

ASBURY SEMINARY
1000062892



EFFECTING MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

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A Project-Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

1980

Approved by Wayne E. Gordon
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Date 3/26/81

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The order for Confirmation and Reception into the United Methodist Church begins with the affirmation: "Dearly beloved, the church is of God, and will be preserved to the end of time"¹ The force and meaning of those words were etched upon my mind as a young person raised in the parsonage. My earliest recollections are of the church. The church is the source of some of my fondest memories as well as my deepest hurts.

I do not know the exact moment God called me to be a pastor in His church, but deep within me there was a pervasive conviction that I should be a pastor. Truthfully, I have never seriously considered any other vocation. My life, from the earliest years in the home through the years of formal education, has been oriented toward becoming a pastor in the church. It was a sense of fulfillment, then, when in June, 1967 Bishop Richard C. Raines appointed me to a student charge. I eagerly began the work I had long anticipated.

After a few years I entered the first crisis of my ministry. I could point to a successful statistical record and a new church building, and a meaningful relationship with the people in the congregation. Yet something was wrong--I was unhappy and depressed most of the time. "If this is the pastorate," I said to myself, "then I must find something

¹The Book of Worship for Church and Home . . . the United Methodist Church, "The Order for Confirmation and Reception into the Church" (Nashville, Tn.: The Methodist Publishing House, 1964), p. 12.

else to do." I felt I could not continue giving my life to the church when it was such a depressing experience.

I turned to the Scriptures. "If the church really belongs to God," I thought, "then what does He want it to be and how does He want it to function?" I made a startling discovery. Despite my love for the church, being raised in a parsonage, having a Bible school training and a seminary education, and now ordination as a pastor, I really did not understand ministry. I soon discovered that I was not alone. The laity of the church were just as confused. These shocking discoveries marked the beginning of a study which is coming to fruition in this project-dissertation.

The Problem

The problem addressed in this study concerns the insufficient biblical and theological knowledge of the church as they relate to ineffective ministry by the pastor and congregation. This problem is complicated by a concomitant desire on the part of the pastor and congregation to see the church fulfill its divine purpose. Ministry is further hindered by organizational structures which seem to perpetuate the institution rather than providing the means for effecting ministry. The lack of knowledge and skill over against the desire to serve, stifled by burdensome organizational structures, leaves the church paralyzed and frustrated.

The following questions provide the framework for this study:

1. Is the church's mission enhanced by increased knowledge of a theology of the church and of ministry?
2. Will analytical tools (survey, questionnaire, etc.) help a

congregation uncover its particular mission and thus effect ministry?

3. Can a structure be found which will meet the institutional needs of the congregation, yet provide for spiritual growth and effective ministry?

4. Can a pastor with a group participative, facilitative style of leadership effectively equip a congregation for ministry?

The purpose of this study is to highlight this pilgrimage and to tell the story of one congregation and its pastor who attempted to put their theology to work and effect ministry. A biblical and theological understanding of the church and the ministry, a thorough knowledge of the contemporary setting, an analysis of the environment, the nurturing of a congregation for ministry, and the actual process of ministry are all the components of the pilgrimage. The United Methodist quadrilateral of Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason provided the framework within which this project unfolded.

The Thesis

The thesis is simple but became the guiding motivation for this study. When the church experiences God, understands its mission, sees the needs that exist, and is nurtured and equipped, ministry is effected.

The Methodology

A multi-faceted process included an eight week sermon series on the mission of the church, and a Bible study on the book of Ephesians. They were designed to help the congregation discover the nature of the church and develop a theology of ministry. These components provided the framework for a biblical-theological understanding of the church and

ministry.

Local church questionnaires, community surveys, group meetings, and professional consultants were employed to gather scientific empirical data on the nature and needs of the congregation and community.

Thus, the process incorporated biblical and historical research, scientific empirical surveys and questionnaires, as well as preaching, Bible study, and the use of consultants, but the bulk of the study is developmental--a congregation and pastor in process and in ministry.

The project-dissertation includes the theoretical and the practical, as well as the academic and the contextual. The contextual setting is the First United Methodist Church, Hagerstown, Indiana.

Chapter Synopses

The next two chapters develop the biblical and theological base upon which the remaining chapters rest. "The Mission of the Church" is the focus for Chapter 2. This study examines the meaning of the word ecclesia and Jesus' first announcement about the church to His disciples in Matt. 16. Further, God's role in the church as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is described. This chapter concludes with an examination of the gathering and the scattering aspects of the church's existence. Chapter 3, "A Theology of Ministry," describes Christ's strategy of choosing and nurturing twelve men to carry on His work, but will also insist that all Christians are called to ministry in the church, and in the world. The final section of this chapter examines the biblical function of pastoral ministry.

The details and processes used by the congregation to ascertain the needs of the congregation and the community are described in

Chapter 4, "Analyzing the Environment." A questionnaire provided the basic information utilized in this chapter.

"Preparing the Congregation for Ministry," Chapter 5, gives the rationale behind the decision to utilize the small group to develop the church's purpose and to effect ministry. "Results of Preparing the Congregation for Ministry," Chapter 6, details the various ministries which have evolved.

Conclusions and future directions are indicated in the final chapter, "Evaluations and Pointing Ahead."

I am grateful to the United Methodists of Hagerstown for the opportunity to work with them in this experiment of faith. There have been successes and failures. Others cannot duplicate our experience, but we are convinced that a similar process which moves from theology to practice, from understanding of mission to ministry, from nurture to involvement is necessary. We hope others will also experience renewal and be able to effect ministry as a result of our work.

Chapter 2

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

As the church approaches the twenty-first century a vital question must be asked--"Why does the church exist?" Christians must face this question squarely, for others will ask it even if the church does not.

Christians tend to accept uncritically the church, its mission, and its inherited structures. Congregational members frequently embrace inherited forms without evaluating their impact on the life and mission of the church. Thus, it becomes a primary duty of the Christians in every generation to clarify the purpose of the church and reaffirm the meaning of its existence. The church cannot accomplish God's task without a proper understanding of its identity and mission.

An Identity Crisis

Some churches appear to be active, with groups coming and going from the building every day. The lights may be burning and all the organizational wheels turning, but what is actually taking place? Charles Mowry pessimistically says, ". . . nothing ultimately significant is happening" ¹ in most churches. He probably overstates his case, but he seems correct in stating, "The church has arrived at a point when it has only the faintest idea what it is or what it is to be

¹Charles E. Mowry, The Church and the New Generation (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), p. 87.

in the immediate world of tomorrow. We are facing the crisis of our own identity."²

The church's identity crisis is complicated by the uncertain use of the term church. This word is used quite often to refer to a particular building or to identify a denomination. At other times church may be used to refer to a cultural force such as in the statement, "the church opposes pornography" or a vague cause such as in the statement, "I believe in promoting the church." In contrast, the New Testament's use of the word church is in reference to a people--either (1) the whole people of Christ everywhere (Acts 9:31), or (2) a local congregation of believers in a particular place, such as Corinth (I Cor. 1:2). Let us examine the New Testament for further insights into the word church.

"I Will Build My Church"

The Greek word for church in the New Testament is ecclesia. This word is actually composed of two Greek words: ek meaning "out" and kaleo meaning "to call"--the called out ones.

The word church is a New Testament term occurring about 112 times, 90 percent of the time in Paul's letters, in the book of Acts, and in Revelation. In ten books (Mark, Luke, John, II Tim., Tit., I and II Pet., I and II John, and Jude) the word church does not appear.³

Ecclesia was used almost 100 times for qahal, in the translation

²Ibid., p. 64.

³P. S. Minear, "Idea of Church," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, I, ed. George A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 607.

of the Old Testament from the Hebrew and Aramaic into Greek. Qahal and ecclesia imply a summoning--a calling together--which involves both a convener and a purpose.⁴ Historically, qahal and ecclesia were used by both believers and unbelievers, in reference to secular as well as religious gatherings.

Those summoned constitute a community whose nature is therefore continually qualified by the one who summons or gathers it.⁵ The convener in the Bible is God; His purpose for assembling the people is to hear His Word. Since God is the convener of the ecclesia, the church belongs to Him.

Christ's first use of the term church was on the occasion of Peter's confession of Christ as the Son of God (Matt. 16:16-18). This historical setting is important. John the Baptist had prepared the way for Christ by preaching, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2). Jesus' message was exactly the same, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). Jesus instructed His disciples to go to the house of Israel with the same message of the nearness of the kingdom (Matt. 10). Jesus explicitly told His disciples that this message was first for Israel. It is clear that His offer to Israel was, "The kingdom is now being offered to you if you will but receive it."

By the twelfth chapter of Matthew, the Jews showed clear signs of rejecting God's offer. They wanted no part of Jesus as their king. Therefore, in Matthew 16, Jesus gave His disciples their first glimpse

⁴Ibid., p. 608.

⁵Ibid.

of a new truth which would be fully developed after Pentecost by the writers of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles.

In Caesarea Philippi, a city named after a Gentile, Jesus chose to reveal that His kingdom would be universal in its scope. Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" (Matt. 16:13). Jesus responded to their answers with a more pointed question, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:15). Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). Peter's confession became the occasion for the first mention of the church in the New Testament:

And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it (Matt. 16:17-18).

These verses have been a storm center of exegetical controversy between Protestants and Roman Catholics.⁶ Generally, three views sum up the interpretations concerning the rock upon which Jesus built His church: (1) that the confession of Peter is the foundation stone; (2) that Peter is the rock upon which the church is built; and (3) that the rock is none other than Jesus Christ, Himself. Oscar Cullmann's historical survey of the leading interpretations reveals that the meaning of these words will not be discerned through consensus. Cullmann points out that Chrysostom viewed the rock on which Christ would build His church as the faith of Peter's confession. Cyprian, reflecting upon this saying of Jesus, believed the reference to the rock meant

⁶George A. Buttrick, "The Gospel According to St. Matthew," The Interpreter's Bible, VII, ed. George A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1951), 449.

Peter. However, Cyprian allowed no priority for the Roman bishops over other bishops. Augustine believed that the rock was Jesus not Peter, an explanation followed by Luther and the reformers. The authenticity of Jesus' words has been the focus of the debate in the twentieth century. Beginning with Holtzmann, the genuineness of these words has been denied by Harnack, Bultmann, and others.⁷

An interpretation of these verses has been attempted by Matthew's use of petra and petros. The word translated "Peter" is petros meaning "a piece off of petra." The word rock in the same verse is petra meaning "large stone." Petros is the particularized example for which petra is the general reality. We can only surmise what theological intent Matthew may have intended by his use of these two words, but we cannot put Greek words in Jesus' mouth, because the Semitic character of these words leads us to assume that Jesus originally used Aramaic.⁸ In Aramaic the word kepha would have been used in both instances. George Eldon Ladd says, "Jesus probably said, 'You are kepha and on this kepha I will build my church'."⁹

Cullmann argues that the rock is in fact Peter, not in an official capacity or by virtue of personal qualifications, but as representative of the twelve disciples confessing Jesus as Messiah. The rock is Peter the confessor. He represents the earthly foundation, the beginning which supports the whole structure of the ecclesia that is to be

⁷Oscar Cullmann, Peter: Disciple - Apostle - Martyr, Floyd V. Filson, trans. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), pp. 158-70.

⁸Ibid., p. 185.

⁹George Eldon Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mi.: William B. Eerdmans, 1974), p. 110.

built in the future.¹⁰

It is unwise to discredit Peter's role in the church. He stood out as the dominant member of the twelve. He preached the first recorded Christian sermon on the day of Pentecost. Also, Peter gives us insight into how he would have understood Matt. 16:18. Speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ he said: "Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious" (I Pet. 2:4).

Peter calls Jesus a "living stone." The word used in the Greek is lithon. He continues, ". . . and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 2:5). The word translated stones in this verse is lithoi, in the plural, indicating several or many. Christ, according to Peter, is the lithon, the one foundation rock; and we are lithoi, many living stones built upon the one foundation, Jesus Christ. Peter adds:

For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and he who believes in Him will not be put to shame." To you therefore who believe, He is precious, but for those who do not believe, "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner," and "A stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall," for they stumble because they disobey the word as they were destined to do (I Pet. 2:6-8).

Paul adds his bold affirmation: "For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:11). In Paul's Ephesian letter, however, he describes Christ as the "cornerstone."

So then you are . . . members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus him-

¹⁰Cullmann, op. cit., pp. 206-12.

self being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the spirit (Eph. 2:19-22).

Thus, Peter and Paul use the analogy of a building. Christ constitutes the foundation of the church according to the New Testament apostles and prophets. All of Christ's believers are built upon this foundation. Paul's analogy of Christ as the chief cornerstone does not present a contradiction. The geometrical figure of a pyramid fits what Paul is discussing.¹¹ In a pyramid, the chief cornerstone provides the key to the whole structure. This concept cannot be said of any other form of building.

A pyramid has four identical cornerstones at the base, but it also has a fifth, different from the others and far more exalted. It is at the top, and properly the chief or head cornerstone. Its shape is altogether peculiar. Naturally rejected by the builder, it finally turns out to be the very piece required for completion. It is itself a perfect pyramid, the original model of the edifice which it completes and adorns. Every other stone stands under it, and has its place in reference to it. The chief cornerstone looks toward heaven, and is the symbol for all aspects of the building.

Jesus' use of personal pronouns clearly indicates whose church it is: ". . . I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). It is His church. It existed in the heart and mind of God before the beginning of time. Thus, Christ is building His church upon the foundation of truth laid by the apostles and prophets. We, when changed and transformed by divine

¹¹G. Campbell Morgan, Great Chapters of the Bible (London, Eng.: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, [1946?]), p. 280.

grace, become not the foundation, but part of the superstructure of the building.

Comprehension of the Church

Christ's statement "I will build my church" becomes the initiation of an unfolding truth that continues through the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. The verbal panorama describes the church, but never completely defines it. More than a hundred figures or images of the church are used to provide a gallery of word pictures.¹² None of these pictures fully explain or describe the total essence of the church. The figures are complementary instead of identical. Together they create a panoramic view of the church.

Our understanding of the church remains critical for every aspect of the Christian faith. Any attempt to reduce the pictorial imagery of biblical writers to a concise verbal definition of the church must be understood as arbitrary and incomplete. However, three statements about the church guide us in a search for meaning and purpose.¹³

1. The church is a theocentric people.
2. The church is a Christocentric community.
3. The church is a charismatic reality.

A Theocentric People

The church is the people of God composed of those who have turned from self to serve God and who belong to Him through Jesus Christ.

¹²Miner, "Idea of Church," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, I, 609.

¹³The inspiration for this triad comes from P. S. Miner, "Idea of Church," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, I, 616.

The idea of the community of God's people has roots which extend deeply into the Old Testament, beginning with our first ancestors. God created a perfect world, in every way. Then as the crown of His creation, God created humankind in His own image (Gen. 1:1-26).

Man and woman were placed in an earthly paradise. The continuation of their relationship with God was contingent upon their obedience to Him. God did not ask for obedience--He commanded it. The first humans disobeyed God. Man and woman made a wrong choice, but God did not inflict an irrevocable curse on them. God provided salvation and made it possible for a return to Him.

God could have created robots, pre-programmed with no choice but to obey. Instead, God gave the power of choice, because of His desire for fellowship that is freely given, not coerced. Humans have the choice of freely entering into fellowship with God, or of withholding that fellowship.

God has always been in search of a people. Despite the disobedience of the first humans, God has had such people. There was Abel, in contrast to Cain, who gave God the true reverence and worship He desired. There were those like Enoch who walked with God. There were others--Noah, Abraham, Joseph, and Samuel.

Genesis 12 records God's covenant with Abraham, which forms the basis for understanding what it means to be the people of God. The biblical concept of a God-man covenant is not an agreement between two equal parties. Rather it involves a relationship between two very unequal parties.¹⁴ Here God declares what He will do on behalf of Abraham

¹⁴G. E. Mendenhall, "Covenant," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, I, 718.

language from the Old Testament to describe His followers, such as, God's "flock" (Luke 12:32). Pursuing the same idea, Peter freely quotes Ex. 19:4-6, applying what was said of Israel to the church, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (I Pet. 2:9).

Thus, the New Testament church saw itself as standing in continuity with the Old Testament people of God, identifying itself with Israel's covenantal promises and mission. Peter's sermons (Acts 2 & 4) and Stephen's defense (Acts 7) both show how the early church understood itself in the light of Israel's covenantal tradition. The Hebrew Scripture provided a vocabulary and texts for supporting the messianic claims concerning Jesus, but, more importantly, it provided them with a recorded history and an identity. Peter and Stephen understood their experiences in the emerging church in terms of the historical record of God's ongoing redemptive activity. Bruce Wrightsman adds:

. . . their central proclamation was that God, who had made Himself known in the events of Israel's history, and through the prophet's interpretation of those events, had now made Himself known in a new and climatic self-disclosure in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.¹⁷

The church in the book of Acts is a continuation of the Old Testament concept of the people of God. The church is the new Israel, chosen to make known God's love, and to demonstrate the possibility for every person to live in fellowship with God. The church constitutes a theocentric people.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 4.

A Christocentric Community

God's self-disclosing revelation and redemptive activity in Israel were fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus was unique in that He came to be the living Word, and to become God's message in human flesh (John 1).

The New Testament makes clear that salvation is through faith in Christ. There is no possibility of becoming part of the church except through Christ. Jesus said, "I am the door, if any one enters by me, he will be saved . . ." (John 10:9). Paul refers to the redeemed person as "in Christ." Every Christian is connected directly with the Lord. One is not in the church unless such a relationship has been formed. Furthermore, because Christians are related to Christ, they are also related to one another. Christians are first members of Christ, then members of one another in Him. The church comprises a fellowship of people united in Christ.

Paul's distinctive metaphor used to describe the church is that of a body. He uses the term body for two purposes. The first illustrates the oneness of the church with her Lord, "In the church every person is a member of Christ's body and should so regard himself. He is no longer his own, but is bound in most intimate and significant ways to Another."¹⁸

As Paul develops this metaphor in Ephesians and Colossians, Christ is called the Head of the Body. "He is the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18), and, in reference to Christ in Ephesians, Paul says that God ". . . has put all things under his feet and has made him the

¹⁸ Minear, "Idea of Church," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, I, 615.

head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:22,23).

"The Body of which Ephesians speaks is strictly only a torso. But all growth is to the head, and conversely this growth is from the head."¹⁹ The church owes its very existence as well as its allegiance to Christ and not to any human design. The church can never be true to its own calling if it merely reflects its own views or mirrors the views of secular society. Just as one's physical body serves one's purpose as a person, so the church as Christ's body fulfills His purpose in the world. The church must not depend on itself or independently determine its direction. The church must always be obedient to the living Lord. He is the Head of His body, the church.

Secondly, Paul uses the metaphor of the body to vividly emphasize Christian inter-relationships. Our natural point of view tends to overlook the fact that we are members one of another. Paul reminds us: "You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19). He also tells us why this fellowship is important: "I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each others' faith, both yours and mine" (Rom. 1:11-12). One's salvation in the church is personal, but it is never private.

Christians who overemphasize the individual in salvation, often fail to see the corporate nature of salvation. Nowhere

¹⁹K. L. Schmidt, "Ekklesia," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, III, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mi.: William B. Eerdmans, 1965), 510.

in the New Testament can the solitary Christian be found. Christians are always pictured in relationship with other believers. Wrightsman writes concerning the corporate nature of the church:

. . . the church is nowhere viewed as a mere collection of individual believers whose spirituality exists independently from that of others; everywhere in the scriptures, the church is described as an incorporation of believers, a single unit or collective entity and an organic whole, so bonded together by mutual love and shared allegiance to Christ that it can be called His body.²⁰

It is God's plan that we should not live alone, but in fellowship with others. At the beginning of man's existence, God saw that it was not good for man to be alone (Gen. 2:18). When one commits himself to God in repentance, he enters into a new relationship with Him. He also begins a new relationship with other faithful people. The church is not merely a society of believers, but the body of Christ--a Christocentric community.²¹

The members of the church live in fellowship with the living Lord and, thus, in fellowship with each other. We have difficulty appreciating this idea fully because of the poverty of the word fellowship. We gather; we play games; we call it fellowship. In the New Testament the fellowship is koinonia. Koinonia denotes fellowship of an inner sharing. It means participation with a close bond of either giving or receiving.²² It is a God-given fellowship, not a manufactured unity or pre-programmed fellowship time. Carlyle Marney describes koinonia this way:

²⁰Wrightsman, The Church . . . its meaning and mission, p. 33.

²¹Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, p. 545.

²²Friedrich Hauck, "Koinonia," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, III, 797-98.

Koinonia means to know as you are known: to be known utterly by one who calls you forth, whom you meet in the brother, before whom it is safe to come as you are. Wherever he is being made whole and well, a man is in church; wherever his burdens and needs become my hunger and task, our wills merge and we hear God. Koinonia is not to have all things in common. It is to know each other in common.²³

The multitudes were so attracted to Jesus, they would sometimes follow Him and forget the basic necessities of life such as eating. People felt at home with Jesus. He was gentle enough to accept them, yet strong enough not to condone their sins. The church can be fully attractive today when it receives the strength from the Holy Spirit to love and see people through the eyes of their Lord.

The church is a Christocentric community living in fellowship with her Lord and with each other.

A Charismatic Reality

The church is sustained and reformed by the power of God--the Holy Spirit. This is not the result of human activity or human energy. Leslie Woodson puts it succinctly: "The body of Christ will be a corpse unless it is indwelt by the Holy Spirit."²⁴ Without the Holy Spirit there would have been no church. The Holy Spirit was given by Christ to form a new people who constitute His body.²⁵

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit saying: ". . . I will send him to you" (John 16:7). He also explicitly instructed His followers to

²³Carlyle Marney, Priests to Each Other (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1974), p. 20.

²⁴Leslie Woodson, Evangelism for Today's Church (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Zondervan, 1973), p. 15.

²⁵Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, pp. 541-43.

wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4). The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost to the body of believers as they prayed in the upper room, transforming this defeated company into a powerful force that changed the history of the world. The Holy Spirit took charge of, cleansed, empowered, and directed the life of the early church. "The church is a charismatic reality, for the Holy Spirit knits together its life, and the gifts of the Spirit empower it and determine its duties."²⁶

The Holy Spirit was appointed to dwell within the church as the sole and sovereign executor of the Father's eternal purpose. The early church recognized and submitted to His sovereign control. In the book of Acts Luke records: "The Holy Spirit said" (Acts 13:2), and "For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us . . ." (Acts 15:28). The affairs of the church were managed in counsel and cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

There is a distinction made in Scripture between the gift of the Spirit and gifts of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit bestows different gifts upon different individuals: "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (I Cor. 12:7). Thus the Holy Spirit is also the possession of all believers. "And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:38). Kenneth Kinghorn makes the distinction this way:

All Christians receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at the time

²⁶ Minear, "Idea of Church," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, I, 616.

of their conversion to Jesus Christ Technically though, a spiritual gift refers to a supernatural enabling of the Holy Spirit which equips a Christian for his work of service and ministry.²⁷

Paul stresses that the church has a need for many different gifts, and that these gifts are to be used in upbuilding the church. They are never given for private enjoyment or merely for the Christian to be happy in himself. They are not to be used pridefully, judgmentally, or selfishly. They are to be subservient to love which binds many different people together in unity. They are to be used in ministry and witness. There is always something for the Christian to do which is vital to the subsistence of the church.

Without the Holy Spirit the church loses its vitality and becomes just another organization among many. Only in terms of the activity of the Holy Spirit can the church be understood truly as the church. The Holy Spirit is given various titles in the New Testament, but that of paraclete is the most significant. Woodson describes this activity of the Holy Spirit as:

The Holy Spirit is one who goes along beside us (which is what paraclete means) to reinforce our witness, to enable us to be. It is the same Spirit who nudges us into moving beyond being to doing. Christianity would have joined the limbo of other dead religions centuries ago if it had not been for this rediscovery of the ever-present enabling partnership of the Spirit.²⁸

These three terms--theocentric people, Christocentric community, and charismatic reality--held together, inform the church concerning its meaning and purposes.

Thus, the church is God's creation and the means whereby He is

²⁷Kenneth Cain Kinghorn, Gifts of the Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1976), p. 20.

²⁸Woodson, Evangelism for Today's Church, pp. 66,67.

calling out a people for His own. The church is Christ's body, the extension of His life and ministry to the world today. The Holy Spirit guides, teaches, and empowers the church for effective ministry.

The Church's Main Task

That the church exists today serves to reaffirm the previous remarks--the church is a theocentric people, a Christocentric community, and a charismatic reality. But this does not explain the Divine motivation for creating the church.

Worship and Study

The church is the gathered people of God. There are two primary reasons for this gathering. The first is to worship and pray. The Greek word leitourgia or leitourgeō (work-service) encompasses these functions. It was used to describe the ministry of priests in the Temple or the ministry of the Word and prayer life of the synagogue. The New Testament uses a form of this word in reference to the fellowship of prayer of the five prophets and teachers at Antioch reported in Acts 13:1, and thereby broadens the meaning to include the spiritual service of God.²⁹

The early Christians met regularly for worship. Worship was not an optional activity for them, but was a fundamental ingredient in the practice of the Christian life. So we read: "And day by day, attending the Temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with

²⁹H. Strathmann, "Leitourgeō and Leitourgia in the New Testament," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, IV, 226-27.

all people" (Acts 2:46,47).

The second primary reason for the church's gathering is to study. This includes hearing the proclamation of God's word (kerygma); to be instructed in the teaching (didache); and to be strengthened, informed, and equipped to participate in God's mission to the world. In Acts we read that the baptized: ". . . devoted themselves to the apostle's teaching . . ." (Acts 2:42). Study remains important in order to learn what the Christian faith means for our own edification, and so we can communicate it to others.

Witness and Service

In addition to being a gathered community, the church is also the "scattered" people of God. It gathers precisely so that it may scatter in ministry. Karl Ludwig Schmidt summarizes the word ecclesia in this arresting sentence: "The church is never triumphant. It is always militant . . . under pressure."³⁰ The scattering, the militancy under pressure, is for two reasons also.

First, the members are to witness. This fact is clear in the Scriptures. The Greek words for witness are martus or martureō meaning to be a witness or to affirm what things are known through experience, hearing, or seeing.³¹ Thus, Jesus instructed His followers, "You shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). Peter and the apostles stood before the Jerusalem Council and said, "We are witnesses to these things" (Acts 5:32)--referring to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

³⁰K. L. Schmidt, "Ekklesia," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, III, 534.

³¹H. Strathmann, "Martus," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, IV, 474-514.

Paul, defending himself before Agrippa, said the Lord appointed him ". . . to serve and bear witness" (Acts 26:16). It is the church's responsibility to tell of God's love in Christ and to embody the reality of God's love in its life and thus display it to the world!

Second, the church is scattered to serve. The nature of this service is outlined by the basic meaning of the word diakonia and how Jesus employed that word. Hermann W. Beyer shows that diakonia is primarily used four ways in the New Testament: (1) it may be waiting on a table (Luke 10:40); (2) discharging any service in genuine love (I Cor. 16:15); (3) to discharge certain obligations in the community (II Tim. 4:11); or (4) Paul's collection for Jerusalem is called diakonia (II Cor. 8:1-6).³²

To the Greek, serving was not very dignified. In contrast, the Jew had a deeper understanding of service and found nothing undignified in serving.³³ Jesus came saying, "I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:27).

The Example of Christ

Our Lord's life of service is an example for all who would be His followers. Matthew 9:35-36 provides a concise and descriptive picture of our Lord in action. It says: "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity" (Matt. 9:35). Jesus taught; Jesus preached; Jesus healed.

Christ taught because there was ignorance, prejudice, and

³²Hermann W. Beyer, "Diakonia," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, II, 87,88.

³³Ibid., pp. 82,83.

misunderstanding. He imparted instruction to correct errors. His teaching came like a breath of fresh air to men and women choking on the stale air of traditional religions. Christ also preached--He heralded the good news of the kingdom of God. He not only taught people about their true condition, but He also announced the possibility and prospect of their coming into the kingdom of God through repentance and faith. Christ also healed--the blind saw, the deaf heard, the mute spoke.

Matthew continues his description of our Lord's work by saying: "When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36). He regarded the crowds as a mission field, and He was filled with compassion because of the needs of people. We see from the examples in Jesus' ministry this included every kind of need. In the verse just quoted, He was moved by their spiritual needs, because they were like ". . . sheep without a shepherd."

On another occasion it was the medical needs of people that called for His involved compassion. A leper approached Jesus, pleading with Him: "'If you will, you can make me clean.' Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, and said to him, 'I will; be clean'" (Mark 1:40,41).

Jesus did not ignore the physical needs of people. With great multitudes attending His ministry, Jesus said to His disciples on one occasion: "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way" (Matt. 15:32).

The social and psychological needs of people also received our Lord's attention. When Christ encountered the funeral procession for

the son of the woman of Nain, "He had compassion on her and said to her, 'Do not weep'" (Luke 7:13). Christ identified with the sorrowing and the suffering.

While our Lord came primarily to "seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10), the needs of people always provided the agenda for our Lord's service or ministry. The common characteristics of the ministry of Christ were the all-embracing functions He performed to alleviate human anxiety. Only a few examples have been cited. Though we have numerous recorded examples of Jesus' ministries, John indicates that even the inspired Scriptures do not fully reveal the magnitude of them all (John 20:30; 21:35).

Jesus' view of service grows out of the Old Testament command to love one's neighbor. When the teacher of the Law came to Jesus, inquiring which was the greatest commandment in the Law, Jesus spoke no new words in response. In answer He quoted two passages from the Old Testament which were very familiar. The first, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord our God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deut. 6:4,5). The second, ". . . you shall love your neighbor as yourself . . ." (Lev. 19:18). Jesus brilliantly connected these verses and made one dependent upon the other.

Jesus' great command to His followers was that they should wholeheartedly love God and neighbor. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, He further defined the neighbor as anyone who has need. This love for God and love for the neighbor further describes the gathering and scattering aspects of the church. These two aspects must not be separated, or the church will become unbalanced and distorted.

