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ABSTRACT

REDUCING PASTOR-DEPENDENCY IN THE NEW
MARKET SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
THROUGH SELF-MANAGED MINISTRY TEAMS

by

Shane N. Anderson

Adviser: Kurt Johnson

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Document

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: REDUCING PASTOR DEPENDENCY IN THE NEW MARKET SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH THROUGH SELF-MANAGED MINISTRY TEAMS

Name of researcher: Shane N. Anderson

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Kurt Johnson, DMin

Date completed: May 2017

Problem

Between 2004 and 2015, members of the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church independently—that is, apart from the pastoral staff—initiated only a handful of new ministries (either for in-reach or outreach) and only occasionally attempted to substantially improve existing ministries. This stunted the church's ability to reach, baptize, and mature new members. Two professional assessments of the church indicated that this problem was caused largely by an unhealthy dependence on the pastoral staff to make the majority of substantive ministry decisions.

Method

Self-managed ministry teams were implemented into a significant portion of the church over a period of 18 months using a two-phase process. Their effectiveness at reducing pastor-dependency was assessed at the end of the 18 months on the basis of personal interviews, group interviews, personal observations, and the use of three evaluation instruments, the largest of which was a 61-question instrument adapted from professionally-formulated instruments used in the business world and the social sciences.

Results

Eighteen self-managed ministry teams were started during the 18-month period. Nine of these failed to survive more than a few weeks beyond their launch. However, the remaining nine (comprised of 58 people total) went on to establish significant ministry-oriented contact with more than 160 new people in the community who were not members of the New Market Church. The teams also recruited an additional 48 church members to assist in carrying out the teams' various ministries. All of this activity was formulated and executed apart from the pastoral staff.

Conclusions

Self-managed ministry teams can dramatically reduce dependence on the pastor in making substantive ministry decisions, including the starting and execution of new ministries. Self-managed teams can thus be a viable means for church members to more closely approximate the ministry arrangement of the New Testament priesthood and the early Seventh-day Adventist Church. While the results from the surviving teams were excellent, further study is needed to understand why the other nine teams did not survive.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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MARKET SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
THROUGH SELF-MANAGED MINISTRY TEAMS

A Project Document
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
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May 2017

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to a number of people for their invaluable assistance in making this project a success. I am grateful to Myrna Anderson, without whose support I'd still be a Master and not also a Doctor. I am grateful to my wife, Darlene, and my children, who have endured years of my being preoccupied with reading and writing. I appreciate the willingness and enthusiasm of the members of the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church who enthusiastically allowed me to carry out my experiments on and with them. I am particularly appreciative of the tabulation work done by Brenda Smith—her work saved me untold hours of bumbling through spreadsheets. The generosity of Shirley Menhardt helped make my excursions for intensives affordable (and therefore, possible). I am grateful for the financial support of the Potomac Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the various levels of the Adventist Church that have made such degrees as the Doctor of Ministry accessible to pastors like me who are in the trenches of parish ministry. Lastly, I am exceedingly grateful for the mentoring and inspiration from the members of my cohort, my professors, Dr. Kurt Johnson (my adviser), and Dr. Michael Cafferky (my second reader).

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the goal and nature of a research project to be implemented in the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Market, Virginia, USA. To that end, this chapter includes a description of the following topics which are germane to the project, namely: the ministry context of the New Market Church; the problem which occasions the project; the task called for to address the problem; the delimitations of the project; the proposed project process; and the definition of certain terms as used in the project.

The Ministry Context

The Church

The New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church is a 764-member, three-pastor congregation located in New Market, Virginia, in the heart of the bucolic Shenandoah Valley. I became senior pastor in 2004. The church was started 136 years ago and today has more than 550 year-round, active worshipers. It functions in part as the campus church of a 180-student coeducational Christian boarding high school, whose students for 10 months of the year swell the number of active worshippers to more than 700. The church also operates a nearby 121-student Christian elementary school. There are thus more than 300 people in the congregation that are under the age of 19. Many members consequently describe the church as a “vibrant” and “energetic” place to be.

The adult membership of the church contains a broad range of people including: blue- and white-collar workers; the spectrum of economic classes; retirees; empty nesters; and young families with children. According to a demographic study commissioned by the church, the average education level of members is well above the surrounding area's average (Percept Group, 2012). While there are some advantages to this education disparity, it also poses a continual challenge as the church seeks to mesh differing expectations for ministry priorities and worship flavor.

The Community

The community the church is located in is relatively sparsely populated. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the town of New Market has just over 2,000 residents. Within a roughly 20-mile radius of the church live less than 25,000 people. This often translates into a more relaxed and decidedly rural lifestyle for valley residents, a factor which draws many people from other areas to retire here. However, from a ministry perspective, there is at least one drawback to this low population density, and that is that immense effort is often required to reach substantial numbers of people evangelistically. This is why the congregation has been particularly pleased with the more than 30 baptisms from the community in the last eight years—perhaps a small number by some standards, but for rural America, ample cause for celebration. (Note that the church also sees 20-30 baptisms annually from the ministry done through the two schools that share its campus.)

The Church's Reputation

The New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church's reputation in the community is quite positive due in part to extensive public service and the hosting of community events. For instance, each Christmas, the church conducts a dramatic re-creation of the birth and times of Christ called "Journey to Bethlehem." More than 1,500 people from the community generally attend. The church has also raised thousands of dollars for the local fire and rescue department, as well as for the international relief efforts of local service clubs (such as Rotary International and the Lion's Club). Because of these and other activities, the church has a positive rapport with most members of the community.

The Problem

The New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church has a large number of well-educated and/or entrepreneurial-minded members. These traits are regularly expressed in these members' lives outside of church. However, since 2004, church members have independently—that is, apart from the pastoral staff—initiated only a handful of new ministries (either for in-reach or outreach) and have only occasionally attempted to substantially improve existing ministries. This has stunted the church's ability to reach, baptize, and mature new members.

Two professional assessments of the church—the first done by Christian Coaching and Consulting Ministries in 2008, and the second by the Potomac Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Ministerial Department in 2012—were commissioned to help determine the cause of this problem. The 2008 study utilized the Natural Church Development (NCD) instrument, which included an assessment of the ministry structures of the church (both for in-reach and outreach) as well whether or not pastoral leadership

was sufficiently empowering laity to do ministry. The results of this assessment clearly showed an unhealthy dependence on the pastoral staff to make the majority of substantive ministry decision (see pages 9-23 in particular). The 2012 assessment predominately used proprietary instruments which surveyed the effectiveness of lay and paid leadership in the church. One recommendation resulting from this was that the church should “create self-managed ministry teams” to the point where they would be implemented “throughout the ministries of the church” (p. 6). Such teams were thus an obvious potential solution to the lack of lay engagement in making substantive ministry decisions.

The Project Task

The task of this project is to develop, implement, and evaluate self-managed ministry teams in the New Market Church in order to reduce dependency on the pastoral staff in making substantive ministry decisions, specifically with regard to starting new ministry initiatives and/or making improvements in existing ministries. These teams will be comprised of members of the church that are 18 years old or older.

A definition of what is meant by the phrase “self-managed ministry team” is given in the “Definitions of Terms” section below. However, I will point out now that secular self-managed teams of various sorts have been utilized in the business world for at least the last 60 years (see Chapter 3), and have become particularly popular in that environment in the last 25 years. It is hoped that many of the benefits that self-managed teams have brought to the business world—such as improved efficiency and increased worker morale—will also be realized in the New Market Church.

The project will be evaluated by analyzing the effectiveness of the new self-managed ministry teams in independently implementing new ministry initiatives and/or making substantive improvements in existing ministries.

Delimitations of the Project

There are two major limitations that will be imposed on this project. First, given the potential benefits of self-managed ministry teams, it is tempting to try to implement them in every ministry of the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church. But while this may be a worthy long-term goal, the time limitations of doctoral research demand something less extravagant. Consequently, for this project, the implementation of self-managed teams will be limited to: (a) new ministries that church members themselves decide to start on their own; and/or (b) existing ministries that church members independently select to modify and improve. In other words, there will be no predetermined ministries, new or current, that will be assigned by the pastoral staff to project participants in which to start self-managed teams.

Second, the two implementation phases of this project (see “Description of the Project Process” below) will be limited to a combined total duration of between 12 and 18 months. Ideally, the self-managed ministry teams would be studied over a period of several years in order to better discern long-term patterns, best practices, etc. The time constraints imposed by the nature of the Doctor of Ministry, however, require a shorter window of study. Thus, this project should be considered an introduction to the use of self-managed ministry teams in a local church rather than a definitive treatment of the topic. (Note that it is only the research for this project that will be time-limited. As for the

self-managed ministry teams themselves, my hope is that they will continue on indefinitely even after the research is finished.)

A Description of the Project Process

Given that self-managed ministry teams represent a substantial departure from long-standing practice in the New Market Church, a coherent, research-based plan will need to be created to bring them about in an effective manner. The plan proposed below consists of: (a) three preparatory steps; (b) a two-phase implementation process that will start, monitor, and assess self-managed ministry teams in the congregation; and (c) an evaluation of the project's overall effectiveness, which will include making recommendations for future improvements in the implementation and utilization of self-managed ministry teams in a church environment.

Three Preparatory Steps

The first preparatory step will be to develop a sound theological basis for self-managed ministry teams being utilized by a local church. To this end, both Scripture and the writings of Ellen White will be consulted, particularly with regard to the role of clergy in the ministry of the local church, the role of laity in the ministry of the local church, and the implications of an unhealthy level of pastor dependency in a local church. All Bible texts cited will be from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

Second, the current literature on self-managed teams will be reviewed in two key areas: self-managed teams in the business world, and self-managed teams in the religious world.

A third preparatory step will be to develop a strategy for implementing self-managed ministry teams in the congregation. This strategy will be developed by: (a) taking the biblical descriptions of how ministry is to function in the local church (as revealed in the first preparatory step); (b) taking the relevant data from strategies used in the business and religious world for implementing self-managed teams (as revealed in the second preparatory step); and (c) interpreting these findings in light of the specific ministry context of the New Market Church.

