ownership of it in new ways.

Another pastor confessed that she feared she would drive away potential leaders by asking too much of them. On the contrary, once they had a clearly defined role with a clear missional purpose, the pastor reported that the people were more responsive and willing to step into a leadership role than they had been in the past. Clear missional roles seemed to help inspire these potential leaders to want to fill the needs in that ministry area more than in the past. There was a heart shift that occurred around a clear missional role for both the pastor and the people that enabled them to have more effective conversations and action steps.

On a similar note, a different pastor indicated the defined roles helped one leader in his ministry area grow. Once that leader had been given clarity, he stepped up to do beyond what had been defined. That new leader felt empowered, trusted, and freer to be creative.

The next question asked about how the implementation of the Leadership Pathway had shifted the culture of leadership in each ministry area. One of the biggest victories for a staff pastor throughout the implementation process came up during this discussion. That pastor has

long felt that the burden of recruiting for her ministry area rests almost exclusively on her and has struggled under the weight of keeping her ministry staffed with leaders and volunteers as a result.

However, as more leadership conversations were happening through the implementation process and as clearly defined roles were being discussed, several people offered to help not only step into leadership roles but to recruit actively. Then those people immediately went out and started recruiting with positive results. They finally recognize the deep need in that ministry area that they had previously overlooked or had assumed the pastor would fill on her own. These people started taking ownership of the problem, started signing up for leadership roles themselves, and then went out to recruit more leaders! The staff pastor felt like this was a seismic shift in leadership for her ministry area.

Another pastor said this process of Leadership Pathway implementation had shifted the culture in his ministry area by making the team feel more empowered. The team felt free to dream about what was possible in their ministry area and started talking about how to accomplish it. They took ownership of both the problem and discovering the way out of the problem into a preferred picture of the future, rather than the pastor being responsible for doing all the creative planning and problem-solving.

Two of the questions in the discussion focused on what was hard or what the staff pastor might wish had been done differently in the implementation. Several of the answers centered around the issue of time. They wish they had more time to implement. They desired for their ministry and personal lives to have slowed down more so they could have more time to focus on implementing well. Some wished for more time at the beginning of the implementation for additional training and clarity before jumping into creating new structures and plans.

One staff pastor was out of the office during the initial training. While the researcher met with the staff pastor one-on-one to resolve this issue and catch him up on training, either the researcher did not communicate well or the staff pastor did not receive it well. The staff pastor confessed that he struggled to get clarity around what was being asked of him or what it would look like to finish well.

Question ten asked if the implementation of the Leadership Pathway had an overall positive or negative effect on the staff pastor, their ministry area, and their leaders. Consistently, every staff pastor responded affirmatively that it was a positive experience. One pastor said trying out the new leadership development process on a key volunteer spurred a lot of good discussions that played a role in creating an internship program within their ministry area. Two new leaders are already slated to begin that program.

Another pastor said this process helped to align his leaders around the missional purpose of Southside Church. Yet another staff pastor said she was excited to see the long-term impact of this process on her ministry area in the future. She is excited to see the new leaders who will step up over the next few months.

Question eleven on the questionnaire provided some of the best insights out of the conversation. One of the staff pastors noted that if this process were to be shared with other churches, especially smaller churches with less structure, that church would likely need to go back before they could go forward. They would have to have absolute clarity around their mission and vision before they could proceed with implementing this Leadership Pathway.

The last question in that discussion asked if the team would be interested in continuing all or part of the intervention now that the research period had ended. This was a valuable question for revealing if the pastoral staff thought the pathway had enough merit to proceed with it apart

from the need for the researcher to complete the doctoral research. The team unanimously said they would like to continue using the Leadership Pathway and demonstrated what the researcher perceived as genuine excitement around the spiritual fruit the pathway would produce moving forward.

These qualitative results clearly demonstrate the efficacy of the Leadership Pathway. It not only develops new leaders, but it empowers people and helps them to see new possibilities. It also guides current leaders in making their ministry areas more effective!

The last source of qualitative data is the New Leader Questionnaire (Appendix L). Of the twenty-three people who stepped into a new or new-to-them leadership role during the implementation period, the researcher interviewed a sample of six of those new leaders who were able to respond within forty-eight hours of receiving the final names from the staff pastors. The researcher utilized the New Leader Questionnaire to guide that discussion. The purpose of the qualitative research done in that interview is to understand if the person who stepped into a new leadership role did so because of the implementation process or for some other reason.

Of the six respondents completed the interview that was guided by the New Leader Questionnaire, two indicated that they were stepping into a brand-new leadership role. Two more indicated that they were stepping up into a larger leadership role than they previously held, and the final two both indicated that they had taken a hiatus from ministry leadership and returned to take on a leadership role during this implementation.

A telling observation from these interviews is that all six leaders learned about the role from a conversation with a current ministry leader, either a volunteer or a member of the pastoral staff. Of those six, four of those conversations were driven by the volunteer asking questions. The other two were approached by a pastoral staff member with the intent of having a

conversation about leadership. Other comments in the interviews made it clear that elements of the Leadership Pathway helped to prompt the conversations and equipped these people to take the actual step into leadership. However, the most effective way reported on this questionnaire to help someone see a need and decide to step into a ministry leadership role is still through personal conversation. The Leadership Pathway systematizes the process for consistency and greatly focuses the efforts of existing leaders raising new leaders, but the process does not replace the people who lead it.

After explaining an overview of the Leadership Pathway implementation, respondents were asked if any of the five steps in the pathway helped them step into a leadership role. One person said no. They were already seeking a leadership role but had not yet decided on where to serve until approached with a compelling role. While the respondent said no, it was evident in his explanation that having a clearly defined leadership role with a missional purpose is a substantial reason he stepped into the specific role he chose instead of other options he was considering.

Two respondents in the group highlighted both training and enrichment opportunities as key in their decisions to step into leadership roles. The enrichment opportunities helped to inspire both people to take the next steps toward leadership and the training helped to equip them to be able to do the role they desired. One respondent stated that her heart felt tugged toward the ministry she is now serving in, and that was confirmed through a conversation with a pastor at one of the enrichment events. The other respondent in this group offered great insight when he said, “If I had this pathway four years ago, I would have known how to go deeper sooner.” After saying that, he also said that the defined leadership roles had made it clear for him and others what was the right next step to take. The training and enrichment prepared them but the clear role showed them which door to step through.

A different respondent said that promoting leadership was the most helpful for him in making the decision to lead. He has felt a sense of calling to be a leader, but consistently doubted his ability to do so. After hearing promotions about leadership opportunities, stories of other people in the church who are leading well, and a sermon that drove home the idea that being a good disciple necessitates being a leader, he felt encouraged to go ahead and take that step. It helped him conquer his fear and empowered him to believe this truly was the right next step God was calling him to take.