Some people grow impatient with the church and leave it in order to go where there is "action." They would do well to think on the words of Leonard Griffith:

It is obvious from reading the New Testament that the church, if it consciously continues the ministry of Christ, will want to be where the action is; it will shelter the homeless, feed the hungry, heal the sick, perform a ministry of practical service. Yet it is equally obvious that the church, if it consciously continues the ministry of Christ, will be where the action is not; it will perform a ministry of prayer and worship. Many secular agencies today are performing ministries of service and performing them expertly and strategically, but which of the secular agencies performs a ministry of prayer? Which of them brings God into human experience? Which reconciles men to God? Only the church performs that priestly role. The church that patterns its purpose on the purpose of Christ will recognize that it exists not only to do something but to be something. It must be to the world what Christ was to the world--a priest, a mediator, a meeting place between God and man We have a duty to serve and a duty to pray, and we cannot neglect either duty if we want to be faithful ministers of Christ.³⁴

At the end of the decade of the 1950's, the American church seemed healthy. New buildings were mushrooming everywhere; memberships were ballooning; budgets were skyrocketing. However, keen observers of the church knew that the church was not as well off as it appeared. About that time Elton Trueblood wrote a book which stridently called for the church's involvement in the world. He said much that needed saying, but perhaps he went too far by commenting: "Worship is important, but it tends to be overemphasized in the contemporary church."³⁵ Almost a decade later Trueblood addressed the polarization of our age and called for more balance in the roots of devotion and the fruits of service.³⁶

³⁴Leonard Griffith, We Have This Ministry (Waco, Tx.: Word Books, 1973), p. 24.

³⁵Elton Trueblood, The Company of the Committed (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961), p. 72.

³⁶Elton Trueblood, The New Man for Our Time (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

We must maintain a balance between the gathering and the scattering aspects of the church. As we have seen, God purposes that congregations gather to worship, study, and fellowship so that they may be prepared to participate in God's mission to the world by scattering for witness and service. This dual process may be likened to that of respiration; one must both inhale and exhale. The one process takes in life for the body in order to give out life to the world in a different form. To confine the church only to worship would produce the same results as inhaling continuously without exhaling. To jump past worship into service could be compared to exhaling continuously. God calls His people to worship and to serve.

The church has been brought into existence because of the direct will of God. He purposed in the church ". . . to reconcile to himself all things" (Col. 1:20). Today's English Version translates this verse in simpler language: "Through the Son, then, God decided to bring the whole universe back to Himself." The merciful God will not allow His creation to rot or to destroy itself. He works to win back all things into union with Himself. His church is both the result of and the agent of reconciliation. Paul says it best:

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation (I Cor. 5:18,19).

Summary

We have learned in this chapter that the church cannot fulfill God's purpose in the world without a proper understanding of its identity and mission. Therefore, it is the primary duty of the

church in every generation to clarify the purpose and reaffirm the meaning of its existence.

Historically the term church was used in reference to secular as well as religious gatherings. The term church was given a technical meaning by the early Christians which has been handed down to us. God calls the church into being to fulfill His purposes. Therefore, the church belongs to God. Through the church God is calling out a people for His own. As Christ's body, the church is an extension of Christ's life and ministry to the world today. The Holy Spirit guides, teaches, and empowers the church for effective ministry.

The church gathers to worship and study that it may be scattered for witness and service. The life and ministry of Christ provide the church with an example for its life in the world today. Through Christ, God has determined to reconcile the world to Himself, and that ministry of reconciliation has been entrusted to us.

In the next chapter we will examine the strategy God uses to reach the world with the Gospel of reconciliation.

Chapter 3

A THEOLOGY OF MINISTRY

What strategy does our Lord employ in furthering God's purposes through the church?

Christ Calls the Disciples

Jesus' method was to call out a few men to follow Him, in fulfilling God's plan to save a people for His very own. He chose The Twelve to be "with Him" (Mark 3:14). Robert Coleman shows that the strategy behind choosing a few was to reach the multitudes: "Though He did what He could to help the multitudes, He had to devote Himself primarily to a few men, rather than the masses, in order that the masses could at last be saved. This was the genius of His strategy."¹

This small group of disciples participated in a traveling seminary; and Jesus provided the curriculum. They listened; asked questions; watched Jesus at work; and observed His prayer life. As He neared the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus spent even more time with them. Coleman discloses how Jesus assigned them work to do, but continued to supervise them.²

During His earthly life, Jesus put a plan into effect that would eventually reach the world. He prepared His disciples for His death,

¹Robert E. Coleman, The Master Plan of Evangelism (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1963), p. 33.

²Ibid., p. 94.

and promised them another Comforter. They did not comprehend Christ's message before the crucifixion, but following the Resurrection the Christ events became clear. In His post-Resurrection appearances Jesus commissioned His disciples and gave them their missionary assignment. John Stott believes that the crucial form of the Great Commission has been handed down to us through John where Jesus is recorded as saying: "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (John 20:21). Says Stott: "Jesus did more than draw a vague parallel between His mission and ours. Deliberately and precisely He made His mission the model of ours . . ." ³ Jesus had been sent by the Father, and He in turn "sends out" His disciples with His own authority to continue His ministry.

The word apostle appears seventy-nine times in the New Testament and always is used to speak of one on a definite mission, sent with full authority on behalf of the sender and accountable to the sender. ⁴ This title was first applied to the original disciples (eventually including Matthias as a replacement for Judas). But it is also used of Paul, Barnabas, James and others in the early church (Rom. 1:1; Acts 14:14; Gal. 1:19). Apostleship is listed as a spiritual gift indicating it is a ministry still needed and being exercised in the church today (I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).

However, the original twelve apostles are in a special category because of the unique ministry they were Divinely appointed to fulfill. They were eyewitnesses to the Resurrection and personally commissioned

³John R. W. Stott, Christian Mission in the Modern World (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter Varsity Press, 1975), p. 23.

⁴Karl Heinrich Rengstorff, "The Use of Apostolos in the NT," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, I, 420-1.

by the Lord. They became Christ's representatives in that they took His place and assumed authoritative positions in the early church.

Paul says the church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone . . ." (Eph. 2:20). Ray Stedman explains:

The foundation of the church is Jesus Christ, as Paul declared to the Corinthians (I Cor. 3:11), and the primary work of an apostle was to declare the whole body of truth concerning Jesus Christ. That is the foundation. What the apostles say about Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church, and what they said about Jesus Christ is recorded for us in the New Testament. That book is written by the apostles and prophets, and the church rests squarely upon that foundation.⁵

Because the apostles formulated the doctrine of the Christian faith, their work became the foundation of the church secondary only to that of Christ Himself.

Laymen Are Ministers, Too

While it is true the apostles performed the unique role of being the first relay team to carry on the Christ ministry, the work of Christian ministry was by no means restricted to them or other professionals. The church consists of the people of God. The Greek word describing all the people of God is laos from which we get our words "lay" and "laity." In both the Old and New Testaments laos means the people of God.

There is also the Greek word kleros. The important point for us is that both of these words--laos and kleros--refer to the whole people of God. Hendrik Kraemer indicates that when the New Testament uses the

⁵Ray C. Stedman, Body Life (Glendale, Ca.: Regal Books, 1972), pp. 70,71.

word kleros it means the men and women in Christ ". . . who share God's gift of redemption and glory, which is their 'inheritance' (kleros), because they are incorporated in the Son."⁶

Kraemer also contends that we derive our word "clergy" from kleros and that the current popular connotations of "lay" and "clergy" are secularizations, and distort "lay" and "clergy" from their original biblical intent:

As early as at the end of the 1st century it becomes evident that the significance of "laos" and "laikos" is getting a turn, different from its basic significance in the New Testament. The main reason, apart from the profane use of the word in ancient society, is the emergence of an organized, duly ordained clergy as a closed "status" over against the "laos," the people, i.e. the ordinary congregation.⁷

Although Kraemer's idea cannot be substantiated, ministry in the church in the New Testament is primarily a function of grace and not an office. Each member was to use his or her spiritual gifts for the edification of all. Therefore, Paul exhorted the Romans: "Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them" (Rom. 12:6a). To this Peter adds: "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (I Pet. 4:10).

Spiritual gifts are divine enablings, equipping and empowering a Christian for his work of service and ministry.⁸ Usually when the New Testament speaks of spiritual gifts it uses the word charismata. Every person in Christ has received a spiritual gift or gifts to be used in

⁶Hendrik Kraemer, A Theology of the Laity (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), p. 52.

⁷Ibid., p. 50.

⁸Kenneth Cain Kinghorn, Gifts of the Spirit (Nashville, Tn.: Abingdon Press, 1976), p. 20.

ministry for the good of all. "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (I Cor. 12:7).

When we are in Christ we are a part of His body, not the whole body. "For the body does not consist of one member but of many" (I Cor. 12:14). Every member of the body has a contribution to make for the good of the whole. The Living Bible's paraphrase of I Cor. 12:27 provides a challenging commentary: "All of you together are the one body of Christ and each of you is a separate and necessary part."

The early church practiced this truth, therefore, the Gospel spread rapidly. In the eighth chapter of Acts, the church, as a result of persecution, was being driven out of Jerusalem and scattered throughout the provinces of Judea and Samaria. Luke makes it clear that those being scattered were ordinary Christians and not the apostles: ". . . they were all scattered throughout the region of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles" (Acts 8:1). These Christians were not professionals, but they went out "preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). The result was a great evangelistic movement; it was begun by laypersons.

Today's church needs to recover the concept of the ministry as a vocation for every person in Christ. The ministry was not intended to be the exclusive work of a few professionals. Trueblood has written:

If, by the ministry, we mean the religious service of our fellow men, it soon becomes clear that this vocation is potentially universal. Not only does it include both sexes and various races; it can also include those who follow a great variety of occupations. John Bunyon was a tinker, Francis of Assisi a soldier and John Woolman a tailor, but it is obvious that all were ministers, because they were persons who ministered. They could and did speak to the spiritual condition of their neighbors in remarkably redemptive ways Whatever a person's ordinary vocation in the world, whether salesmanship or homemaking or farming, the ministry can be his other

vocation and perhaps his truest vocation.⁹

One fundamental principle of the Protestant Reformation was the priesthood of all believers. The priesthood of all believers was intended to mean that Christians are to be priests for each other. Now, more than 450 years later, this concept remains mostly unrealized. Rather, it has come to be thought by many to mean that Christians are sufficient to interpret God's leadings for themselves. This emphasis on individualism has caused a type of isolationism that resulted in neglect of the concern for the neighbor.¹⁰

The 1976 Discipline of the United Methodist Church affirmed in the opening pages of Part IV the ministry of all Christians:

All Christian ministry is Christ's ministry of outreaching love. The Christian church, as the body of Christ, is that community whose members share both His mind and mission. The heart of Christian ministry is shown by a common life of gratitude and devotion, witness, and service, celebration, and discipleship. All Christians are called to this ministry of servanthood in the world to the glory of God and for human fulfillment.¹¹

The sad plight of most congregations is that they hire an ordained minister to do their ministry for them, yet have no awareness that ministry has anything whatsoever to do with them. The result is that they are immobilized. No fraction, however specialized or qualified can ever hope to do what the whole church is called to do.

Stephen Neill has edited a book which contains a comprehensive

⁹Elton Trueblood, Your Other Vocation (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), pp. 37,38.

¹⁰Carlyle Marney, Priests to Each Other (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1974), p. 12.

¹¹The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (Nashville, Tn.: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1976), p. 104.

review of laymen throughout church history. He makes a helpful distinction between the ordained and lay ministry as those whose sphere of service is primarily the church (ordained), and those whose sphere of service is primarily the world (lay). He further states there are three groups of laymen.

First, there are those laypeople who live by the gospel but are not fully ordained. They give fulltime service and receive fulltime pay for service rendered. They live in and for the church while remaining technically lay Christians.

The second group, though not dependent on the church for their livelihood, have so identified with the church that it becomes the center of their existence. They work on committees, rarely are absent, and become the backbone of the congregation.

The third group consists of laymen who really live in the world. Their goals, efforts, actions concentrate mostly in the work-a-day world, but concurrently they revere the church as the confined locale for worship, instruction, and inspiration.¹²

More people are needed in both lay and ordained ministry in all the functions set forth. It is, however, on this third group we must focus attention, for more of our so called "ordinary," "everyday" variety of Christians must learn how to minister and exemplify Christ in the world. Not every person can leave a job behind and go to seminary--God does not expect that. Not every person can work fulltime in some church building or church organization--God does not expect that. But there is a

¹²Stephen Neill, "Introduction," The Layman in Christian History, eds., Stephen Charles Neill and Han-Ruedi Weber (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963), pp. 16-19.

ministry that must be done in the everyday world in which we live.

Note how Lesslie Newbigin describes it:

. . . the church must be ready to say to its members, "Go into that community and for Christ's sake give yourself to it," so that there, in the midst of its daily secular decisions, God's will may be done. . . . The church must be where men are, speak the language they speak, inhabit the worlds they inhabit.¹³

If the church can recover and put into practice the truth that all Christians are ministers and are meant to minister for Christ in the world, then the Christians will become the "royal priesthood" Peter described.

The Need for Pastors

The purpose of this section is to examine pastoral ministry from a biblical perspective. No attempt will be made to trace the development of the body of ordained clergy.

There is a diversity of required functions in the body of Christ. Each member of the body is to serve according to his calling and ability. Ideally, the body has neither dead nor inactive members in it. It has the life of Christ in it, and "God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as He chose" (I Cor. 12:18). In the Spirit-filled body there will emerge such ministerial "organs" and other "organs" as are necessary. Therefore, pastoral ministry is essential, but all members and functions of the body are important.

The Problem

Pastoral ministry is at a crossroads, though. No one seems

¹³Lesslie Newbigin, Honest Religion for Secular Man (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), pp. 114,115,112.

satisfied. Some congregations are searching for a leader to spark their program. Unconsciously, others are looking for someone to perform their ministry for them. Pastors are also dissatisfied. The magnitude of the task is overwhelming, and what constitutes pastoral work remains confused and uncertain. Leadership styles have swung from one extreme to the other. The authoritarian "Herr Pastor" types controlled the church, in contrast to the silent non-directive types who were controlled by the church. This uncertainty has resulted in dissatisfaction and confusion.

The modern lay renewal movement holds great promise for the revitalization of the church in our day. But there are those who tell us that: ". . . it is an unconscious rebellion against the clergy rather than the flower of a new partnership between pastors and a people."¹⁴ This may be true. Others are suggesting that the institutional church is no longer needed and the pastoral ministry is no longer vital or necessary. Note the witness of Jim Wallis:

What matters most today is whether one is a supporter of establishment Christianity or a practitioner of biblical faith Establishment Christianity is a religion of accomodation and conformity Its leaders are more comfortable as chaplains than as prophets; its proclamation has been rendered harmless and inoffensive to the wealthy and powerful; and its churchly life has become a mere ecclesiastical reproduction of the values and assumptions of the surrounding environment.¹⁵

Therefore, it remains for us to review the biblical perspective of pastoral ministry.

In the New Testament three words are used interchangeably for

¹⁴Graydon E. McClellan, "The Ministry," New Frontiers of Christianity, ed., Ralph C. Raughley, Jr. (New York: Association Press, 1962), p. 129.

¹⁵Jim Wallis, Agenda for Biblical People (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), pp. 1,2.

pastoral ministry: episcopos or bishop; presbuteros or elder; and poimen or shepherd. There are three Scriptures which further pinpoint the nature of pastoral ministry.

A Feeding Ministry

The first occurs in a conversation between Jesus and Peter:

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him a third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17).

Jesus changed the wording of His charge to Peter from "feed" to "tend" and then back again to "feed." It is clear the major emphasis of pastoral ministry, at least in this instance, is on feeding the sheep or what the New Testament calls didache.

In the New Testament there is a distinction between kerygma (proclamation) and didache (teaching). Kerygma refers to the proclamation or heralding of the basic tenets of Jesus Christ which calls for a response. It was kerygma when the apostles and their successors went forth into the world to proclaim and win converts to the growing church (Acts 2).

Didache refers to the teaching based on the proclamation (kerygma). Teaching and instruction were essential to the early church to sustain the church body and to encourage spiritual growth. Those who responded to the kerygma were instructed in the ethical and moral dimensions of the faith, and shown how followers of Jesus Christ should live in the world. Jesus demanded disciples, not an adoring crowd.

Those responding to His proclamation (kerygma) were taught and trained (didache), and ultimately participated in His mission.¹⁶

The relationship between the kerygma and the didache helps us see that preaching which emphasizes socio-ethical behavior without the proclamation of the gospel or evangelistic preaching devoted to perpetual "reconversions" without the nurturing didache are inadequate.

Paul instructs the Ephesian elders to ". . . feed the church of the Lord" (Acts 20:28), so that the faithful would be protected from evil from without and from corruption within. Failure to feed the flock results in underdeveloped Christians who are ". . . tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14). Pastoral ministry is indeed a feeding ministry.

A Tending Ministry

A second scripture which speaks to this issue says:

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed. Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock (I Pet. 5:1-3).

Peter places emphasis on the tending of the flock. The pastoral ministry guides as well as feeds. It is impossible to separate the work of ministry from administration. The Greek word for pastor in the New Testament is poimen, meaning a shepherd, one who tends herds. The Greek word for overseer in the New Testament is episcopos which is usually translated bishop. Throughout church history, with only rare deviations, a local congregation has had a general overseer. He was

¹⁶James D. Smart, The Rebirth of Ministry (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), p. 93.

not the hired hand, nor the only person performing ministry. Neither did he give orders like a monarch without consultation. He was in Seward Hiltner's words: ". . . the local 'bishop,' overseer, supervisor, or facilitator of the total work of the total community."¹⁷

John Calvin viewed pastoral ministry as consisting of three functions: prophetic, priestly, and kingly.¹⁸ The roots of these three functions are in the Old Testament.¹⁹ Lindgren defines the kingly function of pastoral ministry as: ". . . a ministry to the organizational structures and processes of the church."²⁰ A pastor may often tend one sheep in direct pastoral care. However, there are many personal needs or goals that can only be met through planned programs or group activity. Therefore, by tending, overseeing, or exercising the kingly function of pastoral ministry to the organizational structures and processes of the church, pastors more effectively minister to persons.

The pastor must exercise his ministry according to the will of God. He seeks to serve--not to be served. He leads and lovingly guides--he does not dictate. He is an example to the flock providing a model for them. To be an example or model is essential to the ministry of discipling converts. Character is the pastor's only real claim to leadership. John Harris says: "Character is as critical for the

¹⁷Seward Hiltner, Ferment in the Ministry (Nashville, Tn.: Abingdon Press, 1969), p. 36.

¹⁸John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion trans. John Allen, Book II, Ch. XV (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1949), pp. 540-50.

¹⁹Smart, op. cit., pp. 42-64.

²⁰Alvin J. Lindgren and Norman Shawchuck, Management for Your Church (Nashville, Tn.: Abingdon Press, 1977), p. 18.

minister as skilled hands for the brain surgeon."²¹ To tend the flock is an essential function of pastoral ministry and character is the key to leadership.

An Equipping Ministry

The Scripture verses which specify the necessity of equipping Christians for their work of ministry are from Paul, for example: "His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11,12).

The third essential function of the pastoral ministry involves equipping every member in the church for ministry. Pastors feed and tend so the church may be equipped to do the work of ministry. A short-coming of the contemporary church is the failure to train and equip Christians for the work of ministry. Perhaps some Christians do not even know they should be trained for service, and some pastors do not realize this is an important part of their ministry. Richard Niebuhr made the suggestion that because of the changing nature of the pastor's work his or her title should be pastoral director:

The pastoral director of a contemporary church has his historical antecedent. His predecessor is to be found in the bishop or overseer of an ancient church, a man who, unlike modern bishops, was not primarily entrusted with oversight over many clergymen and local churches but was elected to oversee a single local church . . . for the church is becoming the minister and its "minister" is its servant, directing it in its service.²²

²¹John C. Harris, Stress, Power, and Ministry (Washington, D.C.: The Alban Institute, Inc., 1977), p. 171.

²²H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), pp. 82,83.

For years, because of a mis-translation of Eph. 4:11-12, it was thought that these enabling gifts listed were given so those receiving them could exercise the work of the ministry of the church, ". . . for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry" Stephen Neill removed the comma (which does not appear in the original), and opened up these verses to their wider meaning.²³ The New English Bible demonstrates the significance of this change: ". . . to equip God's people for work in his service" Thus, these enabling gifts have been given so that all Christians may be equipped to exercise larger ministries. The teaching of the Scriptures equips the Christians: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:16,17).

Neill describes the attitude required of the pastor who fulfills this calling to equip the saints for ministry:

The attitude of the minister must always be that of John the Baptist: "He must increase, but I must decrease." . . . train your lay folk, and send them out to do the jobs. If they get the credit for what is going on, rejoice in that too. Be content yourself to be the quiet, unobtrusive influence, through whom new life comes into the parish. Let them be seen, let them be exalted, let Christ be glorified in them. Then you may sit back and feel that you are beginning to do the work for which you were ordained.²⁴

To feed, tend, and equip are three words that describe the particular functions to which God has called the pastors in His church. This is not meant to imply that the pastor has solo responsibility in these areas. Everything a pastor does is in relationship with others.

²³Stephen Neill, Fulfill Thy Ministry (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), pp. 116-17.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 120-21.

There is movement in this commission: feed, tend, equip. Our ultimate goal is, in Niebuhr's words: ". . . the increase among men of the love of God and neighbor."²⁵

Summary

Jesus began His work of furthering God's purposes through the church by calling a few men to follow Him. These men became His disciples. Jesus trained them, then commissioned them to carry on His work. Through this small nucleus of apostles, Jesus put a plan into effect that would eventually reach the world.

However, Christian ministry is by no means restricted to the apostles or other professionals. In the church, ministry is a function of grace. Every Christian has received spiritual gifts which are to be used in ministry for the good of all.

The biblical functions of pastoral ministry are to feed, teach, and equip Christians for their ministries.

Therefore, in Chapters 2 and 3 we learned that God proposes to save a people for His very own. God sends all His people into the world to minister in His name. An adequate theology of the church and a theology of ministry are necessary prerequisites for the church to effect ministry. A thorough knowledge of the contemporary setting is also necessary for the church to effect ministry. The search to understand the particular needs of the church and community of Hagerstown becomes the focus for Chapter 4.

²⁵Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry, p. 39.

The Process of Deepening the Congregation's
Biblical and Theological Understanding
of the Church and of Ministry

The methodology which led the congregation into a greater theological and biblical knowledge of the church and ministry was varied and intentional. During the first year of my pastorate in Hagerstown, I preached repeatedly on the nature and mission of the church. This focus was highlighted by an eight week sermon series. Dr. Jerry Mercer, a professor at Asbury Theological Seminary, led a Bible study in Ephesians to guide the congregation in understanding the nature of the church and how ministry functions. This study continued through small groups within the congregation.

The Pastor-Parish Committee began developing a theology of ministry by examining closely the pastoral function of ministry. The committee helped the congregation to see that ministry was not to be the sole function of the pastor. Then, Dr. Les Woodson, Elizabethtown, Ky., was invited to our congregation to lead a Bible conference on the Holy Spirit. This conference focused on the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit. As preparation for this conference the congregation studied Dr. Kenneth Kinghorn's book, Gifts of the Spirit.

The congregation's efforts to understand theologically and biblically the nature and mission of the church, as well as how ministry functions in the body of Christ culminated when Dr. Wayne Goodwin of Asbury Theological Seminary led our Council on Ministries in a retreat designed to formulate a statement of purpose for the congregation. This retreat will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

ANALYZING THE ENVIRONMENT

Ministry is effected when a congregation experiences God, understands its mission, sees existing needs, and is nurtured and equipped to minister to these needs. The mission of the church is related to a biblical and theological understanding of the church and ministry, as well as a thorough knowledge of culture and the contemporary setting.

Lindgren believes that the church must be God-centered and person-oriented. If it is not God-centered, it is not the church. If it is not person-oriented its ministry will not be relevant. The church must embrace a biblical and theological concept of the nature and mission of the church because it is of God, and it must be person-oriented because its function is to make God's love known to all men.¹

Further elaboration on the church's mission is given by James Engel and Wilbert Norton in their book: What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest? The authors suggest that the satisfaction of human needs, ascertained through careful surveys, can best be achieved by reducing the church to its primary biblical essentials.² We used the guidelines set forth by Lindgren, Engel, and Norton to discover our mission in the Hagerstown United Methodist Church. We tried to understand ourselves as

¹Alvin Lindgren, Foundations for Purposeful Church Administration (Nashville, Tn.: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 14.

²James F. Engel and H. Wilbert Norton, What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest? (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Zondervan, 1975), ch. 8.

a congregation in relationship with a community.

To learn the situation existing in the community, our locale of responsibility, the leadership of Hagerstown United Methodist Church concluded that a survey designed to ascertain existing factual data in the church and community would serve us best. There were two major purposes in conducting the survey.

First, we desired to ascertain the institutional health, and the spiritual health of our congregation. Second, we sought to uncover the particular needs of the community. From the raw data gathered through survey, congregational leaders were able to identify existing and imminent needs, and after interpreting the data decide on the congregation's mission.

The Church

We used three methods to gauge the institutional and spiritual health of the congregation.

The Congregational Meeting

The members of the church were invited to participate in a congregational meeting. Six questions were asked. Individuals responded by writing their answers, then mutually sharing them within small groups, then through their groups to the larger assembly. The questions were:

1. What are the strengths of our congregation?
2. What are the weaknesses of our congregation?
3. In the past year when has the church ministered to a need in your life or that of someone close to you?

4. When could the church have met a need in your life or someone close to you but failed to do so?

5. What do you believe are the most important things our church should be doing this coming year?

6. If our church is really Christian, what will we be doing in the next ten years?

There is a progression in the sequence of these questions. Each participating member of the congregation had the opportunity to express himself regarding his church. The major purpose of the session was not to provide a forum for the expression of hostilities, although we recognize the value of such a side benefit. We wanted to provide an opportunity for the members to express appreciation for the good things in our church, and an opportunity to list the weaknesses as well as to provide specific illustration of their feelings and observations. Results of this congregational meeting are presented in full in Appendix A.

The results of the congregational meeting indicated that most of the people were pleased with their church. This fact is evidenced by the number of strengths mentioned. When listing weaknesses the answers were mixed, with two notable exceptions--the low Sunday School attendance and shortage of teachers. These weaknesses were listed by an unusually large number of people in comparison with other mentioned areas of weakness.

The answers indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the worship service and the personal care received by members. The request to list specific times of failure in ministry yielded mixed responses. The number of responses given to questions five and six indicated that many people care deeply about the future of the congregation.

A picture emerged of a congregation with many strengths and one pronounced weakness. A profile of the average Sunday School attendance for thirty years revealed why the Sunday School was an overwhelming concern to so many. The average attendance in Sunday School is as low now as it has ever been. Many can remember when the average attendance in Sunday School reached a peak. About thirty years ago 250 people attended each Sunday. Even twenty years ago the attendance was nearly 200 people each week. The last twenty years show a decrease almost every year. Present average weekly attendance is approximately 100.

Table 1

Sunday School Attendance

1979	100	1963-64	160
1978	110	1962-63	152
1977	111	1961-62	169
1976	110	1960-61	185
1975	126	1959-60	181
1974	121	1958-59	186
1973	111	1957-58	198
1972	127	1956-57	194
1971	125	1955-56	197
1970	141	1954-55	193
Last 7 mos. 1969	136	1953-54	218
1968-69	151	1952-53	205
1967-68	128	1951-52	206
1966-67	129	1950-51	227
1965-66	148	1949-50	242
1964-65	158	1948-49	252

The worship attendance chart revealed a dramatically different story. Attendance in worship in the late forties was about 110. In the early fifties worship attendance grew dramatically, and eventually leveled off at about 225 people per week. It has remained remarkably stable for over twenty-five years.

Table 2

Worship Attendance

1979	224	1963-64	250
1978	233	1962-63	239
1977	224	1961-62	237
1976	223	1960-61	225
1975	227	1959-60	222
1974	222	1958-59	228
1973	214	1957-58	235
1972	215	1956-57	228
1971	222	1955-56	213
1970	226	1954-55	194
Last 7 mos. 1969	228	1953-54	227
1968-69	233	1952-53	170
1967-68	229	1951-52	149
1966-67	223	1950-51	131
1965-66	220	1949-50	110
1964-65	245	1948-49	no record

Long-time members of the congregation indicate that this development was the result of changing the schedule for worship and Sunday School. Sunday School attendance was large when it was scheduled before

worship. Worship attendance began to grow when the schedule was reversed. A more subtle reason for this significant development was the coming of Bishop Richard Raines to the Indiana area as episcopal leader in 1948. Until he became Bishop, worship attendance was not even listed as an important statistic of the Annual Conference Journal. Bishop Raines asked each congregation to keep an accurate record of worship attendance and to report it to the Annual Conference. There followed an emphasis on worship attendance and less emphasis on Sunday School attendance.

Consultation

The congregation was further aided in the process of analysis by a consultant, Lyle Schaller, on the staff of Yokefellow Institute, Richmond, Indiana. He was invited by the Council on Ministries to analyze the congregation. He prodded the members by asking, "What would you like to see happen in First United Methodist Church, Hagerstown?" They expressed a concern for a stronger Sunday School.

"What is the best thing we can do to have a child grow up as an active church member?" Schaller asked. He suggested that part of the answer lies in having a father who attends regularly. Adult Christian models wield the greatest impact on young children. The same concept, he said, applies to Sunday School. Attendance gains for a children's class are a side benefit of a successful adult program.

The Hagerstown congregation has an average of 40 adults and 60 children in Sunday School. Schaller also asked the Council members whether they felt the congregation is larger or smaller than average. The Council was surprised to learn from Schaller that the worship attendance is greater than 90 percent of all other churches in America.

The congregation is large, but most people did not realize it. The congregation has 44 percent of its membership in attendance in a normal worship service, whereas, most comparable congregations average below 30 percent.

Describing them as "hunches" rather than "facts," Schaller observed:

1. The congregation was as large or larger than most people desire. That is, a 50 percent increase in attendance would be disruptive to many people in the congregation.
2. The pastor is expected to exercise aggressive initiation of ideas, substantiating these ideas with strong leadership.
3. The congregation evidences adult-orientation. Hence, the present power of the pastor exists in successful dealing with adults.
4. The potential exists to grow significantly in numbers, but the changes produced would cause considerable discomfort to many present members who are relatively content with the status quo.

Spiritual Life Survey

The Council on Ministries used an adapted version of a survey prepared by Campus Crusade for Christ to gauge the spiritual health of the congregation. This form was handed out prior to the worship service. On that Sunday 248 people attended worship. We made no attempt to survey those under the age of twelve. Of 170-180 survey forms distributed, 168 forms were completed giving a solid base for conclusions as to the spiritual needs of our congregation (see Appendix B).

Since those surveyed represent the core of our congregation, it was not surprising that 87 percent of the people had "personally trusted Christ to be their Savior and Lord" and 86 percent of the people "knew

without a doubt Christ was in their lives." "Knowing how to pray" was affirmed by 76 percent, and 68 percent of the people felt they "knew how to deal with temptation and sin in their lives." The consensus indicated a general social harmony within congregational ranks, for 90 percent affirmed a spirit of "friendliness and enjoyable fellowship," and 87 percent claimed to "get along well with congregational members."