With these three preparatory steps completed, actual self-managed ministry teams will then be implemented in the congregation using the two-phase process detailed below.

Phase One of Implementation

Phase One will be intentionally “raw”—that is, it will intentionally push lay ministry done through self-managed ministry teams to an extreme in order to test the limits of what can be accomplished in a church environment with near-zero pastoral intervention. Because of this, Phase One will be intentionally limited to fewer participants than Phase Two. The idea will be that successes generated in a smaller, more easily trackable context will bear sound lessons that can be implemented on a larger scale in Phase Two. Additionally, should the teams fail, their smaller size would potentially limit negative repercussions in the wider congregation.

Recruiting and Orienting Teams

Phase One will begin by first recruiting, then meeting with potential self-managed ministry team members within the congregation. This initial meeting will focus on: (a)

casting a vision for the necessity of lay-driven ministry; (b) conveying the concept of, rationale for, and proper functioning of self-managed teams; (c) discussing metrics for success; (d) conveying the starting and ending dates of the research period; and (e) soliciting and integrating feedback from the potential team members regarding the implementation plan.

Launching the Teams

At the close of the orientation meeting, those that are willing to become part of the new teams will be asked to gather with their team members and choose an official launch date (to take place as soon as possible). On that date, the new team members will meet to determine who will lead their team, the nature of their team's ministry, and other issues.

Monitoring the Teams' Progress

Once the new teams have launched, there will be feedback meetings (at least monthly) between the team leaders and me. The purpose of these meetings will be to assess the progress of the ongoing implementation process. Note again that due to the raw nature of Phase One, I will not be offering guidance to team leaders in these meetings except under the most extreme of circumstances (e.g., the imminent demise of the self-managed ministry team). I will encourage, but not direct.

Assessment of Phase 1 Effectiveness

At the conclusion of the time allocated for Phase One, all participants will meet with me for an evaluation meeting. Information for evaluating the effectiveness of the project will be gathered at this meeting through: (a) personal interviews by me with

selected individual team members; (b) a group exit interview with all the participants; (c) my personal observations; and (d) group member's answers on evaluation instruments adapted from teamwork effectiveness surveys used in the business world and social sciences.

Phase Two of Implementation

Phase Two will essentially follow the same steps as Phase One (recruit, meet for orientation, launch, monitor their progress, etc.). However, potential improvements identified in Phase One will undoubtedly alter at least somewhat the exact steps that Phase Two will follow. It is also hoped that significantly greater numbers of people will choose to participate in Phase Two than were allowed to in Phase One.

One facet which that I do not anticipate changing from one phase to the next will be the evaluation process, including the use of the same teamwork effectiveness evaluation instrument. This will allow the effectiveness of Phase Two versus Phase One to be appropriately compared and assessed.

Evaluation and Recommendations

Once Phases 1 and 2 are completed, the final step of the project process will be to summarize and interpret the lessons learned from the research. Conclusions will be drawn as to the effectiveness of the strategy used to implement the self-managed ministry teams. I will also make recommendations for further study on issues relating to the implementation of self-managed ministry teams.

Definition of Terms

There is one term already used consistently in this project paper that may not be fully understood by the reader: “self-managed ministry team.” This lack of understanding should not be surprising, as there is no definition given in the literature as of this writing. True, there is a wealth of literature defining self-managed teams in the business world, and a similarly wealthy corpus defining traditional ministry teams (e.g. committees) in the local church. But regarding self-managed teams that are comprised of lay church members and are formed for the purpose of ministry in and through the local church, there is nothing but tangentially related material currently available. Given the profound need many pastors see for lay engagement in substantive ministry, this gap in the literature is cause for concern. (See Chapter 3 for a more detailed treatment of this issue.)

This project envisions a substantial amount of overlap between the definition of a self-managed ministry team in the religious world and a self-managed team in the business world. Though Chapter 3 will provide a fuller definition of the latter type of team, Yeatts and Hyten (1998), one of the foremost teams of researchers of self-managed teams in the business world, give a definition that will suffice for the moment:

[Self-managed teams in the business world] are typically responsible for managing all or most aspects of the work and performing all the technical tasks involved. Technical tasks are typically rotated among team members, as are management responsibilities, such as monitoring the team’s productivity and quality. (p. 16)

In other words, many (if not most) of the oversight and quality control tasks normally assigned to middle or upper business management staff are instead taken on by members of the self-managed team. The usual intent is that less vertical leadership will lead to less bureaucracy, and thus more innovation and investment of time and energy on the part of team members, which will ultimately yield greater productivity and efficiency.

With that foundation in mind, here is my definition of a self-managed ministry team as used in this project:

A self-managed ministry team is one that: (a) is comprised of uncompensated, non-clerical Christians; (b) is entirely or almost entirely responsible for the mode of execution and quality of their ministry work; (c) is internally and consistently motivated to achieve sound ministry results; and (d) is committed to fellowship with and the spiritual maturation of each team member in Christ.

Again, Chapter 3 will provide more depth to this definition.

Summary

The New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church has a number of entrepreneurially-minded members. However, this resourcefulness is not currently translating into effective lay-initiated and/or lay-led ministry within and outside of the church. To remedy this problem, self-managed ministry teams will be introduced into a portion of the congregation. This introduction will start with three preparatory steps, followed by a two-phase implementation process. When both phases are completed, I will conduct an in-depth evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the self-managed ministry teams in independently implementing new ministry initiatives and/or making substantive improvements in existing ministries. This will determine how effective the self-managed ministry teams were in reducing undue dependence on the pastoral staff in making substantive ministry decisions.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

In the western world today, it is an accepted fact of religious life that professional clergy are to function as leaders of local congregations. Parishioners often envision a clergyman or clergywoman's presence as stabilizing, inspiring, and catalytic, expecting that his or her tenure will lead to growth in the church both spiritually and numerically.

It is indisputable that some professional clergy do indeed contribute positively to a local church. However, as Rainer (2013, para.1) points out, it is also true that "the majority of the churches in our country [the United States] are not growing." It thus seems warranted to conclude that at this time, the pervasive phenomenon of professional clergy leading local congregations does not correlate positively to church growth. Could this be due to how the individual clergyman or woman is functioning in their leadership with regard to the Old and New Testament priesthods?

It is the contention of this project paper that: a) the type of leadership used by many professional clergy in local churches today often retrogrades into a pre-Christian form of leadership, namely, that of the Old Testament priesthood; b) that this return to Old Testament practice can negatively impact church growth; and c) that a resurgence of a leadership style that approximates the New Testament-style priesthood can offer fresh and substantial opportunities for spiritual and numerical growth in a local church.

To support these contentions, this chapter is an exploration of the theological roots and nature of priestly leadership in the Christian community of faith. The Old Testament and intertestamental roots of such leadership will be examined from a methodological perspective (what priests historically did) and a chronological perspective (how the role of the priesthood evolved over time). Next, the New Testament transformation of priestly leadership in the community of faith will be examined using a reverse-chronology approach. This will be followed by a study of relevant material in the writings of Ellen White and other historical sources pertaining to the leadership of local Seventh-day Adventist churches. Finally, a chapter summary will be given, as well as a general prescription for leadership of the local Adventist church today.

The Old Testament Priesthood

The role of the Old Testament priest was essentially that of an intercessor between God and humanity. This intercessory role was manifest in two related yet distinct ways. First, the priest was to act as an intercessor between God and penitent human beings by “offer[ing] gifts and sacrifices for sins” (Heb 5:1; see also 8:3; Lev 1-7, 9:7; Joel 1:13—unless otherwise noted, all texts here and elsewhere in this paper are from the New International Version). Through such sacrifices, cultic ritual, prayer, and other means, the Old Testament-era priest was to be a restorative intermediary so that “he might make atonement for the sins of the people” (Heb 2:17). The priest’s actions were thus designed to bring the people back into right legal relationship with God.

The priest also interceded in a second way: an instructor of the people (Lev 10:11; Deut 33:10; Ezra 7:10; Mal 2:7). He was to teach the ways and laws of Yahweh. This

teaching role was intercessory in that it helped bridge the gap between the Jews' ignorance of God on the one hand and the life Yahweh was calling them to on the other.

Development of the Priestly Role

The Mt. Sinai experience (see Exod 19:1, onward) undoubtedly provides the most detailed exposition of the priestly role in all of the Old Testament. It is thus to that event that many turn to learn of the roots of the priesthood. However, the first functioning priestly role is arguably found more than two millennia earlier in the life of Adam.

Adam: Priestly Prototype

Though there is no specific record of Adam leading out in cultic ritual or of being designated by God to do so, it can be inferred that this was nonetheless the case from the fact that his sons Cain and Abel clearly understood the necessity of fulfilling a priestly-type function themselves (Gen 4:3 & 4). It is notable also that some Jewish Midrash (e.g., *Numbers Rabbah*, 4.8—see Slotki, 1983) and scholars (Davidson, 2015; Hahn, 2012; Orlov, 2013) cite strong evidence that Adam was indeed the first priest. If true, this marks the beginning of what was essentially a patriarch-priest class in which the male head of each family, tribe, clan, etc., was responsible for the spiritual wellbeing of his family through direct intercession with Yahweh (usually via prayer and/or cultic ritual). Examples of this type of priestly role can be found in Noah (Gen 8:20 & 21), Abram/Abraham (Gen 12:7, 22:13, etc.), Jacob (Gen 31:54), Manoah (Judg 13:16), Job (Job 1:5), and others.

The Priesthood Codified at Sinai

The Sinai experience would dramatically codify and concentrate the priesthood compared to the days of the early patriarchs. Beginning in Exodus 28:1, Yahweh commands Moses: “Have Aaron your brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests.” From that time forward, while patriarchal heads-of-family undoubtedly retained an intra-family priestly role, the Aaronic priesthood now held sway as the uniquely designated class entrusted with interceding between Yahweh and Israel (Num 3:10). This arrangement continued (admittedly with some ebb and flow—see below) for more than a thousand years, even to and beyond the time of Christ (see Matt 2:4, 26:57; Heb 10:11).