A fifth respondent said that the discipleship focus was most helpful. She desired to help connect new people to Southside Church to help them grow into disciples of Jesus, so she stepped into a leadership role that specifically allowed her to do that. Also, her passion and giftedness, which she explored through the discipleship process at Southside Church, made her a great fit for this leadership role.

The final respondent said that all five steps in the Leadership Pathway were helpful to her. Having a clearly defined role and understanding where that role functioned within the discipleship process was particularly important. She also noted that within the discipleship process the focus on specific outcomes helped to promote growth and encouraged people to step toward leadership positions. She states that when discipleship is driving toward leadership, and is supported with enrichment, training, and promoting vision, it all worked together to help inspire her and others.

When asked if any teaching or promotion from the stage was particularly helpful in their decision to step into leadership, everyone said yes, but half the respondents said that nothing specific or memorable stands out. As they continued to share, two of the three said they did remember announcements that highlighted the need for more leaders in various ministry areas.

The other three respondents were very specific. One person highlighted that she heard several announcements about leading a discipleship group to provide a place for new people to get connected and it inspired her to lead a group. Another recalled the sermon on leadership given by the researcher and shared insights from the message that had gave him a needed push to step into a leadership role. He said it both encouraged and affirmed what he sensed God was asking of him. The last respondent said a sermon challenged her about how she used her time and it inspired her to be a better and more focused leader.

The last question on the New Leader Questionnaire reiterated Southside Church's mission statement and then asked the leader how their current role was helping to fulfill the mission. Of the six, five of the leaders have taken on a role within the discipleship ministry of the church. Two works with kids and they both noted how they get to shape kids into disciples as well as impact the whole family both through the kids and by interacting with the parents. Another works with students and answered similarly that he gets to disciple kids and influence parents. However, he also noted how much he has been able to impact other volunteers in this role who are not as mature as he previously thought.

The next two respondents serve by leading adult discipleship groups. One is a group for new people to learn more about Southside Church and its beliefs, and another is a women's discipleship group for new people. Both leaders said they felt they got to be part of the discipleship process by engaging with new families and helping them grow in their faith.

Only one of the six respondents works outside the discipleship system. He took a leadership role on Southside Church's media team and oversees video content creation. He saw his role as vital to discipleship by creating engaging online content that helped people want to come to Southside Church. He saw his role as opening the front door of the church in an online

environment to new people, as well as raising the bar on the video content shared in service to make it a more engaging environment for people to hear the Gospel.

Summary of Results

This DMIN action research project was extremely effective in addressing its expressed purpose of raising up new leaders at Southside Church. The number of new leaders grew substantially, and the results were confirmed to be statistically significant through a T-test. That testing resulted in a ninety-nine percent probability that the increase in the number of new leaders is directly related to the implementation of the Leadership Pathway.

This project was also effective in shifting culture around leadership as evidenced by freer discussions around leadership ideas, more clarity around leadership roles, and more people willing to invite or recruit others to be a part of ministry teams. A positively shifting leadership culture is also evident in the pastoral staff improving their ability and willingness to delegate to lay leaders. This helped the pastoral staff to focus on the tasks that are best suited to their specific skills and gifts.

The implementation of the Leadership Pathway was less effective than it could have been for Southside Church due to staying within the time constraints necessary for the doctoral program. Apart from the program timing, several of these steps would have been stretched out a few extra weeks to provide additional training and mentoring support to develop and implement every step of the Leadership Pathway fully. More time would have ensured that the Leadership Pathway was fully integrated into the discipleship system of Southside Church in each ministry area. The researcher also could have managed time better during the earlier parts of the intervention and mentored the pastoral staff through the development of the leadership structure

and defined roles sooner. This would have allowed more implementation time for the rest of the Leadership Pathway.

The largest gap in data reported for this action research project is in discipleship process integration. While leadership was promoted at discipleship events, through discipleship groups, and leadership through serving according to a person's giftedness is one of the discipleship outcomes, there was still much work to be done for full integration. Additional work in the area of mentoring in particular would help incorporate the Leadership Pathway into the discipleship system in a catalytic way that would help perpetuate its implementation. A clear model for mentoring is not given in this intervention, though it is implied within the discipleship process of the church that mentoring would focus on the five discipleship outcomes to help the leader grow as a disciple. A discussion around mentoring and the outcomes was included in the leadership training for the staff pastors at the beginning of the intervention.

To complete this action research project successfully, data needed to be collected and analyzed in such a way as to remove as much bias as possible. To accomplish this, the data was triangulated in several ways. First, the researcher utilized multiple forms of data collection. One example is using multiple forms at varying points throughout the implementation. Some forms were given beforehand to be filled out privately while others were given in a group setting to foster discussion. Also, the researcher organized a panel of two other researchers to review both the data and collection methods to make sure the researcher was not imposing any bias or missing critical insights present in the data. Anywhere bias was noted to be present by that panel, it was discussed in the conclusion to this project. Finally, the researcher validated the data through a T-test to verify the statistical significance of the intervention in causing more people to

step into leadership roles at Southside Church. This moved the results from opinion to scientific fact.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

After completing the full implementation of the action research project and having analyzed the results, this researcher concludes that the thesis presented in this paper was validated. The thesis posits that if the leadership development pathway presented in this paper is fully implemented more new leaders will be developed at Southside Church of the Nazarene. The thesis was proven true by the number of new leaders per quarter during the implementation rising to twenty-three compared to the three-year running quarterly average of 7.41 people, with a calculated ninety-nine percent probability that the change was, in fact, due to the implementation rather than random variation.

The results of the implementation of this action research project bode well for the other large local churches on the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene. Because these churches share a similar setting and leadership style to Southside Church, implementing the Leadership Pathway intervention at those churches would probably produce similar results.

The positive results and insightful feedback from this research study confirm that every part of the implementation plan was helpful in producing more leaders. This was confirmed by participant responses. Integrating the leadership development process into the discipleship process is the most effective step for creating systemic change in the eyes of the pastoral leaders who implemented the action research project, while the creation of a new leadership structure and clearly defined leadership role descriptions that have a missional purpose produced the most immediate results. This should be shown in the qualitative data retrieved from the surveys and questionnaires as well as the pastoral leader roundtable discussion.

Research Implications

This action research project created ripe fruit in terms of implications for ministry that could be harvested for the benefit of the local church. Those insights will be shared in this section, starting with general implications about leadership learned through this project. The first and greatest implication is simply that a well-defined leadership pathway does in fact lead more people to step into leadership roles in a local church setting like the one at Southside Church!