However, only 51 percent of the people were confident of their ability to study the Bible and gain meaningful insight from it for their personal lives, and only 35 percent of the people take time to read the Bible daily. While there seemed to be a high level of satisfaction with our congregation, only 48 percent of the people encouraged their friends and acquaintances to attend. Even fewer, (22 percent), had shared their faith with a non-Christian during the previous week and just 20 percent of the people claimed to have introduced anyone to Christ in the past year. While only 22 percent of the people claimed to be participating in a definite plan to reach our community with the gospel of Christ, a full 60 percent claimed to be committed to helping reach the world for Christ in their lifetime. The results of this survey are still being searched for clues to what is needed to make the congregational ministry more effective.

The Community

Two methods were used to analyze the community environment.

Community Surveys

In a joint program with the local United Church of Christ, community surveys prepared by the Center for Parish Development, Naperville, Illinois, were used. All of the forms did not prove to be valuable to

the process, and their usage resulted in some subjective answers.

The survey on demographic and population data was revealing (see Appendix C). The population within the city limits is estimated to be 2250. Only one is non-white and few were foreign born. The United States Census information showed a population growing older. Therefore, public school enrollment is declining. The trend also showed more females than males, representing the longer life span of women. The largest single group of persons were women over 65. They represented 8.3 percent of our total population.

The survey showed there had been a slowdown in the building of new homes, and there was also a scarcity of building lots available in the city limits. These factors had combined to make available housing generally scarce and difficult to find in every price range.

Hagerstown's population would be classified as consisting of those in the middle to upper middle classes of society. Hagerstown has prospered, mainly because of the Teetor family who invented the Perfect Circle piston rings. Those who lived in the area during the great depression say that Hagerstown never felt the full brunt of the economic downturn because of the benevolent management of this home-owned company.

The Perfect Circle Corporation remained home-owned and managed until 1965 when it changed ownership. This change has had far-reaching effects in the community. First, it brought about a cultural shock. Hagerstown had been for many an island where persons were born, grew up, lived, and died. Since the Dana Corporation assumed ownership there has been a continual shuffle of transfers to and from other communities. Hagerstown thus encountered job mobility. The second

effect of the Dana ownership has meant that the owners no longer live in the community. There are now bargaining agents who represent the corporation which is based in Toledo, Ohio.

Another probe of the community was an attempt to gauge the strength of the religious organizations in the community. The estimated population of the township is 3500. Presently this area is being served by nine congregations. The average combined Sunday worship attendance of these nine congregations totals 710.

Table 3

Average Worship Attendance of Local Congregations

Baptist Temple	20
Church of Christ	25
Church of the Brethren	125
Evening Light Tabernacle	30
First Baptist.	60
Home Mission	55
Nazarene	55
United Church of Christ.	115
United Methodist	225

The people driving from our township to attend church elsewhere are probably balanced by those driving into our township to attend church. This fact indicates that somewhere between 2500-2800 people are non-attenders on a typical Sunday.

The Town Meeting

The United Methodist congregation hosted a Town Meeting

sponsored by the Hagerstown Ministerium with assistance from the Institute of Cultural Affairs, Indianapolis, Indiana. There was an effort to involve the entire community, especially representatives from business, industry, labor, and the public school system. Church leaders dialogued with community leaders concerning the accomplishments and concerns of the community as well as community hopes and dreams (see Appendix D). Four challenge statements and four proposals for further actions were adopted. The proposals were:

1. TITLE: Fiscal Management. We the citizens of Hagerstown, in order to channel resources for long term capital needs, propose a master plan through community participation to evaluate our resources and to propose long term use of our resources with emphasis on conservation and increased enjoyment of our environment.

2. TITLE: Involvement. We the citizens of Hagerstown, in order to involve more citizens, propose to encourage people to share ideas through asking Town and School Boards to appoint task forces for controversial and planning issues, and to have binding referendums.

3. TITLE: Attitudes. We the citizens of Hagerstown, in order to project a town image that moves beyond stability and security toward future needs, propose a task force of community representatives to work to keep Dana in Hagerstown through personal contact and information meetings, for example: "Dana Appreciation Day."

4. TITLE: Senior Citizens. We the citizens of Hagerstown, in order to create a local coordinated effort to care for the elderly, propose: a. Formation of a citizens group; b. Study needs; c. Seek funds; d. Formulate plans; and e. Implementation.

All present understood that the Town Meeting had no authority.

If anything was to come of these proposals, it would be the result of private initiative. The evening dialogue with community leaders gave everyone a better understanding of the needs and concerns of the community, as well as indicating some of the hopes for the future.

Stating Our Purpose

As a congregation we were growing in our understanding of the mission of the church and its ministry, and we were beginning to see the needs of both our congregation and our community. At this time Dr. Wayne Goodwin, of Asbury Theological Seminary, was invited to lead the Council on Ministries in a week-end retreat. The retreat focused on the mission of the church and sought to formulate a statement of purpose for the congregation.

Goodwin shared his concept that everything of concern to the church can be demonstrated on a loop. With his guidance we have come to call it the "theological loop" (see Figure 1). The loop begins with the experience of God (primary theology), advances through the loop of nurture (secondary theology), with the ultimate goal being outreach (practical theology). This loop represents the weekly cycle of a congregation. A congregation may be in any one of the three phases in its mission.

The Council felt our congregation has experienced God, is in need of training and nurture, and is well on its way to outreach. This statement of purpose was adopted:

The purpose of the First United Methodist Church in Hagerstown, Indiana is:

1. . . . to make known the gift of salvation through Jesus

Christ to all people, and to provide the opportunity for others to accept salvation for themselves.

2. . . . to enable people to grow and mature so that:
 - a. Spiritual growth and development can take place,
 - b. and preparation for ministry can take place
3. . . . for active outreach.

The increased understanding of needs existing within the congregation and community, as well as the growing awareness of the church's mission, meant we were now ready to begin mobilizing for ministry.

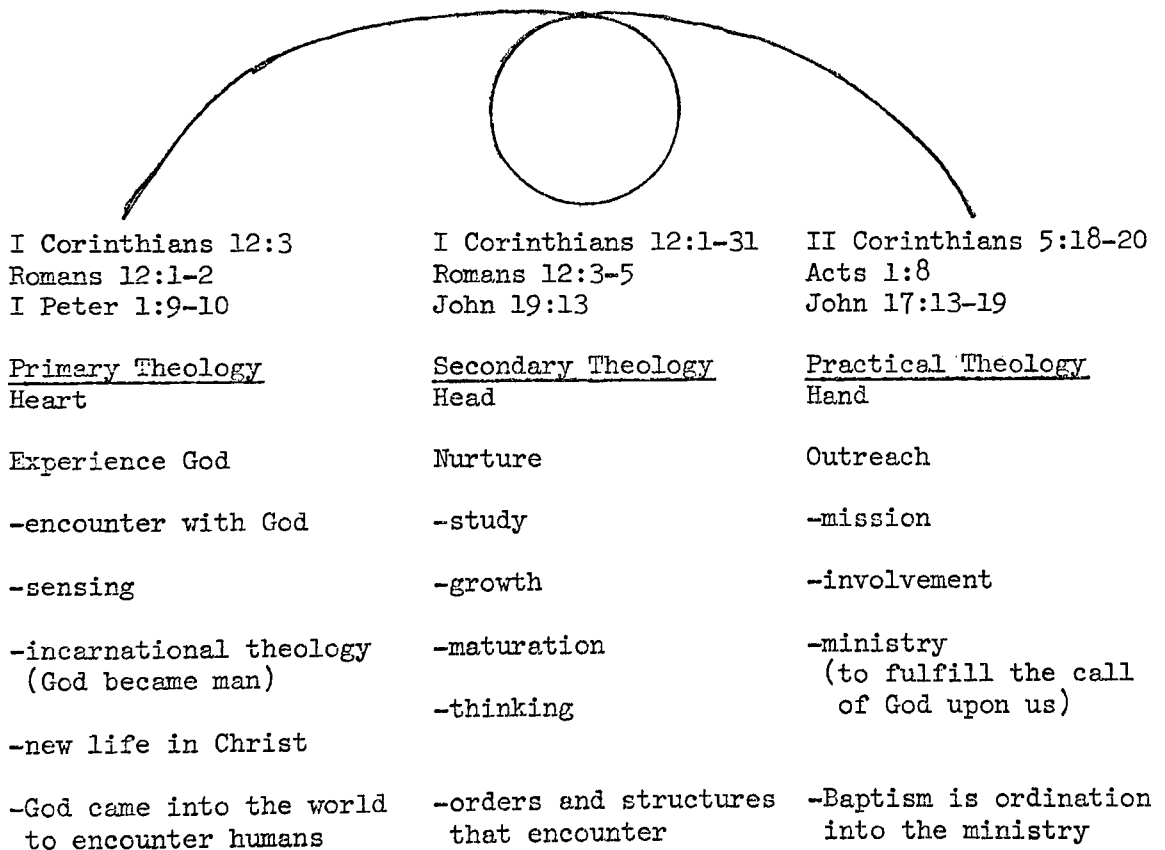


Figure 1

Theological Loop
Ephesians 4:1-16

Summary

The congregation analyzed its contemporary setting and environment through group meetings, consultation, surveys, and a questionnaire. Through this process, needs became apparent to the congregation that would provide the agenda for the church's ministry. The congregation, by understanding its mission and how ministry functioned, as well as being knowledgeable about the needs of its existential setting, was prepared to adopt a statement of purpose. We must be knowledgeable about our environment in order to understand the Lord's mission for us. The next step, which is the focus for Chapter 5, is one of preparing the congregation to move into specific ministry.

Chapter 5

PREPARING THE CONGREGATION FOR MINISTRY

At this point we felt we were on our way to becoming involved in ministry. However, our congregation had not yet outlined plans for specific action.

Mobilization

The agenda called for the mobilization of the congregation for specific ministry. The congregation had thought through the mission of the church, and developed a theology of ministry. The environment had been analyzed in preparation for ministry. Now, the crucial question needed to be asked: "What structure would best serve and advance this purpose?"

In 1963 Colin Williams asked the question: "Is the present form of church life a major hindrance to the work of evangelism?" He showed historically how the church in the New Testament was remarkably flexible in its structures--form followed function. But these patterns of church life changed drastically with the adoption of the church by the State in the days of Constantine. Buildings were then erected for the first time for church use. At first these church buildings were not for local congregations. They were built at the crossroads of life where Christians radiated out with a variety of gathered forms.¹

¹Colin W. Williams, Where in the World (New York: Distributed by the office of Publications and Distribution National Council of the Churches of Christ, 1963), p. 5.

However, during the static period of the Middle Ages, small local congregations constructed buildings so the whole life of the community could center around the church building.²

This arrangement became the basic form of church life which has existed for a thousand years. But changes have occurred which make this form of church life obsolete, because more career, vocational, and social activities are taking people away from home. The church's failure to cope with this reality has left the local congregation so structured that as Williams states:

It is a structured island in the secular world, pulling individuals out of the world and causing them to act as commuters shuttling back and forth, leaving the world to enter the church, and leaving the church to go back to the world, with no real relation between the two parts of their life.³

Therefore, the church as presently structured often hinders effective ministry. The witness of history and the need to find new structures to facilitate ministry provoked us. As Williams says: "There is then a strong case for rejecting the conclusion that the residential congregation is necessarily the normal form of church life."⁴

The Small Group as the Basic Structure

If we dispose of the only form of church life most of us have ever known, what can we offer to take its place? Williams says that thought and experimentation seem to be proceeding in two directions:

First, there is the development of "small group" life (often called *koinonia* groups)--places where opportunity is given for the

²Ibid., p. 6.

³Ibid., p. 2

⁴Ibid., p. 11.

discovery of self-identity in the free and open meeting of persons. Here again, we may see two bases for small-group life: (1) around the Word and in seeking immediate awareness of God's will in prayer and mutual care; (2) around a shared concern in the world--a neighbourhood, a common task, a particular problem. These are by no means exclusive bases. In fact, there is evidence that it is when these two centers coalesce--the "vertical" gathering around the Word and the "horizontal" gathering around a world mission--that there is a vital rediscovery of mission.

Second, there is a reaching out toward a more inclusive strategy of mission. There is a feeling that small group life is essential to a penetration of the broken fragments of our culture in order that the lost may be found at the scene of their lostness and there find meaning through the personal approach of Christ through the neighbour.⁵

The congregation concluded that the best method for mobilizing the church and effecting ministry was through the development of small groups. There is nothing novel about this approach. In the last two decades the church has been rediscovering this basic element of church structure. Robert Raines was in the forefront of this movement explaining how small groups effectively provided the means for both renewal and ministry:

The koinonia groups provide the context in which the institutional church may begin to become the body of Christ, and in which nominal church members may become disciples of Christ. Within such groups Christians are being equipped for the work of ministry, first in the church and then in the world. From such groups the lay ministers are coming.⁶

George Webber called for small groups as a means of advancing the mission of the church and the need for Christians to learn to live with one another. He said:

A new structure of congregational life is called for which makes provision for genuine meeting between persons, a context in which the masks of self-deception and distrust will be maintained only with difficulty and in which men and women will begin to relate to

⁵Ibid., p. 13.

⁶Robert Arnold Raines, New Life in the Church (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), pp. 103-4.

each other at the level of their true humanity in Christ.⁷

Therefore, he concludes: "The missionary congregation, then, will make basic provision for its members to meet in small groups, not as a sidelight or an option for those who like it, but as a normative part of its life."⁸

More recently, Howard Snyder has followed Webber's lead in a book entitled The Problem of Wine Skins. He points to the small group as the basic structure and says:

A small group of eight to twelve people meeting together informally in homes is the most effective structure for the communication of the gospel in modern secular urban society. Such groups are better suited to the mission of the church in today's urban world than are traditional church services, institutional church programs or the mass communication media. Methodologically speaking, the small group offers the best hope for the discovery and use of spiritual gifts and for renewal within the church.⁹

Snyder enumerates the advantages of small groups. They are flexible; mobile; inclusive; personal; can grow by division; are an effective means of evangelism; require a minimum of professional leadership; and are adaptable to the local church.¹⁰

Williams, Raines, and Snyder show the importance of small groups to John Wesley's method of evangelism and the rise of Methodism. New converts were divided into "classes" of twelve with a leader to meet weekly for prayer, study, and sharing. This method provided the context for nurture.

⁷George W. Webber, The Congregation in Mission (Nashville Tn.: Abingdon Press, 1964), p. 121.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Howard A. Snyder, The Problem of Wine Skins (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter Varsity Press, 1976), p. 139.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 140-42.

More importantly, however, is the example of Jesus and the practice of the church in the New Testament. The small group was the method Jesus used. He chose twelve and spent considerable time with them. Through this small group He set in motion the plan which would eventually reach all the world.

The small group was essential in the life of the Christians in the early church. We read: "And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people" (Acts 2:46,47a). They gathered together in the Temple for worship, and they gathered in their homes for supportive fellowship. Worshipping in a crowd can be thrilling and uplifting, but even in that kind of atmosphere a person can be lonely. This is precisely why small groups are so important to the life of the church today. Without them the church can become only a gathering of strangers.

Using Present Structures

The evidence from Scripture, church history, and the suggestion of creative thinkers indicates that the small group can be the basic structure for the church today. But there is a problem. While everyone seems willing to write about the need for small groups, very little information is given on how to incorporate this structure into the life of the congregation.

Elizabeth O'Connor relates a humorous incident in the life of Church of the Saviour which illustrates the reality of the problem. Their congregation was having problems facilitating the small group structure. Without guidelines or models they struggled anxiously. Fortunately they came across a book which described their hopes and

promised to help. Finally, the author advised those wishing to pursue the matter to write to the Church of the Saviour!¹¹

Our congregation settled on the strategy of using the groups already in existence. This decision was made for two reasons. First, there was a desire to give meaning to the existing structures, instead of creating new ones. Second, the congregation already had extensive structure, and adding another layer would prove burdensome, and at cross-purposes with the intended goal.

The organization (see Figure 2) of our congregation was like most other United Methodist congregations in 1978. We had a multitude of boards, councils, committees, and work areas. The Council on Ministries had six work areas reporting to it. They were: worship, evangelism, missions, education, stewardship, and ecumenical affairs and social concerns. For the most part, these work areas were not functioning. Only the missions and worship work areas had actually been active. The other groups were not meeting and some of them did not even know why they existed.

Our strategy was to begin working with persons in each work area and help them come to an understanding of their purpose. Once they understood why they existed, they could form objectives and develop a plan for fulfilling the purposes.

Next, we wanted to include every interested person in our congregation, and have them involved in their area of interest. Previously it had been the duty of the nominating committee to make such appointments. Experience had demonstrated this process was ineffective. Except

¹¹Gordon Cosby, Handbook for Mission Groups, intro. Elizabeth O'Connor (Waco, Tx.: Word Books, 1975), p. 26.

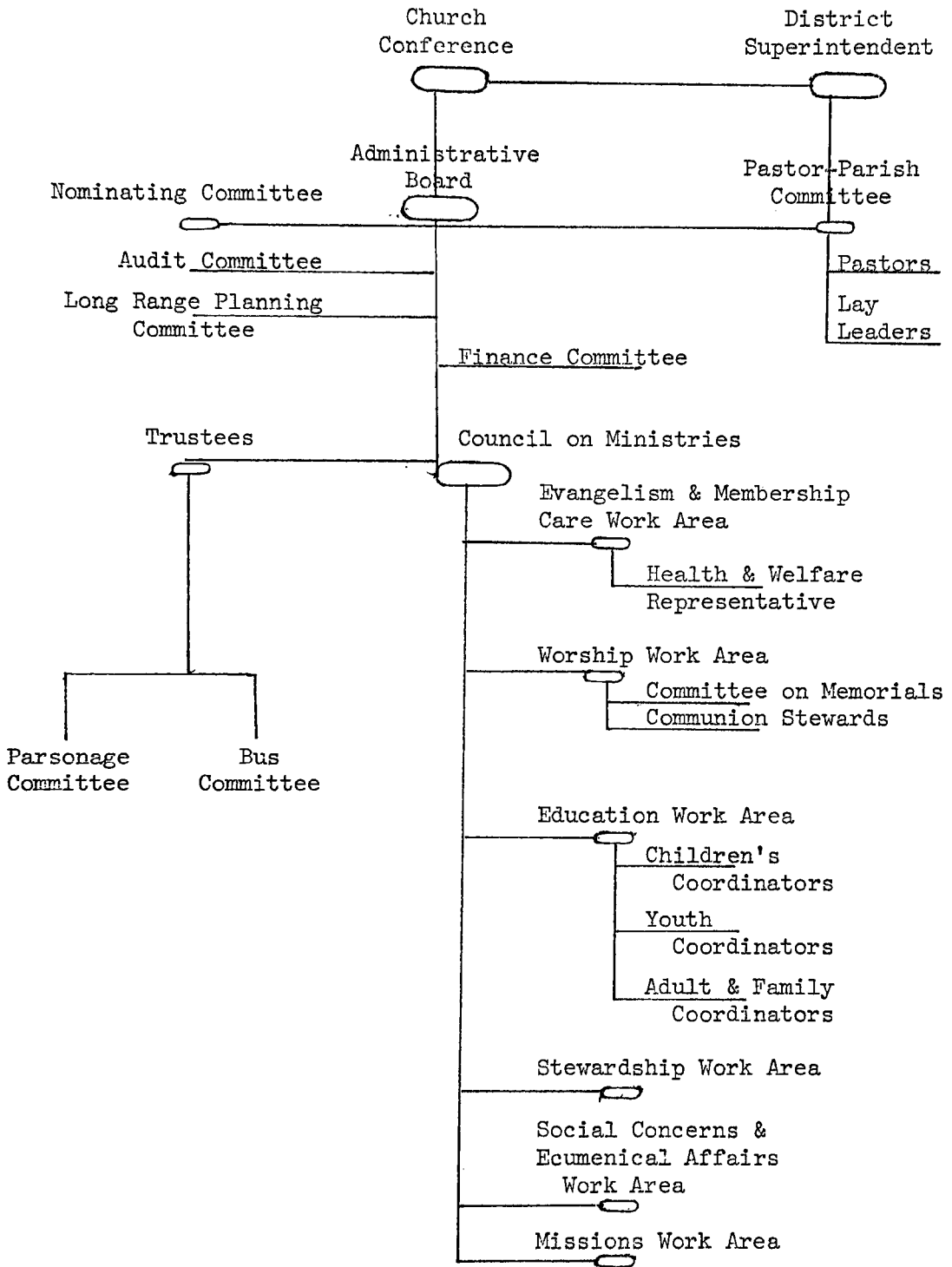


Figure 2

An Organizational Chart for the
 First United Methodist Church
 Hagerstown, Indiana

in emergencies the nominating committee meets only before the Annual Charge Conference. The objective of the nominating committee is usually to get everyone involved and give everyone a job. Very little effort is used to consider gifts or abilities.

Lyle Schaller and Charles Tidwell suggest in their book that churches try a self-nominating process.¹² With slight modifications we used their idea. The Charge Conference was held on Sunday morning when most of our congregation would be present. The Nominating Committee, with the Administrative Board approval, nominated only the chairpersons of the various work areas of the Council on Ministries. Then, on this special Charge Conference Sunday the chairperson, the purpose, and the plan of each work area were presented to the total congregation. Booths were set up in the fellowship room for each of the work areas. After worship the members of the congregation were invited to the fellowship room for the "church fair" to decide what area of the church they wanted to participate in for the coming year.

Enthusiasm was great and the response was overwhelming. We had 90 to 100 people sign up for at least one of the work areas that morning. We believed when people enlisted voluntarily, their participation would be greater. No one had been drafted. Every person chose his own area. We also felt the choices would more nearly reflect the particular gifts, abilities, and interests of the people than a nominating committee.

These groups were task-oriented (worship, evangelism, missions, education, stewardship, social concerns and ecumenical affairs). However, we planned to combine prayer and Bible study with the task.

¹²Lyle E. Schaller and Charles A. Tidwell, Creative Church Administration (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), pp. 36-7.

The groups were to perform the task in response to prayer and study of the Scriptures. It was our hope that work, prayer, and study would produce the koinonia we wanted and needed in our congregation.

We entered 1978 confident that we had planned well. Our congregation, we believed, was on its way to renewal and a more effective ministry.

Radical Surgery is Needed

We thought we were on our way, but we were mistaken. There was a high level of anticipation at our Charge Conference Sunday, but it soon became apparent little had changed. Closer examination and analysis indicated at least four reasons why we were still static.

First, leadership was missing in many of the groups. Some work area chairpersons had no experience in planning or conducting meetings of any type. The result was that some groups had good participation at first, but discouragement quickly set in after one or two meaningless meetings.

Second, the groups had a task to perform but the participants were so task-oriented they failed to pray and study together. We had hoped to modify the function of each group to combine the task with Bible study and prayer. The plan did not work even where prayer and Scripture were incorporated into the meeting--it was a perfunctory gesture which was a prelude to the "real" business at hand. The atmosphere for koinonia development was not present.

Third, we were having more meetings than ever before which was perceived as an intrusion into people's lives instead of an aid to spiritual development. A person could actually be involved in as many as five or six meetings a month. Strains on family life were increasing.

Snyder had described our situation:

In a world of big, impersonal institutions, the church often looks like just another big, impersonal institution. The church is highly organized just at the time when her members are caring less about organization and more about community.¹³

Fourth, we were not ministering. One of our Council on Ministries meetings made this poignantly clear to me. A work area chairperson gave a report identifying a needed ministry, and we spent the next thirty minutes trying to think of someone or some group to whom we could refer the concern. The bureaucratic levels of organization were smothering ministry instead of helping to implement it. We were so fatigued from keeping the administrative machinery running that there was no energy left to perform the church's ministries.

Larry Richards has never visited our congregation but he described it perfectly:

. . . while the church professes to exist for the purpose of promoting spiritual growth, that goal has in fact been set aside. The machinery of running the church is so difficult to maintain that the church actually has to concentrate its energies on its own organization!¹⁴

In a short time after a promising beginning, we became disillusioned. The congregation was frustrated; I was frustrated; the lay leadership was frustrated--resignations and low attendance were verification of this malady.

We needed a better approach. It had become apparent that we needed more radical changes than we had previously thought. Yet the reasons for which we originally developed the small groups still seemed

¹³Snyder, The Problem of Wine Skins, p. 90.

¹⁴Lawrence O. Richards, A New Face for the Church (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Zondervan, 1970), pp. 49,50.

valid. David Mains, from Circle Church in Chicago, highlighted our concern:

Never before has this need for interaction been so apparent. We live in a world of alienations--government from government--race from race, generation from generation, husband from wife, father from child, and, most poignantly, man from God Essentially, the message of Christianity is and always has been that man can relate to his God, to his neighbor, and most certainly to his fellow believer. The initial role of the local church, therefore, is to fill this need for valid spiritual interaction¹⁵

Richards presses the case:

When the church today becomes organizationally a community, it will again be able to guide believers in spiritual growth To develop community, a basic requirement is a certain order of interaction of community members. That is, people do not develop a sense of community apart from frequent, regular social interaction with one another. They have to spend time together.¹⁶

He continues emphatically: "'The church' is people in relationship--not their meetings, or agencies, or programs."¹⁷ So even more markedly than before, we saw the need for small groups in the life of the congregation to nurture and strengthen the whole body. Our failures made us more determined to find some way to succeed.

Richards again gave us direction:

The changes envisioned to transform the "church that is" into the "church that must come" are drastic ones. Drastic in that they require the restructuring of our present church forms and organization structures, and drastic in that they involve changing a total pattern of group behavior and norms.¹⁸

Changing the structure of a new work like that of David Mains is one thing, but restructuring a congregation 138 years old is another.

¹⁵David R. Mains, Full Circle (Waco, Tx.: Word Books, 1971), pp. 50,51.

¹⁶Richards, op. cit., p. 54.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 56.

¹⁸Ibid.

The problem was one of changing old patterns to new patterns open to growth and change. In order to alter such patterns we used Richards' plan. He suggested dividing the congregation into "growth cells" of five families or ten single adults.¹⁹

I wrote a "proposal for restructure" (see Appendix E) to clarify the emerging ideas. The Richards' plan called for keeping only organizational structure that was absolutely necessary, and eliminating every work area and committee possible. We decided that everyone would belong to some group. The sole purpose of the group would be the spiritual growth and care of each group member. Thus, this scheme simplified our organizational structure from the one pictured in Figure 2, page 67, to the one pictured in Figure 3. This proposal stirred a great amount of discussion.

A copy of this proposal was sent to my episcopal leader, Bishop Ralph T. Alton, along with a personal letter voicing some of my concerns (see Appendix F). I sent a similar letter and the proposal to the Bishop's Executive Assistant, J. Kenneth Forbes (see Appendix G).

Bishop Alton replied:

You are certainly on the right track as far as the purpose of the church is concerned The structural design of the United Methodist Church is intended to do exactly what you are getting at It is left to each Council on Ministries to determine what sub-groups that Council may need to fulfill that purpose, but none of these are required. (Appendix H)

Forbes provided further encouragement:

We are living in a time when certainly some new things have to be discovered in order to add strength and inspiration to our denomination. It is obvious there is plenty of leeway for suggestion. More power to you and keep going! (Appendix I)

¹⁹Ibid., ch. 2.

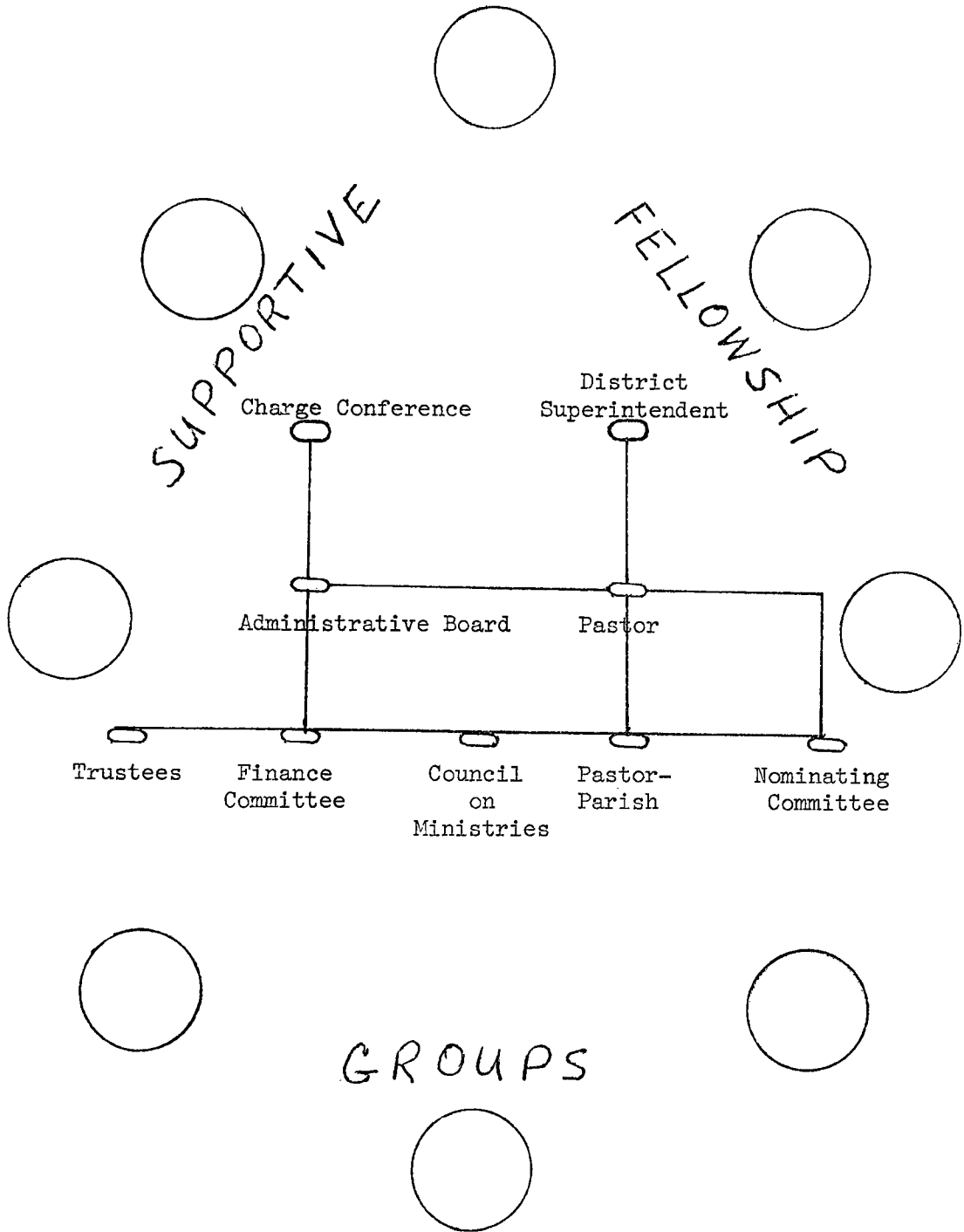


Figure 3

Revised Organizational Structure
First United Methodist Church
Hagerstown, Indiana

Obviously I was looking for room to maneuver, yet stay within the guidelines of my denomination. I was also venting some of my own frustrations with bureaucracy. Armed with the support and encouragement of my episcopal leaders, and a sense of the general acceptance and approval of the congregation, a plan to implement this proposal was drawn up by a small task force and presented for approval to the Administrative Board (see Appendix J). The Administrative Board approved this proposal to restructure our congregation around small groups designed for study, koinonia, prayer, and ministry.