It is important to pause here and note that the priesthood as practiced from Sinai onward confirmed or established at least three key points. First, the priesthood would now nearly always be a *located* phenomenon with priests being firmly attached to a designated place of worship (e.g., the sanctuary/temple). It seems safe to thus imply that an Old Testament-era priest would minister to the same general populace for the majority (if not all) of his career. Priests acting as missionaries for Yahweh to other cultures and places are thus essentially unknown prior to the mid-first century A.D. Second, the priesthood was now explicitly *restricted to Jewish males*. And third, membership in the priesthood was now clearly for the *spiritually stratified*—that is, God was to be approached via the intercession of a unique strata of human beings that were to live a markedly more elevated spiritual life than did the average follower of God. Priests were thus to be held up as pronounced and very public examples of ritual and moral purity (see Exod 29:1-35, 44-46; Lev 21; etc.).

The Priesthood After Sinai

The gravity of the duties of the post-Sinai priesthood demanded the Israelites' deep respect, and the priestly class came to be highly esteemed. This was logical, for if Yahweh was their only hope, then the sons of Aaron were their only access to that hope.

Unfortunately, this high esteem did not lead to consistent effectiveness for the Aaronic priesthood. Instead, its fortunes and efficacy rose and fell significantly in the centuries following Sinai. For instance, on the one hand, Nadab and Abihu served as early (and fatal) examples of priestly failings (Lev 10:1 & 2). On the other hand, by the advent of the Jewish monarchy, the priesthood had achieved such markedly elevated status that they merited literally royal treatment: King David himself (c.11th century B.C.) oversaw specific, important functions of the priesthood (1 Chr 24:1-19).

This tie to David and the influence it entailed, though at the time perhaps considered appropriate and thus unremarkable, is nonetheless significant. It is the first and clearest indication of willing concomitancy between Israel's relatively fresh hierarchical/political power system—the human monarchy—and the priesthood. The by-turns benevolent/malevolent dictatorships the monarchy initiated brought different temptations to the priesthood that were not present when Yahweh was the sole king of Israel. The Davidic kingdom was thus a harbinger of political corruption in days to come.

A small number of priests would not only withstand these future enticements, but would strongly speak out against corrupt monarchies. This is illustrated by the examples of Jehoida (2 Kgs 11 & 12), Jeremiah (Jer 1:17-19), and Ezekiel (Ezek 19). However, by the end of the seventh century B.C., sufficient numbers of priests had become corrupt—both politically and spiritually—that they elicited rebukes from God *as a class* and not

merely as individuals (Jer 1:18, 2:8, 6:13, 8:10, 14:18, 23:11; Ezek 22:26; Hos 6:9; Zeph 3:4; Zech 7:4-6 & 11:17; Mal 2:1-9). For all its promise and in spite of its direct commissioning by Yahweh Himself, the located, exclusively male, spiritually stratified Old Testament priesthood of that era was headed in a firmly negative direction.

The Intertestamental Priesthood

The intertestamental period (c. 5th century B.C. to the birth of Christ) is little commented on by the biblical record. However, it is essential to give at least a brief overview of the development of the priesthood during these centuries, as this will elucidate the conditions Christ encountered when forming the new priesthood.

A Politicized, Degraded Priesthood

The intertestamental period saw the Jewish priesthood descend into increasing political engagement and moral ambiguity (Kaiser & Garrett, 2005a). This descent came about as a reaction to the successive subjugation by the Persians in c. 539 B.C.; the Greeks in c. 331 B.C.; and the Romans in c. 168 B.C. (Kaiser & Garrett, 2005b; La Sor, Hubbard, Bush, & Allen, 1996; Myers, 1987a, 1987b). Under Persian rule, Judea was forced to become essentially a priest-led state, with high priests becoming the highest Jewish leaders in the nation and yet fully subject to the king of Persia (Kaiser & Garrett, 2005b).

This could and at times did lead to institutionalized corruption in the priesthood. For instance, Horn (1960) points out,

Under the Ptolemies and early Seleucids [c. 3rd and 2nd centuries—see Myers, 1987a, 1987b], the high priest held both religious and civil power, subject to the foreign king. The priestly aristocracy, living from the tithe of the people and receiving other contributions, became wealthy, and consequently sought eagerly to preserve the

political status quo of the nation and to prevent any rebellion that might endanger their lucrative position. (p. 877)

In 37 B.C., the Roman King Herod murdered the Hasmonean high priest and replaced him with one of his own appointees. This pattern of naming appointees continued, and by the time the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., 28 high priests with no genealogical ties to the Aaronic priesthood would be appointed by pagan kings (Kaiser & Garrett, 2005b). While this situation caused consternation for some, the majority of the Jewish nation, enraptured with nationalistic fervor, only increased their admiration of and loyalty to the priestly class, which now were not merely spiritual intercessors, but also genuine statesmen taking full advantage of political process (Kaiser & Garrett, 2005b).

The decline of the priesthood is thus startling. What had begun as a deeply spiritual intercessory role designed to restore humanity's relationship with God had devolved into an often-secularized office with spiritual overtones and practices, an office primarily concerned with nationalistic, political, and military goals.

The New Testament Transformation of the Priesthood

By the time of Christ's public ministry, the intertestamental state of the priesthood remained unchanged. Even the most respected priests in Israel engaged in bribery (Matt 28:12-15), blasphemy (Matt 26:65—compare with Lev 10:6, 21:10), and murder, both attempted (John 12:10) and actual (Matt 27:25). Circumstances like this called for a profound change in the priesthood. As the writer of Hebrews stated (years after this change had begun), "The former regulation [i.e., that which established the Old Testament priesthood] is set aside because it was weak and useless" (Heb 7:18). A new and markedly different priesthood would take its place.

Deconstructing the Old Priesthood

The transition to this new priesthood started with the deconstruction of the old. Arguably, this began through the ministry of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist: Priesthood Critic

John the Baptist sharply criticized the Jewish ruling class—the most prominent of which were priests (Myers, 1987)—for being spiritually unqualified for their role:

But when he [John] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. (Matt 3:7-10)

The reference to cutting down “trees” would not have been lost on these religious leaders, for the nation of Israel had been prominently symbolized as a tree by the prophet Jeremiah (Jer 11:16). Such rhetoric clearly cut against the grain of Jewish nationalism—a nationalism that was dependent upon the priesthood for its energy and leadership. John’s words were thus doubly worrisome. Not only did they hint at the end of Jewish ethnic primacy in God’s kingdom, they also hinted at the end of the old-era Jewish priesthood.

Continued Deconstruction by Christ

Christ continued this deconstruction of Jewish/priestly ambition when he spoke of the need to “love your enemies [e.g., their Roman overlords] and pray for those who persecute you,” even making such love a pre-condition of being a part of the future heavenly family (Matt 5:43). He performed miracles for Roman military leaders (Luke 7:1-10). He asked a Jew who collected taxes for the Romans to be one of his closest associates (Matt 9:9). He refused to become embroiled in Roman-centered political

controversy (Mark 12:13-17). The conclusion was clear: Christ's kingdom—and inevitably, its priesthood—was to exceed Jewish national boundaries and norms.

Christ's deconstruction of the priesthood even went so far as to directly correct or rebuke prominent Pharisees, Sadducees, and other priesthood-connected leaders in both private and public (Matt 12:24-37; Luke 14:1-24; John 2:13-19, 3:10, 9:39-41, etc.). This culminated with his unmasking of their corruption in Matthew 23 and his climactic statement, "Look, your house is left to you desolate" (Matt 23:38). Clearly, Christ saw the days of the priesthood—at least as constituted for the last four millennia—as limited.

With the ripping in half of the dividing curtain in the Jerusalem temple (Matt 27:51), God's deconstruction of the long-standing, Old Testament-based priesthood was complete. Because Christ had been sacrificed, no other blood sacrifices were needed on earth (Heb 9:26-28, 10:11-14). Consequently, no earthly sanctuary was needed, and the priesthood as constituted in the Old Testament was no longer needed, as well.

Understanding the New Priesthood: A Reverse-Chronology Approach

The new priesthood was the primary office around which the leadership of the New Testament church was formed. This formation can perhaps best be seen by starting with the latest (and thus more mature) statements in the New Testament regarding the new priesthood rather than starting with the earliest statements (which clearly show their incubatory nature). Such a reverse-chronology approach will help make clear what God's plan had been all along for the execution of the church's work.

John and Peter on the New Priesthood

The apostle John was the last living New Testament author. Writing near the end of the first century, he enthusiastically describes the Christian church's new priestly leadership arrangement in clear terms:

To him [Christ] who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen! (Rev 1:5 & 6)

And later, he states:

You [Christ] are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God. (Rev 5:9 & 10)

The apostle Peter, writing in roughly the mid-60s A.D. (Nichol, 1957), also describes this new priestly leadership arrangement, but with even greater detail:

You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.... But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now [because of Christ—see vs.7 & 8] you have received mercy. (1 Pet 2:5, 9 & 10)

The Radical Nature of the New Priesthood

It is difficult to underestimate the stark difference between the Old Testament-era priesthood and the new priesthood that John and Peter described. For while the intercessory role of the Old Testament priesthood is to be retained, *by whom* and *by what methods* this intercession is carried out is to be dramatically different.

An Inclusive Priesthood

Careful analysis of the words of John and Peter just quoted establish two key points in regard to whom was to carry out the New Testament priest's intercessory work.

The first point becomes clear when the old priesthood's *restricted-to-Jewish-males-only* policy is contrasted with the *dramatically inclusive priesthood* described by John and Peter. According to John, for instance, eligibility for the priesthood is no longer determined by one's gender, nor by one's ethnicity or genealogy. Instead, priesthood eligibility is now determined "by his [Christ's] blood" (Rev 1:5), that is, by faith in Christ's sacrifice on the cross. This would seem to strongly imply that if one is a Christian, one is a new order priest—no exceptions. One may or may not be Jewish and male. But it appears that *all* who trust in Christ are appointed as priests in the new Christian priesthood.