After looking through the results, it became clear that every leader who stepped into a leadership role during this implementation did so for different reasons, and each person seems to have been affected by a different combination of steps from the Leadership Pathway that were meaningful to them. Many of the leaders stated in various ways that the entire Leadership Pathway was meaningful to them, but struggled to pinpoint what was most effective. The whole system seems to have raised the overall awareness of leadership possibilities and encouraged their participation.

A key insight from this observation is that there is strength in having a pathway that offers multiple steps to empower this cumulative effect on multiple leaders. A single step, no matter how well it is implemented, will not have the same cumulative impact on as many different leaders as a fully integrated system. Some powerful feedback revealed how this system impacted one of the leaders. He stated, "If I had this pathway four years ago, I would have known how to go deeper sooner." This system does make a difference, and potential leaders are hungry for it. This is very much in line with the work of Geiger and Peck, who said that the whole pathway must be systematized to produce consistent results across all the ministry areas of

the church.¹¹⁰ This consistency across each part of the pathway and across the ministry areas had a much larger overall impact.

Another observation about this Leadership Pathway is that it seemed helpful to people who had served in a leadership role in the past but had stepped back or gotten burned out. Many great leaders stepped back into leadership during this implementation, and the pathway directly impacted their desire and willingness to reengage. A well-defined leadership pathway gave enough clarity, encouragement, and structure to these former leaders that they were willing to step in and try again.

The staff's efforts at raising up leaders were catalyzed through this process. Every ministry area that participated was already desiring to raise up leaders, but many had not seen any measurable progress in several years. However, as they participated in the action research project, they quickly realized that the pathway was going to be beneficial to them and their ministry areas. This quickly began to shift the culture around leadership development as these pastors were able to make changes in a few months that they had desired to make for the last several years. This is a different take on Justin Joy's approach. Instead of focusing on a catalyzing event for each step of the Leadership Pathway, it is designed to shift culture, which itself becomes the larger catalyst over the individual steps and opportunities within them.¹¹¹

One of the pastors in this implementation noted that just having a leadership system was helpful. Being a part of a system provided the opportunity to be intentional in focusing on leadership development. She knew a lot about leadership development but it had slowly sunk to the bottom of her to-do list as more and more of her attention was focused on simply getting

¹¹⁰ Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 14.

¹¹¹ Joy, "Establishing A Leadership Development Process," 63.

ready for the next Sunday. Being intentional changed the conversations and started to shift the culture long before the actual plans could be developed and implemented.

As the Leadership Pathway moved from training to implementation within the ministry areas, many of the staff pastors struggled to know how best to structure their ministry areas. They were advised in the mentoring sessions to carefully review the structure and see if it was adequate to meet the needs of where the ministry was heading. If any changes to the structure were needed, they should be made before writing all the new role descriptions. This seemed like a daunting task to add on top of the regular weekly ministry requirements of the pastors, but they continued to work through the process.

To help bring the pastors to clarity, the researcher helped them through the revisioning process in the mentoring sessions. Phil Newton says that mentoring is the best image of Jesus' leadership in the New Testament, and it certainly proved effective to engage that model with the pastoral staff.¹¹² The staff was asked to think about what was effective and what was not effective in their ministry area, and what caused them the most frustration on a regular basis. After making that list, the questions shifted more personally toward the pastoral leader. They were asked what they loved about ministry, what they did out of necessity, and what they did not love or felt drained by within their ministry. Then they were challenged to write their own role focused on the parts of ministry they loved the most and write a structure around them that delegated the parts of ministry they tolerated or hated to other people who would be more gifted for those tasks.

¹¹² Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church: How Pastors and Congregations Cultivate Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2017), 41.

The process of leading the pastoral team to clarity around structure was extremely helpful. One of the pastors noted that she was exhausted and nearly burned out, but the new structure gave her hope that even though she had technically not changed jobs, she had completely changed what her ministry would look like for the better. This brought clarity to the structure overall and made writing missionally focused job descriptions under the new model much easier.

There was so much value in this part of the process for the pastors involved that it could revitalize a ministry and breathe new life into an exhausted pastoral team even if the church as a whole was not implementing the entire leadership pathway. Naturally, it would be most beneficial in context with the rest of the pathway, but clear roles and the right structure are life giving to everyone involved.

After working through this process, it also yielded other positive results for the pastoral staff. They found it much easier to delegate tasks that previously they had felt compelled to do themselves. By being given freedom to write a role description for themselves that focused on their strengths and passions, it made it easier to hand off the rest of their ministry tasks to someone else. By writing those other tasks into an important role that carried a clear missional purpose it alleviated the guilt of feeling like they were just pawning off the hard stuff on someone else. Rather, they were now gifting someone else with a specific mission-oriented ministry role tailored to their different gifts and passions. Everyone in the ministry benefited.

This process of delegation was a consistently cited highlight from pastoral staff members. They were excited to see other people thriving, the parts of ministry the pastor did not enjoy getting were still getting done, and the pastors had more time to focus on the parts of ministry that they wanted to focus on. This leads to the next insight. Good delegation leads to greater

staff satisfaction. This process raised the overall morale of the staff, and it was noticed by staff members who did not participate in the implementation. This was such a positive experience that the researcher believes it will have a substantial and positive impact on staff retention. This process of delegation was made possible by good role descriptions, which proves the point made by Kizer, et al.¹¹³

This process produced clearly defined ministry roles with a missional purpose. As those roles were shared, they quickly generated interest. People appreciated knowing their role was making a missional difference. This reinforces a point made earlier in this paper and matches the research done by Miller and Duckworth indicating that people are desperately looking for clarity that adds value to what they are doing. They do not want to fill an empty role of just complete a task. They want clarity of purpose, and for that purpose to make a real difference.¹¹⁴ This proved true as several people jumped into new leadership roles as the new role descriptions were shared with volunteers by the pastoral leaders.

One of the pastors in this study noted that the implementation was good for unity on the ministry team that he led. He said the new structure and roles, as well as the leadership training provided, helped to unite his team around the mission. This new focus helped them to start dreaming about what could be improved and how they could work together to lead those changes.

Other key insights developed around the process of discipleship integration. As the Leadership Pathway was woven into the discipleship process, it made a noticeable difference in how many people responded. One volunteer said she was challenged consistently through the

¹¹³ Kizer, Kreisher, and Whitacre, *The Volunteer Project*, 85.

¹¹⁴ Miller and Duckworth, *Leading Not Normal Volunteers*, 52.

discipleship processes to grow, and it was clear that growth would develop into her leading in a ministry area. This develops on the work of Asifatu, demonstrating that good leadership does in fact grow out of good discipleship.¹¹⁵ The discipleship process was a catalyzing agent for her leadership as she learned how to help other people grow, too.