The plan of restructure prepared for the Administrative Board makes use of a "process page" originally developed by Chuck Miller of Barnabas, Inc. This form is beneficial in helping people to think in terms of the biblical principles involved in a decision before moving on to goals and administration, and, therefore, becomes an instrument of instruction.

Preparing Leaders

The implementation of the proposal for restructure became our next step. Previous experience had shown us the necessity of good leadership. The ability to plan and conduct a meeting had been a missing ingredient in some of our previous groups. We needed group facilitators. We chose twenty-five couples and trained them to be enabling couples for group leadership. By this time we were calling our groups supportive fellowship groups.

The enabling couples were given training in five specific areas. (The material used in training is included in Appendix K).

First, we explained why small groups are important to the life

of a congregation (page 160), why small groups were vital to the early church, and why they were vital to our denomination (page 161). Our enabling couples began to realize what we were doing was not just a new program that would soon lose steam and be forgotten, but an effort to return to the spiritual basics which had made our denomination great. We also pointed out that even though the purpose was to experience group life, it is not a failure if a group dies (page 162).

Second, we gave specific instruction on how to lead a group (pages 163-4). We stressed that each enabling couple was to be a facilitator of the group. They were not expected to be the teachers. Their purpose would be accomplished by blending unnoticably into the group. The more pronounced their presence in a group, the less effective they would be. We did, though, provide them with a way to begin their first meeting (pages 165-6).

Third, and most importantly, we trained the enabling couples in a method of Bible study. The guidelines for using the Bible (page 167) spell out in simple form how a person may begin to respond to the Scriptures. The 2PROAPT sheet (page 168), developed by Chuck Miller and obtained through Barnabas, Inc., is a process page which enables one to move from observing what Scripture is saying to applying that truth in his own life.

Finally, we provided a form for group evaluation (page 169), and a listing of helpful materials for small groups (pages 170-2). The training sessions, covering a three month period, provided enabling couples a context to experience small group life first-hand.

The enabling couples were given the opportunity to choose the time for their meeting, and each person in the congregation was invited

to select one of the groups. It was our hope that families would choose a group in which they could participate together.

Developing Our Resources

The goal is to develop the most important resources--the people--by nurturing them and helping them identify their gifts in the atmosphere of koinonia and a supportive fellowship. The nurturing of faith and identification of spiritual gifts, allow people who have made a profession of faith in Christ to develop into disciples of Christ.

One of the primary purposes of the Christian church is to help people understand and utilize their gift or gifts; we felt this could be best accomplished in the small group. "The small Spirit-led group builds community and provides the context for both awakening spiritual gifts and disciplining their use."²⁰

Gordon Cosby has said: ". . . to love a person means to help them recognize their uniqueness and to discover their gifts."²¹ O'Connor says the reason we have great difficulty in identifying our gifts ". . . is that we have had no one to listen to us or even to look at us."²² But the ". . . Christian church comes into being as we come to know our own gifts and help others to know theirs."²³

Mains relates that in Circle Church small groups were used to

²⁰Snyder, The Problem of Wine Skins, p. 132.

²¹Cosby, Handbook for Mission Groups, p. 73.

²²Elizabeth O'Connor, Eighth Day of Creation (Waco, Tx.: Word Books, 1971), p. 19.

²³Ibid., p. 20.

awaken and develop spiritual gifts.²⁴ Both Stedman²⁵ and Kinghorn²⁶ have stated that one method of identifying our spiritual gift(s) is recognition of the gift(s) by others. We believe this occurs naturally in the small group.

More practical information has come from the Church of the Saviour in Washington, D.C. concerning small groups and their function in developing lay ministries. O'Connor, in her written history of that congregation, claims that despite the formation of small groups, no ministry actually took place until the small fellowship groups were abandoned and groups were formed around a call.²⁷

She has said that while the church's ministry is shaped by the world's needs, surveys and studies of the community do not determine which need is to be served. There is the need for a divine call or Christians: ". . . arrive on the mission field with no word from the Lord."²⁸ She comments: "We are not to superimpose structures on those outside the church, but neither are we to superimpose structures on those inside it."²⁹

We appreciate the experience of those with a proven track record. However, the consensus is that our congregation needs to test it for a time. Fellowship is a new experience for many of our people, and

²⁴Mains, Full Circle, pp. 180-95.

²⁵Stedman, Body Life, p. 55.

²⁶Kinghorn, Gifts of the Spirit, p. 115.

²⁷Cosby, op. cit., pp. 25-27.

²⁸Elizabeth O'Connor, Journey Inward, Journey Outward (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 32.

²⁹Ibid.

there is often a mission to those within the group. We are keeping the words of Elton Trueblood before us as we continually lift up the ultimate purpose of ministry:

While there can be no doubt that the rediscovery of the power of the small group has been one of the genuine Christian advances in our generation, it is possible that the prayer group, like the sanctuary, may involve a retreat from reality. A prayer group is dangerous, and even harmful, if the members are satisfied to indulge in their own delightful fellowship, making this fellowship essentially an end in itself. The society of a little group of fellow believers can be so pleasant that the poverty and sorrow of the outside world are forgotten, at least for the time of meeting. But the poverty and the sorrow must never be forgotten, not even for a little while. A prayer group which does not make its members more effective apostles in their jobs and homes, and more sensitive participators in the fellowship of those who bear the mark of frustration, is essentially a failure. The test of the vitality of a group does not occur primarily while the group is meeting; it occurs after the meeting is over.³⁰

Summary

The examples of Jesus, the early church, the origin of our own denomination, and the witness of the church's creative minds all pointed to the small group as the structure for nurturing Christians and effecting ministry. The problem confronting a congregation today is, "How do we implement this structure?" We found that our congregation was overloaded with a structure designed almost entirely to meet the institutional needs of the congregation. Every congregation has need for administration, but the administrative needs are not more important than meeting the spiritual needs of people. We were not able to implement the small group structure to nurture Christians for ministry, until we adopted a structure minimizing the administrative bureaucracy.

³⁰Elton Trueblood, The Company of the Committed (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961), p. 75.

Small groups are not to be an end in themselves. Gentle, yet firm pastoral leadership and initiative helps move Christians and thereby the congregation into ministry. We can see this happening already as some groups have taken on ministry and others are beginning to form around a particular mission. This takes time, but one thing is sure, our Lord is patient with us as we struggle and grow. It is well for us to be patient also as Christian disciples are developing through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. In Chapter 6 we will see some of the results of preparing the congregation for ministry.

Chapter 6

RESULTS OF PREPARING THE CONGREGATION FOR MINISTRY

June 7, 1977 at the South Indiana Annual Conference, Bishop Ralph Alton appointed me to the First United Methodist Church, Hagerstown, Indiana. Hagerstown is a community of 2250 people. The congregation had 644 members and was averaging 225 people in worship attendance. I was eager to assume my responsibilities in this new arena of service.

Within the first month, I was visited by an involved member of the congregation. She wanted to know what I wanted to do in Hagerstown. She was eager to start and wanted to encourage me. Her assessment of the congregation was that it was uniquely cooperative. She said the people were waiting for clear instructions from me before engaging in action. All that was needed was the signal, so they would know in which direction to move.

This input was overwhelming. I appreciated her sincerity, but I had learned a few things in ten years, and I felt that no congregation could be that ready or cooperative. Furthermore, though I did not want to appear ill-informed or disappoint my visitor, I did not have the slightest idea what we were going to do.

To begin with a pre-conceived agenda in a new appointment would be program-centered church administration, instead of God-centered and person-oriented. We needed time to explore together our understanding of the nature of the church, and time to study the needs of our

congregation and community. Only then could we establish goals and make plans.

I was convinced that our particular mission would evolve after careful study and earnest prayer. It would have been risky to assume, however, that goals would surface automatically at the opportune moment. The process is more like a pilgrimage than a program. It unfolds as the church understands its mission, is attuned to its faith traditions, and is obedient to God.

As a congregation analyzes its specific existential situation, it follows that the mission which evolves may be different from other congregations. Though God's eternal purpose for His church is the same everywhere, needs vary from community to community. Individual churches must adapt to meet those needs.

We studied our church, and thought about our particular needs before any program emerged. Slowly, our particular ministry evolved. Even now we see it only partially, but God will continue to reveal it as we walk in obedience to Him and grow stronger in faith.

Ministry in the Congregation

Worship

Worship is central to the life of a congregation. As the pastor, I plan the service of worship around the Scripture, with the hope that every service of worship may be a fresh experience instead of a dry routine. Our congregation has experienced a new vitality in worship which has been witnessed to many times by the members of the Council on Ministries. One member writes:

We, as a congregation, had been used to a set pattern of worship, to the point that it almost would not have been necessary to

have printed bulletins. When Jim Hertel was appointed to Hagerstown, we were quickly introduced to a change in our order of worship. We have learned that each Sunday morning worship can have new meaning, and can take on new form. We can reach out for new experiences in our worship of God. I see us growing stronger in our faith, in our mission, and in our fellowship with one another (see Appendix L).

Personal Spiritual Growth

The most vital result of the congregation's ministry is the personal growth of the people of God. This growth usually comes slowly, and documentation can be difficult. The success or failure of a program can be evaluated, because it is tangible. Personal spiritual growth is subjective. Unless persons volunteer information about their spiritual development, personal growth may go undetected.

The church exists to help people grow spiritually. Paul says certain gifts have been given to the church: ". . . for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ . . ." (Eph. 4:12b,13). This truth helped us make the decision to restructure the congregation around the concept of supportive fellowship groups. Previously, congregational energies had been spent maintaining a structure designed to meet the institutional needs of the church. The congregation adopted a structure designed to meet the spiritual needs of people. Presently there are twelve supportive fellowship groups. Combined participation in these groups totals approximately 120 people.

Recently, a congregational member related during a worship service how God had been faithful to him. Family and professional problems had caused him to turn anew to God, seeking strength to cope with mounting problems. God answered this prayer through the support and

love of other Christians in a supportive fellowship group.

Another witnessed to the personal growth in her life by saying:

Prayer and Bible study are now an important part of my life. Fear has been replaced by the spirit of love and power. My life now has purpose. I feel like a worthwhile person. I have a peace and a calmness that I never had until I let God into my life. I feel loved; I have fulfillment and a place of refuge in the church.
(Appendix M)

Only two examples are cited, but their lives show clear evidence of personal spiritual growth. In addition, every program of the congregation is conceived to promote the personal spiritual growth of people.

Bethel Series

The study of the mission of the church revealed that one of the primary purposes for the church's gathering is to study. The purposes for study are to hear the word of God; to be instructed in the teaching; to be strengthened; informed; and equipped to participate in God's mission to the world. Luke records that the Christians of the early church: ". . . devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching . . ." (Acts 2:42). Study is important for the Christian's personal spiritual growth. Also, one must study to know the Christian faith so that faith may be communicated to others.

We learned that one biblical function of a pastor is to ". . . feed the church of the Lord" (Acts 20:28). The pastoral role is to teach. It is important to show those who respond to the proclamation of the gospel how followers of Jesus Christ will live in the world ethically and morally. Jesus demands disciples.

The spiritual life survey of our congregation had shown a high percentage who had personally trusted Christ to be their Saviour and

Lord (87%). However, only 51 percent of the people were confident of their ability to study the Bible and gain meaningful insight from it for their personal lives. Only 35 percent of the people claimed to read the Bible daily. These percentages highlighted a need for a teaching ministry.

The congregational meeting revealed that the most pronounced weakness of our congregation was the educational program. When the members of our Council on Ministries met with Lyle Schaller, they expressed the need for a stronger Sunday School.

During the consultation, Schaller explained that it was not his purpose to recommend programs for congregations. There was, however, one program he had no hesitancy in suggesting, and that was the Bethel Series. The Bethel Series is an adult Bible study developed by the Bethel Lutheran Church, Madison, Wis., to do something positive about the problem of biblical illiteracy among adult church members. Schaller said that if we would help our adults become more knowledgeable and confident about the Bible, we could improve our Christian education program to our children. So, after considerable thought and planning, the Administrative Board voted to enroll the congregation in the Bethel Series (see Appendix N). This decision required a substantial investment of both the congregation's money and pastor's time.

The Bethel program consists of three phases. First, a pastor or Christian education representative of the congregation attends a two week orientation session in Madison, Wis., to become acquainted with the material and methodology used in the course. Andre' Weber, (the Adult Ministries Coordinator), Becky (my wife), and I went to Madison in August, 1978 where we participated in a leadership training program.

The second phase of the Bethel Series is the training of teachers within the congregation. A small nucleus of persons receive extensive training to prepare to teach the Bethel Series when it is opened to the whole congregation. This phase lasts almost two years.

Volunteers for the teacher training phase are required to:

1. spend 2 1/2 hours a week in study with the pastor for two years.
2. do between 8 and 12 hours of homework a week between these weekly sessions.
3. learn about 15 biblical concepts a week.
4. write examinations as the study program progresses.
5. teach in our congregation after completing the training program.

The requirements are demanding, but we believe, the benefits, both individually and collectively, are beyond estimation.

A congregation our size needed six trained teachers to move into the congregational phase. Bethel representatives in Wisconsin recommended we train at least ten in order to be sure of the six needed. We began January, 1979 with fourteen. Five people dropped from the group in the first year (2 moved and 3 chose not to continue).

The congregational--or third phase--is open to all the adults of the congregation. We plan this phase for the Fall of 1980. The requirements for this phase are not as demanding as those for the teacher trainees. The weekly session lasts an hour, whereas phase two (teacher training) requires two and one-half hours. The courses will be divided into six semesters of seven weeks each. The schedule of semesters still requires two years to complete the course.

Those in phase two anticipate the time when the Bethel Series is opened to the total congregation. The strength of the individual Christian as well as the strength of the entire congregation lies in our understanding of Scriptures. We see ourselves as a mission group with the purpose of strengthening and enriching the biblical understanding of the congregation.

The Bethel Series aids church members in gaining a deeper understanding of the biblical messages. It confronts the problem of biblical illiteracy in terms of concepts and themes, meeting adults where they are in their understanding--not where the church assumes they should be. It does not instantly cure all church ailments, but it does serve as a long-range plan to make serious biblical studies a way of life for our adults.

Group Blood Assurance Plan

This ministry to the members of our congregation did not grow out of a formal survey that pinpointed a need. However, our process of encouraging groups to look for needs as a method of discovering ministry contributed to our congregation entering the Blood Center's Group Blood Assurance Plan.

A group within our congregation began discussing the need for blood donors in our community, and how many of the elderly have the most difficulty replacing the blood they have needed. This group's concern led them to explore the requirements for entering our congregation in the Group Blood Assurance Plan. This plan provides a way to insure the total blood needs for every person, young or old, in our congregation.

Happily, church membership in America covers a wide age span. It is this fact, however, which makes it difficult for churches to meet

blood program quotas. The congregation's quota is based on the number of family units. Many of the family units in American church membership consist of single adults. Often the single adult is not eligible to give blood due to age or health restrictions. Yet, each of these single adults counts as a unit for quota purposes.

A physiologist, who is a member of our congregation, explained the rationale for moving into this program. She pointed out that blood is an important biblical concept to both the Old and New Testaments.

According to God's Word:

If any Israelite or any foreigner living in the community eats meat with still blood in it, the Lord will turn against him and no longer consider him one of his people. The life of every living thing is in the blood, and that is why the Lord has commanded that all blood be poured out on the altar to take away the people's sins. Blood, which is life, takes away sins (Lev. 17:10-11).

This passage is a part of the laws which God gave to unify and strengthen Israel to insure the fulfillment of His covenant with Abraham. These laws were a means to an end, to insure Israel's destiny to be a blessing that all the families of the earth might be blessed (Gen. 12). The passage also lays the groundwork for understanding God's perfect blood sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Blood, which is life, takes away sins.

The truth of the statement, "The life is in the blood . . ." is the basis for the modern medical practice of blood transfusion. The body relies on blood to carry oxygen from the lungs and nutrients from the digestive system to every cell. The blood is also necessary to remove carbon dioxide and other waste products of metabolism from every cell. Special channels are present to carry blood to and away from every body cell which lives. Without a blood supply, the cell will die. Without living cells, the body will die.

Our congregation entered the Group Blood Assurance Plan in late 1978 for the calendar year 1979. We needed 48 pints to insure our 335 family units their total blood needs. We met our quota and reached our goal for 1979. We have almost reached our goal for 1980.

It is good to have members and friends of our congregation who have given portions of their lives so that the total blood needs for each full member, his or her spouse and immediate dependents, are met. It is time to celebrate!

Ministry in the Community

Senior Citizen Apartments

The community survey conducted by our congregation in cooperation with the local United Church of Christ highlighted the scarcity of housing, and revealed to us that the single largest group of persons in our community were women over 65 years of age (Appendix C). The Town Meeting listed the needs of senior citizens in the challenge statements and proposals for further community action (Appendix D).

Hagerstown congregations (especially the United Methodist Church, United Church of Christ, and the Church of the Brethren) have an exemplary record in cooperative ministries. The Town Meeting was hosted by the United Methodist Church under sponsorship of the Hagerstown Ministerium. The pastors met to discuss the possibilities of an ecumenical community ministry. It was decided to focus on the needs of the senior citizens (Proposal 4). Local congregations began this process by sponsoring community meetings to discuss the needs of the elderly.

We concluded that housing for senior citizens was a major need. Many elderly parishioners live in unsafe, sub-standard apartments which

take a high percentage of their incomes. Some of the elderly are "house poor." They own their homes, but now are unable to maintain them. Loneliness is a related need. Some are afraid to live alone, and have daily diets which are nutritionally deficient. Most Hagerstown senior citizens contemplating a move to a smaller apartment or nursing home must leave the community. Leaving their homes adds to the trauma.

The nearest hospital is fifteen-eighteen miles away, and the two local medical doctors are already overloaded. So, building a nursing home is not a viable option--at least for now. However, through the Rural Rental Housing Program of the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), funds were available to construct senior citizen apartments. The FmHA program does not provide funds for common eating facilities. However, the opportunity to be with friends, within easy access to community facilities, and without the burden of property maintenance will assist the senior citizens.

Hagerstown Faith Housing (HFH) was born in response to this need. HFH is a non-profit corporation consisting of interested persons from the community, most of whom belong to the United Methodist Church or the United Church of Christ. The corporation is a legal entity related to FmHA and is eligible to receive a loan for the construction of these apartments.

The community has previously been negative toward federally financed housing. But we felt that with the broad support of the churches, and the fact that we were planning these apartments for senior citizens we could overcome the opposition. This project has received the full support of the town government and the community.

The "perfect" location for our apartment complex appeared to be

a full square block owned by the local school corporation. It was located two blocks north of the main business district. This property was unused and vacant except for one small frame building. The location was in close proximity to doctors, a library, the Town Hall, a drug-store, and a grocery.

Charles Keil, an engineer with Insta Housing, Inc., Scipio, Indiana, helped us design eighteen single level apartments for this block (see Appendix O). The FmHA had suggested that we build only single level apartments. Plans were not complete, but we had a vision for the block which would add to the beauty of our community and dignify the lives of those living in the apartments.

It was time to talk informally with the school board about the availability of this block before our plans and dreams progressed much further. The school board had previously attempted to sell this property, but turned down the bid. The reason voiced by those opposing the sale was that the property would not be on the tax roles since the potential buyer represented a non-profit corporation. So, although we knew the property was available, we did not know whether the school board would approve a sale to our non-profit corporation.

A further complication was the timing of our offer to purchase the site. Eventually, we would receive funds from the FmHA, but we did not have any funds on hand. So, we wanted two things from the school board: a commitment to sell to our non-profit group, if we were the highest bidder, and cooperation in timing the sale. We understood the sale would be legally advertised, and any interested person would have the right to place a bid. Since we would have no money until our loan was approved by the FmHA, we wanted the school board to wait to schedule

the sale of this block until we could be ready to bid on it.

A small task force from HFH met with the school board. The task force was assured the property was for sale, and our bid would not be rejected just because of our non-profit status. They were also given private assurance of cooperation in timing the sale. Those factors had hardly been established when we read in the local weekly newspaper that the school board was putting the block up for sale. Another potential buyer, who wished to remain anonymous, had approached the school board about purchasing the block if the sale could be finalized before March 15, 1979. The school board set the date of the sale for March 14, 1979.

We undauntedly began to line up private sources of capital for interim use. It is difficult to assess the value of a city block. Appraisers indicated the value was considerably less than \$30,000. The block contained only six lots which could be sub-divided for single family dwellings. We hoped the bid would not go much beyond \$30,000, but we were prepared to go to \$40,000 if necessary. The FmHA had counseled us that \$40,000 was the maximum on a project of this type based on a potential of eighteen apartment units.

The night of the bid opening came. We eventually bid \$39,500. Two ladies from outside the community bid \$40,000. We lost the property of our choice, and went home disappointed.

Our discouragement did not dampen our determination to fulfill this dream for housing for the elderly. We knew it would be difficult to find an alternate site. No more vacant blocks were available. Land was available at the edge of town, but it would not be approved by the FmHA for senior citizen units. Several additional avenues were explored

and abandoned.

There were five potential sites involving eight persons. All the sites were small. Therefore, it was necessary to combine sites to build enough apartments to be economically sound. Agreement with one property owner would be reached then checkmated by a neighbor. Our efforts were thwarted. This stalemate discouraged the group.

Several non-productive months lapsed before two sites became available. Meanwhile, the FmHA altered its restrictions against two level apartments. We now have plans for thirty apartments (all two levels) on two sites (see Appendix P).

Plans are being finalized by our architect. We anticipate groundbreaking in the Spring, 1980. The apartments should be ready for occupancy by Fall, 1980. Total cost of the project is estimated to be \$825,000. When constructed, these apartments will be a living witness to what Christians can accomplish working together, even when faced with difficult obstacles, when they have a vision.

Focusing on Youth

Youth are important to our congregation. Almost any program could be sold to our congregation if it was labeled "youth." Since 1974 a qualified person has been employed to give leadership in youth ministries. Yet, even such a quality program attracts mainly the youth of our own membership. If this is true in other churches, then a large majority of America's youth enter adulthood without exposure to the Gospel.

Through observation and the community survey (see Appendix Q) it was apparent that little activity was available for youth in the community. Following ballgames youth gather in cars and park around

town. Some frequent the bowling alley. The school provides a recreation program, but if one is not athletically inclined, he is mostly forgotten.

This need has caused our congregation to dream for a ministry that will reach youth left untouched by regular church programming. A coffee house type ministry is foremost in our thinking at present. Main Street buildings provide several sites away from the church building for this creative ministry. Plans are for light refreshments, and atmosphere conducive to real conversation. There will be an adult presence, not to police but to be available to share with youth who have questions and problems.

The congregation's stated purpose is to make known the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ to all people, and to provide the opportunity for others to accept salvation for themselves (pages 58-9).

The gospel will be presented indirectly through films, drama, and contemporary gospel singing groups. Through atmosphere and presence, we believe youth, who would never be caught in the traditional nets, can learn to know Jesus Christ. Seeing the church in this setting may open the eyes of some to the traditional church, who, heretofore have been repulsed. This is still a dream and an idea, but it has possibilities.

Wholistic Health Care Center

The congregation participated financially in the founding of the Richmond Wholistic Health Care Center. Richmond is the county seat, fifteen miles from Hagerstown. The concept of Wholistic Health Care is unique. The distinctiveness is the concern for the total care of the person. Each person is received as a blending of mind, body, and

spirit. The more these three are in harmony with one another the greater the potential for health and well-being.

The ability to provide professional assistance in dealing with "dis - ease" and brokenness in one or more of these three aspects of life is known as Wholistic Health Care. Medical doctors, nurses, pastoral counselors, and volunteers cooperate to help an individual maintain good health or assist in dealing with illness, distress, and brokenness.

To provide quality care, the Richmond Wholistic Health Care Center will limit the number of patients under their care, and become a training center for professionals entering the wholistic practice. The goal of the Richmond Center is to spawn satellite health centers in neighboring communities, rather than growing bigger and more impersonal in Richmond.

Our Administrative Board voted on July 1, 1979, to empower a small task force with authority to investigate what is needed to bring this ministry to Hagerstown. The results of this investigation cannot be predicted. One determining factor will be whether the resources are available to attain this goal. Should one congregation be unable to go alone, perhaps an ecumenical effort will succeed.

Ministry to the World

Becoming Missionaries

The average church member has a vague idea the church is involved in missions, but rarely, if ever, does he think of himself as a missionary. Missionaries are those we send and support, who represent us and serve in some distant place.

United Methodists in Hagerstown have an exemplary record in supporting missionaries and mission work around the world. The annual Missions Conference is a highpoint of the church year. The congregation's general budget includes \$10,000 designated for General Advance Projects. Through faith-promise giving another \$10,000 is received for second-mile mission projects. Consequently, 40 percent or more of every dollar received through our congregation finds itself in mission somewhere around the world when apportionments are included.

Often we can only give our money to support another in his ministry. Giving money, however, does not always signify that we are in mission. The giving of money can be an excuse which keeps one from personal involvement in Christ's mission to the world.

The Spring of 1979 brought gruesome reports of the plight of the "boat people." Refugees from Laos, Cambodia, and Viet Nam were flooding the countries of Malaysia and Thailand. The hardships caused many to leave their homelands, but others were being systematically expelled from Viet Nam and Cambodia because of their Chinese ancestry. The Chinese invasion of Viet Nam the previous winter had inflamed these prejudices.

Today, there are more homeless people in the world than at any time in history--no one seems to want them. Malaysia announced to the world in June, 1979 they would receive no more boat people, and they would begin loading the ones they already had on boats and tow them to sea. There were reports of thousands dying by starvation or drowning. Other accounts had Viet Nam loading their own people on leaky boats, then not allowing them to be picked up. The cruel irony was that the refugees own country did not want them, nor did they want anyone else

to receive them.

Our congregation began to ask, "What can we do about this tragedy?" "What would Jesus do?" We knew what had to be done. Steps were taken to sponsor a family of refugees and bring them to Hagerstown. While our congregation had congratulated itself on its missions giving, the adoption of a refugee family was a larger and different challenge than we had previously faced. The proposal to sponsor a refugee family, formulated by the Council on Ministries, was adopted by the congregation July 1, 1979 (see Appendix R).

We developed committees, and searched for suitable housing for our adopted family. We expected to receive our family in October. Our preparations intensified, but it was the end of the month before we received a dossier on a prospective family. We relayed our acceptance immediately and continued to wait. By December we feared our adopted family would not arrive until the next year. But the long awaited call came--our family would arrive in Indianapolis on Tuesday, December 11, 1979.

We welcomed a beautiful Laotian family of six. The children of Bounnark and Khamphoy Chaleunsack range in age from nine months to ten years. Bounnark served in the Laotian Air Force for nine years as a mechanic. The Chaleunsacks fled Laos in June, 1976, and since have been in a refugee camp in Thailand.

Bounnark was the only family member who spoke any English. Communication has been difficult at times, yet always enjoyable. Words were not always understood, but love does not need any words. Their coming at Christmastime seemed especially symbolic. We were prepared to give; little did we realize how much we would receive.

Bounnark goes to school four days a week, to learn English and to prepare for employment. The three oldest children are enrolled in school, and are being tutored by volunteers from the congregation. Khamphoy remains home with the baby, but she is also learning to speak English.

Through this experience we understood Jesus' words more clearly: "For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me" (Matt. 25:35,36b).

To the shocked inquiry, "When did we do these things?" The reply comes: ". . . as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Matt. 25:40).

Conclusion

It is exciting to be in mission. Busy, imaginative people committed irrevocably to Christ will accomplish His purposes. God has given us a dream for our congregation and community. We have only begun, but more of His dream will be unveiled and fulfilled through the people who want to be His church.

Chapter 7

EVALUATIONS AND POINTING AHEAD

Evaluating the Developmental Aspects of the Project-Dissertation

Aristotle says in Rhetoric: "Educated men lay down broad general principles; uneducated men argue from common knowledge and draw obvious conclusions."¹ The process used to effect ministry in the Hagerstown United Methodist Church has been to allow ministry to flow from two general foci: (1) a theology of church and ministry, and (2) knowledge of the needs of the environment.

These two foci led us in two major directions. First, we studied the nature and mission of the church. This study became the focus for sermons, Bible studies, retreats, and spiritual enrichment week-ends. Secondly, we surveyed the community and established small group meetings to uncover existing needs. The ministries developed as we discovered who we were, as we understood our mission, and as we assessed the needs. There was a congruency as we realized we were the people of God, called to ministry, especially as we saw the existential need.

Joan Lafuze, chairperson of the Pastor-Parish Committee, has been in a strategic position to view and evaluate this process. She says:

The process (from ecclesiology to ministry), in my opinion, has

¹Rhetorica, Bk. II, ch. 22, ll. 30-32.

been effective An important aspect of effecting ministry is meeting the needs of people. Jesus set the example by saying that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Likewise, our process has been one of establishing programs which meet the basic needs of people rather than forcing people to meet the needs of our programs (Appendix S).

The Council on Ministries at first resisted attempts to use surveys as a way to analyze and pinpoint needs for future ministry. The Council (1) rejected material available from the South Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church; (2) turned down a computerized church profile distributed through the Conservative Baptist Association by the David C. Cook Company which would provide the congregation with a complete analysis of congregational life and individual spiritual development; and (3) refused to use a questionnaire to help congregational members identify their spiritual gifts.

There were three factors which, in my opinion, caused the Council to reject these resources.

First, the cost of the computerized questionnaire from the Conservative Baptist Association was approximately \$500. I felt the cost was not exorbitant for our size congregation, but Hagerstown United Methodist Church is a conservative congregation. They are very generous and liberal in providing funds for obvious needs, but they are reticent to spend money on something as intangible as a survey. Council members asked, "What could be learned that we didn't already know?" Justifying anticipated information was difficult.