Moving backward in time, Peter is emphatic about the inclusive nature of the new priesthood when he declares:

You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.... But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God. (1 Pet 2:5, 9)

The "you" mentioned twice here refers to the people the book of I Peter is addressed to, namely, "to God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1 Pet 1:1). There are no gender distinctions being made, here. Peter's letter is not only for "men" or only for "women," but rather, "to God's elect"—clearly and emphatically an appellation devoid of any gender specificity. Moreover, Peter's letter is written late enough in the Christian missionary era and to such locations that the conclusion is inescapable: Gentile converts

to Christianity are included in the category of “God’s elect.” It is thus safe to deduce that the priesthood of the New Testament is no longer solely for males of a certain ethnicity and genealogy, but for all people—men and women, from any part of the world or parentage—who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

An Equal, Pure Priesthood

A second key point becomes clear when the *spiritually stratified* nature of the Old Testament priesthood is contrasted with the *spiritually equal/spiritually pure* priesthood John and Peter describe in the above texts. As shown above, Old Testament-era priests were called to a high-level spirituality, one notably elevated over the non-priest population. But in the New Testament era, the priesthood is instead comprised of the *spiritually equal*, with *all* being called to a very high moral standard of purity.

Again working chronologically in reverse, John is the last biblical witness to address the universal equality and high purity of this new priesthood. He begins his introduction of the new priests (of which he is one) by stating that “[Christ] has freed us from our sins” (Rev 1:5). Given that this freedom is a rectification of the primary weakness of the old-era priesthood (Heb 10:11), and given that Christ’s blood is sufficient to overcome all sin (1 Cor 10:13), the spiritual standard to which all New Testament believers/priests are called is clearly high.

Peter earlier sets the stage for John’s sentiment when he says in 1 Peter 2 that all believers in Christ are “being built into a spiritual house” (v. 5). This “spiritual” nature of the Christian priest’s “house” is mentioned in contrast to the disobedience (v. 8) and the “darkness” (v. 9) of the unredeemed. All believers, not just an isolated class, are thus called to high spiritual attainment. Moreover, Peter says believers are to be “a holy

priesthood” and “a holy nation” (v. 9). He thus does not call them to merely “be well-intended” or to “be moderate in all things” in their priestly roles. He instead essentially confirms that the same nomenclature embossed on the headwear of the Old Testament Aaronic high priest—“Holy to the Lord” (Exod 28:36)—be used for the entirety of the New Testament priesthood, as well.

All of this points to a clear call to high moral and spiritual purity for a spiritually equal priesthood rather than a spiritually stratified one. All who are redeemed by the blood of Christ are to be priests, and all of those priests are called to be morally and spiritually exemplary. Any stratification among believers where one class of believers is considered spiritually superior to another is now done away with in Christ.

Changes in Priestly Methodology

In addition to changing who was eligible to carry out the new priesthood’s intercessory duties, the New Testament also changed by what methods this intercession was to be achieved. The new priests were to intercede between God and humanity by offering new sacrifices and by being spiritual instructors of the people in fresh and different ways. Four points can be made regarding this.

First New Sacrifice: Full Devotion

First, New Testament priests are to offer “spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 2:5) rather than the literal sacrifices of sheep, goats, drink-offerings, etc. Again working backward in time, Paul makes it clear that this spiritual sacrifice is the Christian priest’s offering of the totality of his or her self to God’s service: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship” (Rom 12:1). In

essence, Paul is calling new priests in some limited yet real sense to intercede *for* themselves, *between* themselves and God, by *offering themselves*—certainly a profound reshaping of the sacrifices required in the old priestly order. The New Testament priesthood is thus a supernatural calling to be fully devoted to Christ in every way.

Second New Sacrifice: Service to Others

Second, there are other intercessory “sacrifices” required of these new priests. Monetary gifts given to assist others, for instance, are referred to as being “fragrant offering[s], an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God” (Phil 4:18). Furthermore, assisting others and being generous to them are also referred to as “sacrifices” with which “God is pleased” (Heb 13:16). To be a New Testament priest, therefore, is to serve others.

Third New Sacrifice: Evangelism

Third, this notion of the new priesthood offering new spiritual sacrifices leads directly to the fresh ways in which they are to act as spiritual instructors of the people. The writer of Hebrews, for instance, speaks of Christians offering up the “sacrifice of praise” to God through “lips that confess his name” (Heb 13:15). This is significant, for it appears to imply that for a Christian to fulfill his or her priestly role, they must engage in evangelistic functions. If true, this would be an affirmation of the Old Testament priesthood’s responsibility to be an intercessor by teaching the people—only now, the “people” to be taught specifically include those outside the body of believers, people the old-era priesthood rarely addressed.

Peter also calls for such priestly evangelistic duty when he says that Christian priests are called specifically that they “may declare the praises of him [Christ] who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” Evangelism seems to be implied in

this statement. Furthermore, the New Testament priest's obligation to offer the totality of his or her self to the will of Christ (Rom 12:1) would certainly include obedience to Christ's command to make disciples in Matthew 28:18-20. Sharing Christ with others—thereby interceding between them and God—is thus key for the New Testament priest.

Fourth New Sacrifice: Crossing Borders

Fourth and finally, the locale in which the New Testament priest's intercession is to occur is radically changed from the old order. Recall afresh that for millennia, the priestly role was extraordinarily *located*—that is, it was geographically restricted, both to Israel in general and to the temple (or other approved site) in particular. As mentioned previously, this geographical anchoring intensified into the intertestamental period, when the priests' duties to intercede for the people spiritually became often indistinguishable from their political aspirations. They failed to separate being God's chosen priesthood from the drive for Israel to have political and geographical sovereignty.

But John decimates this notion of a located, nationalistic priesthood when he says that “you [Christ] purchased for God persons *from every tribe and language and people and nation*. You have made *them* to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God...” (Rev 5:9 & 10, emphasis supplied). The inclusion of other nations—of gentiles—into the priesthood of God must have been astonishing to Jew and gentile alike. Clearly, the priesthood was no longer to be a located phenomenon, but instead one that transcended numerous boundaries, including geographic ones.

Decades earlier, Peter had strongly implied this same point: “Once you were not a people, but now [because of the cross of Christ] *you are* the people of God,” he proclaimed (I Pet 2:10, emphasis supplied). Peter said this in the full knowledge that

Rome still ruled over Palestine. In other words, being a constituted people of God was no longer dependent on geographical boundaries or sovereignty. The inevitable conclusion was that with national boundaries no longer defining the people of God, a priest's intercessory/instructor-of-the-people/evangelistic work was now global.

The New Priesthood's Impact on the Church

With the preceding information in mind, we can now see at least four areas impacted by the new role of the priesthood in the New Testament church. Each impacted area illustrates a pronounced departure from Old Testament practice.

Geographic Agility

Because all Christians of any nationality were now priests and thus called to mediate the message and blessings of God to others, the church was to expand in any direction its members were able to go—including across national and culturally-mandated geographic boundaries. This added previously unknown flexibility for the church to become a truly global rather than merely Jewish body.

Financial Affordability

Old Testament-era priests were financially supported through the tithe (see Num 18:8-32, Deut 14:22-29, etc.). Because these priests were localized and generally did no missionary work, the pool of people to support the priesthood was purely determined by the number of tithe paying Jews (predominately land owners—see text references above) present in their area. No thought was given to increasing the number of tithe returners through evangelism. Given that by the first century, there were an estimated 7,200 priests and 9,600 Levites (Kaiser & Garrett, 2005b), and given the precarious political and thus

financial situation of the nation, the fiscal resources required to support the priesthood were substantial.

This changed dramatically with the coming of the New Testament priesthood. Christian congregations no longer employed local, paid priests. Instead, as priests themselves, Christians oversaw their churches (the sizes of which would not usually have required any special training), including local evangelistic work. In fact, the only work that seems to have been consistently supported financially by the church was that done for other distant churches via the apostolic ministry (1 Cor 16:1-3, 2 Cor 8 & 9)—a ministry to which only a relatively small percentage of Christians were called. This kept local overhead low and ministry affordability high, thus facilitating kingdom growth both locally and around the world.

Spiritual Responsibility

A solid case can be made that the Old Testament-style priesthood was particularly prone to encouraging Jews to relinquish personal responsibility for the strength of their relationship to God. For instance, individual Jews on a national scale often went through the motions of the priest-led atonement system (offering sacrifices, having the priest manipulate the blood of those sacrifices on their behalf, etc.)—all while committing heinous sin such as idolatry and child sacrifice (see Jer 7:4-11, 19:5, 22-24; Isa 1:13-17; Hos 6:6; etc.). They thus in effect made the priesthood responsible for their salvation rather than actually being faithful followers of God themselves.

However, in the new era, this abdication of spiritual responsibility was to be overcome. Patterson (2014) sums this up nicely as he points out,

the centralized monarchical leadership model [referring to 1 Sam 8 and Israel's request for a king] and the consolidation of priestly responsibility in a tribe instead of the familial model of the firstborn ended the direct role and relationship of God as their Ruler (Judg.8:23). This separation between God as personal Ruler and His people was radically reversed in the New Testament record when Immanuel was realized and the Spirit of God took up residence in the hearts of His people (John 14:17; Acts 2:4). The need for the intermediate ruler was no longer present, because God and the individual were once again bonded in the Spirit. (p. 372)

Thus, as their status as newly-minted priests implies, Christians are to have direct access to the holy and transforming presence of God as he put his "laws in their minds and write[s] them on their hearts" (Heb 8:10). Their experience is to be a personal one with God, and as priests themselves, they alone are to be held responsible for the quality of that experience. No other human intercessor is to be required or indulged in.

Reproducibility

All of this led to a fourth area impacted by the new priesthood: reproducibility. Because of the geographic agility of the new priesthood, its low financial cost, and the high value placed on every priest being personally responsible for maintaining their spiritual health in top shape (and thus maintaining their readiness for service and evangelism), the Christian church was now far more reproducible than God's people had been previously. Adding to this was the fact that the new priesthood, being free from spiritual stratification, was inherently less bureaucratic. The marked simplicity of this arrangement meant it was now possible for one Christian to be all that was necessary for an entirely new branch of Christian work to be started in a new locale.