Another volunteer saw the discipleship process as extremely helpful in leadership development. As he was growing through discipleship classes, he was inspired to go deeper through additional training and enrichment opportunities. These helped him grow as a disciple and built a passion within him to want to lead others to experience Jesus in similar ways. When speaking about this impact, he said, “As I got more involved, I more felt led to ask questions, and as I was learning more about discipleship, the leadership just manifested.”

This volunteer noted especially how helpful the pastoral staff was in mentoring him through that process of growing from a disciple to a disciple who makes disciples as a ministry leader. He said when speaking about a staff pastor who helped him step into leadership, “[That pastor] has helped me a lot. He’s there to answer questions and push me along in the right direction.” Two powerful insights come out of this statement. One is that discipleship systems should lead to leadership. This matches the biblical call to go and make disciples, or to lead others in the Christian faith. Another is that mentoring is an incredibly valuable part of that process and catalyzes the growth of the people involved, helping them quickly step from volunteer into leader. This correlates to what Phil Newton says about mentoring providing the necessary reinforcement for people to implement what they are learning as leaders in ministry.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Sikiru A. Asifatu, “Leadership Culture: An Effective Leadership Strategy for Church Growth and Spiritual Maturity” (DMIN project, Liberty University, 2022), 107. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/5049/>

¹¹⁶ Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church: How Pastors and Congregations Cultivate Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2017), 41.

One inspiring insight that developed near the end of the project is that the church had truly undergone a systemic change around leadership. The pathway would not end with the research project but would carry on at Southside Church. The evidence of that shift came through the news of two major events. The first was the development of a new internship program specifically for training and empowering those interested in ministry leadership. While none of the participants counted toward this study since that program started after the implementation period ended, it showed how the work done in the project was already creating a lasting effect on leadership development.

The second major event took place when two different adult discipleship groups decided a certain ministry area did not have enough leaders or volunteers and so as a group they decided to make a difference. Both groups decided to go through leadership training for that ministry area and to start serving. Some of those people became volunteers and some leaders, but it signaled a cultural shift away from expecting the paid staff to do all the work of ministry, to a model of the lay people taking responsibility for making sure the ministries of the church are staffed with great leaders. This directly addressed a major cause of the problem this research project was created to combat.

One final insight about the research implications is noteworthy. This entire process of implementation was extremely helpful to the staff. It became clear that even aside from the particular purpose of this intervention, the process itself worked well. As such, it is worth outlining the implementation process. The implementation template consists of leading the pastoral staff toward a clear purpose, providing and defining the end goal, giving a plan for accomplishing the goal, and supplying it with forthright expectations and a reasonable timeline. That plan is bolstered by focused training and carried across the goal line with strong personal

mentoring or coaching. This implementation template will likely be of use in future projects regardless of the problem being addressed.

Research Applications

The research completed at Southside Church on the Leadership Pathway has many positive applications. The first and most relevant application would be to implement this process in other large churches of the Nazarene on the Virginia District. These are the churches most like Southside Church and most likely to have the same positive results of raising up substantially more leaders through this process.

The insights observed in this implementation confirm those discussed in the literature review. Those authors made their observations at other churches in other settings much different than Southside Church. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that other churches beyond the specific context of Southside Church could also benefit greatly from implementing this Leadership Pathway

Another research application that is particularly helpful for other churches is to know just how hard this process of implementation actually was on the staff pastors, especially since it was implanted in the quarter of the calendar year that ended on Easter Sunday. Working through revisioning ministry areas with the staff is time- and labor-intensive. It also uses up a lot of the staff's creative energy, perhaps taking a toll on other key projects going on simultaneous to implementing the Leadership Pathway.

However, it is also important to know the end result. After laboring through revisioning the ministry areas leadership structure, the staff pastors wrote new missionally focused role descriptions for each leadership role. Once completed, the pastors unanimously stated that the

implementation was worth the additional effort. They saw nearly immediate results and are still seeing additional results from implementing this part of the Leadership Pathway.

While the researcher hopes that other churches will implement this Leadership Pathway, it is also important to note that some of the reasons the pathway worked so well at Southside Church may not be present at other churches. Southside Church has a clearly defined mission, vision, and ministry framework. Many churches are not that clear. If they are going to implement the Leadership Pathway, they would have to go back before they could move forward. They would need to develop a clear mission and vision and a framework by which they plan for their ministry areas to work together cohesively toward that vision. That foundation must be in place before this Leadership Pathway can function well inside the church.

Another key part of that foundation is a flexible discipleship system. Because discipleship integration is a key part of implementation, the church needs a discipleship system that is flexible enough to include leadership training, enrichment, clearly defined mission-driven leadership roles, and leadership promotion. If that is not already present, churches should start by developing a clear mission and vision, then a discipleship system before moving on to this Leadership Pathway.

Other churches should also give careful thought to the amount of time they plan for implementing the Leadership Pathway. The timing of implementation at Southside Church was driven by the needs of the doctoral research program. However, other churches should look at the amount of time they think it will take to reach the milestones and plan an appropriate timeline for implementation that keeps the pastoral leaders accountable but doesn't drive them with unrealistic expectations. The time the current pastoral and volunteer leaders can give to

implementation in a normal week should also be a key determiner of setting up the implementation timeline.

Research Limitations

There are several factors present in the Leadership Pathway implementation that were limitations to be considered. One such limitation is the amount of time that was available for the staff pastors to work on this process. As noted earlier in this project, some of the pastors did not finish the entire implementation, and many did not even complete their planning for the new structure and roles until around week ten. The time limit on this project made it extremely taxing on the pastoral leaders to fit in extra work in a busy season.

Time was a limiting factor in another way. The results of this implementation must be measured at the thirteen-week mark to compare with previous quarters to confirm the validity of the results. However, this limits the opportunity to see all the fruit that will be born from the project. Many pastoral leaders were not able to implement in full during the thirteen weeks, and others only near the end of that time, so the full value of the implementation was not be demonstrated within this paper. It is hypothesized that the leadership growth will continue to grow over the next several months based only on the work already done.

Another key limitation to the implementation of this project could be the context of Southside Church. While the researcher believes that the Leadership Pathway will be effective in other contexts, it still remains that the pathway was designed for Southside Church. The geographical, economic, cultural, and denominational setting for Southside Church is quite specific and could be a limiting factor in this pathway being applicable across the board in other settings.

Other limiting factors to the research included several questions that had been used in surveys and forms that were deemed as leading questions by the review team during the triangulation process. These questions assumed a positive result from the process of implementing the pathway and could have limited insightful responses that were helpful but not positive. These questions limited the feedback of the participants and, as such, the insights that are available through this research. For future usage, the questions should be revised.