Second, the whole process, for some, seemed too business-like. "Businesses are expected to analyze and survey, but the church should be engaged in more spiritual pursuits."

Third, and perhaps the most important factor had little to do with the method, but was related to the perception some had of the

pastor. They felt the pastor was trying to make a name for himself, so the processes he advocated were viewed with suspicion. This perception mitigated against the survey technique.

The Pastor-Parish Committee was cognizant of the Doctor of Ministry program before I was appointed to the congregation. I explained the nature and scope of my professional involvement, what this program might mean for the congregation, and that I would come only if the members of the congregation were willing to accept the responsibilities of such a program. The Pastor-Parish Committee indicated their readiness to be involved in such a program, but time requirements of the program forced us to begin the process of theological reflection on the church and its ministry, as well as gathering information on our community setting before we were acquainted with one another. I am chagrined as I look back on that first year. Yet, we grew in understanding and developed meaningful relationships, and now, three years later, I have much more support than at the beginning.

Evaluating the Programs for Effectiveness

Our journey toward a more effective ministry has only begun. We have made considerable progress in understanding our theological base, several meaningful programs have evolved, and needs have been met, but some of the programs are still in the future. We can only anticipate their value to us at the present. However, there are some immediate results which are apparent to us.

Supportive Fellowship Groups

A major change in our congregation resulted when the

congregation, in an attempt to meet the personal spiritual need of people, decided to restructure the congregation around the concept of supportive fellowship groups. We believe these groups provide the occasion for personal and congregational spiritual growth which will impact the congregation for years to come.

Paul and Betty Beachler, an enabling couple, have written of their experience after the first year of participation in a supportive fellowship group:

We have finished the study of Ephesians and are half through the book of Acts. Everyone speaks freely and candidly, not always agreeing on a particular interpretation that one of the members might express. But among all, there is a feeling of good Christian fellowship and a desire to learn more of the Bible. Many have been most lavish in their praise of the rewards they have felt from this fellowship group.

As a group, we have shared joys as well as problems; we have acted as hosts for three or four special activities in the church. As one member states, "I always look around in worship on Sunday to see if our group is in attendance." We feel that this past year has been a most rewarding time for all of us. We are indeed grateful that we were persuaded to become an enabling couple. (Appendix T).

The study on the mission and purpose of the church preceeded the congregation's decision to adopt a structure designed to promote the spiritual growth of its members. We discovered a spiritual hunger and need for deeper fellowship by the members of the congregation. Lawrence Richards, a Christian educator, helped us to see that a congregation needed to be a spiritual community organizationally as well as a fellowship of believers. Community, we discovered, could not develop apart from spiritual interaction of members with each other.

This need was especially characteristic of the Hagerstown United Methodist Church. Like many congregations today, they have been conditioned to be members of an audience instead of members of Christ's body. The sanctuary is structured to enhance spectatorship rather than

body-life ministry. The sanctuary seats 300 people and is normally three-fourths full the year around. However, the sanctuary actually has four separate parts--a balcony, an overflow room which is used every Sunday as part of the sanctuary, the front section, the largest part of the sanctuary, and a section below the balcony. A person can sit in any one section and not see another person in a different section. Instead of facilitating community, the congregation divides into those who want to be involved in worship and those who desire to be spectators. This physical barrier was alleviated in part by the small groups.

A year and one-half after forming supportive fellowship groups, we estimated that about one-half of our attending members were involved in a group. Some groups have been discontinued, but other groups have demonstrated remarkable growth and vitality. This structure has provided for more effective spiritual growth and for a deeper supportive fellowship than any previous structure, technique, or program. The supportive fellowship groups are an excellent method for assimilating new members.

However, old patterns and habits are difficult to break, and this evaluation can be fair and honest only if we examine why one-half of the attending congregational members still are not participating in small groups. It may be that some are not responding to the new structure of supportive fellowship groups because they have been conditioned over the years that to be good church members meant involvement and work on some committee in the congregation. The removal of that structure left a void. The church will need to be sensitive to congregational members whose only form of involvement, outside of corporate worship, has been removed. New approaches for incorporating these members into

congregational life and ministry must be found.

The General Board of Discipleship will propose to the 1980 General Conference of the United Methodist Church a plan to simplify the local church organizational structure. Lyle Schaller calls for this restructuring in a recent article printed in The Circuit Rider. His article discussed the need for restructure for large congregations, yet he makes a point discovered earlier by our congregation: "The structure now recommended in The Discipline places an excessive administrative burden on the members of thousands of congregations."²

The structure adopted by the congregation does meet the basic requirements of the Discipline, and allows for person-to-person contacts, study, community concerns, family responsibilities, and personal spiritual growth.

The Bethel Series

The congregation awaits the full benefits from the Bethel Series, but some immediate results are apparent to us. Bethel Series has highlighted the teaching role of the pastor. Furthermore, my involvement as teacher in the Bethel Series is not a solo effort. I am training and equipping laypersons for their ministries of teaching. The whole congregation will be edified in this way. Three of those participating in the teacher training phase of Bethel Series have written evaluations of this study. Joe Smith says:

Bethel Series has been an instrument God has used to get me deeper into His Word. It has helped me to see the overall picture

²Lyle Schaller, "A Call for Restructure," ed. J. Richard Peck, The Circuit Rider, February, 1980 Vol. 4 No. 2, (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House), p. 5.

of the Old Testament. Previously, I had viewed the Old Testament as a series of small stories. I feel my prayer life has become richer, and my relationship with the other teacher trainees has been greatly beneficial. (Appendix U)

Connie Marlatt also witnesses to the greater vision of the total picture of the Bible gained through the Bethel Series. She adds: "The discipline of memorizing has been a very healthy and beneficial experience. Although the study has been very time consuming, it has been most rewarding" (Appendix U).

Mindy Smith remarks that the Bethel study ". . . has made me a much more effective Sunday School teacher . . ." (Appendix U). The benefits already gained heighten our anticipation for those benefits yet to be received and experienced by the total congregation.

Senior Citizen Apartments

There is one positive result for the Christians in Hagerstown, even before the senior citizens apartments have been built. Non-Christians often view the church's role in society as being primarily negative. The church needs to oppose certain influences, such as liquor or pornography. This project, however, has given Christians of different denominations an opportunity to join together to make a positive witness in the community. The church is promoting a better life for our senior citizens.

Hagerstown Faith Housing would have never been formed, and the temporary setbacks and disappointments would have killed the vision for these apartments had it not been for strong leadership. Initially this leadership was provided by the pastors, but now there is an encouraging development--lay leadership is giving direction to this project. The result will be a stronger witness for the Christian community in Hagerstown.

Refugee Family Adoption

The Chaleunsack family has contributed so much to all of our lives and the congregation. It is a joy to watch this family participate in corporate worship and congregational life. This project has been time consuming, and our responsibility is far from finished. Yet the rewards received are already greater than anything we have given. Cynthia Rhoades, one of the congregational leaders in this project, says:

Several in the congregation have been so very willing and hard working to accomplish what has been done so far. These people, as well as I, have gained so much more than we have given. Those of us involved have learned to give and take and share so much in terms of time, rewards, and disappointments. Our common goal is to serve Christ and our fellow man. I do think the church as a whole has a better understanding of those who have left their countries, and have sought a new life in a strange land. (Appendix V)

The process of effecting ministry has strengthened the congregation. Also, the congregation has become more effective in furthering Christ's ministry both at home and throughout the world.

Conclusions

Four questions in the beginning provided the framework for this study.

First, is the church's mission enhanced by increased knowledge of a theology of the church and of ministry? Even though we have no valid scientific proof that increased theological and biblical knowledge aided the church's mission, the overall results indicate this process is valid.

One of the principles of management by objective administration is that results are a part of the total process that begins with mission and ends with program. The congregation carefully walked through this

process from mission to ministry. As a result, we were able not only to justify our reason for being, but to justify programs as inherent in the biblical-theological rationale.

Second, will analytical tools (survey, questionnaire, etc.) help a congregation uncover its particular mission and thus effect ministry? Surveys and community analysis do not give us a divine call for ministry. However, we have learned that it is helpful to be knowledgeable about existing needs in order to understand the Lord's mission for us. Legitimate programing comes not only from a biblical mandate to serve, but from the actual needs of those being served. We were able to focus our programs, activities, and involvements for more effective ministry. We found we could not divorce the needs of the existential situation and the divine call. Effective program and ministry evolved not only as we understood our biblical reason for being, but as the specific needs of the people became known to us.

Third, we believe that we did find a structure to meet the institutional needs of the congregation, yet provide for spiritual growth and effective ministry. This fact was not only verified by our subjective experience, but also legitimized by the enthusiasm generated for program planning and implementation. Whereas, before we spent most of our energy maintaining the organizational structure, now more time and energy are given to accomplishing the mission of the church.

The fourth question related to the pastor's leadership style in equipping a congregation for ministry. Paul F. Goetting, of the Center for Parish Development, has written concerning the importance for the pastor to understand his leadership style: "One's leadership style affects the degree to which people are trusting; how committed they are

to the key decisions of the congregation, and their level of satisfaction with the general parish life."³ The pastor's leadership style profoundly affects the quality of congregational life.

As a result of what we have done, I have reflected on my leadership style. I tend to be a person who gets an idea, a dream, or a vision, and work to see the idea fulfilled. I work as a leader with other congregational leaders, or with leaders from the community. The congregation is receptive to pastoral ideas, if they can be substantiated. One of Lyle Schaller's observations about the congregation has been confirmed, in my view.

Schaller said an idea is: ". . . the most important single force for social change."⁴ The pastor is a leader who works with other congregational leaders to accomplish God's purposes. As an agent of change the pastor must rely on the ideas of others as well as his own. This has been an important learning. What the members of the congregation perceive about the pastor as a person determine in large measure their receptivity to change. Furthermore, sometimes nothing happens in a congregation because no one has an idea, a dream, or a vision for the future.

I attended a pastor's retreat, in the Spring of 1971, led by Dr. Kenneth Kinghorn. The theme of this retreat, "Keeping the Dream Alive," proved to be of lasting importance to me. Kinghorn shared that the Holy Spirit wants to give Christians dreams. Peter's quotation from the prophet Joel on the Day of Pentecost is the biblical foundation for this

³Letter from Paul F. Goetting, Director of Training of the Center for Parish Development, March 14, 1980 (Appendix W).

⁴Lyle E. Schaller, The Change Agent, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972), p. 49.

concept of dreams or visions:

And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams (Acts 2:17).

This retreat enabled me to understand biblically, a concept that had always been important to me. Kinghorn showed not only that part of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to impart dreams to Christians, but that we must receive God's dreams and visions. We can be cooperative with God in the fulfillment of the dreams God has given, and we need to continually receive new dreams.

I have experienced that an idea, a dream, or a vision lifts sagging spirits and is a deterrent to depression. An idea, a dream, or a vision motivates one in ministry. To possess a dream enables one to absorb criticism and to keep going.

James Glasse has shown how the pastor who desires to be an agent of change in a congregation must learn the lesson of walking the fine line between losing his vision and losing his job. A pastor cannot give the congregation an absolute veto power over all of his activities. To effect change he must stay in the congregation long enough to make a difference. Glasse suggests a formula whereby the pastor can learn to calculate the risks if he is to run the risk responsibly. He says the pastor must determine in advance how many members, and how much congregational money and personal income he can afford to lose. Then the pastor should determine how much public acclaim he is prepared to sacrifice; how much public censure he and his family can tolerate; and how much physical danger he is prepared to suffer. Glasse's formula may sound melodramatic, but only by calculating the risks can a pastor determine

what price he will pay for his convictions.⁵

The decision to adopt a refugee family provides an example of learning to calculate the risks. I was warned of opposition both in the congregation and the community to bringing foreigners to live in Hagerstown. If the Administrative Board had rejected the refugee-adoption proposal, I would have been greatly disappointed. I was braced to lose some opposing members. However, I was not ready to lose a whole congregation through a "do it or else" attitude. The result was that despite some honest objections, we lost no members over this decision.

Christians may receive God's dreams and visions by being sensitive and receptive to the Holy Spirit. The fulfillment of the dream may not come quickly. Frustration can be alleviated by applying Gamaliel's advice to the men of Israel concerning the preaching of the gospel by Peter and John: ". . . if this plan or undertaking is of men, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them" (Acts 5:38b,39a). If it is just my idea, I don't want a project to succeed. But if God has given the dream, then sooner or later He will bring it to pass.

Pointing Ahead

The mission of the church is always in process. The story at Hagerstown has been told to a point, but new chapters will continue to be written. A future study will need to be cognizant of emerging factors facing the church today, and examine their impact on the church of tomorrow.

⁵James D. Glasse, Putting It Together in the Parish (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972), pp. 35-37.

I often wonder what the church will be like in the year 2010. That particular year interests me, because that will be the year of my sixty-fifth birthday. Should I be in the retiring ministerial class at Annual Conference in 2010, what kind of church will I be relinquishing to the care of the incoming class of ordinands?

The future remains a mystery, until time unveils it. There are, however, three factors affecting the church of today, and they will, I believe, determine the future shape of the church in the next century. These factors can be viewed as ominous clouds on the horizon. How the church responds to the challenges of the future, may determine whether these clouds actually are harbingers of renewal.

The first factor confronting the church is inflation. Inflation blindly and silently robs everyone of purchasing power. The church cannot escape this reality. Inflation's affect on the church means that personal ministry is being priced out of the market. Already many small congregations, even when combined with other small congregations, cannot afford a fulltime pastor. This trend will probably continue. Larger congregations with multiple staffs will also find ministry too costly causing a reduction in the paid staffs.

Energy cost is the second factor challenging the future of the church. The price of heating buildings is already staggering. As the price of oil neared the dollar a gallon mark, our church trustees investigated, for the first time, how much oil was being used to heat our church building. Most of the congregation was shocked to learn that over 10,000 gallons of oil was used in a year to heat the building. At today's prices, which are constantly going higher, the first \$200 received every week in the offering goes to heating the building six

months a year. The cost of energy will continue to have a substantial impact on the church of tomorrow.

The third cloud on the horizon is the phenomenal growth of televised religion. Ben Armstrong estimates that 47 percent of the American population listens to religious broadcasting each week.⁶ The Gallup Opinion Index of 1977-78 on Religion in America reveals that 42 percent of the American population attended church during an average week.⁷

Armstrong writes as the Executive Director of the National Religious Broadcasters, but he surely exaggerates by referring to the explosion in religious programming as: ". . . a miraculous offspring of the New Testament church in our time."⁸ He says: "In the electric church, as in the New Testament times, worship once again takes place in the home."⁹

Harvey Cox shares in part Armstrong's enthusiasm for the electronic media, but he recognizes the problem: ". . . signals come down from the tower tops but there is no way to answer back from the bottom."¹⁰ Cox's hope is that somehow the media can be "freed" from its

⁶Ben Armstrong, The Electric Church (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1979), p. 7.

⁷Religion in America, The Gallup Opinion Index 1977-78, ed. Tom Reinken (Princeton, N.J.: American Institute of Public Opinion), pp. 22-5.

⁸Armstrong, op. cit., p. 19.

⁹Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁰Harvey Cox, The Seduction of the Spirit (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), p. 278.

present captivity.

More than a decade ago William Kuhns prophetically wrote about the future problem of televised religious programing. He said one danger was: ". . . that the church will attempt to be relevant and appealing by imitating the entertainment milieu, thereby eventually facing the threat of being drawn into it."¹¹

The worship of the local congregation can look like amateur hour in comparison with the slick broadcasts of religious programing. In this scenario the television set becomes the altar before which a person worships. One's conscience can be absolved by sending a donation to underwrite the gospel program.

No one knows how much good religious broadcasting accomplishes. There surely is a needed ministry to shut-ins, to those in hospitals, and to those who otherwise are unable to attend church. However, the danger in the religious media is that it continues the tendency of individualism that has always been present in Western Christianity. Private worship in the home does not strengthen the body, it only serves to isolate the different members of the body further from each other.

These three factors--inflation, energy, and televised religion--will continue to challenge and shape the local congregation of the future. How the congregational leaders respond to these challenges will determine whether the local congregations of the future will be vital centers of faith or they will become ineffectual organizations with limited impact on the religious lives of most people. To insure the former and not the latter, congregational leaders will need to see God's

¹¹William Kuhns, The Electronic Gospel (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), p. 162.

hand in these challenges.

The inflation that causes a reduction in the ranks of the full-time ministry, may actually be the impetus which furthers the ministry of all Christians. The future congregation that can no longer afford to pay a person to do its ministry, will force congregational members to assume that ministry or die.

Energy costs will mandate that more congregational meetings take place in the homes instead of church buildings. This probability also harbors great potential for the future church. Already, in many countries around the world, Christianity is nurtured in small groups. The small group meeting in homes can play a major role in the future life of American congregations as well. Energy conservation may be the guiding force in this development.

No one can predict today whether the televised media will be freed in the future from its present captivity and limitation, or what effect freedom would have. But God is surely using this media today to challenge local congregations to care more for people, and God is challenging pastors to be more relevant in preaching. Congregational leaders need to examine the possibility that people do receive more love and spiritual help from a box, rather than participating in the life of their congregation.

Imperatives for the Church of the Future

The congregation that lives to minister in the twenty-first century will be characterized by at least three ways.

First, that congregation will be as imaginative and intentional in its planning as the best examples from the business world. The Lord's

work is the most important business in the world, and there is no excuse for the Lord's stewards to be dull and sloppy in continuing His ministry to the world. The parable of the unjust steward may be the strangest parable of our Lord. A scoundrel is commended in this parable, because: ". . . the sons of this world are wiser in their own generation than the sons of light" (Luke 16:8b). Business plans more effectively and is more creative in its profit motives, than the church is in its heavenly pursuits. This dullness is inexcusable, for the church has the full potential and power of the Holy Spirit to guide and direct its ministry. The congregation that lives to serve the next generation will need to appropriate that potential and power in its planning.

The second characteristic for the congregation which lives to minister in the twenty-first century is that it will constantly train its members for ministry. I often feel jealous as I visit the Dana offices of the members of my congregation. On their walls hang the diplomas earned from the University of Dana. Dana periodically sends its employees to Toledo for short term classes and training. This concept of training keeps Dana's employees developing, and thereby a more efficient work force. Yet, the church often expects its lay ministers to fulfill their ministry without training.

The American birthrate has been dropping for almost two decades. This decline is now being felt by educational institutions at all levels. For the seminary caught in this dilemma, the way may be open for a new flower of relationship with the church. The future holds the possibility that seminaries will begin training and equipping the laity for their ministry. This possibility holds great potential for the church. For the church of the future must diligently equip its members

for ministry.

The third characteristic for the congregation ministering in the twenty-first century will be community flourishing through a network of small groups and the nurture of congregational worship. Problems of alienation cannot be solved by turning on the television set to a religious program. Willis Whitby is a pathetic character in the play, Sure As You're Born. At one point he sings mournfully: "Where can I go and be a person . . . just a person?"¹² Presumably, even in the twenty-first century, that will be a Christian congregation. The challenge for the church of today is to build community so rich and rewarding that it will attract people to the Christ who gives it life. No future force on earth or in hell will be able to kill that kind of congregation.

The Future of the Hagerstown Congregation

The First United Methodist Church of Hagerstown will be affected by the three factors of inflation, energy, and televised religious broadcasting. In addition, its future will be molded in part by specific problems of employment and energy. The 1970 population of Wayne County was 79,109.¹³ The 1980 census is just beginning. However, a marketing agency in 1979 estimated the county population at 76,300.¹⁴

¹²Gene Benton, Sure As You're Born (New York: Williamson Music, [196-?]), p. 53.

¹³U. S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1970. General Population Characteristics, Final Report P C (1)-B 16 Indiana, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington D.C. 1971.

¹⁴Sales and Marketing Management, 1979, Survey of Buying Power, 633 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

The early indications are that the population in this general area has not grown in the past decade, and may have actually declined.

Employment, in the area and Hagerstown in particular, is stagnant at best or declining at worst. Dana is rebuilding the local factory, but this fact probably does not indicate growth in employment. A new facility does mean that the jobs which are already in Hagerstown are more secure than before.

The high cost of energy also clouds Hagerstown's future as a bedroom community. As gasoline approaches two dollars a gallon, will families choose to live in Hagerstown and commute to neighboring cities for employment? This question remains to be answered, but the answer will affect the kind of community we have in the future.

The future belongs to those who face it with faith and courage, and to those who receive God's dreams and visions. God has provided richly for this area in the past, and there is no reason to think He will cease in the future. The United Methodist congregation in Hagerstown has a rich past and a strong present. The future is as bright as the promises of God. The Lord said to Jeremiah, and, I believe He is saying to His church: "Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things which you have not known" (Jer. 33:3).

The congregation has begun to dream God's dreams and see God's vision. Ministry is being effected, and renewal is taking place. However, we have only begun. I have a dream that each person in the congregation will continue to grow spiritually, and that the congregation will continue to develop community. I have a dream that God will enable this congregation to undertake even greater ministries in the future than they are at present. An outreach ministry to community

youth, and a community wholistic health care center are components of that dream. Even greater, however, is the dream that the congregation will creatively train and nurture Christians. Bethel Series is the beginning of this process. Finally, I dream for structure that facilitates community. This structure would be a place of worship, but it would also be one at home with the arts. Christians would be encouraged through the fine arts, drama, and music to express their faith, and feel and appreciate the world in which we live.

The Conclusion

The mission which has appeared and is evolving for our congregation may seem to have no strategy for evangelizing and recruiting new members. The church's mandate is to evangelize, and the church cannot be satisfied with maintaining the status quo. Church growth, however, is not the whole point either. Desire for church growth may evolve from pride filled goals or a need to save the institution, rather than any real zeal to serve Christ.

Matthew's account of our Lord's commission places the emphasis on making "disciples." Often the church has been content to have converts. The immediate need of the members of the Hagerstown congregation was for training and nurture to lead them in discipleship. The evangelism taking place presently is in depth, rather than outreach.

Hopefully, the congregation will be equipped to engage in a mission of reaching new people for Christ. Those received will then be nurtured and trained, so they, too, will become disciples of our Lord. Bishop Wayne Clymer adds his affirmation:

The mission of the church is not so much to gather the world into itself as it is to be in the world as the servant of Christ.

If the church would spend less time worrying about how it can get more people into the church, and more time thinking how it can redemptively move its members into the world, the impact of the church upon our society would be greatly enhanced.¹⁵

God purposes through the church ". . . to reconcile to Himself all things" (Col. 1:20). There is no greater endeavor in the world than to cooperate with God to bring all of life under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we live hopefully in the world as we fervently pray: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Epilog

This project must come to an end, but the process of ministry will continue. The church is called to reexamine continually the meaning of its existence and mission in the light of God's purpose for its time. That purpose will need to be actualized in new and different existential settings. Christians are in the process of actualizing God's purpose in and through their lives. They are responding to God. They are not complete, nor is God finished with them yet.

This fact makes it easier for me to admit in retrospect that there were omissions in my research, and some research was incomplete leading to pre-mature understandings. That only four paragraphs were taken originally (pages 6,7) to flesh out the term ecclesia dramatically emphasizes the point just made. I continue to grow in my understanding of what the church has been called by God to be as I

¹⁵Wayne K. Clymer, Affirmation (Nashville: Tidings, 1971), pp. 79,80.

discover added dimensions of the richness of this word.

The original classical sense of ecclesia meant an assembly called out by the magistrate, or by legitimate authority. The members of the ecclesia are those summoned and called together by a herald.

"The decisive point is not that someone or something assembles; it is who or what assembles."¹⁶

Even though ecclesia was a secular expression, it was adopted by the New Testament writers because it expresses the supreme claim of the Christian community as it interfaces with the world. God in Christ calls people out of the world's order of being to form His ecclesia. The ecclesia of God in Christ always stands in contrast to every other form of society. God gathers people into a new order of being—to be His people, to bear witness and foreshadow the kingdom that is yet to come. The church is not the kingdom. It announces the coming of the kingdom, but it is also called to embody in its life the kingdom yet to come.

We should not be disappointed that we do not see the perfect ecclesia of God as He intended. The church is God's choice, and He utilizes the church for ministry despite her shortcomings. The church exists today by God's will and purpose to bear witness to the presence of the kingdom which is to come.

The point was made previously that the church exists to worship and study and to witness and serve (pages 23-5). This statement is correct, but I now understand more completely the nature of

¹⁶K. L. Schmidt, "Ekklesia," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, III, 505.

the church's worship and witness.

The worship section examined only leitourgia or leitourgeo (page 23). Those words do not adequately present the biblical perspective of the church at worship and prayer. This section should have been expanded to have included a review of latreia and proskuneō.

Proskuneō means to "prostrate oneself." Most of the usage of this word in the Bible relates to the veneration and worship of the true God. Heinrich Greeven notes this word is common in the Gospels, Acts, and in Revelation, but that this word is almost totally absent in the Epistles. This fact demonstrates the specific nature of the term, i.e.:

Proskynesis demands visible majesty before which the worshipper bows. The Son of God was visible to all on earth (the Gospels) and the exalted Lord will again be visible to His own when faith gives way to sight (Revelation).¹⁷

The church is the community that spans the space in between the first and second coming of Christ. There is proskuneō in the Gospels, because Christ is literally present. There is proskuneō in Revelation when Christ comes again. In Acts there is proskuneō because the Christians are worshiping the risen presence of the Lord.

On the other hand, latreia means "to serve" and refers to the ministry offered to God. Thus, one's life is to be lived in such a way that it can be offered to God as worship. Herman Strathmann says:

The service which Christians are to offer consists in the fashioning of their inner lives and their outward physical conduct in a way which plainly distinguishes them from the world and which

¹⁷Heinrich Greeven, "Proskuneō," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, VI, 765.

corresponds to the will of God. This is the living sacrifice which they have to offer.¹⁸

Paul characterizes this when he says: "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Rom. 12:1).

The study of latreia leads naturally to and correlates with the biblical concept of the church's witness. This section emphasized the aspect of proclamation as witness, but only casually referred to the need to embody in our lives the truth which we are proclaiming (pages 24-5). Subsequent study has shown me the richness of this dynamic and its relevance for the church today.

Plato used the term martus in reference to Socrates' conduct in life and especially in his death.¹⁹ Socrates is a model of loyalty to conviction irrespective of the consequences. As such he not only is a moral hero, but an example that men are more effectively convinced by conduct than by word.

This particular dynamic of martus is found in its use in the Scriptures. Paul, when praying to God, refers to Stephen as "thy witness" (Acts 22:20), because he was steadfast in the face of death. This conduct was his witness, not just the words he spoke. The requirements for a widow listed by Paul includes that she witness by her lifestyle (I Tim. 5:9-10).

¹⁸Herman Strathmann, "Latreia," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, IV, 65.

¹⁹H. Strathmann, "Martus," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, IV, 480.

John records in his first epistle:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life--the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you. . . (I John 1:1,2a).

The word martureo is translated testify. If martureo only meant to proclaim, "testify and proclaim" would be redundant. Obviously to testify means more than speaking words. One may also testify by embodying the truth in one's life.

Finally, the tabernacle in the Old Testament was referred to as the "tent of witness" (Acts 7:44), because this place was where God manifested His presence. Paul, writing to the Christians at Corinth, exclaims: "For we are the temple of the living God. . ." (I Cor. 6:16). The Holy Spirit indwells Christians' lives. Those lives are holy to God, for in our lives we are to manifest the presence of God.

The ecclesia is called to be the new people of God who come into being through relationship with His Son. Jesus the Christ came to this world to bear witness for God even unto death, and He continues to draw around Him those whom He empowers as witnesses. Jesus promised: ". . . you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses. . ." (Acts 1:8). We have seen that this witness includes our conduct in life as well as our spoken words.

The words spoken by the church's apologists and witnesses were disputed by the pagans, but they could not deny the truth as exemplified in the lives of the Christians. They were forced to admit, "Behold, how they love one another." We should not be surprised today when our

words of witness have long been forgotten, our testimony in life is still having influence.

There are other areas related to the church and ministry which could be explored. In particular, paraclete is solely a Johannine perspective of the Holy Spirit (page 22), and further reflection upon the various aspects of the Holy Spirit in the Christian community could be gained from a thorough study of the pneuma agion.

What has been gained by me, now that this study has been completed? First, I have grown in my ability to function in ministry. I don't work longer or harder now, but I work more effectively as a result of my greater understanding of the church and how ministry is to function. Second, I rest more securely in the fact that the church is God's redemptive society and it belongs to Him. I thank God that He has given to me the privilege of being a pastor in His church, but ultimately the battle is His--not mine. Third, I find myself more patient with the church's imperfections and shortcomings. God has not given us the task of separating the wheat from the tares. He will do that Himself, in due time. Finally, in a struggle that will no doubt continue, I am learning not to be as concerned about where I shall serve, and to be more content to serve God just because He is God.

Finally, I will attempt to show some specific ways in which this project has been valuable for our congregation, and to depict some implications for the church in the future. First, we have learned that the church belongs to God, and the main business of the church is to help people to develop spiritually. God does not call out the ecclesia to serve itself, or to use all of its energies and resources to maintain its own organizational structures. We demonstrated that a

structure can be implemented that will serve the church's organizational needs, yet allow time to meet the spiritual needs of the people. I wish I could report that as a result of this project the congregation's attendance at Worship and Sunday School had grown significantly. I cannot, but as a result of developing supportive fellowship groups, and enrolling the people in Bethel Series--we are relating more people to each other and to God, and nurturing their spiritual lives more than ever before. That fact demonstrates growth for the congregation.

Second, Christ is the Head of the church. This truth means that Christians are to be obedient and subservient to Christ. The church does not exist to do as it desires, but to ask, "What would Jesus do?" The church is the Body of Christ designed to carry on His work in the world today. The decision to sponsor a refugee family was made simply because it was felt that we knew what Jesus would do and what He would have us to do. Jesus said that when we feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, and shelter the homeless we are serving Him (Matt. 25:40). That action represents in part our witness (martureō), and our life of service offered to God as worship (latreia).

A final implication to be drawn from this study is that the church must never see itself isolated from other members of Christ's body. Often, congregations in their pride, foster feelings of superiority and separate themselves from other Christians. The church's efforts to break down barriers and to work together may seem feeble, but there are rewards for those willing to make the effort. The housing project for senior citizens was one of our efforts to demonstrate to our community that Christians have more that unites them than keeps them apart.

The course one congregation has taken in ministry has been described. We have been on a pilgrimage. Something has happened to me and to the church. My approach to ministry has been altered, and the congregation has been more adequately prepared to fulfill its God-given purpose. The last has not been said about the United Methodists of Hagerstown. Now we can be more responsible in the task of effecting ministry. The future is open and stands before us.