Facing Resistance to the New Priesthood

Because of the positive impact in the early Christian church in the above three areas, any signs of a return to the old priestly regime were met with strong resistance. For

instance, when Paul sensed that some Christians were beginning to assign a spiritually stratified elitism to he and other apostles, he rebuked them sharply, stating, “Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into Paul? I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you” (1 Cor 1:13 & 14). He concluded by pointing out why such elevation of others to that outmoded elite spiritual status was so dangerous: It would result in “the cross of Christ be[ing] emptied of its power” (v. 17)—a result which would mean an end of the Christian church and of salvation itself.

The New Replaces the Old

The preceding pages strongly suggest that replacing the Old Testament priesthood with a new one was integral to the design and success of the Christian church. A new priesthood was thus indeed the primary office around which New Testament church leadership was formed. Consequently, to retrograde to the old priestly arrangement—that is, to reinstate a located, exclusively male, spiritually stratified, non-evangelistic, costly, spiritual-responsibility-shifting leadership presence back into the lives of the people of God—would have been anathema in the minds of first century believers. It would have been the same as denying that Christ had died on the cross.

The New Priesthood in the Adventist Church

The early, mid-19th century leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church sought to implement the principles and practices of the New Testament church when designing the leadership structure of their burgeoning movement (Burrill, 1998; Maxwell, 2002; Schwarz, 1979). This included their insistence on a New Testament-style priesthood.

An Aversion to Settled Pastors

Perhaps the clearest evidence of this insistence was their refusal to have “settled pastors” over their local churches. As will be seen below, a “settled pastor” was one that stayed over a church as its leader for an extended period of time and took on responsibilities that rightly belonged to the local members (organizing prayer meetings, doing evangelism, solving intra-church difficulties, etc.). Instead of using such pastors, Adventist pioneers opted to have established churches be run by local leaders while reserving most salaries for clergy starting new churches in new areas—that is, for clergy fulfilling an apostolic function. So pervasive was this policy that as late as 1909, the Adventist Church was still organized in this way globally (*Seventh-day Adventists and Seventh-day Baptists*, 1909).

Ellen White was one of the most outspoken leaders against settled pastors. Her objections to them reflect a clear understanding of the dangers of returning to an Old Testament-style priesthood. For instance, in a January 27, 1890, article in the magazine *Signs of the Times*, she stated,

the success of a church does not depend on the efforts and labor of the living preacher, but it depends upon the piety of the individual members. When the members depend upon the minister as their source of power and efficiency, they will be utterly powerless. They will imbibe his impulses, and be stimulated by his ideas, but when he leaves them, they will find themselves in a more hopeless condition than before they had his labors. I hope that none of the churches in our land will depend upon a minister for support in spiritual things; for this is dangerous.... Just as soon as the members of a church call for the labors of a certain minister, and feel that he must remain with them, it is time that he was removed to another field, that they may learn to exercise the ability which God has given them. (para. 9)

White here clearly recognizes the dangers of spiritually stratified, located leadership in the church. Members were not to abdicate responsibility for the quality of their relationship with God to a supposedly spiritually superior leader who remained over

their congregation. To do so would result in spiritual immaturity—a phenomenon similar to what the ancient Jews experienced under the Old Testament priesthood.

A Long-Standing Policy

Ellen White’s thinking did not change over time in this regard. By 1895, a significant push had begun to place settled pastors over Seventh-day Adventist churches. At first, this took what seemed like a relatively harmless form: paid clergy holding lengthy “ministerial institutes” in which they preached about and taught laypersons to do various ministries. Though such clergymen were only briefly with these members or their churches, White (1895) sensed an inefficient precedent being set:

There has been too much spiritual energy expended [i.e., by the professional clergy] in the church at Battle Creek. Those who have listened to the precious truth that has been pouring forth in such a free manner as it has there, have generally failed to receive or to appreciate the light given. They have failed to communicate what they have received. (para. 8)

White reiterated this sentiment seven years later when she proclaimed, “there should not be a call to have settled pastors over our churches,” but instead, church members themselves should “carry on efficient missionary work in each locality” (1902, para. 9). Her point is again clear: Too much exposure to even quasi-located, spiritually stratified clergy can lead to an abdication of personal spiritual responsibility—in this case, the responsibility to do evangelism. Again, this was an ill effect similar to that experienced by Israel under the Old Testament priesthood.

Not Even to Save a Church

White’s aversion to settled pastors held firm even when a local church was facing difficult circumstances. For instance, as the Adventist work grew in the 19th century, not all churches that were planted thrived. Some had substantial internal disagreements and

consequently asked for a located clergyman to come and attempt to rectify their situation.

White's reply (1902) was firm:

God has not given His ministers the work of setting the churches right. No sooner is this work done, apparently, than it has to be done over again. Church members that are thus looked after and labored for become religious weaklings. If nine tenths of the effort that has been put forth for those who know the truth had been put forth for those who have never heard the truth, how much greater would have been the advancement made! (p. 18)

Here, White points again to the dangers of depending on clergy that would be functioning much as Old Testament-era priests did. Not only does such dependency stifle evangelism in the church, but it makes the dependent members spiritually immature—yet again reminiscent of the effects of the Old Testament priesthood.

The strongest statements from Ellen White about the negative impact of depending on settled pastors came in reply to local churches that were nearly ceasing operation. To them, White (1901) noted flatly that indeed,

the churches are dying, and they want a minister to preach to them. They should be taught [instead] to bring a faithful tithe to God, that He may strengthen and bless them. They should be brought into working order, that the breath of God may come to them. They should be taught that unless they can stand alone, without a minister, they need to be converted anew, and baptized anew. They need to be born again. (p. 381)

The force of this statement should not be underestimated. White clearly posits that the need for a minister—a located, spiritually stratified clergy person who intercedes over time in significant ways for his members—is a sign, not of good health, but of apostasy, the only cure for which is a rebirth in Christ. This appears to be similar to the dynamic that Paul fought against when he said that exalting a spiritually stratified class of church leadership would result in “the cross of Christ be[ing] emptied of its power” (1 Cor 1:17).

Additional Opposition to Settled Pastors

In 1912 came one of the strongest public denunciations of having settled pastors over Adventist churches. It did not come not from Ellen White, but instead from then-General Conference president Arthur G. Daniells. He and White were two of the strongest opponents to settled pastors at that time. In a ministerial institute address (as cited in Burrill, 1998) in Los Angeles, Daniells' response to the growing movement to settle pastors over churches was stark:

We have not settled our ministers over churches as pastors to any large extent. In some of the very large churches we have elected pastors, but as a rule we have held ourselves ready for field service, evangelistic work and our brethren and sisters have held themselves ready to maintain their church services and carry forward their church work without settled pastors. And I hope this will never cease to be the order of affairs in this denomination; for when we cease our forward movement work and begin to settle over our churches, to stay by them, and do their thinking and their praying and their work that is to be done, then our churches will begin to weaken, and lose their life and spirit, and become paralyzed and fossilized and our work will be on a retreat. (pp. 177-178)

The Shift to Settled Pastors

In spite of such statements, a shift in practice did eventually come. In 1915, Ellen White died. In 1920, Daniells was not re-elected to the General Conference presidency. Within the decade, settled pastorates began to be implemented on a gradual, yet broad scale in the United States. The results were as Daniells had feared: Adventist accession rates dropped sharply. As Burrill (1998) points out,

In the 1920s and onward, the church moved toward settled pastorates and the [resulting] growth rate [was] only one-third to one-fourth of what it was when the church operated without settled pastors. Clearly, the move to settled pastors has not accentuated the growth of the Adventist Church. (p. 188)

Moreover, many of the problems predicted to accompany the adoption of settled pastorates became reality: reduced spiritual growth of members; abdication of spiritual

responsibility by members to the settled clergy (whom they perceived as spiritual superior, i.e., stratified, when compared to themselves); and dramatic increases in the costs of pastoral ministry due the mushrooming number of pastors on the church payroll (Burrill, 1998, pp. 224-225). And again, all of these are reminiscent of the problems that plagued Israel under the Old Testament priesthood.

Summary and Prescription for the Church Today

The preceding pages have given a brief overview of the development of the priesthood in the community of faith. From the beginning, the priest was an intercessor, acting as mediator between humans and God via both cultic ritual and public instruction in the ways of God. Beginning with Adam and his sons, the priesthood moved from being a patriarchal, intra-family, intercessory role to, from Mt. Sinai onward, being a located, exclusively male, spiritually stratified intercessory role. By the time of Christ, the priesthood had degenerated into a more secularized, nationalistic office while still serving in the sanctuary and indulging in the associated prestige such service then brought.

With the advent of the Christian church, a new priesthood began to replace the old. Instead of a located, exclusively male, spiritually stratified, and expensive priesthood, Christ came to begin a priesthood that is:

- gender and ethnically inclusive
- based on spiritual equality/free from spiritual stratification
- committed to interceding for others via spiritual sacrifices such as service and evangelism
- geographically agile
- financially affordable

- comprised of Christians who are personally responsible for their own spirituality, aiming for nothing less than full devotion to Christ
- easily reproducible
- global in reach

The early Adventist Church was strongly committed to the principles of the New Testament priesthood as evidenced by its dogged opposition to “settled pastors.” However, in the 20th century, settled pastors ultimately became the norm, bringing Adventism some of the same problems experienced under the Old Testament priesthood.

What of the Three Contentions?

In light of the above evidence, it now seems warranted to affirm two of the three contentions given at the beginning of this chapter. First, the type of leadership often used by many professional clergy in local churches today has indeed retrograded into a pre-Christian form of leadership—namely, the priesthood of the Old Testament. Clergy today are nearly always located in one place over the same congregation(s) for extended periods of time; are a majority male; tend to be seen as spiritually stratified, i.e., somehow spiritually superior to their parishioners; devote little time to evangelism; and are costly to maintain. This is strongly reminiscent of the Old Testament priesthood.

Second, Adventist history persuasively suggests that settling pastors over local churches in the mode of the Old Testament priesthood constricts church growth and may thus account in part for the current decline we observe in American churches.

The third contention—that a return to a leadership style that approximates the New Testament priesthood can offer fresh and substantial opportunities for spiritual and

numerical growth—is the substance of this project and will thus be addressed in subsequent chapters.