Another limitation in the pathway is that it was designed specifically for this doctoral research project implementation. One factor that is precluded is a defined structure by which someone other than the researcher in this context should be chosen and empowered to lead the implementation in another local church. Even in the setting of Southside Church where this research was done, there is no clear plan written into the implementation for who should lead the Leadership Pathway implementation in the future or how and when it should be applied to new leaders and new ministries that develop in the future. This should be resolved before the Leadership Pathway is implemented again at Southside Church or in a different church setting.

A different kind of limitation presented itself during the pastoral leader roundtable discussion after the implementation. One of the pastoral staff members expressed that he was still not clear on many details of the implementation project. This pastor missed the initial training because he was out of town at the time it was shared with the staff. The researcher made it a point to mentor the staff pastor and to go through the training one-on-one but either something was not communicated clearly or the pastor misunderstood some of the training. This was a major limiting factor, and this ministry fell toward the bottom of the results with much less movement in raising new leaders than most of the Southside Church ministries. This gap begs the question of whether participants should be allowed to join a study late.

Further Research

Now that this DMIN action research project is complete, it is time to assess what new areas of research should be explored next regarding the problem of raising up new leaders at Southside Church and other churches in a similar context. The next step for further research would be to implement this Leadership Pathway at one of the other large congregations of the Church of the Nazarene on the Virginia District. That way, the researcher could compare the results from that implementation to this implementation to see if the Leadership Pathway is strong enough to work in similar but distinct contexts.

Further research would take the Leadership Pathway out of its context entirely and place it in small churches and churches of other denominations and geographical or socio-economic settings. The results of these implementations could be compared to this project. This would show just how transferable the Leadership Pathway is across various churches and settings.

Another topic that emerged during this research is the need for a clearly defined mentoring model to support the process of discipleship integration. Southside Church uses an outcomes-based discipleship model, which gives direction to mentoring but it does not clearly articulate a prescribed model. This creates a lot of room for a pastoral leader to mentor in a way that is not as helpful to implementation and sows inconsistency into the process between ministry areas. Testing the impact of a clearly defined mentoring model on the implementation of the Leadership Pathway would offer additional insights.

A careful review of how each ministry area implemented the Leadership Pathway would also be an important avenue of further research. This would provide insight into which practices made the most significant difference within the pathway. Once identified, they could be researched further by testing if those best practices could be replicated across every ministry area and in differing ministry contexts.

Another idea that emerged through this project was to implement the Leadership Pathway at another church but instead of measuring new leaders, gauge its effectiveness in other areas such as staff retention, new ministries started, or growth in church attendance. These additional insights would demonstrate whether this Leadership Pathway could have a systemic impact on the overall church, not just how many people stepped into leadership roles.

A final area of additional exploration revealed through this study is the measurement of long-term effects. This action research project focused on a three-month implementation. However, it would be far more meaningful to track the results and report at six, twelve, and twenty-four months to see if the results are systemic.

Ultimately, this action research project addressed the problem of not having enough ministry leaders at Southside Church by developing a new Leadership Pathway that was implemented over a thirteen-week period. At the end of the implementation period, the pathway had substantially increased the number of new ministry leaders from a three-year quarterly average of 7.41 to twenty-three. In this short time, leaders were raised, pastoral staff were encouraged and helped, and the culture of leadership among the ministries positively shifted. Therefore, the project was successful, and the insights gained will help foster further development and research in the area of raising up leaders both at Southside Church and other churches in the future.

APPENDIX A**PERMISSION LETTER LEAD PASTOR**

[Date]

[Pastor's Name]

[Title]

[Address]

Dear [Pastor],

As a graduate student in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree. The title of my research project is "Developing a Pathway for Ministry Leaders in Large Congregations for the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene," and the purpose of my research is to design and implement a ministerial leadership development pathway to produce more leaders on the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene.

I am writing to request your permission to contact members of your staff to invite them to participate in my research study and to collect data and historical records pertaining to Southside Church of the Nazarene.

Participants will be asked to implement the leadership development pathway of this action research project in their ministry area. This will include receiving and implementing leadership training, offering leadership enrichment to volunteers, creating defined leadership roles in their ministry areas, promoting the vision for raising up leaders, and fully integrating these processes into the discipleship process. They will be invited to complete a survey or interview and participate in a roundtable discussion at the end of the intervention. The data will be used to analyze the effectiveness of the intervention in raising up new leaders. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please return the signed permission letter in person or by email to [REDACTED]. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Reggie Phillips
Director of Discipleship
Southside Church
[REDACTED]

APPENDIX B

PERMISSION RESPONSE LETTER LEAD PASTOR

(Please provide this document on official letterhead or copy and paste it into an email.)

[Date]

Reggie Phillips
Director of Discipleship
Southside Church of the Nazarene
6851 Courthouse Road
Chesterfield, VA 23832

Dear Reggie Phillips:

After careful review of your research proposal entitled “Developing a Pathway for Ministry Leaders in Large Congregations for the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene,” [I/we] have decided to grant you permission to contact our staff and invite them to participate in your study as well as receive and utilize historical data for your research study.

Check any of the following boxes, as applicable:

I grant permission for Reggie Phillips to contact Southside Church staff pastors to invite them to participate in his research study.

The requested data WILL BE STRIPPED of all identifying information before it is provided to the researcher.

The requested data WILL NOT BE STRIPPED of identifying information before it is provided to the researcher.

I am requesting a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication.

Sincerely,

[Official’s Name]

[Official’s Title]

[Official’s Company/Organization]

APPENDIX C**RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR PASTORAL STAFF MEMBERS**

Dear [Potential Participant],

As a doctoral candidate in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree. The purpose of my research is to create a Leadership Pathway to raise up new leaders in large local churches in the Virginia District Church of the Nazarene, and I am writing to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be active pastoral staff members of Southside Church of the Nazarene who are willing to commit to a thirteen-week implementation plan. Participants will be asked to fully apply the ministry intervention as proposed in this form, including changes made to the discipleship process, church events, and worship services, to create a development pathway for ministry leaders. The intervention will last for thirteen weeks and, as a staff member, you will be asked to implement the intervention in your respective ministry area, participate in surveys and a roundtable discussion, and gather historical data about the number of leaders in your ministry area. If you consent to participate, you will receive training on how to implement the action research project in your ministry area. The data from the roundtable discussion may be recorded and transcribed, which you will have a chance to review for accuracy. You would also consent to the data collected from this intervention being published in a dissertation for use by other scholars and researchers. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but participant identities will not be disclosed.