Appendix A

RESULTS OF SEPTEMBER 16, 1977 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

1. What are the strengths of the First United Methodist Church in Hagerstown, Indiana? (numbers at the beginning of the answer indicate how many answered in the same way)

Worship -

- (25) Good pastors
- (19) Loyal members and witnesses
- (18) Friendliness of members
- (15) Fellowship with Christians
- (14) Strong spiritual leadership among lay people
- (11) A growing spiritual depth
- (10) Active prayer and Bible study groups
- (10) Sunday morning worship well attended by all ages
- (10) Good organists and choir
- (10) Good facility to worship in
- (9) Loving concern for fellow members
- (5) We hear Bible preaching
- (5) The church bell is used
- (5) Varied vocations are represented in our active congregation
- (4) God and us are a majority
- (2) Active acolytes and banner program
- (1) The church is only as strong as its weakest member
- (1) Special talents are used

Youth Ministry -

- (22) Good youth director and program
- (4) Special projects well supported
- (2) Bus ministry

Sunday School -

- (6) Dedicated teachers
- (2) Round table and Talkback classes

Miscellaneous -

- (12) Financially sound
- (9) Cooperations and mission work
- (7) Community awareness
- (6) Strong UMW, Men's study and Bible groups
- (6) Tape ministry
- (4) Excellent clerical and communication work
- (3) Good cooks and pitch-in dinners
- (3) Good custodian service
- (1) Good membership interest in the mechanics of operating the church

- (1) Wholesome sense of humor

2. What are the weaknesses of the First United Methodist Church in Hagerstown, Indiana?

Worship -

- (6) Lack of Sunday evening service
- (4) No altar calls on Sunday mornings
- (4) Need more support in Bible study and prayer groups
- (3) Problem of youth noise in balcony during service on Sunday morning
- (2) Lack of register and offering plates in choir and nursery
- (2) Lack of Amen corner
- (1) Choir director should lead congregation in hymns
- (1) Many come but do not worship God
- (1) Pastor should alternate entries for meeting people after service
- (1) Need for strangers to be seated by ushers
- (1) No "Junior Church" program
- (1) Lack of opportunity to witness in worship service
- (1) Lack of information of who is ill or in need of prayer
- (1) Lack of seating space in sanctuary
- (1) Congestion in aisles after service
- (1) We can still work on friendliness
- (1) Communion is not often enough
- (1) Not enough invitations for visitors to return

Sunday School -

- (19) Shortage of teachers (especially men) and attendance
- (2) Not enough time for Sunday School
- (2) Need for more class parties in own age group
- (1) Need for teacher training program
- (1) Need for recognition of S.S. teacher and promotion in S.S.
- (1) Lack of clear goals and objectives
- (1) Lack of participation of congregation in S.S. service

Membership -

- (9) Need more people to give time as well as money (choir, tapes, S.S.)
- (7) Lack of attendance of large percentage of resident members
- (6) Lack of communication between attending and non-attending members
- (6) Members of committees are appointed without proper explanation of duties so do not serve efficiently
- (3) Lack of friendly visitation to sick and shut-ins by fellow members
- (3) Too many steps to get a job done
- (2) Our witness is weak to those who do not go to any church
- (2) Lack of transportation arrangements for elderly and non-drivers
- (2) Self-satisfaction
- (2) Not using talents of members
- (2) New members should be introduced to congregation and later called on

- (2) Not enough mixing procedures
- (2) Members do not invite pastor to eat in own homes
- (2) Some members are stingy givers
- (1) Membership should be updated
- (1) Lack of growth in membership
- (1) Poor cooperation
- (1) Not enough attendance at "pitch-ins"

Youth -

- (7) Not reaching out to the community's youth
- (3) Behavior in balcony on Sunday mornings
- (2) Lack of participation in youth groups

Choir -

- (4) Shortage of choir members
- (1) Need an organ key in the church for approved people

Material Needs -

- (7) Off street parking
- (4) Bibles in pews
- (4) A new organ
- (4) Speaker in nursery with on-off switch
- (1) A new Christian flag

3. In the past year when has the church ministered to a need in your life or that of someone close to you?

Visitations and Prayer Concerns -

- (9) Prayer support from individuals on personal matters
- (6) Visited me in the hospital
- (4) Home visits of Pastor and Associate Pastor
- (4) Availability of calling pastor if needed
- (1) When dinner was served for John & Ruby Hunt's family
- (1) Visits and prayer for my father-in-law and family of my niece
- (1) Privilege of taking tapes into homes
- (1) Support of members to each other in times of need as food in sickness and transportation
- (1) Prayer partners
- (1) Baby sitting in our home so we could visit our son in the hospital

Youth -

- (8) Youth groups, camps, and trips
- (1) Financial help for trip to Henderson Settlement
- (1) Help when I was "mixed-up"
- (1) Sharing and identifying more with my UMYF leaders

Worship -

- (16) Sunday morning worship ministers to personal needs
- (7) Missionary Conference
- (6) Bible study groups
- (5) Sunday School classes

- (4) Lay Witness Mission
- (2) Providing a nursery during Worship Service
- (2) Circle meetings
- (1) Due to the church God is more a part of my life
- (1) Baptismal at Scout Lake
- (1) Frank Roughton

Fellowship -

- (2) Pitch-in suppers
- (2) The church fills my need for social communication and friendship with fellowship

Miscellaneous -

- (3) Bus
- (2) Opportunities to serve on committees and official capacities
- (1) When moving into the parsonage
- (1) Having a Lay Witness team in our home
- (1) Letting me have a vacation

4. When could the church have met a need in your life or someone close to you but failed to do so?

- (2) Do not know of a time when the church has failed me
- (2) At a time when I had a need and there was no church activity
- (2) When there is a lack of pastoral visitation to sick and inactive members
- (1) When I needed an altar call but had none
- (1) When we have a need for a revival and have none
- (1) When potential talent is not given an opportunity to serve
- (1) When visitors are not invited back
- (1) When meetings are held right after church I feel deprived of S.S. or if I go to S.S. I feel guilty about missing the meeting
- (1) When I needed to feel needed and loved but was not
- (1) When my need is not recognized and acknowledged
- (1) When new people are not given an open line to people who can be called on for prayer
- (1) When I needed pastoral counselling and did not get it
- (1) When members fail to remind each other of activities and encourage their attendance
- (1) When there isn't contact with the sick by fellow members
- (1) When my son needed to be contacted and visited
- (1) When college students are not contacted by the church while they are away

5. What do you believe are the most important things the church should be doing this coming year?

Growing, Receiving New Members, and Reactivating Inactive Members -

- (5) Make personal visits to newcomers
- (4) Recruit and receive new members
- (4) Double our attendance

- (4) Develop a definite program of evangelism outreach
- (3) Encourage better attendance to church and Sunday School
- (3) Bring our membership up to date either by attendance or transfer
- (3) Work to get inactive members into church and Sunday School
- (3) Learn to become more effective Christian witnesses
- (2) Reach new people and non-attenders
- (2) Grow in numbers
- (2) Seeking new members in our community on a personal basis
- (2) Better attendance by membership
- (2) Invite more people to church
- (2) Give more thought to evangelism
- (2) Make plans for 400 church attendance
- (2) Each member witnessing and bringing another person to our church
- (2) Get a plaque to register Sunday School and Worship attendance
- (2) Visit inactive members
- (2) We need to see new converts come to Christ
- (2) Spread God's Word and reach the people in the community that have never been reached
- (2) Witness where we are/take Christ with us every day
- (2) Increase our attendance
- (2) Reach out to the community
- (1) Get more people interested in the Bible and following Christ
- (1) Build a membership of faithful attenders and givers

The Community -

- (2) Have more outreach into the community
- (2) Take a stand against the things that are harmful to our faith and beliefs
- (2) Develop a ministry to our leisure society
- (2) Be genuinely concerned with the problems of others
- (2) Fight the liquor sales
- (1) Develop an outreach program to our community
- (1) Care more for others
- (1) Find a way to reach those in need
- (1) Take up offerings for sick people

Church Finances -

- (3) Have better budget planning
- (1) Watch how the money is spent
- (1) Spend our money

Church Trustees -

- (3) Buy the kindergarten property
- (1) Keep the church open
- (1) Begin planning for a larger sanctuary and Sunday School area
- (1) Repair the church structure
- (1) Buy new property for the future
- (1) Stop the water running in the bathroom
- (1) Get more space

Youth Ministry -

- (3) Develop a ministry to college students
- (2) Develop a youth coffee house ministry

- (2) Start a youth choir to sing the type of music youth enjoy singing
- (1) Encourage our youth to prepare for the ministry
- (1) Support the Youth Ministry
- (1) Pay attention to the youth
- (1) Get the youth of the community in the church program

Membership Care -

- (5) Help people to become more involved in the church
- (4) Improve our ministry to nursing homes and shut-ins
- (3) Improve participation in all church activities
- (1) Love others more
- (1) Be more of a church family
- (1) Have more members participating in attendance, prayer, and tithes
- (1) Care more about our members and their problems
- (1) Let each other know who you are
- (1) Make the pastor feel at home
- (1) Get better acquainted with each other and work together for new members
- (1) Be good workers for the good of the church and everybody cooperate with the pastor

Outreach in Missions -

- (5) Increase our vision and giving to missions
- (2) Support our missionaries and really get involved in the Spring Missionary Conference
- (2) Increase our mission effort at home and abroad

Worship -

- (4) Buy a new organ
- (3) Preach the Gospel
- (2) Provide two worship services
- (2) Preach the Word of God
- (2) Personalize our worship as much as possible with special prayer for members, altar calls, etc.
- (2) Have the ushers seat people as they come in
- (2) Have special groups in more often on Sunday evenings
- (1) Have a special time for youth in the morning service
- (1) Put Bibles in the church pews to encourage Bible reading
- (1) Have more singing groups
- (1) Build up the Worship through music, drama, art--involving all ages--not just a single group

Sunday School -

- (5) Make Sunday School longer
- (4) Strengthen the entire educational program
- (3) More teachers and more participation in Sunday School by everyone
- (2) Recruit more teachers
- (2) Change Sunday School back to 9:30 a.m.
- (2) Work on the Sunday School
- (2) For better communication between age groups, anyone should be able to attend any class in Sunday School

- (2) Build a stronger Sunday School program
- (2) Hire a Christian Education Director
- (1) Get more youth and adults in Sunday School

Spiritual Life -

- (4) Develop the spiritual life of the church
- (4) Continue to encourage the spiritual growth in the church
- (3) We need a deeper commitment to Christ
- (3) Offer and encourage more Bible study
- (3) Utilize our prayer power--and make known our willingness to pray anytime--day or night--whenever the need arises
- (3) Have a Lay Witness Mission
- (2) Minister to the spiritual needs of others
- (2) Study the Scriptures in more depth
- (2) Increase interest and spiritual growth
- (2) Have a 24 hour prayer vigil
- (2) Utilize small groups for in-depth Bible study
- (2) Grow spiritually in the knowledge of God by reading the Bible
- (2) More Bible studies on different nights
- (2) Recognize God's Spirit in everyone
- (1) Have a 24 hour prayer vigil for inactive members who do not attend--pray for better attendance and a deeper personal commitment for all members
- (1) Let God direct our actions and stop doing our own thing

Miscellaneous -

- Write a clear statement of purpose for our church, and develop both short range and long range goals for our church
- Have a major church project that would involve a majority of the members
- Buy the kindergarten property for a strong outreach program to the community children--hire a religious director--make a special effort to reach the lower income families
- If we don't buy the property--we should become more community concerned--for example a school vacation program where children "grow" in all areas instead of the mind and some stagnating
- Be very positive in all of the church attitudes on all activities
- Have better attendance at Circle meetings
- Get to the major priorities of the meaning of Scripture--what is the essence of the Gospel message? What are the implications of the Gospel message for the "least of us?" These questions must be truly answered before any of us can minister to another.

6. If our church is really Christian what will we be doing in the next ten (10) years?

Growing, Receiving New Members, and Reactivating Inactive Members -

- (2) Growing in membership and having good leaders
- (2) Grow
- (1) Doubling attendance
- (1) Visitation program
- (1) Arranging for larger congregation

- (1) New ground
- (1) Increase membership
- (1) More members in the church
- (1) More Christian members
- (1) Plan for future generations
- (1) Get all members on rolls to be present
- (1) Keep our members active
- (1) Go to two services of Worship
- (1) Keep a larger attendance
- (1) Look for new members
- (1) Increase our members to further the cause of Christ
- (1) Get attendance
- (1) Grow in faith, size, and activities
- (1) Our strengths should be growing great guns
- (1) Growing with aches and pains, accepting the teachings of Jesus, examining church practices and discarding those which are not in fact Christian
- (1) Expand
- (1) Growth of the Sunday School and church and we will need a new church building
- (1) Minister to everyone who is within the outreach of our church
- (1) Outreach programs in the community
- (1) Try to reach more people telling them about God
- (1) Need to see more new converts

New Facilities -

- (4) Build a new church
- (1) Build a new and larger church with a seating capacity for 400 and a Sunday School of 300
- (1) New facilities
- (1) Buy a lot for church picnics and activities in the summer. There are times you need ministered unto by trees and flowers rather than concrete and plaster.
- (1) Increase size by building new building and parking lot
- (1) Build a new church for all our new members
- (1) Build a new church if it helps to accomplish our goals
- (1) Space
- (1) The possibility of more than one United Methodist Church in Hagerstown
- (1) A device that will enable us to get in the church
- (1) Work on P.A. system

Library -

- (1) Church library

Parsonage -

- (1) Annual check and improvements made on the parsonage and place in the budget if not there already

Conference -

- (1) Participate enthusiastically in majority of conference programs

Organ -

- (3) New organ

Spiritual Life -

- (2) Save souls
- (1) New small groups
- (1) Growing with Christ in mind and in us
- (1) Aim for a closer humanity through Christ
- (1) Being aware of changing needs and meeting them as part of the church's responsibility
- (1) Prayer
- (1) Keep up the good work
- (1) Continue to interest more people in the teachings of Christ, then other things would follow
- (1) Acting like Christians and after that much time we should have grown so much more in Bible study and fellowship with Christ
- (1) Correct our weaknesses

Missions -

- (1) Expend missions
- (1) Continue to enlarge our missionary effort at home and abroad
- (1) Increase involvement in missions, both local and foreign
- (1) Increase vision and giving to missions

Christian School -

- (3) Opening a Christian school

Youth -

- (1) Enlarge our youth activities
- (1) Work with youth
- (1) Provide at least one ministerial student from our church
- (1) Seeing some of our youth prepare for the ministry

Sunday School (Education) -

- (1) Better the Sunday School
- (1) Strengthen our Church School
- (1) Build a stronger Sunday School program
- (1) Could use a Christian Education Director to develop and coordinate the educational program of the church
- (1) Getting more men teachers

Social Concerns -

- (1) Fight liquor sales every year
- (1) Each one more concerned for others

Appendix B

CHURCH SURVEY RESULTS

Total Surveys Returned: 168

AGE: Under 12 2%, 12-18 10%, 19-25 6%, 26-35 21%, 36-55 22%,
Over 55 38%, Blank 1%.

CHURCH: Member 83%, Visitor 10%, Blank 7%.

NUMBER OF YEARS ATTENDING THIS CHURCH: 1 or less 5%, 1-3 12%, 3 or
more 79%, Blank 4%.

SINGLE: 25%, MARRIED: 69%, BLANK: 6%.

	yes	not really	blank
1. I know without a doubt that Christ is in my life.	<u>86%</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>4%</u>
2. I live a life which is generally free from defeat and discouragement.	<u>67%</u>	<u>26%</u>	<u>7%</u>
3. My church is for the most part utilizing my particular abilities.	<u>53%</u>	<u>31%</u>	<u>16%</u>
4. Prayer is a regular part of my daily life and schedule.	<u>66%</u>	<u>27%</u>	<u>7%</u>
5. I know how to explain to a non-Christian how he can know Christ personally.	<u>48%</u>	<u>42%</u>	<u>10%</u>
6. I am participating in a definite plan to reach our community with the gospel of Christ.	<u>22%</u>	<u>57%</u>	<u>21%</u>
7. I take time to read the Bible, by myself, on a daily schedule.	<u>35%</u>	<u>55%</u>	<u>10%</u>
8. I have personally trusted Christ to be my Savior and Lord.	<u>87%</u>	<u>8%</u>	<u>5%</u>
9. I know how to deal with temptation and sin as it occurs in my life.	<u>68%</u>	<u>22%</u>	<u>10%</u>
10. Our church is friendly and I enjoy the fellowship.	<u>90%</u>	<u>5%</u>	<u>5%</u>

	yes	not really	blank
11. I am confident in my ability to study the Bible and gain meaningful insight from it for my personal life.	<u>51%</u>	<u>38%</u>	<u>11%</u>
12. If I should die now, I am certain that I will have eternal life in heaven.	<u>60%</u>	<u>28%</u>	<u>12%</u>
13. I pray daily with my family when I am home	<u>32%</u>	<u>55%</u>	<u>13%</u>
14. I can explain to another Christian how to live a Christian life in the power of the Holy Spirit.	<u>36%</u>	<u>50%</u>	<u>14%</u>
15. Compared to a year ago, I can see real growth in my Christian life.	<u>64%</u>	<u>22%</u>	<u>14%</u>
16. I communicate openly with all members of my family.	<u>68%</u>	<u>26%</u>	<u>6%</u>
17. I know how to pray.	<u>76%</u>	<u>18%</u>	<u>6%</u>
18. I encourage my friends and acquaintances to attend our church.	<u>48%</u>	<u>41%</u>	<u>11%</u>
19. I have shared my faith in Christ with a non-Christian in the last week.	<u>22%</u>	<u>62%</u>	<u>16%</u>
20. My daily life is consistently controlled by Christ.	<u>53%</u>	<u>36%</u>	<u>11%</u>
21. I can truthfully say that I love others.	<u>87%</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>3%</u>
22. I get along quite well with everyone in this church.	<u>87%</u>	<u>9%</u>	<u>4%</u>
23. I like myself.	<u>70%</u>	<u>19%</u>	<u>11%</u>
24. I have introduced at least one person to Christ this year.	<u>20%</u>	<u>60%</u>	<u>20%</u>
25. Our church outreach program offers a variety of opportunities for involvement.	<u>75%</u>	<u>11%</u>	<u>14%</u>
26. I know that my life is yielded to and directed by the Holy Spirit.	<u>64%</u>	<u>24%</u>	<u>12%</u>
27. I feel my life has purpose and meaning.	<u>80%</u>	<u>11%</u>	<u>9%</u>
28. I am committed to help reach the world for Christ in my lifetime.	<u>60%</u>	<u>25%</u>	<u>15%</u>

29. I attend worship regularly.

yes	not really	blank
<u>79%</u>	<u>12%</u>	<u>9%</u>

Appendix C

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY SURVEY: CATEGORY #1

Demographic and Population Data

1.	How many people are there in your city?	(approx) <u>2250</u>
2.	How many people are there in the section of Baraboo which your church has designated its community? (To get this information, identify the boundaries around the area and then determine which census tracts fall within those boundaries; the simple addition of the population of each of those census tracks will give the total number of persons within the downtown parish area.)	<u>2250</u>
3.	How many people in your community are white?	<u>100%</u>
	How many are non-white?	<u>--</u>
	Of the whites, how many are native born?	<u>100%</u>
	how many foreign born?	<u>--</u>
	Of the non-whites, how many are Indians?	<u>--</u>
	how many are blacks?	<u>--</u>
	how many belong to other races?	<u>--</u>
4.	Of all persons 14 years old and over in your community, how many are male?	<u>640</u>
	Female?	<u>914</u>
	Single?	<u>350</u>
	Married?	<u>1170</u>
	Widowed or Divorced?	<u>225</u>
5.	What is the population per household in your community? (approx)	<u>3</u>
6.	How many foreign-born persons are there in your community 21 years of age and older?	<u>None</u>
7.	How many of these are naturalized?	<u>--</u>

8. What is the population density of your community, or of its various parts? (Population density is the number of people per square mile. The Census gives this figure for counties, but you can compute for your city by dividing its total population by the number of square miles it covers.) 2250
9. What was your community's period of most rapid growth of population? 1930-1940
 To what cause was it due? Growth of industry (Perfect Circle)
10. How does your community's population compare with: 1940 1620
 1950 1695
 1960 1730
 1970 2059
11. Is your community undergoing marked suburban growth? No
12. How has the sex ratio and the age distribution of your community changed since 1940? Birth rate higher, large classes started in mid-sixties. Trend in seventies---more older than young, more female than male and school classes getting smaller.
 1950?
 1960?
13. Is your community growing as rapidly as the surrounding territory? Yes
 The county? "
 The state or section thereof? "
 Other communities of comparable size? "
14. How many dwelling units are there in your city? (approx) 825
 How many in the parish area of the church? "
 How many of these are owner occupied? 550
 Renter occupied? 270
 Vacant? 5
15. Of the owner occupied dwelling units, how many are occupied by whites? 100%
 by blacks? --

- by Indians? ---
- by other races? ---
16. Of renter occupied dwellings, how many are occupied by whites? 100%
- by Indians? ---
- by blacks? ---
- by other races? ---
17. How many dwelling units are there for rent or for sale that are now vacant? 10
18. Is it easy or difficult to find a suitable dwelling in your city to purchase or to rent in the
- low-priced range? Difficult
- medium-priced range? "
- upper-priced range? "
19. Are there signs of insufficient housing, such as doubling up, over-crowding, etc.?
No
20. How many building permits for new housing units were issued during the past year?
8
- For what types of housing were these permits issued? Single family
- Are they the types of housing for which there is the greatest need? Yes
21. Which types of control are exercised over new housing constructions: Zoning, building code, multiple dwelling law, sanitary code, subdivision control, architectural review?
22. Do any of these controls operate needlessly to hamper new housing construction?
No
- In what way?
23. If your community has a building code, when was it written? 1975
- By whom is it enforced Town Board (City Government)
- Has it been updated in order to keep pace with present

- economical and sound construction practices? Yes
24. Does your state provide a uniform building code for municipalities? Yes
- Is it kept up to date? Yes
- Has your city adopted this code? Follows guidelines of state code and also uses city code.
25. How many violations were reported during the past year, and what was done about them? None
26. Are there special groups with serious housing needs in your community?
- low-income families? No
- certain minority groups? No
- aged couples? No
- veterans? No
- others? No
27. What are the local estimates (by the housing department or authority or local real estate boards) of the number and types of new housing units needed annually during the next few years?
No estimates--very few building lots remain within city limits. There will be a need to expand into 2 mile radius around city limits which is also under control of City Building Code.
28. How many dwelling units are delapidated (had serious deficiencies, run-down or neglected, did not provide adequate shelter or protection against the elements, a danger to the safety of occupants)? None
- Where are these dwellings located? (census tracts)
29. How many dwelling units do not use gas or electricity as a cooking fuel? None
30. How many dwelling units have no hot and cold running water? None
- private flush toilet? None
- private bathtub or shower? None
- electric lighting? None

- central heating? Small insignificant %
- kitchen sink? None
- mechanical or ice refrigeration? None
31. How many occupied dwelling units have the following number of persons: 0.75 or less
- 0.7621000 721
- 1.0121 15
- 1.51 or more 4
32. How many dwelling units were built in the following years:
- 1955 or later?
- 1945 to 1955
- Information not available. 1930 to 1939
- 1920 to 1929 or earlier
33. Are there areas of your community where there is a large concentration of undesirable housing as indicated by the answers to the preceding questions? No
34. Are there other unhealthy or unwholesome features of these neighborhoods: Industrial smoke, gases, noises, odors, street noises, traffic dangers to pedestrians, unprotected railroad crossings, unsafe or abandoned buildings, or dumps which present a hazard to children, houses of prostitution, taverns in excessive numbers? No
35. Has your city a duly authorized housing authority, or redevelopment agency, or department of the city government prepared to handle redevelopment work? Yes
36. Are there any plans for slum clearance in your community at present? No
37. Are slum clearance efforts now underway? No slums
- In what stage is each project: Area selected?
- plans drawn?
- housing provided for displaced families?
- plans approved by governing body?
- public hearing held?
- land acquired?
- buildings raised, streets changed, or other physical work done?
- land sold or leased, or transferred for new ones?

Not applicable to community

38. Do redevelopment plans call for decreasing the density in tracts which will be put to residential use in the new land-use plan? Not applicable
39. What income will the renewal area serve?
 What rents will be charged?
 What community services will be needed and how will they be provided?
40. Is there a need for a public low-rent housing program in your community? No
41. Are any low-rent housing programs now underway?
 No, questions 41-50 not applicable to our community.
 Are they receiving financial or other help from your state housing authority?
 Are they participating in the federal low-rent housing program?
42. Are the new low-rent housing developments constructed in a way that would segregate their tenants from other citizens in the vicinity?
43. What provisions are being made for people who are displaced by low-rent housing development but whose incomes are too high to qualify them for admission to this or other low-rent projects?
44. What rents are charged in the low-rent projects?
45. Has any study been made of what happens to people who are discharged from low-rent projects because their income has grown to exceed the permissible maximum?
 What happens to this critical group?
46. Are low-rent housing projects increasing population density at the city center, or decreasing it?
47. Are any racial or religious groups barred from or discriminated against in connection with private housing developments, or low-rent housing developments?
48. Is there a state or municipal law, ordinance, or resolution specifically forbidding racial discrimination in specific types of housing projects?
49. Where interracial housing is provided, is effort made to avoid creation of racial "islands" in the locations of tenants?
50. What has been the experience of your city with respect to

segregated or integrated housing?

51. Does your planning board or housing authority favor neighborhoods comprised of different income groups, types of houses, and so on, or does it favor fairly complete homogeneity in such matters?
Must meet specific square footage requirements.
52. Which citizens' organizations have a special interest in housing?
City government.
53. Of these organizations, which ones give indication of working for the good of the whole community, and which take a narrow or selfish point of view?
City government.
54. Are citizen groups asked to participate in planning for housing by the housing authority or slum clearance authority?
No
55. Using the most recent U.S. Census information on population, complete the Community Age-Sex Pyramid on the following page. NOTE: the pyramid is a normative graph and is used to identify pictorially the numbers and percentages of persons in the community in each age bracket.

Age Range	MALE		FEMALE	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
65 & over	<u>105</u>	<u>4.6</u>	<u>188</u>	<u>8.3</u>
55-64	<u>131</u>	<u>5.8</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>7.1</u>
45-54	<u>107</u>	<u>4.7</u>	<u>142</u>	<u>6.2</u>
35-44	<u>100</u>	<u>4.4</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>4.3</u>
25-34	<u>147</u>	<u>6.5</u>	<u>161</u>	<u>7.1</u>
20-24	<u>85</u>	<u>3.7</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>4.0</u>
15-19	<u>74</u>	<u>3.3</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>3.7</u>
10-14	<u>81</u>	<u>3.6</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>4.5</u>
5-9	<u>118</u>	<u>5.2</u>	<u>113</u>	<u>5.0</u>
Under 5	<u>94</u>	<u>4.1</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>3.9</u>
Totals	<u>1042</u>	<u>45.9</u>	<u>1227</u>	<u>54.1</u>

Grand Total: Number 2269 Percent 100.0

Appendix D

TOWN MEETING: INDIANA

Hagerstown Town Meeting
 May 11, 1978
 First United Methodist Church
 Hagerstown, Indiana

Presented by: Town Meeting: Indiana in cooperation with The Institute of Cultural Affairs, 3038 Fall Creek Parkway, North Drive, Indianapolis, Indiana 46205.

The accomplishments of our community are:

1. Proud of the people--concerned
2. Newcomers welcome
3. School & church are important
4. Library
5. Newspaper
6. Little League
7. Clean community
8. Neighbors care
9. Proud of school system
10. Spirit of involvement
11. Lovely park
12. Dana Corporation
13. Utilities well planned and still in good shape
14. Municipal government
15. Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts
16. Maintenance & quality of housing
17. Appearance of town
18. Smorgasbord
19. Service clubs
20. Post Office & service
21. Lions
22. Street service & snow removal
23. Fire Department
24. Good relationship with other towns
25. Police Department
26. Summer theater--Nettle Creek Players
27. Ambulance service
28. High level of personal services
29. Eleven year term of mayor
30. Churches get along well together
31. Ministers get along well together
32. Countryside--well kept

33. Two doctors

The concerns of our community are:

Economic -

1. Scarcity of utilities in future
2. How to finance services
3. Retirees with limited income
4. What would happen if Dana would leave?
5. Sewers--new finances to expand
6. Need housing for new people employed in community
7. Need jobs--increasing number of potential laborers
8. Housing for elderly

Political -

1. Getting more voter participation
2. How to get people out to meetings
3. Much destructive gossip discourages civic participation
4. Need people to run for office
5. How to maintain local effort in working toward new projects
6. Dealing with drug abuse--recognize problem
7. Need to upgrade schools

Cultural -

1. Need to work on projected image of "snootiness"
2. How to maintain level of culture--clubs, etc.
3. Lack of support for some clubs, events, etc.
4. How to coordinate calendars, activities, etc.
5. Need to encourage volunteer leadership
6. Negative story (Dana will leave)
7. Nutrition needs for elderly

The practical visions, hopes, and dreams of our community are:

1. Keep industry here
2. Extend water & sewer west of town
3. Another doctor
4. New industry
5. Youth programs
6. Community youth programs
7. Industrial park moving
8. Dana expansion
9. More construction of housing--multi-units
10. Extend water & sewer east of town
11. Community education program
12. Coordinating
13. Healing of differences between labor & management
14. Nursing home care
15. Maintain present situation
16. Apartments for elderly with dining area
17. Minimum of government interference
18. Skating for kids with supervision

Challenge Statements:

Title: Special Group Needs -

In the arena of Senior Citizens, the fact that their needs are now being met with limited services indicates the underlying difficulty is a lack of a local coordinated effort. This is illustrated by the actual state of the elderly people around us and by the elderly people who have to move from our community.

Title: "Money and resources are available for what we want."

In the arena of Fiscal Management, the fact that money and resources are not readily available for long range capital needs, indicates the underlying difficulty is money and resources are available for what we want. Community consensus on needs and long range planning not a priority. This is illustrated by gasoline prices have more than doubled but consumption increases. Imagination and innovation can reverse this--example--Bike-a-thon held last weekend.

Title: Projected Image

In the arena of attitudes, the fact of complacent attitudes, indicates the underlying difficulty is past stability and security. This is illustrated by increasing higher average age of residents.

Title: Involvement

In the arena of Community Involvement, the fact that complacency --perfectly happy as is, indicates the underlying difficulty is too few people run everything, traditional means of decision making doesn't encourage participation. This is illustrated by 3-way liquor decision and Industrial Park decision.