For Further Research

Two areas seem ripe for further research. First, while this chapter has addressed humanity's role in the new priesthood, the role of Christ has not been explored. His high priestly office, and how it should impact lay ministry today in the local church, would be a fruitful line of research. Second, further study is called for to find effective ways to implement a bona fide New Testament priesthood on a broader (state, national, etc.) scale. Because many church organizations today appear to be intentionally and resolutely staffed on the principles an Old Testament-style priesthood, the potential for negative consequences to come to those seeking to bring large scale reform is high. Reform is inherently risky. But it may be that biblical principles and practices can be discovered and elucidated that can help church leaders and churches minimize such risk.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

As mentioned in Chapter 1, two professional assessments of the New Market Church suggested that church members have an unhealthy dependence on the pastoral staff to make the majority of substantive ministry decisions. One possible solution to this problem lies in approximating a New Testament-style priesthood in the church via the implementation of self-managed ministry teams (SMTs). Consequently, in this chapter, I will review the literature regarding SMTs in two broad areas of practice: (a) SMTs in the business world; and (b) SMTs in the religious world, specifically in Christian churches.

Two clarifications will help the reader navigate what follows. First, due to the conceptual and methodological similarities between SMTs and other types of teams (such as work groups, committees, etc.), there will be times when research done on other team types will be cited as applying to SMTs. Depending on how obvious it is that a non-SMT source accurately applies to SMTs, research cited may or may not be labeled in this review as being originally done on non-SMTs.

Second, because the use of SMTs in churches is currently rare, my project necessarily deals with the foundational aspects of SMTs. In other words, churches today that wish to implement SMTs are essentially pioneering and thus need to understand the fundamentals of SMTs as well as more advanced SMT concepts. Consequently, sources older than 10 years will be referenced in both the business and religious world sections,

as the foundational research on SMTs needed for my project dates from prior (at times well prior) to the last 10 years.

Self-managed Teams in the Business World

Five key facets of SMTs largely describe their use in the business world: (a) the definition of an SMT; (b) the rationale for SMTs; (c) the selection of team members for effective SMTs; (d) the internal leadership and environment of effective SMTs; and (e) the external leadership and environment of effective SMTs.

The Definition of a Self-Managed Team

At first glance, an SMT may seem simple to define: a team that manages itself. However, researchers such as MacMillan (2001) and Castiglione (2007) hold that terms like “self-regulating teams,” “self-managing work teams,” “leaderless groups,” “self-managed teams,” “autonomous work teams,” “self-contained teams,” and others are all essentially interchangeable. This proliferation of synonymous terminology has prompted a number of researchers to define SMTs in greater detail. This is usually done by expanding on definitions developed years and even decades ago when SMTs were in their more formative stages.

Perhaps the prototypical example comes from the foundational research done more than 60 years ago by Trist and Bamforth (1951). Trist and Bamforth are generally considered to be the first to research what years later would become known as an SMT. They described this impressive new work unit (then being used experimentally in the coal mining industry) as a “single, small, face-to-face group which experiences the entire cycle of operations within the compass of its membership. . . . Leadership and ‘supervision’ [are] internal to the group, which [has] a quality of responsible autonomy”

(p. 6). Moe, Dingsoyr, and Dyba (2009) build explicitly on Trist and Bamforth's definition by pointing out that SMTs distribute their internal leadership in some manner to team members who "share decision authority jointly" and also "bring [this] decision-making authority to the level of operational problems and uncertainties" (p. 20), often leading to quicker resolution of such challenges.

In a similar vein, Carte, Chidambaram, and Becker (2006) see SMTs as being "characterized by members taking responsibility for the quality of the work process and product as well as sharing in the management and/or leadership functions of the team" (p. 323). Bunker and Coleman (2014) note that this often includes the responsibility to resolve internal conflicts independent of outside management. And Yeatts and Hyten (1998), a foremost team of researchers of SMTs, put it the most strongly when they said that SMTs consist of:

team members [that] are typically responsible for managing all or most aspects of the work and performing all the technical tasks involved. Technical tasks are typically rotated among team members, as are management responsibilities, such as monitoring the team's productivity and quality. (p. 16)

Regardless of their specific wording, nearly all definitions for SMTs serve to highlight the difference between standard workplace teams—which nearly always retain a strong measure of vertical governance (see next section) both within and outside of the team—and SMTs, which, while not free from outside control, nearly always retain much of the authority normally allocated to an outside entity.

The Rationale for Self-Managed Teams

The rationale for forming SMTs in the business world is often predicated on the perceived inadequacies of the vertical governance models prevalent in most businesses today (Pearce & Conger, 2003). Such models are described provocatively by some

researchers as “command and control” models (Angles, 2007, pp. 36, 60, 142; Cashman, 2008, p. 32; Moe et al., 2009, p. 20; Seel, 2006, p. 9) and as being “hierarchical” (Humphrey, Hollenbeck, Meyer, & Ilgen, 2007, p. 885; Mendez, 2009, p. 10; Morgeson, 2005, p. 497). Pearce and Manz (2011) even make the bold assertion that vertical modes of governance are predisposed to “corporate social irresponsibility” (p. 563) and that given the power many CEOs wield, “the proverbial fox does indeed seem to be in the henhouse” (p. 564), filling his or her own needs at the expense of the company and/or society. While such thoughts may seem overly skeptical and even openly biased, there’s no doubt that SMT proponents often see SMTs as the antidote to the abuses of vertical leadership, diffusing authority and decision-making processes rather than centering them in one individual or entity.

From a more positive perspective, there are additional reasons for using SMTs. SMTs have often proven to be positively correlated with increased productivity and profitability; increased overall employee job satisfaction; decreased negative effects of absenteeism (since employees in SMTs tend to know each other’s work assignments better and can thus more easily fill in should an absence occur); increased agility to deal with production problems quickly and effectively; and increased personal satisfaction of employee higher-order human needs, such as self-actualization and autonomy (Castiglione, 2007; Cordery, Mueller, & Smith, 1991; Houghton, Neck, & Manz, 2003; Luis Alves Pais, 2010; Manz & Sims, 1987; Moe et al., 2009; Kogler-Hill, 2016; Wageman, 1997; Yang & Guy, 2011; Yeatts & Hyten, 1998; Yukl, 2014). These can be powerful reasons for using SMTs.

The Selection of Team Members for Effective Self-Managed Teams

When considering how to best staff SMTs, it is self-evident that much of the criteria businesses use in non-SMT staffing remains applicable (e.g., seeking team members with traits such as excellent task-specific skills, a strong understanding of company working protocols, a willingness to work in a team environment, etc.).

However, less obvious is the necessity of dealing with the concepts of homogeneity and heterogeneity—polar concepts between which nearly all researchers' opinions fall when advocating their staffing views.

On the one hand, those who prefer a homogeneous approach to staffing believe that the less major differences there are among team members, the less intra-team obstacles there will be to overcome, leading to greater overall team effectiveness (Cable & Edwards, 2004; Kirkman & Shapiro, 2005; see also Stahl, Maznevski, Voigt, & Jonsen, 2009). Some also specifically point out that team member similarities in individual core values (such as honesty, competition, and autonomy) can promote team cohesiveness and thus overall productivity (Al Abdulwahab, 2009).

On the other hand, advocates of heterogeneity tend to take a differentiated approach to team staffing, embracing some of the strengths of homogeneity while taking advantage of a selective heterogeneity. Somech (2006), for instance, draws a distinction between relations-oriented attributes (such as a team member's sex, age, and religion) and task-oriented attributes (such as professional skills, tenure, and knowledge base). Relations-oriented homogeneity, while at times helpful, is largely irrelevant, he claims, to overall team performance. However, task-oriented heterogeneity promotes higher team performance by enabling the team to leverage a wider range of resources toward the

achievement of team goals. This line of thinking is undoubtedly responsible for the pervasive use of inter-disciplinary SMTs in the business world, particularly in the field of healthcare (Gastil, 2009).

Some researchers put an even finer point on the homogeneity versus heterogeneity staffing debate. Humphrey, et al. (2007), for instance, posit that high levels of variance (heterogeneity) among team members with regard to personal extroversion combined with low levels of variance (homogeneity) with regard to high levels of commitment to goal achievement can lead to stronger team performance. This is due to team members with high extroversion emerging more quickly as leaders of the group, enabling the groups' high commitment to goal achievement to be focused sooner. Consequently, Humphrey et al. recommend that organizations "seed" (p. 888) their teams by carefully categorizing their work force based on desired traits (such as openness to new experiences; agreeableness; numerical and analytical ability; experience; etc.—see p. 890). Workers should then be placed into teams to reach the desired homogenous/heterogeneous mix appropriate for the specific team goal being sought.

While such atomistic dissection of the intricate emotional functioning of SMTs may be beyond the reach of many businesses, it nonetheless clearly illustrates that homogenous/heterogeneous concerns are of high importance when staffing SMTs for maximum effectiveness in the business world.

The Internal Leadership and Environment of Effective Self-Managed Teams

The hallmark of SMTs is of course the heightened level of internal versus external leadership. Various researchers propose different approaches to how this internal leadership is to be configured. A majority believe maximum team effectiveness is

achieved when leadership is diffused to a greater or lesser degree among team members by a) having no designated team leader at all; b) allowing for a team leader or leaders to emerge naturally over time depending on the specific competencies required for the task at hand; or c) designating a mandatory rotation of leadership among all team members (Angles, 2007; Erez, Lepine, & Elms, 2002; Luis Alves Pais, 2010; Mendez, 2009; Pearce, 2004). Such diffused leadership, they say, can lead to benefits such as greater intra-team communication, greater employee satisfaction, and greater overall productivity.

On the other hand, a minority of the literature posits that there should be one team leader, appointed from outside the SMT, who guides the internal functions of the team throughout its service life and thus strongly determines its environment (MacMillan, 2001). In this way, the SMT is still responsible for a great deal of its performance, but has the benefit of a safety net should the functionality of the team falter beyond the teams' ability as a whole to recover. (One wonders, however, how much this dilutes the self-managed quality inherent to genuine SMTs.)