To participate please read, sign, and return the consent form within five days. The form is attached. It can be returned by hard copy in person or by email to

[REDACTED]
Sincerely,

Reggie Phillips
Director of Discipleship
[REDACTED]

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM STAFF PASTOR

Title of the Project: Developing a Pathway for Ministry Leaders at Southside Church of the Nazarene

Principal Investigator: Reginald D. Phillips, Doctoral Candidate, John W. Rawlings
School of Divinity, Liberty University

Invitation to be part of a research study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be willing to fully apply the ministry intervention as proposed in this form, including changes made to the discipleship process, church events, and worship services, in an effort to create a development pathway for ministry leaders. The intervention will last for thirteen weeks and, as a staff member, you will be asked to implement the intervention in your respective ministry area, participate in surveys and a roundtable discussion, and gather historical data about the number of leaders in your ministry area. You would also consent to the data collected from this intervention being published in a dissertation for use by other scholars and researchers. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to implement a Leadership Pathway to raise up new ministry leaders at Southside Church of the Nazarene. Changes to the discipleship process, promoting vision, defined roles, enrichment, and leadership training will be guided for thirteen weeks and the number of people stepping into new or new-to-them leadership roles will be compared to the historical average of new leaders stepping into leadership roles over the previous three calendar years to see if the pathway is an effective process for developing new leaders.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

1. Support the research intervention assignment by participating in the study for the thirteen-week implementation period.
2. Allow the researcher to direct changes to the discipleship process that will fully integrate the proposed Leadership Pathway.
3. Fully engage the intervention under the direction of the researcher, giving it due focus during the intervention period.
4. Participate in the requisite training on two successive Tuesday mornings for one hour each on the first two weeks of the intervention.

5. Promote this Leadership Pathway during weekly worship services by highlighting a lay leader at least every other week.
6. Respond within five days to participants who desire to step into volunteer leadership in your ministry area when alerted to their decision by the researcher.
7. Participate in surveys and roundtable discussions about the Leadership Pathway at the end of the thirteen-week intervention.
8. Allow new lay leaders in your ministry area to be interviewed at the end of the thirteen-week intervention.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study include new leaders stepping into leadership roles within your area of ministry in the local church. This will lighten the ministry burden on paid staff and multiply the amount of ministry work that can be accomplished.

Benefits to society include having a potential model for raising up new leaders in other ministry settings similar to the one being studied and multiplying ministry leaders for the sake of advancing God's kingdom.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. While discouraged, other members of the focus group may share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.
- Data collected from you may be used in future research studies and/or shared with other researchers. If data collected from you is reused or shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed beforehand.

- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and on a secure cloud server. All hard copy data will be scanned and stored digitally on the same password-locked computer and cloud server. Electronic records will be retained but all hard copy documents will be shredded after being digitized. Once the research project is complete any personally identifiable content will be removed from the stored data.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer and cloud server until participants have reviewed and confirmed the accuracy of the transcripts and the research project is completed, then they will be deleted. The researcher and members of his doctoral study team will have access to these recordings.

Is the researcher in a position of authority over participants, or does the researcher have a financial conflict of interest?

The researcher serves as a director on the pastoral staff at Southside Church of the Nazarene. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on his or her decision to participate or not participate in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Reginald (Reggie) D. Phillips. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor,

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address

is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record me in a focus group setting as part of my participation in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

APPENDIX E

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Week 1

Open with story of Nehemiah selecting leaders to oversee sections of the wall being rebuilt. Where did he find leaders? How did he select them so quickly? If you had a major project and needed twenty new leaders by the end of the week, who would you ask? Where would you find them?

The work we are embarking on is to help us answer that question.

The facilitator opens the discussion by asking:

8. What is the mission of Southside?
9. Of each ministry area? (ask ministry leaders individually)

Then share a celebration story tied to the mission and the leader who carried it out as an example.

The facilitator then takes the team deeper in the discussion by asking:

10. How might additional leaders positively impact your ministry area?
11. Why do you think you do not currently have those leaders?

The facilitator then presents this implementation plan as the solution to have more missional effectiveness and a way to solve lack of leader problem. (Start with pages 59 of this project)

Discuss: (Use graphic)

Leadership Training – Influencing people to lead others toward Christ, specific skills for a specific role, core purpose with missional value.

Leadership Enrichment – Invest in people rather than roles, add value to people, and appreciate them.

Defined Roles – Delegate well, clearly define roles with written job descriptions, growth step-up plan for each role, mentor to guide them.

Promoting Vision – Keeps leadership development central, promoting clear roles increases engagement and excitement, celebrating what matters and Kingdom impact, vision cast possibility of any team member becoming a leader.

Discipleship Integration – Develops leaders who carry out the mission, discipleship structure reinforces process and highlights the missional value of leadership, multifaceted approach reinforces for increased growth, shift culture to focus on developing people instead of programs, direct access to a leader and defined authority in new role.

Ask the pastoral team to aid in supplying historical data (Appendix F) so they can be a part of tracking effectiveness (Appendix D).

Week 2

The facilitator will recap the vision casting that was shared in week one, and what the pastoral team shared about gaps and reasons for not having adequate leaders.

Then the facilitator will highlight the staff pastors' desire to raise up new leaders, and this plan's ability to help them do so.

The facilitator will guide a discussion around implementation by asking the following questions:

1. How will each participant implement this plan in their ministry area using the provided template?
2. How will each pastor Identify and plan for necessary training, enrichment opportunities, leadership roles, discipleship integration, and promotion within their ministry area.

Then the facilitator will provide the template found in Appendix G and walk the staff pastors through how to use it.

Then the facilitator will let the team know the following information:

1. The facilitator will ask the following questions each week in a staff meeting. The updates will be recorded in a reflective journal by the researcher: Are you actively implementing the Leadership Pathway? Have you encountered any roadblocks with implementation with which you need help? Where have you started to get traction with new leaders as a result of the Leadership Pathway?
2. The staff pastors will need to train new leaders on how to train participants in their ministry area. Invite them to:
 - a. Set a time with each new leader to discuss leadership training.
 - b. Cover all five steps of the intervention so they are growing and training the same way as the pastoral team during the intervention.
 - c. Assign a mentor to guide them through the process of growing as a leader.
 - d. Write out a simple plan for how they will deliver the five steps of this implementation to the people they lead.

Then the facilitator needs to:

1. Remind the pastors of the missional impact of this project.
2. Make sure the pastors know they can contact the facilitator with any questions or issues.
3. Encourage the pastors again to fill out Appendix G before next week's meeting.

APPENDIX F**HISTORICAL DATA FORM**

Instructions: Please use the following form to supply historical data regarding the number of leaders serving in your ministry area and how many leaders stepped into a new or new-to-them leadership role during the dates given below. Please give the most accurate data available and indicate by checking the appropriate blank if the information is based on written records or the recollection of the staff pastor providing the data. Leaders are defined as people who are ROI—Responsible for a ministry area, Organize a ministry area, or Inspire others to serve within a ministry area.

Staff Pastor Reporting:**Ministry Area:****Date:**

1. How many people served in leadership positions in your area of ministry responsibility for the 2021 calendar year?

Is this based on ___ written record or ___ recollection?