Proposals:

Title: Fiscal Management

We the citizens of Hagerstown, in order to channel resources for long term capital needs, propose a master plan through community participation to evaluate our resources and to propose long term use of our resources with emphasis on conservation and increased enjoyment of our environment.

Title: Involvement

We the citizens of Hagerstown, in order to involve more citizens, propose to encourage people to share ideas through asking Town and School Boards to appoint task forces for controversial and for planning issues and to have binding referendums.

Title: Attitudes

We the citizens of Hagerstown, in order to project as town image the moves beyond stability and security toward future needs, propose a task force of community representatives to work to keep Dana in Hagerstown through personal contact and information meetings by a "Dana Appreciation Day" for example.

Title: Senior Citizens

We the citizens of Hagerstown, in order to create a local coordinated effort to care for the elderly, propose the formation of a private citizens group through--

Formation of a citizens group, study needs, seek funds, formulate plans, and implementation.

Appendix E

A PROPOSAL FOR CHURCH RESTRUCTURE

1. Read and reflect upon Acts 2:43-3:10 before going any further.

2. The foundation of my thinking is that we are unified in a common desire to see spiritual growth in the life of the people of our congregation.

3. However, we are experiencing a great amount of frustration in the area of how do we get to there from here. Further analysis seems to indicate the root of this frustration is centered between the struggle going on between meeting the institutional needs of the church versus meeting the real spiritual needs of people. In simple language, we feel frustration because our purpose is the spiritual needs of people, but in reality most of our time is spent dealing with the institutional concerns of the church.

4. Let's look at our record. Last Fall we worked hard to organize our work areas. We said these groups being formed would have three purposes:

- a. They had a task to perform; evangelism, worship, missions, stewardship, education, and social concerns.
- b. The groups were to study the Bible together, so we would be performing our task out of our understanding and response to the scriptures.
- c. The third purpose was our desire that a deep fellowship would grow out of working and studying together.

What has happened? Well, the record is spotty. There have been encouraging signs and good experiences. There have also been areas where nothing like our original purpose has resulted. However, I'm beginning to think when we put all of those three purposes together (task, study, and fellowship) it's overloading the circuit. Furthermore, whenever the task (institutional concern) is in competition with the Bible study (spiritual needs of people) for time--the institutional task-related needs will come out ahead. This is the reason Bible study is often looked at as only the preliminaries before we get down to the "real work."

5. My hunch about the church of today is that because of the way we are designed, we do a better job of helping people become good church members instead of helping them to grow spiritually. For instance, look at the new person who receives Christ and joins our church. We want them to attend regularly, give regularly, and get "involved" in the work of the church. There is nothing wrong with any of this, but it is de-

signed to make people church members instead of helping them to grow spiritually.

6. What can be done? My solution is to design the structure of our church in such a way that we plan for the spiritual needs of people to be our top priority and the institutional concerns of the church to be secondary. First of all, every church has institutional concerns-- buildings have to be maintained, programs administered, etc. The point in question is not one of getting rid of all institutional concerns, but not allowing the institutional concerns to smother the real work of the church. So, secondly, how much structure do we have to have in order to function and be a United Methodist Church? I believe that in addition to a nominating committee there are only five other groups which we must have:

- a. Administrative Board
- b. Trustees--for legal purposes and the maintenance of the property
- c. Finance Committee
- d. Pastor-Parish Committee--for staff needs, personnel, etc.
- e. Council on Ministries--local church programming

One can see the necessity of each of the above groups, but as far as I know all other work areas, commissions, task forces, committees, and others are optional!

7. How can we design our church structure to serve our purpose? My proposal is that we take the total number of our congregation and divide them into "cell groups" of 25 each. The cells are formed to meet semi-monthly in order to do five things:

- a. Study the Bible together.
- b. Sharing--preferably this will be a Bible study like 2PROAPT where each member of the cell group is responsible for studying the Bible, and we share how this particular passage has been applied in our lives during the week.
- c. Pray together.
- d. Minister to the needs of each other in the cell group.
- e. Minister to any other related needs that come to the attention of the cell group.

The emphasis in the cell group would be for families to be together studying and sharing with other families. Part of my concern in the church is that we take families apart too often.

8. Allow each cell group to elect one or two representatives to the Council on Ministries in order to plan, coordinate, and implement programs for the total congregation. In this way we would be receiving input from the total congregation on programs that affect the total congregation.

The Council on Ministries is relatively new in the life of the Methodist Church. We received this through merger some ten years ago. As a pastor, I have tried to make it work because I really do believe in the concept. My experience has been that it never has really worked,

and I don't know any good examples of it working. I think the Council doesn't work because it doesn't really have enough to do. The Council may coordinate, but it seldom plans or implements. Therefore, our Council meetings end up listening to reports about what others are doing. There is a real reluctance to make decisions, and seldom do we ever look at the broader issues of what we are trying to accomplish as a church.

I would eliminate, therefore, the committees and work areas replacing this structure with the cell groups--because our purpose is to create a structure which plans for spiritual growth and not one which binds us up in institutional work. Through the elected representatives to the Council, the Council would then become responsible for the total church programming.

9. Can you begin to see what could take place? Theoretically, everyone would belong to and participate in a cell group. Your elected representatives to the Council, and the members of the Trustees, Finance Committee, and Pastor-Parish Committee would total approximately 40-50 people. So, while everyone participates in the cell group and is responsible for two meetings a month, only 40-50 would be responsible to a second group. I'm not going into it now, but I think even the Administrative Board could be restructured so that a very minimum of people would be responsible to three groups.

What is happening now is just the opposite. A person who is really dedicated and desires to work finds with a job it is possible to be in 5 or 6 meetings a month--none of which are designed to help them grow spiritually. Furthermore, my concern is that our bureaucracy is smothering our ministry. This restructure would put the responsibility for ministry in the cell groups. In the cell groups, our ministry of evangelism, visitation, concern, service, etc. would be a natural outgrowth of our Christian witness.

10. Do you still remember the Acts passage I referred to in the beginning? For years I've read this account of the life of the early believers and yearned to know that same experience in the life of the church today. At least three things were true about these people:

- a. They experienced deep love for each other.
- b. Their lives were attractive to others.
- c. Their ministry in the community was a natural outgrowth of their being together and being filled with the Holy Spirit.

There is no reason to believe the same thing could not be written about the United Methodists of Hagerstown in the last third of the 20th century--if we see the principles at work then and apply those same principles today. I call these principles the THREE C's.

- a. Congregation--they were gathered in the Temple worshipping. One thing I'm sure of is that I want to worship in as large a crowd as possible. If you've ever heard "O For a Thousand Tongues" with a 1,000 tongues, you don't ever want to hear it again with 150. But in a crowd you can be lonely--even in a sanctuary.

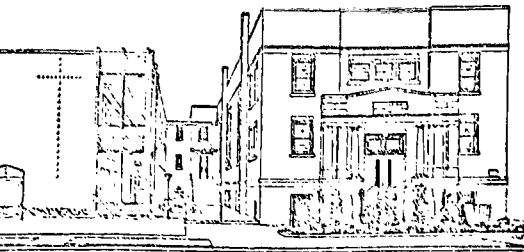
- b. Cell--the believers gathered in their homes. Here is where the deep supportive fellowship developed.
- c. Community--Peter and John were ministering to the needs in the community. Again, this ministry was not programmed, but was a natural outgrowth of their Christian witness.

11. Question! Could this be the beginning of providing for a structure that will plan for the spiritual growth of people; where renewal has room to take place; and the Christians can once again be free enough to minister to each other and for their Lord?

Think about it!

Your Friend,

Jim Hertel



First United Methodist Church¹⁵³

PERRY AT SOUTH MARKET

HAGERSTOWN, INDIANA 47346

Appendix F

LETTER TO BISHOP RALPH T. ALTON

July 11, 1978

Bishop Ralph T. Alton
United Methodist Church
1100 W. 42nd Street, Box 88188
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Dear Bishop Alton,

I am enclosing a proposal for church restructure which I wrote up and sent out to the members of our Council on Ministries, the Pastor-Parish Committee, and Education Work Area. I am seeking feedback and advice from you.

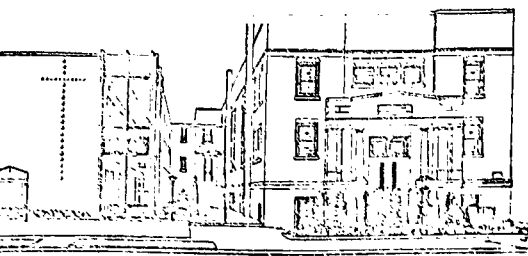
First of all this is just a proposal. However, it comes out of some deep concerns I have and have had about the church through my experience as a pastor. My concern is that the ministry of the laity, in general, is just not taking place. Too often our congregations are made up of strangers. The result is, that as a pastor, I often feel like a fireman rushing around putting out fires. So, secondly, my desire has been to create a structure that is United Methodist and plans for the spiritual growth of people and the ministry of the body to take place. My question to you is--would you consider this proposal to be in line with our Discipline? In creating, how much leeway do we have? I know you will have questions about the proposal, but I think it is clear enough for you to see the intent.

I hope all is well with you and yours. Give my regards to Mrs. Alton. You are in our love and prayers. I am,

Sincerely yours,

J. Wesley Hertel

JWH/rm
Enc. 1



First United Methodist Church¹⁵⁴

PERRY AT SOUTH MARKET

HAGERSTOWN, INDIANA 47346

Appendix G

LETTER TO DR. J. KENNETH FORBES

July 11, 1978

Dr. J. Kenneth Forbes
 Executive Assistant to the Bishop
 United Methodist Church
 1100 W. 42nd Street, Box 88188
 Indianapolis, IN 46208

Dear Ken,

I want to thank you again for the books you gave me at Conference. That was much more than you should have done or I expected. I haven't gotten through all of them yet, but I will. I will say that they look good. Thanks again for your generosity and help.

I am enclosing a proposal for church restructure which I wrote up and sent out to the members of our Council on Ministries, the Pastor-Parish Committee, and Education Work Area. This proposal has grown out of concern I have had for the church for many years in my experience as a pastor. I am looking for a structure which provides for the spiritual needs of people and plans for the ministry of the laity to take place. My concern for the church is that too much of our time is taken up with institutional needs; our ministry is being smothered through our bureaucracy; and as a pastor I often feel like a fireman rushing around to put out fires. Ken, these are some of my gut feelings about the church and ministry. But I'm not ready to give up on either, thus, my proposal for restructure.

My question to you--is this a United Methodist plan? Is it in accordance with our Discipline? How much leeway do we have? I love our denomination and am not seeking to tear down but to build up. I'll be looking forward to hearing from you. I am,

Sincerely yours,

J. Wesley Hertel

JWH/rm

Enc 1

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

INDIANA AREA

1100 WEST 42ND STREET

INDIANAPOLIS 46208

PHONE
317-924-1321

BISHOP

RALPH T. ALTON

July 13, 1978

The Rev. J. Wesley Hertel, Pastor
First United Methodist Church
Perry at South Market
Hagerstown, IN 47346


Dear Wes:

I have read through your paper on "A Proposal For Church Restructure" with real interest. You are certainly on the right track as far as the purpose of the church is concerned. The principle is still true that structure must support function and function must be determined by purpose. And what you do in your paper is to identify the purpose of the church and then define functions that would support that purpose.

The structural design of The United Methodist Church is intended to do exactly what you are getting at. In your paragraph number eight, on page two, you talk about the Council on Ministries which you indicate doesn't seem to work in your church because the Council does not function as it is intended to. The reason why the church separated the Council on Ministries from the Administrative Board was to establish a structure that would have as its only reason for being the encouragement of the spiritual development of the people of the church. It is left to each Council on Ministries to determine what sub-groups that Council may need to fulfill that purpose, but none of these are required. So your suggestion of eliminating the committees and work areas would certainly be in order. You might want to substitute task groups for these so that when the Council on Ministries felt that some particular program would be important, they could identify a task group to work with that program.

In my own relationships to the church, I have come to the conclusion that no structure will work unless we want it to and any structure can be made to work if we are committed to a purpose which it may serve. So I congratulate you on your thinking.

Very sincerely yours,


Ralph T. Alton

RTA:bm



INDIANA AREA
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1100 West 42nd Street – Indianapolis, Indiana 46208 – Phone (317) 924-1321

J. Kenneth Forbes, *Executive Assistant*

July 17, 1978

Rev. J. Wesley Hertel
First United Methodist Church
Perry at South Market
Hagerstown, IN 47346

Dear Jim:

I have received your communication of July 11 and am pleased to be able to peruse the restructure proposal.

I have read it over and spent a little time studying the details. My first concern was whether or not it was disciplinary so that you wouldn't immediately run into problems at technical points.

It would seem that all of what you have put together fits well with the present structure. The organizational plan adopted by the General Conference is of such nature that there is considerable latitude allowed at both the General Church and Local Church levels. It would appear to me that so long as there is an Administrative Board and a Program Counsel with some additional committees and boards such as Trustees, Pastor-Parish Committee, etc. that this would satisfy the Discipline. How a local church would arrive at placing persons within the work of these structures and how these structures would ultimately be utilized can be pretty much a local concern.

So long as everyone knows what the ground rules are, I don't think you will ever run into problems with the denomination. Purity of purpose and the endeavor to cooperate with the whole program is of more concern than anything else when it comes of organizational development.

We are living in a time when certainly some new things have to be discovered in order to add strength and

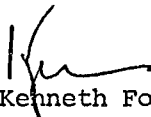
Rev. J Wesley Hertel
July 17. 1978
Page 2

inspiration to our denomination. It is obvious there
is plenty of leeway for suggestion.

More power to you and keep going!

With good wishes always, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Kenneth Forbes', with a stylized, cursive flourish.

J. Kenneth Forbes

JKF:kas

Appendix J

PROCESS PAGE FOR SUPPORTIVE FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Event: the Development of Small Groups
Within the Congregation for Nurture
and Supportive Fellowship

1. BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

Acts 6:1-7 - putting the institutional concerns and administrative tasks of the congregation in their proper perspective.

I Cor. 14:3 - Body Ministry, every member ministering to and supporting one another.

Acts 2:43-3:10 - the three levels of Christian involvement from the example of the early church.

- (1) Small groups in homes
- (2) Together in worship
- (3) Serving in the community

2. NEEDS

The Why?

- (1) Spiritual growth
- (2) Fellowship
- (3) Sharing-supporting one another
- (4) Learning to appreciate and respect one another even with our differences.
- (5) The small group life in our congregation is weak.
- (6) We are overloaded with institutional concerns.
- (7) We need to learn to pray for one another.
- (8) We need to learn to minister to each other and to the need of the community.
- (9) We need to make every person feel they are a needed part of the Body of Christ.
- (10) Evangelism-outreach
- (11) Assimilating new people into our fellowship.

3. GOALS

The Target

Every person in our congregation a part of a supportive group fellowship.

The supportive fellowship groups would include every age and each group would number 25 at a maximum.

PROCESS PAGE cont.

4. PROGRAM
When - Where -
doing what

When - beginning in
January 1979 the SF
groups would meet
approximately 19
times a year.

--twice monthly
Jan.-April &
Sept.-Nov.

--once monthly
May-August &
December

--first & third
week

--first week
May & Dec.

--third week
June, July &
August

Where - basically in
homes

Doing what -

- (1) Studying the
Bible together
- (2) Sharing (2PROAPT)
- (3) Praying
- (4) Ministering to
the needs within
the group
- (5) Ministering to
the needs of the
community.

5. METHODS & MATERIALS
The how & with what

The Bible and 2PROAPT
forms.

6. ORGANIZATION &
ADMINISTRATION
Who will do it

- (1) Choose 25 enabling
couples
- (2) Give them training
- (3) Each enabling
couple will then
choose one other
couple to work
with them.
- (4) They will select
their time of
meeting.
- (5) Every person will
have the oppor-
tunity of choosing
their group.
- (6) Those who do not
choose will then
be chosen by a
group.
- (7) Special youth
concerns
 - some youth will
be chosen to be
enablers for a
group also
 - youth suppor-
tive group
fellowship will
be divided
between girls
and boys.
 - youth may elect
to participate
in a group with
their parents.

Appendix K

ENABLING COUPLES TRAINING MATERIAL

The Use of Small Groups in the Church

Small groups have exploded into every part of our social order-- institutional and organizational, corporate, educational, and religious. The use of small groups is not a new idea at all to Methodist people. Our Methodist Church was born out of a small group movement. In recent history, the idea of groups has been very strong with such groups as our Sunday School classes, men's, women's, and youth organization, prayer groups, Bible study groups, lay witness missions, and so on. Many begin in order that people might encounter each other in a "face-to-face relationship."

The small group structure was at the heart of the early church up until the fourth century with the establishment of the cathedrals. Small groups were born out of necessity as the Christians were largely a persecuted group in society worshipping in semi-secrecy against the political law. The early Christians probably had no larger than twenty people meeting together at one time. The meetings were usually held in some isolated spot, their houses, or as in the case of the Christians at Rome, in the catacombs. It was, no doubt, their smallness of size which enabled them to preserve the doctrine of the church as a fellowship as was expressed in their love feast meals.

Look up the following references concerning the shared life of the early church in small group encounters:

I Corinthians 14:26-31
 Acts 2:42-46
 James 5:16
 Colossians 3:16

The church was basically:

1. A believing, worshiping community, not a building or an institution.
2. A soul-fellowship, not a social fellowship.
3. Their fellowship was centered in Jesus Christ.

The church today is:

1. Impersonal
2. Somewhat indifferent
3. A lonely crowd where roles are played.

There is a need today for small groups in order to build the supportive fellowship we all are in need of sharing.

Example out of Our Heritage
of a Covenant Community

The Wesley Class Meeting -
18th Century

1. That we will meet together once a week to "confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed."
2. That the persons so meeting be divided into several bands, or little companies, none of them consisting of fewer than five, or more than ten persons.
3. That everyone in order speak as freely, plainly, and concisely as he can, the real state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances, since the last time of meeting.
4. That all the bands have a conference at 8:00 every Wednesday evening, begun with and ended with singing and prayer.
5. That any who desire to be admitted into this society be asked, "What are your reasons for desiring this? Will you be entirely open; using no kind of reserve? Have you any objection to any of our orders?"
6. That when any new member is proposed, everyone present speak clearly and freely whatever objection he has to him.
7. That those against whom no reasonable objection appears, be in order for their trial, formed into one or more distinct bands, and some person agreed upon to assist them.
8. That after two months trial, if no objection then appears, they may be admitted to the society.
9. That every fourth Saturday be observed as a day of general intercession.
10. That on Sunday night following be a general lovefeast, from seven until ten in the evening.
11. That no particular member be allowed to act in anything contrary to any order of the society; and that if any persons, after being thrice admonished, do not conform thereto, they be no longer esteemed as members.

Some Basic Convictions About Group Life

1. Group life needs to be experienced not just learned in a book.

2. Get your "feet wet"--that is, try a group and if one does not meet your need, try, try again. Because of our personal--private--centered American culture, many people are "deeply afraid and threatened" by a group experience which gets beyond the sharing of ideas and deals with the feeling level. Fears of exploitation, gossip, disappointment, of having to sacrifice one's mask and take the "risk" of trusting in and caring for people keeps many, many people from experiencing on a feeling level Christian fellowship.

3. Do not be afraid to let a group die! In fact, do not even be shocked if a group doesn't even get off the ground.

a. Where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is freedom (II Cor. 3:17).

b. We have our institutional boxes--God doesn't!

c. We live in both death and resurrection.

4. Small groups are not an end in themselves. They are a style of Christian life but not more important than content. A Christian small group exists to consider substantive issues--the Bible, Christian doctrine, church history, personal and social issues of today--not just to hold hands or nurse neuroses, or be a truth session billed as a psycho-drama.

How to Lead a Group

Your primary purpose in leading a small group should not be to teach but to provide an opportunity for other people to express themselves. Each person in the group should be encouraged to speak, but not pressured, and total participation is one evidence of a successful meeting.

1. HOW TO BEGIN. Explain briefly the purpose of the meeting:
 - a. To explore the resources of Christian fellowship.
 - b. To share our growing edge.
 - c. To determine where we are in our relation to God and His claim on us.
 - d. To report those areas of life where we find the Christian faith to be either most difficult or most helpful.

If you, as the leader, begin by relating an experience of God's power in the midst of personal need, you will set the tone for what is to follow.

2. EXPERIENCE, NOT IDEAS. Encourage people to share problems and answers from their experience. This is not the time to discuss intellectual or theological concepts. When someone generalizes, ask him to tell of a specific instance in his own life to illustrate his point. Try to get behind criticism and negative attitudes (especially those aimed at the church) by asking, "Why do you think this hurt or bothered you so much?"

3. FREEDOM AND INFORMALITY. If someone asks for prayer, don't hesitate to pause and pray at that moment. If there are periods of silence, help your group to welcome them and use them for self-evaluation and listening to God. Informality, freedom, and spontaneous laughter give the Holy Spirit much to work with. Enjoy each other and enjoy God.

4. LOVE AND HONESTY. Total acceptance by those through whom we experience God's forgiveness enables us to be honest about ourselves. In turn, we must not fear to be incisive with others when the occasion calls for it. You may have to be direct and forceful with those who would dominate the group either by talking too much or offering know-it-all answers. Remember that "honesty without love is brutality, and love without honesty is sentimentality."

5. LISTENING AND QUESTIONING. To be listened to attentively and sympathetically is to be loved. Make your group a laboratory in listening. And when someone who is obviously "seeking" speaks up, remember that questions (especially "why?" and "how?") may be more helpful than a direct answer, because they may lead him to discover the answer himself.

6. WHAT IT LEADS TO. Perhaps the meeting should close with conversational prayer in which all can feel free to join. However, this should not be considered as a rule. Let the Spirit rule. When the

meeting breaks up, or during the week between meetings, be sensitive to those who have expressed a need and look for the chance to talk personally. People seldom take first steps in a group meeting, but the groundwork is often laid there for significant decisions made later in the quietness of a talk with one other person.

The Art of Group Conversation
Getting to Know Each Other

One Way to Begin Your First Meeting

A group should not be larger than 12 persons. . . . The group should not be sitting in rows but in a circle, or around tables, so that each person can see the face of every other person. The leader should explain to the group, "We are going to take a few minutes to get acquainted. In order to do this, we are going to ask ourselves several questions. These questions are not 'loaded' questions but simply represent a way we have found to get to know each other in a short time."

The first question has three parts: "State your name. Where did you live between the ages of seven and twelve years? (You may have lived several places during that time, but state the place that stands out most in your mind). And how many brothers and sisters did you have at that time?" The leader proceeds to answer first then goes completely around the circle asking each person to answer the question.

The second question is, "How did you heat your home at that time (pot-bellied stove, open fireplace, gas burners, etc.)?" Humorous and vivid incidents are helpful and enjoyable here.

The third question is, "Where in your home at that time was the center of human warmth (e.g.: the kitchen, parents' bedroom, dining room, etc.)?" Or it may not have been a room at all; it may have been a person around whom in retrospect you sensed an aura of safeness or warmth. The leader should answer first and then explain that what we are actually doing is tracing the human experience of security. Security is first known by a child in terms of physical warmth. As his horizon broadens outside of his immediate self, he senses his security in the warmth and acceptance of the people around him. (It is good to note that some people simply do not have any remembrance of a center of human warmth in their home or in any person. The leader by mentioning this may put at ease people for whom this experience is not a reality).

The fourth and last question is asked to the group as a whole so that people can volunteer answers if they have any. This is because it is not about the past but may relate to an incident in the present and therefore may be threatening to someone who is afraid to reveal himself. The question is, "When, if ever, in your life did God become more than a 'word'? When did He become a living Being, alive in your own thinking?" We are not asking necessarily for an account of a conversion experience. This transition in one's thinking may have taken place while listening to a beautiful piece of music, or watching a sunset, or in a conversation with a person who loved him. By this time the group may know each other well enough to volunteer answers right away. If not, the leader tells of his own experience.

Note: You should not be surprised if someone begins to weep

during these questions. The memories of our past, especially if we have locked them away, can be very moving.

After this last question has been asked, the group is in the midst of a discussion on the reality of God in human life. And the leader may close this conversation by summarizing the discussion and pointing out that, according to Christian belief, although every man's experience of security and acceptance begins with physical warmth and graduates to human warmth, he is made so that his security will never be complete until he finds it in God.

What this discussion does is to cause us to share ourselves with each other as persons, thus giving us a sense of joy and of belonging to each other. We may also find that living Christianity is not what we had thought it was at all. Far too often we think of Christianity as a religion of religious patterns of behavior and study. But Christianity is actually not a religion at all--it is real life--life in which we are free to be honest about ourselves and to accept and love each other and God, because the Living Christ is in the midst of us. . .winning us to Himself and to His world. Suddenly in our struggles we have something real to tell. . .something "which we have seen and heard" (I John 1). (This material has been taken from the book, Groups That Work, pp. 11-15, by Keith Miller. You will need to use all the time at the first group meeting to cover this material.

Guidelines for Using the Bible in the
Supportive Fellowship Groups

The Bible is not a book of magic. It is best understood when we study it in its context. The miracle is--when we seek to know what was being said back then, God confronts us with His truth today. Therefore, it is important not to teach the Bible as information only, but to teach it for response.

The following steps may be helpful:

1. Begin by hearing the text in its own biblical setting. Inquire into its historical setting, to whom was it addressed, by whom, and under what conditions. What were the issues at stake? How did the people of its own time understand it?
2. Seek the most accurate understanding of the language available.
3. Study key words, and examine how these same words are used elsewhere in the Bible.
4. Discern the literary type. Is it poetry, parable, narrative, etc?
5. Attempt to assess the dynamics of the text.
6. How does God confront us with His truth in this text?
7. Don't be afraid to use a good commentary after you have done your own searching.
8. The 2PROAPT forms are helpful to groups beginning to share learning together from the Bible, and leads one from observing what is being said to applying the truth in our lives.

2PROAFT - Pray Read Apply
 Preview Observe Pray

Tell

Passage _____

Date _____

Name _____

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

What does it say?

What does it mean?

How does this apply to my life?

How did this change my life?

Just write the words of the text.

You might paraphrase, outline, ask questions, (think of general implications of the text).

Write measurable goals that include, where applicable, When you will do it (the truth of God) With whom you will do it To whom you will do it

What was the result of doing the truth of God?

Small Group Evaluation Sheet

Group members should give honest and immediate impressions in response to the following questions.

IN THIS MEETING (Circle one category for each statement)

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. LEADERSHIP WAS | Dominated
by one
person | Dominated
by a
subgroup | Centered in
about half
the group | Shared by
all members
of the group |
| 2. COMMUNICATION
WAS | Badly
blocked | Difficult | Fairly
open | Very open &
free flowing |
| 3. PEOPLE WERE | Phony | Hidden | Fairly
open | Honest and
authentic |
| 4. THE GROUP WAS | Avoiding
its task | Loafing | Getting
some work
done | Working hard
at its task |
| 5. I FELT | Misunder-
stood &
rejected | Somewhat
misunder-
stood | Somewhat
accepted | Completely
accepted and
understood
by the group |

6. The one word I would use to describe the climate of this meeting:

_____.

7. Suggestions: _____

_____.

Items of Help for Small Groups

General Books:

Nine Roads to Renewal, W. Howard, Word Inc.

Tomorrow's Church Today, L. Richards, National Association of Evangelicals, paperback.

*Witnessing Laymen Make Living Churches, Claxton Monroe and William Taegel, renewal in two churches, lay witnesses on lay ministries, and a brief theology of the laity. For groups and church members it gives the following: 3 disciplines for witness, 7 steps for beginners, 7 disciplines for church members, disciplines for a Woman's Prayer Group, spiritual principles that guide us, some convictions about spiritual healing, etc.

The Rebirth of the Laity, Howard Grines, Abingdon. This book will give you a more detailed study of the theology and the history of the laity in the church as well as some insights into church renewal in the church today.

Church Meetings That Matter, Philip Anderson, United Church Press, paperback. Good for boards and committees to read, study, and discuss.

Prologue to Growth by Groups, A Guide to Renewal Groups in Action, paperback. Included in complete set of Growth by Groups.

*Groups That Work, Faith at Work, paperback. A handbook.

Magazine:

(Faith at Work) - 4800 W. Waco Dr., Waco, Texas, 76703.

Bible Study Groups:

*Growth by Groups, Christian Outreach, Inc., Box 115, Huntingdon Valley, Pa., 19006.

*Nucleus (creative Bible study), complete sample program.

The Bible Speaks to You, Robert Brown, Westminster Press, (general Bible study).

God's Unfolding Purposes, Suzanne deDietrich, Westminster Press, (general Bible study).

*Group Encounters with the Bible, Howard, Faith at Work, Inc.

*52 Weeks with the Bible, Walden Howard, Faith at Work, paperback.

Reflection Book, Association Press, have a number of paperback study books on the Bible.

Studies in the N.T., William Barclay, 18 vols.

How to Conduct Home Bible Classes, Albert J. Wollen, Scripture Press.

Creative Youth Groups Materials: (for high school and older youth)

*The Coffee House Itch, Lyman Coleman, Christian Outreach, Inc.

Acts Alive, Lyman Coleman, Christian Outreach, Inc.
Man Alive, Lyman Coleman, Christian Outreach, Inc.

Life in Depth Personal Sharing Groups:

New Dimensions in Spiritual Growth, How to Start and Lead a Yoke-fellow Group, Yokefellows, Inc., 209 Park Rd., Burlingame, Ca.
Leader's Handbook, Part I and II, Yokefellows.

For Group Studies on Marriage and Child Training:

*Marriage is for Living, A Faith at Work Book published by Zondervan, paperback, contains several articles on marriage but mostly contains life experiences.
 *To Understand Each Other, Paul Tournier, John Knox Press.
Letter to Philip: On How to Treat a Woman, Charlie Shedd, Doubleday, book for a men's group on marriage.
Letter to Karen: On How to Treat a Man, Charlie Shedd, Abingdon, paperback, good for women's groups.
Parents on Trial, Why Kids Go Right or Wrong, David Wilkerson, Hawthorne, paperback.
 *Between Parent and Child, Haim Ginott, MacMillian, paperback.
 *Between Parent and Teenager, Haim Ginott, MacMillian.