There is reasonable unanimity regarding the environment that SMT leadership (whatever form it takes) needs to be fostering within the SMT if maximum effectiveness is to be achieved. But here I must pause and note that there is substantial overlap between internal leadership and external leadership when it comes to developing an effective internal SMT environment. This is because the external leadership is responsible for the initial genesis and design of the SMT (and thus bears strong responsibility for the SMT's overall future performance), while internal leadership is more responsible for maintaining that design and improving upon it (Wageman, 1997). Consequently, the remainder of this

subsection will deal with internal leaderships' responsibilities with regard to the SMTs internal environment, while the section on external leadership below will deal with its role in establishing that internal environment.

A strong predictor of team effectiveness is intra-team cohesiveness (Al Abdulwahab, 2009)—that is, the ability for the team to function smoothly and efficiently together. SMT leadership must intentionally foster this cohesiveness first and foremost through clear communication with regard to goals, member roles, task-specific protocols, etc., (Appelbaum, Bethune, & Tannenbaum 1999). SMT leadership must also create an environment that promotes mutual accountability (Appelbaum et al.), as well as task inter-dependence and caring social interaction and support (Khanbabaei, Lajevardi, & Kohsari, 2011; Olson & Olson, 2012; Zarraga & Bonache, 2005).

Interestingly, MacMillan (2001), who in contrast with most researchers overwhelmingly prefers a single, externally-appointed team leader, insists teams form environments based on six crucial practices—nearly all of which overlap with the practices just listed. These six are: common purpose, crystal clear roles, accepted leadership, effective processes, solid relationships, and excellent communication.

The research is clear that when SMT leadership regularly infuses the environment of their teams with the above practices, higher levels of team cohesion are possible, making team success more likely.

The External Leadership and Environment of Effective SMTs

One of the greatest challenges facing the successful implementation of SMTs in the business world is forming a larger environment outside the SMT within which the team can function effectively. The profound philosophical differences between the

vertical methods of governance that dominate many businesses and the diffused, more egalitarian methods used in SMTs can lead to conflicts that are fatal for the SMT.

However, contrary to some extreme proponents of SMTs, “vertical leadership is [still] necessary to foster shared leadership [in teams]” (Cashman, 2008, p. 23). In other words, some hierarchy is needed to make sure that SMT virtues are preserved and promoted. But what is an external leader in that hierarchy to do to foster an SMT’s success?

Dealing With Issues Within the SMT

First, it comes as no surprise to learn of the wide agreement in the literature that the external leader should avoid relating to the SMT in a top-down, I’m-the-boss fashion. Instead, they should act like a consultant (Elloy, 2008; Yukl, 2014), coach (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007; Morgeson, 2005; Wageman, 1997; Yukl, 2014) or coordinator (Manz & Sims, 1987)—all terms that point to a leadership role that is less direct and subtler than those in most hierarchical organizations. Moe et al. (2009) take this sentiment further and say, “management should avoid any control [of SMTs] that would impair creativity and spontaneity” (p. 26). While not all researchers agree with this more extreme sentiment, Manz and Sims speak for the majority when they say that “the dominant role of the external leader...is to lead others to lead themselves” (p. 119) rather than direct their actions as a traditional supervisor might. There is consensus, then, that having an external leader acting as a skilled consultant/coach/coordinator can go far toward making this goal a reality. (It should be noted, though, that a minority of researchers conclude that the positive actions of such a consultant/coach/coordinator are not necessary. Cohen, Ledford, and Spreitzer (1996), for instance, found a negative correlation between such encouraging behavior by the external leader and SMT success,

and even suggest that "the best [external] leadership of self-managing groups is no leadership at all" (p. 670). See also Northouse (2016.)

Second, there are specific tasks the external leader should take on with regard to an SMT, particularly when it is first established. Wageman's work in 1997, though dated, speaks from an era when SMTs were truly hitting their stride. She thus provides what is easily one of the best summaries available of the external leader's basic tasks when establishing effective SMTs (Yukl (2014, p. 266) confirms Wageman's prescience). She insists (on pp. 35-38) that the external leader must successively provide the nascent SMT with:

- *Clear, engaging direction.* SMT members should be encouraged to formulate a written understanding of this direction so all team members are in concert with this overarching mission.
- *A real team task.* A frequent cause of failure in SMTs, Wageman claims, is that too often, they are assigned tasks that really do not require teamwork or that only require teamwork part of the time. SMTs must actually have teamwork-requiring tasks if they are to build cohesiveness and succeed.
- *Rewards for team excellence.* Creative planning by the external leader may be required here, as rewards must truly be for the team as a whole and not primarily individuals since perceived favoritism can lower team morale.
- *Basic material resources.* This is simply a matter of providing the raw materials needed for the team to do its work.
- *Authority to manage the work.* The external leader grants this initially and then reinforces it by initiating team discussions on task prioritization and basic

day-to-day operations. This will help show clearly that the team—not external management—is going to govern these areas.

- *Team goals.* The external leader helps the team break down their overall team mission into bite-size goals that are measurable.
- *Team norms that promote strategic thinking.* For Wageman, this means the external leader encourages the team to

(1) experiment with new ways to work more effectively, (2) seek best practices from other teams and other parts of the organization, (3) take action to solve problems without waiting for direction, and (4) discuss differences in what each member has to contribute to the work [of the team]. (p. 38)

Third, once these essentials have been established, there are a number of practices the external leader should follow. For instance, because basic managerial functions such as determining work hours, intra-team production processes, and team communication protocols are usually completely or partially reassigned to the SMT, the external leader must cease performing those functions and take on a new role as the external eyes and ears of the SMT. The external leader thus in essence acts as an early warning system, looking for potential threats to the SMT's ability to carry out their production and management functions (Morgeson, 2005). When such threats come (such as a dramatic increase in workload due to a pending new assignment or a dramatic reduction in production supplies), the external leader is to prepare the team for it. However, whatever preparation the external leader performs for the SMT, as a true consultant/coach/coordinator, they must not be overly intrusive (Wageman, 1997). They must instead provide only enough help to make up for what the team truly lacks (Morgeson). (However, Morgeson also posits that in the case of surprise dire events that

directly threaten the livelihood of the SMT, an external leader must intervene directly in that SMT and thus briefly suspend their consultant/coach mode of working—even when it causes resentment among SMT members.)

Fourth, and perhaps surprisingly, research indicates that the external leader of an SMT should still insist on regular employee evaluations for SMT members—both formally and informally (Manz & Sims, 1987). But again, significant increases in team effectiveness have been found when the consultant/coach/coordinator role is used and evaluations are done as peer evaluations performed on and by SMT members rather than by external leadership (Bhattacharya, 2011; Erez, Lepine, & Elms, 2002; Friedman, 2008). (There is one striking exception to this. Langfred (2004) found a negative correlation between SMT effectiveness and intra-team trust where highly autonomous SMT members also had high levels of trust in one another. Such members were often reluctant to perform rigorous evaluations on—and subsequently hold one another accountable for—the quality of a peer’s work. This led to less objective accountability, lower production quality, and thus lower SMT performance. The solution, Langfred believes, is to impose on high trust/high autonomy SMTs some form of more rigorous evaluation—in my opinion, something that must be done by an external leader.)

Dealing With Issues Outside the SMT

The wider environment in which SMTs function must also be adjusted appropriately if SMTs are to thrive in an externally hierarchical setting. Some of these adjustments are self-evident (such as non-SMT employees being made aware that SMTs are functioning within the company). However, other adjustments, though less intuitive, are nonetheless beneficial.

Moe et al. (2009) identify three environmental barriers within an organization that can hamper the health of SMTs and that therefore require specific adjustments (see pp. 24 & 25). First, when there are multiple SMTs in a single organization working on identical or overlapping projects, the sharing of resources can be problematic. If two or more SMTs need scarce materials at the same time, one or more SMTs may grind to a halt. If this becomes an organizational pattern, SMT member motivation to perform on behalf of the organization declines. Consequently, organizations wishing for SMTs to thrive must provide adequate resources in spite of the increased overhead, knowing that such increases will likely be offset due to increased productivity from healthy SMTs.

Second, Moe et al. identify organizational control as a potential environmental threat to SMT health. Such control can be subtle. For instance, a software company once gave a new SMT the usual bevy of self-managing prerogatives with at least one notable exception: product quality evaluation. When team members discovered that a remote quality control office was surreptitiously collecting data on their project, they concluded they were not being trusted to make sound design decisions—a key provision of that teams' charter. This created distrust and ultimately led to lower productivity.

Barriers like organizational control are understandable, as practices such as evaluating product quality are standard in any organization that wants to succeed. However, the manner in which such control takes place is important if the potential of the SMT is to be realized. The control must be understood and mutually agreed upon at the earliest possible time in the lifecycle of the SMT (definitely prior to its formal start of operations, if possible) and any changes to the agreement must be clearly communicated.

This brings us squarely to a key antidote to the negative effects of organizational control on an SMT's success: boundary spanning (Druskat & Wheeler, 2003; Hersted & Gergen, 2013; Hornstrup, Loehr-Petersen, Madsen, Johansen, & Jensen, 2012; Luis Alves Pais, 2010). Boundary spanning is the ability of the external leader of an SMT to bridge the world of the SMT and that of the wider organizational structure in which the SMT functions, acting as a liaison (and, if necessary, as a peacemaker) between the two. Skill is required here, as both worlds are counting on the loyalty of the external leader to their respective interests. But an external leader who can appropriately span the gap between the SMT and wider management can contribute to the success of an SMT.

A third environmental barrier that can be a formidable threat to the success of any SMT is a specialist culture. Moe et al. found that in organizations where specializing in a particular product or practice can lead to both rewards (promotion, for instance) and negative consequences (being endlessly assigned to the same project because so few other employees know about it), there is a decreased incentive to work collaboratively even within the ultra-collaborative ethos of a properly established SMT. Employees instead can tend to stay within the work silos they enjoy and assiduously avoid working with other employees engaged in silos they find distasteful. To overcome this, organizations must establish a culture that provides ample opportunities for cross-training as well as incentives and rewards for generalists within their SMTs.