2. How many new people stepped into leadership during the 2021 calendar year?

Is this based on ___ written record or ___ recollection?

3. How many people served in leadership positions in your area of ministry responsibility for the 2022 calendar year?

Is this based on ___ written record or ___ recollection?

4. How many new people stepped into leadership during the 2022 calendar year?

Is this based on ___ written record or ___ recollection?

5. How many people served in leadership positions in your area of ministry responsibility for the 2023 calendar year?

Is this based on ___ written record or ___ recollection?

6. How many new people stepped into leadership during the 2023 calendar year?

Is this based on __ written record or __ recollection?

APPENDIX G

LEADERSHIP PATHWAY IMPLEMENTATION TEMPLATE

Instructions: This document will provide a template for how the local church will implement the Leadership Pathway being tested for this action research project. At the end of the form there is a place for each staff pastor to fill in how the template will be applied in their area of ministry responsibility. Please review the template and fill in your own plan for implementation in your ministry area.



The Leadership Pathway consists of five steps that will be applied at Southside Church of the Nazarene. The steps and method of implementation for the church at large are as follows:

Step 1—Leadership Training

Current leaders will be provided with training on how to lead well in their current roles including being given examples of what effective leadership in their role looks like. This training

will include information on how to lead volunteers well. This will begin with training for the staff pastors on how to lead this implementation in their ministry areas of responsibility.

Step 2–Enrichment

Leadership enrichment opportunities (such as a leadership summit, training event, or simulcast event) will be provided to the church at large to invest in leaders in the local church. This enrichment will help strengthen leadership skills that are useful for ministry but will also provide a means of investing in the leaders as individuals whom the staff cares about. This will help shift the culture to valuing volunteer leaders as individuals and members of the body of Christ, not just as valuable when they are provided a desired service.

Step 3–Defined Roles

All leadership roles will be clearly identified and defined within the organizational structure. Job descriptions will be written that clarify the leadership responsibilities and goals of each position. These leadership roles will be promoted within the ministry area and to the congregation at large so that people know the opportunities they have to step into leadership roles within the local church. These leadership roles need to be promoted to the serving base in the church, as well as the current leaders so that both see the potential they have for advancement in using their skills and spiritual gifts.

The Leadership Pathway begins by highlighting serving roles at one-time events, in ministry, and in mission. The first leadership role these servants can grow into is the Group Leader role, which includes small group leaders, large group leaders, and class teachers. The next leadership role is Ministry Coordinator. This role oversees a ministry or a team of Group Leaders in a specific ministry area, such as an age-specific ministry coordinator, compassionate ministry leader, or affinity group coordinator, such as a men’s or women’s groups coordinator.

The next leadership level is to grow beyond a coordinator role and into a pastoral role (or minister if the candidate does not have a district license per the requirements of the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene). This leader provides pastoral support and guidance to a ministry coordinator and the people the coordinator serves. This is as high as a leader can progress within a ministry area under the leadership of a staff pastor.

Should the candidate continue to grow as a leader, the next step is to take on a staff pastor (whether paid or volunteer) role in a ministry area, such as a student pastor, children's pastor, worship pastor, etc. Pastors who continue to grow as leaders could be invited by a lead pastor or executive pastor to serve as pastoral directors to oversee a core strategy woven through all pastoral ministry areas, such as connection or discipleship. Directors could advance as leaders by stepping into an executive pastor role or eventually a lead pastor role.

The roles of Group Leader, Ministry Coordinator, Support Pastor/Minister, and Pastor to Ministry Area need to be promoted internally through each ministry area and to the congregation at large through all church communication and during the worship gatherings. The diagram provided shows the progression of these leadership roles in the leadership development pathway.



Step 4–Promoting Vision

The vision for new lay leaders stepping into leadership roles and working in partnership with staff pastors should be promoted to the body of Christ at Southside Church of the Nazarene. This can be done through the worship services by teaching and preaching on biblical leadership, celebrating lay leaders, and highlighting the process during prayer and announcement times. Promotion can also be done at training events, celebrations, and through electronic means such as email, newsletters, and social media.

This promotion aims to inspire new people to embrace leadership roles and shift the culture away from the local congregation relying on paid staff to do most of the ministry functions.

Step 5–Discipleship Integration

Every step of the leadership development pathway needs to be integrated fully into the discipleship process of the local church, including the discipleship efforts of each ministry area. This will help develop the understanding that disciples are called to lead using their gifts to make disciples of others. This integration is the most important element of the Leadership Pathway in that it provides the catalytic experiences that keep a person moving forward in leadership. The discipleship process provides the ability for people to learn their spiritual gifts, gain necessary mentoring, be encouraged to step into serve roles, and growing as a disciple themselves so they know how to disciple someone else, which is the primary purpose of ministry and where leadership skills are most important.

Ministry Area Implementation Plan: Please use the space provided below to describe how you will implement each step of the leadership development pathway in your ministry area carefully.

Step 1–Leadership Training

Step 2–Leadership Enrichment

Step 3–Defined Leadership Roles

Step 4–Promote Vision for Leadership

Step 5–Integration into the Discipleship Process

APPENDIX H

NEW LEADER TRAINING

The staff pastors will need to train new leaders. Use the following template to provide training:

1. Set a time with each new leader to discuss leadership training.
2. Cover all five steps of the intervention so they are growing and training the same way as the pastoral team during the intervention.
 - a. Leadership Training
 - i. Core Purpose is to influence people to lead them toward Christ.
 - ii. Train on specific skills for a specific role.
 - b. Leadership Enrichment
 - i. Invest in people rather than roles, add value to people and appreciate them.
 - ii. Define the enrichment opportunities available.
 - c. Defined Roles
 - i. Clearly define leadership role with a written job description.
 - ii. Create a growth step-up plan for each role.
 - iii. Select a mentor to guide them.
 - iv. Write out the missional purpose of the role.
 - v. Show the leader where their role is on the leadership roles pathway.
 - d. Promoting Vision
 - i. Explain how promotion keeps leadership development central.
 - ii. Promoting vision inspires others to engage.
 - iii. Celebrating what matters and kingdom impact so collect stories.

- iv. Have the new leader vision cast the possibility of any team member becoming a leader.
- e. Discipleship Integration
- i. The goal is to develop leaders who carry out the mission.
 - ii. Explain how the discipleship structure reinforces the leadership development process and highlights the missional value of leadership.
 - iii. Explain the multifaceted approach that reinforces the process for increased growth.
 - iv. Explain how people are valued over programs as part of shifting culture.
- 3. Assign a mentor to guide them through the process of growing as a leader.
 - 4. Work with the new leader to write out a simple plan for how they will deliver the five steps of this implementation to the people they lead.