Studies on Various Subjects of Christian and Life Related Interests:

The Doctrine of the Church, The Significance of the Church, Robert Brown, Westminster, paperback. Excellent on the meaning of the church and justification by faith. One in a series of paperbacks on the Christian faith entitled, The Layman's Theological Library.
Reflection Books, paperback, Association Press.
Mere Christianity, C. S. Lewis, MacMillian, paperback.
 *Dare to Live Now, Bruce, Larson, Zondervan, paperback.
You Can Witness with Confidence, Rosalind Rinker, Zondervan, paperback.
 *Prayer Conversing with God, Rosalind Rinker, Zondervan.
Prayer Can Change Your Life, Parker and St. John, Prentice Hall.
Know Why You Believe, Paul Little, Scripture Press, paperback.
 *The Experiment of Faith, a Handbook for Beginning Christians and very helpful for older Christians as well, Samuel Shoemaker, Harper and Row.
The Adventure of Living, Paul Tournier, Harper and Row.
 *The Taste of New Wine, Keith Miller, Words, Inc.
Hellbent for Election, P. Speschock, Zondervan paperback. Fictional but excellent for church renewal.
The Struggle for Peace, Henry Brandt, Scripture Press, paperback.
The Present Day Movement of Tongue Speaking, two books: They Speak with Other Tongues, John Sherrill, Spire Books, paperback, gives actual experiences of it. Glossolalia, Tongue Speaking in

Biblical, Historical, and Psychological Perspective, Stagg, Hinson, Oates, Abingdon, paperback. Do not read one without the other.

*The Art of Understanding Yourself, Cecil Osborne, Zondervan Books, paperback. Good for getting to understand the Yokefellow groups. Could be used for Church School class.

*Facing the Issues, I and II, William J. Krutza and Phillip P. Dicco, Baker Book House, paperback. Two excellent books for discussing the Bible and contemporary issues.

*Teaching Conversational Prayer, Rosalind Rinker, Word, Inc.

*Especially good for beginning groups.

Appendix I,

WORSHIP EVALUATION

As a member of the Hagerstown United Methodist Church, I would like to share a personal thought about the Sunday morning worship. The congregation had been used to a set pattern of worship, to the point that it almost would not have been necessary to have printed bulletins. When Jim Hertel was appointed to Hagerstown, we were quickly introduced to a change in our order of worship. The congregation has learned that each Sunday morning worship can have new meaning and can take on new form. It is possible to reach out for new experiences in our worship of God. I see us growing stronger in our faith, in our mission, and in our fellowship with one another. I want to thank our Lord for the changes, and the results we are realizing each new day.

Caroline Benedict

Appendix M

SPIRITUAL GROWTH WITNESS

I was not raised in a Christian home and had no childhood training in Sunday School or church. As I grew older, an interest in the church did develop; and I did begin to attend church, but not on a regular basis. When I graduated from college, I moved to Hagerstown. My landlady, who was a Christian, invited me to go to church with her, and I soon began to attend church regularly. I was not one, however, that felt that it was necessary to go to an altar. I believed that I was a Christian; I had never done anything really sinful.

Then in October, 1975, we had a guest minister, Jim Hertel, who preached Sunday morning and then was to hold services Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings of that week. I had never attended any evening services before and didn't intend to then. However, something happened to me during the service Sunday morning, and I knew when I left church that I was going to attend all three nights. On Monday evening I went to the altar. What a feeling of relief I felt! I had heard people talk about being reborn and being saved; but until that night, I did not understand what they were talking about.

Everything was just great for awhile, but then I realized that something was wrong. I was having some problems, and I didn't know why. My problem, though, was that I was still trying to take care of things by myself instead of letting the Lord take care of them. In April, 1978, after a Missions Conference in our church, I went to the altar again. This time I felt that I really gave my life to Christ. He was now in control, and I felt good about that!

I am just overwhelmed at the changes that have taken place in my life since I became an active participant in the church and Christianity. I definitely feel the leading of the Holy Spirit in my life now. I can look back and see how the Lord has always been leading me, even before I became a Christian. When you let the Lord enter your heart and life, it's so exciting! Prayer and Bible study are now an important part of my life. Fear has been replaced by the spirit of love and power. My life now has purpose. I feel like a worthwhile person. I have a peace and a calmness that I never had until I let God into my life. I feel loved; I have fulfillment and a place of refuge in the church.

Andre' Weber

Appendix N

BETHEL SERIES PROCESS PAGE

1. BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES	2. NEEDS The Why?	3. GOALS The Target
Isa. 40:8 God's Word is eternal	(1) Shortage of Sunday School teachers	To make biblical studies a way of life for our adults, and in turn for the adults to provide Christian models for our youth and children.
II Tim. 2:15 We are to study to show ourselves approved.	(2) Low Sunday School attendance	
II Tim. 3:16 God's Word nurtures Christians.	(3) Bible not read by majority of adult Christians	
II Tim. 2:1,2 Principle of discipling.	(4) Biblical illiteracy (5) Spiritual hunger of the people	
Acts 2:42 Example of the early church.		
John 21:17 Our Lord commands Christians to be fed.		
Prov. 9:9 Principle of wisdom.		

PROCESS PAGE cont.

4. PROGRAM
When - Where -
Doing what

Bible study

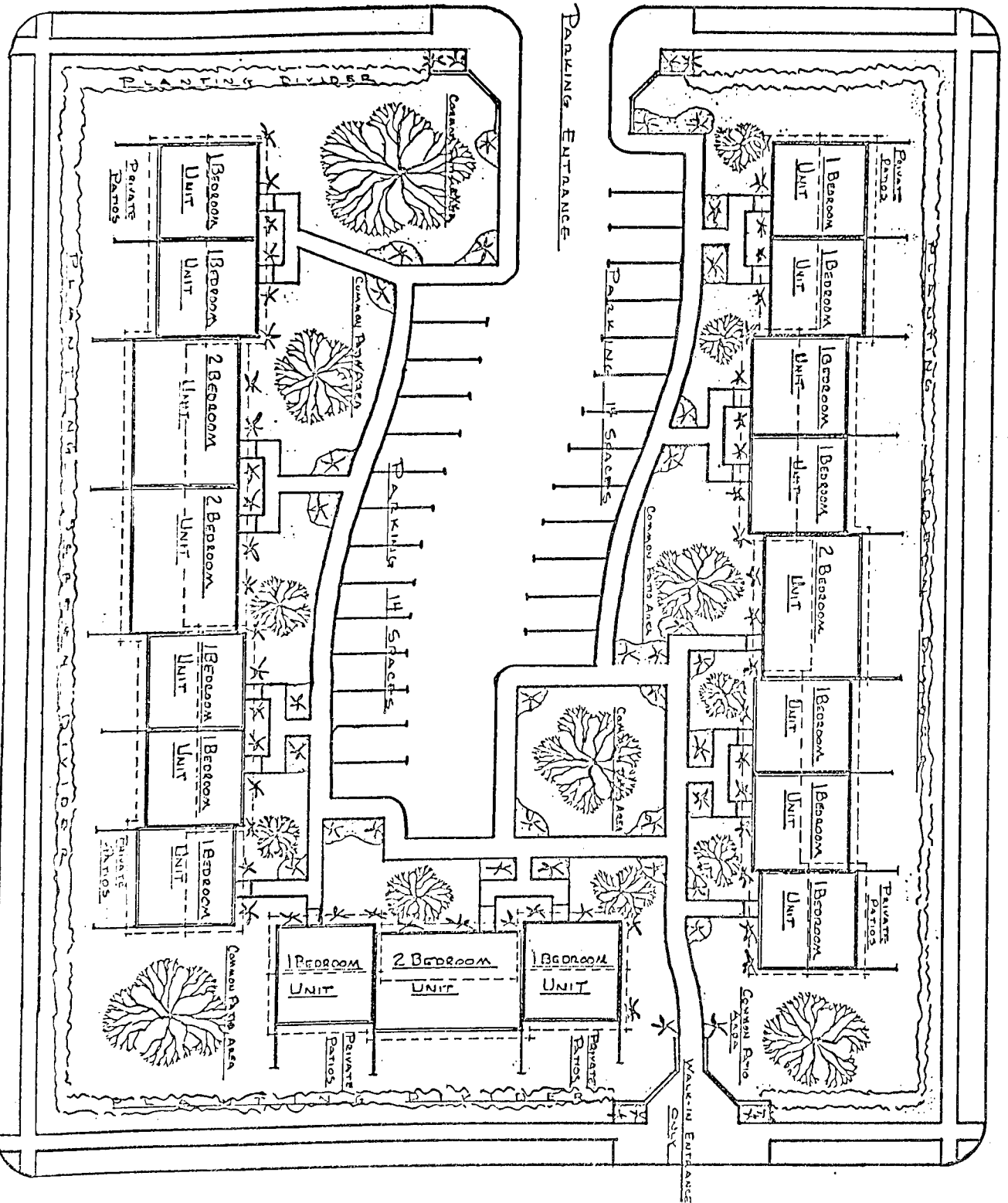
5. METHODS & MATERIALS
The how & with what

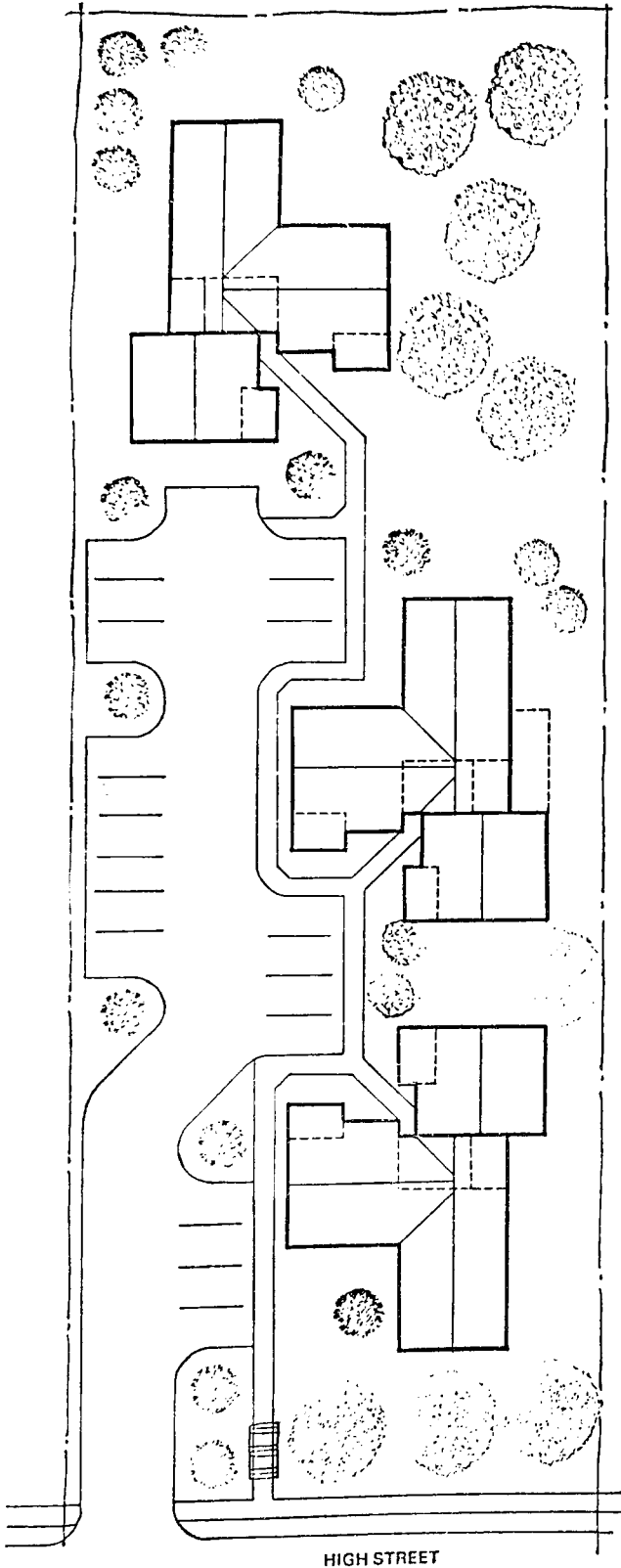
The Bethel Series from
Adult Christian
Education Foundation,
Madison, Wi.

6. ORGANIZATION &
ADMINISTRATION
Who will do it

- (1) The pastor,
pastor's wife,
and Adult Minis-
tries Coordinator
attend orienta-
tion session at
Madison, Wi.
- (2) Teacher training
phase.
- (3) Congregational
phase--Bethel
Series opened to
every adult in
the congregation.

FIRST SITE PLAN FOR SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING

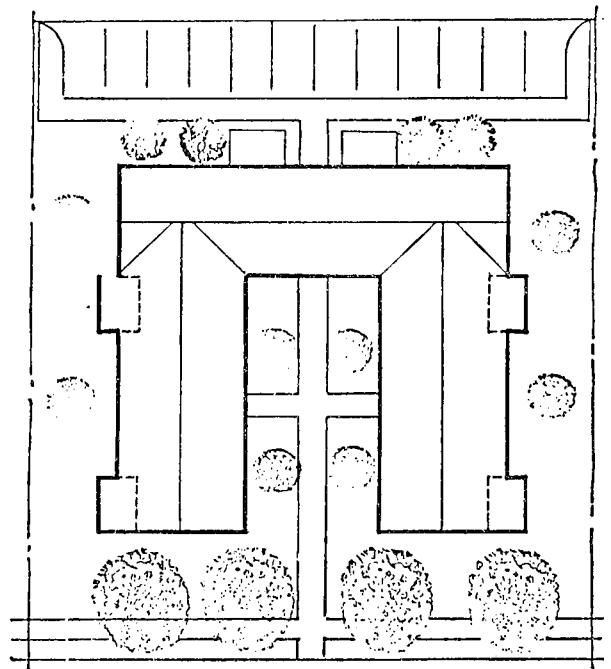




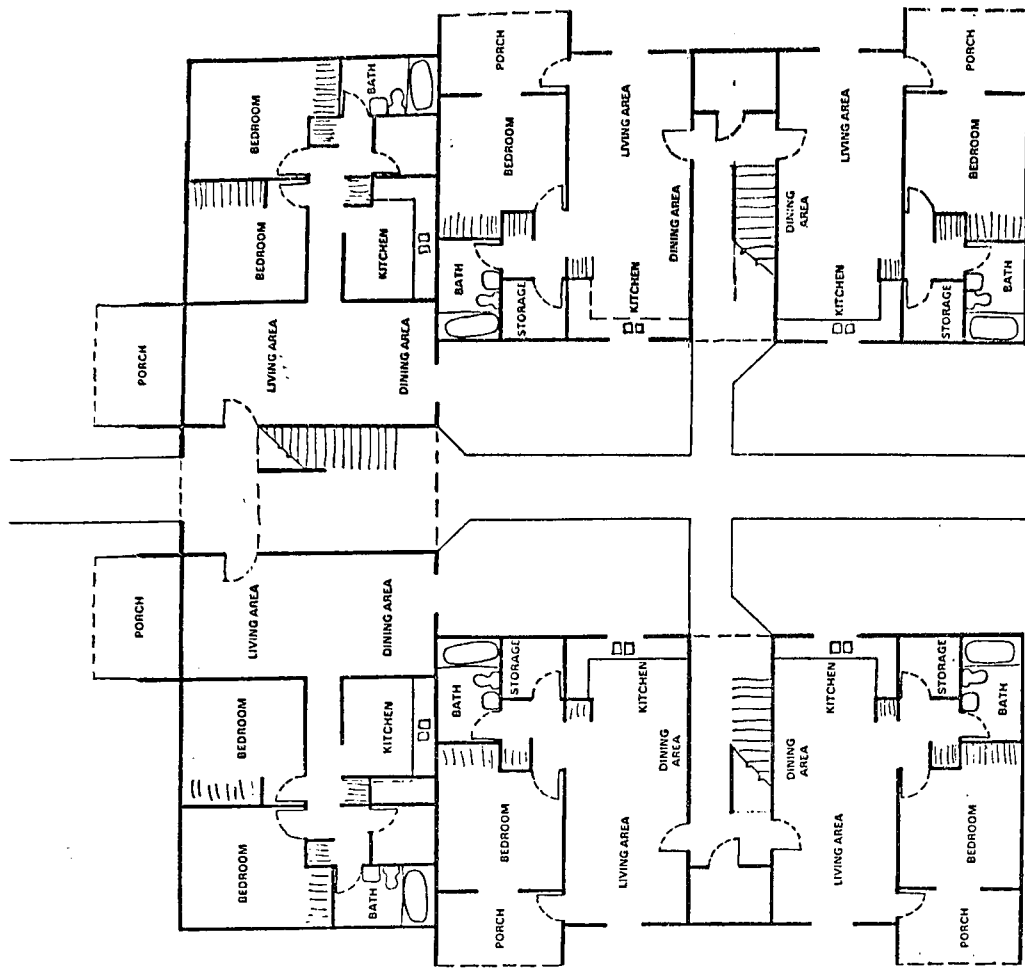
HIGH STREET

SECOND SITE PLAN FOR SENIOR
CITIZEN HOUSING

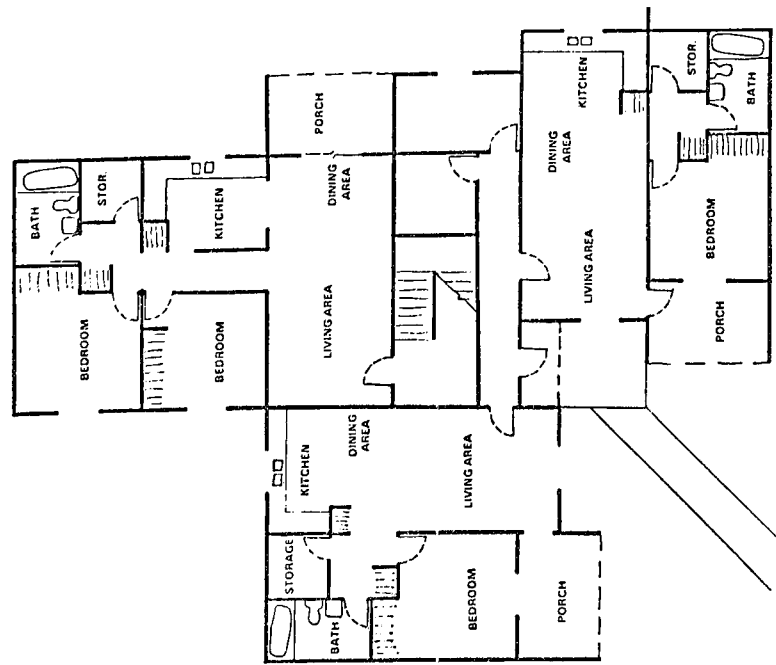
- 30 units:
- 18 units High Street
- 12 units Walnut Street



WALNUT STREET



FLOOR PLAN
WALNUT STREET BUILDINGS



FLOOR PLAN
HIGH STREET BUILDINGS

Appendix Q

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY SURVEY: CATEGORY #8

Recreation and Cultural Concerns

1. Does your community's recreation program include a wide range of activities throughout the year--both indoor and outdoor facilities?

Indoor activities and facilities include swimming, wrestling, ball games and bowling. Outdoor activities and facilities include tennis, golf, softball, camping, and swimming. The community's recreation program consists of a summer program and the school program.

2. Are indoor recreational facilities distributed so as to make them readily available to all neighborhoods?

No

3. Are the various activities in your public recreation program used widely by the people of the community?

Yes

4. Are there special teenage recreation centers?

No

What kind of programs do they conduct?

Church activities, sponsored by churches and held in churches could be considered as a teenage recreation center.

Under what sponsorship?

5. Are there youth hostels in your area?

No

6. Does your community provide quiet park space for older couples and for mothers and nurses who have young children?

There are downtown benches on the street and there is a city park, but the park is inaccessible to anyone without a car.

7. Are there special clubs or facilities for older people to come together for companionship, relaxation, and various activities?

Special clubs for older people are under a senior citizen's program, some meetings of this group are held at the Union Hall.

8. Is there a single municipal body responsible for public recreation?

How are its members chosen?

There is a Park Recreational Director appointed.

9. Is there a professionally qualified recreation director?
Is his service on a part-time or full-time basis?

The recreation director is on a part-time basis and is paid \$1700.00 a season and is usually someone from the high school athletic department which qualifies them for the job.

10. Are recreation personnel adequately trained and experienced for their work?

Training for this job is not necessary since most of the qualifications are covered in college physical education program.

11. Are there adequate recreation facilities available for people in different kinds of institutions, such as:

jails?

children's homes?

other?

No

12. Is there a concert or forum series which brings outstanding artists or speakers or dance groups to the community?

Various clubs bring outstanding talent to the community.

13. Is there a museum in or accessible to your community?

Yes

14. What school or professional teachers exist in your community to help the developing young musician, artist, writer, actor?

Nettle Creek Players are a group of actors and musicians seeking college credit who allow interested persons to audition for parts. There are two dance schools in the community.

15. Compare the amounts of money which your community pays each year for commercial recreation and for public recreation.

Public recreation would include golf at the country club, swimming at a pool and bowling in a bowling alley, all of these are public recreation which cost the individual and are privately owned with no way to estimate what the public pays. Commercial recreation would include the Nettle Creek Players who charge \$4.50 per single performance but are considered non-profit.

Prepared by: Mrs. Helen Hudson

Appendix R

PROCESS PAGE FOR REFUGEE FAMILY PROJECT

1. BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

The Principle of Serving Christ in our Fellow Man.

Matt. 25:31-46

". . .whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me!"

The Principle of Continuing Christ's Ministry.

His keynote message

Luke 4:18-19

". . .He has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. . .to proclaim liberty to the captives. . .to set free the oppressed. . ."

We are His Body designed to continue His work.

I Cor. 12:27

His ministry is an example for ours.

John 20:21b

"As the Father sent me, so I send you."

The Principle of Return.

Luke 12:48b

"Much is required from the person to whom much is given; much more is required from the person to whom more is given."

2. NEEDS

The Why?

- (1) The needs of refugee people have never been greater-- there are more homeless people today than anytime in history.

- (2) The needs of our congregation. We need to grow in our personal involvement in missions. It is easier to give our money than ourselves. This gives us an opportunity for growth.

3. GOALS

The Target

Our goal is to rehabilitate a refugee family in our community--to help them become self-supporting and reoriented to a new culture.

PROCESS PAGE cont.

4. PROGRAM
When - Where -
Doing what

When - within 6
weeks

Where - Hagerstown

5. METHODS & MATERIALS
The how & with what

Our contact will be with
UMCOR

--UMCOR will screen
the family we
eventually receive.

--UMCOR will provide
initial support of
\$100 per family
member

--Faith Promise money
will be used as
needed

--Solicitation of
support from the
community for
supplies, furniture,
clothes, etc.

6. ORGANIZATION &
ADMINISTRATION
Who will do it

(Medical Care)
Dr. Dan Hibner

(Dental Care)
Dr. Albert DeFrank

(Housing)
Cynthia Rhoades

(Household Goods)
Virginia Hormel

(Financial)
Bill & Judy
Denhart

(Transportation)
Connie Marlatt

(Clothing)
Virginia Whealy

(Babysitting)

(Education)
Emma Perry
Carolyn Conder

Appendix S

EVALUATING THE PROCESS OF EFFECTING MINISTRY

Before Jim Hertel was appointed to serve our church as pastor, he shared with us the fact that he was already involved in a professional degree program through Asbury Seminary. Only if we would accept the privileges and responsibilities of such a program, he told us, should we accept his appointment to our church. The Pastor-Parish Committee indicated to the District Superintendent that its members felt that Jim Hertel was the man God intended to lead our congregation.

Jim chose the Pastor-Parish Committee as his Congregational Reflection Group. The first meetings of this group were spent in having Jim explain his program at Asbury, our function as related to that endeavor, and the role of the Council on Ministries in planning and implementing any programs which evolved from the system.

Through the Congregational Reflection Group meetings, we began to see the pastor as one who serves many needs. One role which emerged predominately was that of working with the laity that its members might be better equipped and enabled to effect ministry. We moved from a philosophical understanding toward a working reality of the fact that each person in Christ is in ministry.

Several important events served to guide us in our learning. Wayne Goodwin of Asbury Seminary met with us on several occasions to coordinate the intentions of the program with the functioning of our church. Wayne presented his concept of the "Theological Loop" and helped us apply its implications to our membership. We were able to see ourselves as people who had experienced the heart event of receiving Jesus into our lives. As an outgrowth of that salvation we had begun to study and nurture growth in our life in Christ. To some extent we had reached out to serve. We were, however, very much "ones," moderate "twos," and some "threes" in loop terminology.

Another step in evaluating where we were in order to decide how to proceed was survey taking. We spent an evening at church using personal surveys and sharing opinions and dreams of what, with God's help, we could become. We also used a series of surveys over a period of a few months to evaluate the community and its needs.

The third major evaluation experience was a meeting with Lyle Schaller. He and the workshop participants who attended with him helped us see ourselves and our potential. Schaller helped us realize that we are a large congregation. This fact was new to many of us. We were able to see our strengths and potential. We realized our strength of tradition, our strength of heritage, our strong spiritual base, and our

dedication to the Lord. We also saw our need for an opening to new life and new thought. We saw through this meeting, an opportunity for greater outreach. It was here that the idea for instituting the Bethel Series as a growth program of Bible study was born. The reasoning was used that by undergirding our faith with a disciplined approach to Bible study, we would be more effective in those outreach programs we employed.

Having evaluated our condition we were ready to design and implement programs to meet needs. This process of effecting ministry has been on-going. We have tried to balance the program so that consideration has been given to renewal and nurturing as well as outreach.

The process (from ecclesiology to ministry), in my opinion, has been effective. By being aware of our role in effecting ministry, we have been able to tackle problems we might otherwise have not seen as ours to tackle. Furthermore, we have used the process to determine true needs. Without this aspect of our approach we might have established programs and pushed to get participation in them. We feel that an important aspect of effecting ministry is one of meeting the needs that people have. Jesus set our example by saying that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Likewise, our process has been one of establishing programs which meet the basic needs of people rather than forcing people to meet the needs of our program.

Joan Lafuze
Chairperson, Pastor-Parish Committee

Appendix T

SUPPORTIVE FELLOWSHIP GROUP EVALUATION

Approximately fifteen months ago, Rev. Hertel approached us to be an "enabling couple" for one of the Supportive Fellowship groups soon to be organized in our church.

We "reluctantly" agreed--our reluctance being a result of neither of us feeling that we had sufficient Bible knowledge background that could possibly qualify us as an enabling couple. However, with much encouragement from Rev. Hertel and other church members, we set up our first meeting for Sunday night at 5:30. Inasmuch as we did not have a sufficient number of volunteers to join our group, we looked around the congregation on Sunday and invited several to come.

The first meeting was not our greatest in spite of using the format designed to "warm-up." However, we did enjoy good fellowship and all agreed to meet again in two weeks and to start our study of Ephesians at that time.

Now a year later, most of this group is intact. A few have moved away or been forced to honor other commitments, but those vacancies have been filled by several new members. We have finished the study of Ephesians and are half through the book of Acts. Everyone speaks freely and candidly, not always agreeing on a particular interpretation that one of the members might express. But among all, there is a feeling of good Christian fellowship and a desire to learn more of the Bible. Many have been most lavish in their praise of the rewards they have felt from this fellowship group.

As a group, we have shared joys as well as problems; we have acted as hosts for three or four special activities in the church. As one member states, "I always look around in worship on Sunday to see if our group is in attendance."

We feel that this past year has been a most rewarding time for all of us. We are indeed grateful that we were persuaded to become an enabling couple, and feel that our prayers have been answered in sending to us so many so much more knowledgeable than us. We find ourselves continually sharing this feeling with groups and individuals completely outside of our church.

Paul & Betty Beachler

Appendix U

BETHEL SERIES EVALUATIONS

Bethel Series has been an instrument God has used to get me deeper into His Word. It has caused me to see the overall picture of the Old Testament. I looked at the Old Testament as a series of small stories before the Bethel study. I feel my prayer life has become richer and my relationship with the others in Bethel Series has been greatly beneficial, but I guess I shouldn't be surprised, because as scripture says: "The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever" (Isa. 40:8).

Joe P. Smith

I have taken several different Bible studies. What makes Bethel Series so special to me is the way it draws together all the other studies I've had, and gives me a better overall picture of the passage of time between events. It has made me a much more effective Sunday School teacher, as I can speak with authority knowing where to look in the scriptures. Most importantly my husband and I both are Bethel Series Teacher Trainees, and we no longer have lulls in conversation because we practice memory concepts together. Our children hear us and are learning from us, also.

Mindy Smith

It is very difficult to put into words what the Bethel Series has meant to me. I can say that I have a much greater vision of the total picture of the Bible, and a better understanding of how God used many of the situations to prepare man for the coming of His Son. The discipline of memorizing has been a very healthy and beneficial experience. Although the study has been very time consuming, it has been most rewarding.

Connie Marlatt

Appendix V

REFUGEE FAMILY EVALUATION

Being personally involved in the preparation, settlement, and continual progress of our refugee family, the Chaleunsacks, has been very rewarding, yet frustrating and very time consuming. I must say the Lord has provided me the time and opportunity to work with the Chaleunsacks and for that I am very thankful.

This program has broadened my outlook on the missions program and made me more aware of how great the need is to help displaced people. I, as well as most Americans, do not appreciate the total freedom that is mine as a citizen of the United States. The loss of family ties, home and freedom are things that have not been forced upon me. It overwhelms me to think what the Chaleunsacks and other refugees have been through due to the communist takeover of their homelands.

The hurdles the Chaleunsacks and I have overcome are so numerous--the complex language barrier to grocery shopping, doing laundry, using the telephone, solving educational problems, planning social and educational schedules--the list is almost endless.

But all of this has been done by a number of people, certainly not by me alone. Several in the congregation have been so very willing and hard working to accomplish what has been done so far. These people as well as I have gained so much more than we have given. Those of us involved have learned to give and take and share so much in terms of time, rewards, and disappointments. Our common goal is to serve Christ and our fellow man. I do think the church as a whole has a better understanding of those who have left their countries and have sought a new life in a strange land.

Cynthia Rhoades



Center for Parish Development

208 East Fifth Avenue
Naperville, Illinois 60540
(312) 355-8502

March 14, 1980

Paul F. Goetting, Director of Training

First United Meth. Ch.
P. O. Box 67
Hagerstown, IN 47346

Dear Pastor:

Your leadership Style? What is it? How important is it?

It is not like the latest auto styling out of Detroit.
Nor is it something you dress-up in and parade before
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Your leadership style is the quality of your relationship with your
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Research in recent years has clearly shown that there are subtleties to
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The Center's Leadership Skills Lab will help you examine your style,
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June 23 - 27 in suburban Chicago is your opportunity, in a non-
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Act today. Your registration form is enclosed.

Cordially yours,

Paul F. Goetting, jr
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PFG/jc

Enclosures

Dictated by Paul Goetting, signed in his absence

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