Then the facilitator needs to remind the new leader of their core purpose to fulfill the mission in their new role.

APPENDIX I**LEADERSHIP INTEREST FORM****Name:****Email:****Phone Number:****I am interested in growing as a leader in the following ministry areas (check all that apply):**

- Children's Ministry
- Student Ministry
- Young Adult Ministry
- Adult Discipleship/Groups
- Ministry Events
- Worship/Media Ministry
- Missions
- Mentoring
- Online Service
- Sports
- Drama
- Support Groups/Recovery Ministry
- Connection/Guest Services
- Outreach

After submitting this form the pastor who oversees this ministry area will contact you within four days.

APPENDIX J

DISCIPLESHIP GROUP ATTENDANCE AND OUTCOMES FORM

Discipleship Group Attendance & Spiritual Outcomes														
Group Participants	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 6	Wk 7	Wk 8	Wk 9	Wk 10	Wk 11	Wk 12	Wk 13	Wk 14
1	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				
2	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				
3	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				
4	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				
5	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				
6	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				
7	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				
8	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				
9	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				
10	Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	Baptism	Serving	Member	Bible x4	Prayer	Mentor	Worship	Witness				

Mark the spiritual outcomes that a group member has taken during the group. These can be marked at any time during the semester.
 Mark a date for when they Said Yes to Jesus, were Baptized, or joined the church as a Member if you know it or if it happens as a result of your group.
 Mark a "Y" if a member took a step in Serving, reading their Bible 4 times a week, Prayer, Mentoring, Worshipping regularly, or Witnessing.
 (Many factors impact a person's decision, but if you feel your group played a role in someone taking a spiritual step, please mark the outcome)

Examples:

1 Southside Sue	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X		X	X				
Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	4.5.93	Baptism	5.21.23	Serving	Y	Member	6.11.23	Bible x4	Y	Prayer	Y	Mentor	Y	Worship	Y	Witness	Y
2 Discipleship Dave																		
Spiritual Outcomes	Say Yes	10.1.22	Baptism		Serving		Member		Bible x4	Y	Prayer	Y	Mentor	Y	Worship	Y	Witness	

***Please report attendance and outcomes every Monday by noon by emailing this document, or a picture of the printed document, to [Redacted]**

APPENDIX K**NEW LEADERS SURVEY FOR STAFF PASTORS**

Instructions: Please complete this form at the end of the thirteen-week implementation. Answer the questions below based on the activity in your ministry's area of responsibility.

1. How many people in total are now serving in leadership roles in your ministry area?
2. How many people actively stepped into new or new-to-them leadership roles during the implementation?
3. How effective do you perceive the implementation to have been in helping new people step into leadership roles?
4. If you could change something about the leadership development pathway, what would it be?
5. If you could change something about how the pathway was implemented, what would it be?
6. What was most helpful about the leadership development pathway and how it was implemented?
7. Do you feel this implementation has shifted the culture of the local church in a beneficial way toward a desire to produce more leaders?
8. Do you feel this implementation has shifted the structure of the local church to create a pathway of leadership development that will continue to produce leaders into the future?

APPENDIX L

NEW LEADER QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Use this form to guide one-on-one interviews with each of the new leaders who stepped up into leadership roles during the implementation period. The purpose of the interview is to decipher whether the intervention contributed to their decision to step into a new leadership role.

The new leader will be informed of the thirteen-week intervention and shown the Leadership Pathway Implementation Template. Then the following questions will be asked.

You have stepped into a new leadership role during the last thirteen weeks at Southside Church of the Nazarene, therefore:

1. Did you step into leadership for the first time, or did you step into a bigger leadership role?
2. How did you become aware of that leadership role and/or get clarity on what the role entailed?
3. List the five activities. Were any of these helpful in stepping into a leadership role, and if so, in what way? Was there another reason?
4. Did any teaching from the stage during the weekend services also play a role in your decision to step into leadership? If so, what specifically was said that was helpful?
5. At Southside Church, our mission is to make Christlike disciples who impact families to transform our world. In what ways, if any, is this leadership role helping you fulfill our mission?

APPENDIX M

PASTORAL LEADER ROUNDTABLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: The researcher will use this form to guide a roundtable discussion with the staff pastors after the thirteen-week implementation. The roundtable discussion will be audio recorded and a written transcript will be made. The purpose of this questionnaire is to guide the discussion to help evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation from the view of the pastoral staff who participated. The desire is for the group discussion to reveal insights through this questionnaire that the pastoral surveys did not.

1. How was the thirteen-week implementation helpful in raising up new leaders in your ministry area?
2. What was the most helpful part of the implementation?
3. Did anything surprise you during this implementation?
4. What impact did this implementation have on the leadership culture in your ministry area?
5. What impact did this implementation have on you?
6. What was the hardest part of the implementation?
7. What do you wish would have gone differently during the implementation?
8. Did you have everything you needed to implement the intervention well?

9. Do you feel like this was a worthwhile experience?

10. Did this have an overall positive or negative impact on your volunteer leaders, ministry area, and on you personally?

11. What is one important thing you would want the researcher to know having spent thirteen weeks investing in this intervention?

12. Would you be interested in continuing part or all the intervention steps as a means of helping to raise up new leaders in your ministry area?

APPENDIX N**IMPLEMENTATION REPORT FOR STAFF PASTORS**

1. What Leadership Training has been or will be implemented this quarter to equip leaders to serve within your ministry area, especially equipping them to navigate changes you may have made to the system (events, seminars, videos, emails, newsletters, etc.)?
2. What Leadership Enrichment has been or will be implemented this quarter to invest in your leaders (events, seminars, simulcasts, classes, videos, emails, retreats, etc.)?
3. What Leadership Roles have you clearly defined during this quarter, and for which have you added new missionally focused job descriptions (either new roles or just new descriptions)?
4. In what ways have you or will you Promote Vision for Leadership this quarter in your ministry area to inspire people to step up and highlight your new systems (newsletter, email, meetings, signage, training, handouts, conversations, preaching, etc.)?
5. How have you integrated these things into your Discipleship Process so they are an ongoing part of ministry instead of a short-term focus (systems, processes, measures, outcomes, teaching focus, events, mentoring, etc.)?
6. Please attach any new organizational chart or job descriptions you have written.
7. Please list any people who have stepped into new leadership roles in your ministry area so far this quarter.

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IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Date: 12-16-2023

IRB #: IRB-FY23-24-896

Title: Developing A Pathway for Ministry Leaders at Southside Church of the Nazarene

Creation Date: 11-22-2023

End Date:

Status: **Approved**

Principal Investigator: Reginald Phillips

Review Board: Research Ethics Office

Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Exempt	Decision	No Human Subjects Research
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