Self-Managed Teams in the Religious World

Formal, peer-reviewed research on SMTs in the religious world is extremely rare and represents a definite gap in the available literature. Nearly all of the information available on SMTs as specifically utilized by churches is of a more popular and anecdotal

nature. Moreover, while research on the use of more traditional teams in the religious world is more abundant, peer-reviewed or scholarly material is again in short supply. Therefore, of necessity, the following sections will address the same five areas addressed previously in regard to SMTs in the business world while leaning on such sources as are available, lacking in academic credentials though they may be. Research on SMTs from the business world will be used to supplement this lack when possible and appropriate.

It is also significant to note that a sizable majority of the extant literature on traditional teams in the religious world focuses very narrowly on one of two themes. First and foremost, “ministry team” in the literature is used most often to refer only to a church leadership team, usually comprised of professionally trained clergy and very rarely including the laity (Cladis, 1999; Galloway, 2000; Hartwig, Bird, & Ferguson, 2015; Kelly, 1994; McIntosh, 2000; Osborne, 2010; etc.). Such literature does provide some tangential insights on how SMTs might best function in the religious world. However, the professionalized element that paid clergy bring to teamwork does not necessarily translate into healthy lay SMTs. Second, the concept of “team” as used in the religious world very often refers to a generic sense of camaraderie and cooperation that is desired in a church (often specifically in a committee) setting (Hook & Clement, 2002; Morgan, 2001; Putman, 2009; Trent, Cox, & Tooker, 2004; etc.). In these cases, “team” clearly does not refer to the development of specific, task-oriented teams such as SMTs.

Finally, note that for the purposes of this study, the following discussion takes into account SMTs in the religious world as they specifically relate to Christian churches (which do indeed comprise a great deal of the “religious world”).

The Definition of a Self-Managed Team in the Religious World

The definition of an SMT in the religious world is not explicitly identified in the literature. However, it seems self-evidently logical to define it similarly to the way it is in the business world (see above), with one obvious caveat: a spiritual dimension must be recognized. This is not to say that the business world does not recognize the spiritual in conducting its affairs. There, however, it is optional, while in the religious world it is not. As Ott (2004) points out, “a ministry team describes a particular way of patterning our life together in order to grow in faith, experience Christian fellowship and accomplish a ministry vision” (p. 7). (Interestingly enough, Eguizabal and Lawson (2009) specifically take Ott’s definition and expand it to mean that ministry teams worthy of the name utilize leadership that is more diffuse than merely a single leader—a meaningful nod to at least the basic concept of an SMT in the religious world.)

Ott (2004) further fleshes out the definition of a team in the religious world by contrasting it with traditional committees: “Committees are almost always task-driven, and only rarely do they facilitate personal friendships among their members and intentionally develop their discipleship as well as accomplish their mission. Ministry teams [however] perform all three functions” (p. x).

Though not a typical scholarly source, Ronnie Christian, lead pastor of Pace Community Church in Pace, Florida, has blogged on the use of what are very nearly SMTs in his church. Calling them “self-directed ministry teams,” he defines them as “a small group of people with a complimentary assortment of gifts and abilities who are committed to a particular ministry that supports the mission of our church” (Christian,

2013, para. 14). To distinguish between these teams and the traditional church committee, Christian goes on to say,

the team must be self-directed, which means they own the process or the task at hand. Only when given the responsibility AND authority to follow through on a task can a team have the flexibility to be responsive to changing events and demands. (para. 13, emphasis his)

In light of the above thoughts, and taking into account the theological foundations of the New Testament priesthood detailed in Chapter 2, I propose the following definition of a self-managed ministry team:

A self-managed ministry team is one that: (a) is comprised of uncompensated, non-clerical Christians; (b) is entirely or almost entirely responsible for the mode of execution and quality of their ministry work; (c) is internally and consistently motivated to achieve sound ministry results; and (d) is committed to fellowship with and the spiritual maturation of each team member in Christ.

The Rationale for SMTs in the Religious World

Because of the dearth of research done on SMTs in the religious world, there is no specific rationale given for them in the literature. However, Eguizabal and Lawson (2009) lay a possible foundation for such a rationale when they propose that ministry teams are useful for “building mutual accountability to a higher purpose, building mutual trust and confidence, recognizing special skills and contributions to the team, and supporting one another” (p. 261). Baab (2003) amplifies such reasoning when she insists that Christians are “called to make God’s love known as a community, not as isolated individuals” (p. 8)—an implicit call for teamwork in the church. The similarities between these sentiments and the rationale for using SMTs in the business world mentioned above are striking. But again, teamwork in the religious world must also be seen as a discipleship tool with overt and essential spiritual goals in mind.

There is one trend in the religious world that may offer an additional rationale for SMTs in the religious world: the changing role of the pastor. While it's clear that this trend is still in its aspirational rather than actualized phase, there is nonetheless a large and building body of literature calling for professional clergy to radically shift their focus from traditional chaplain-type duties to equipping lay members for both in-reach and outreach (Adams, 2009; Barna, 2001; Burrill, 2004, 1998, 1997, 1996, 1993; Cordeiro, 2004; Cousins, 2008; Cousins & Bugbee, 2008; Dodd, 2003; Gangel, 1997; George & Bird, 1994; Ogden, 2003; Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006; Steinbron, 2004, 1997; Stetzer & Putman, 2006; etc.). This trend certainly accounts for much of the recent work regarding teams in the religious world, as there is a general recognition in such literature that the pastor's job (as it has traditionally been constructed) will no longer lead to effective disciple-making. Instead, far greater numbers of lay people must be engaged in the mission of the church. In my opinion, self-managed teams seem to intuitively fulfill that need, thus providing a possible rationale for their implementation in the religious world.

The Selection of Team Members for Effective SMTs in the Religious World

While there is no research available in the literature that specifically addresses the question of staffing an SMT in the religious world for effectiveness, there is some work that has been done on how to best staff general ministry teams (as distinct from committees, boards, or pastoral leadership teams). Baab (2003), for instance, advocates strongly for a homogenous approach, suggesting that team members that have much in common have the best chance at developing strong relationships (which for Baab is the primary spiritual goal of the team). Lawson and Eguizabal (2009), while not ignoring the need for "technical" (p. 279) skills (such as the ability to solve problems), call first and

foremost for selecting team members based on their behaviors and Christian character. Such considerations, they believe (in concert with Sell, 2010), will have the best chance of creating a team that illustrates God's grace while effectively achieving its goals.

In contrast to this more subjective focus on feelings and attitudes, some research emphatically calls for a more objective, skill-oriented approach to ministry team staffing. Throughout his seminal book, "The Power of Team Leadership: Achieving Success Through Shared Responsibility," Barna (2001) boldly calls for each member (whether clergy or lay) of a ministry team to be able to: identify and articulate a vision; coach and develop other leaders; motivate others; resolve conflict; and mobilize others while modeling Christian commitment and character. However, I would point out that while these attributes are undoubtedly desirable, finding a surplus of such highly qualified lay people for any type of team in the average church seems problematic.

The Internal Leadership and Environment of Effective SMTs in the Religious World

Internal Leadership of a Religious SMT

There are at least three lines of thought when it comes to the internal leadership of ministry teams in the religious world. All three may be able to shed light on the internal leadership of SMTs in the religious world.

The first line sees internal ministry team leadership as being pastoral or chaplain-like in nature. While the leader helps logistically to achieve team goals, his or her first goal is to help team members grow socially and spiritually (Baab, 2003).

The second line of thought, while not ignoring this pastoral/chaplaincy component, has a much greater emphasis on the need for internal leadership to keep team

members focused on the right vision, to acquire resources needed by the team for vision attainment, and to personally demonstrate productivity (Barna, 2001).

The third line of thought with regard to internal team leadership in the religious world is again the work of Lawson and Eguizabal (2009) who come tantalizingly close to advocating for SMT-style leadership in a church environment. They intriguingly suggest that whether or not leadership in a ministry team is by one individual or shared by the group as a whole depends on the type of work the group is seeking to do. When the task requires a combination of individually produced “products” (p. 274), a single leader is best (though what comprises the ministry equivalent of a “product” is not specified). When the task requires input and production from many team members, group/diffused leadership should be used—again, very nearly a reference to religiously-oriented SMTs.

When this group leadership path is chosen, Lawson and Eguizabal (2009), explicitly adapting the work of Katzenbach and Smith (1993, 2001), call for the following leadership guidelines and practices:

- Decisions are to be made by the appropriate people (based on competency), not always the designated leader.
- Team members set and affirm team goals, not just the team leader.
- The pace and approach to the teams’ work are determined by the entire team.
- The team rigorously and consistently evaluates the results of their work.
- Team members as a whole set high standards of achievement for the group.
- Team members hold themselves and each other rigorously accountable in such a way that when success or failure comes, it is a team experience rather than an individual one (Lawson & Eguizabal, 2009, pp. 273-274).

Together, the three lines of thought discussed above—the need for ministry team leadership to be pastoral/chaplain-like; the need for ministry team leadership to be objective and goal-oriented; and the call for ministry team leadership to be diffused among team members—may be able to provide acceptable guidance for the internal leadership of an SMT in the religious world.

Internal Environment of a Religious SMT

When it comes to the internal environment of an SMT in the religious world, Lawson and Eguizabal (2009) again lay a solid foundation to build on. They recommend a ministry team environment (which, as noted above, could refer to a quasi-SMT environment) that: fosters unified commitment to team goals; develops a collaborative climate; builds team morale and confidence; draws on team member's strengths; values team member assessment (evaluation) and development; fosters high standards; encourages clear communication and thus coordination; and nourishes the spiritual growth of team members (see pp. 277-280). To achieve this environment, it is recommended that teams: share power and decision making; involve other team members in problem solving; recognize special skills and contributions; and generally support one another (Eguizabal & Lawson, 2009—see p. 261).

Tilstra (2014), directly referencing SMTs and their potential relation to life in the church, echoes similar sentiments when he states that the environment they function in should be characterized by "mentoring, delegating authority, sharing decision-making, preparing successors, and fostering interdependence among members" (p. 295).

Given that the much more robust research on SMTs in the business world heavily supports these conclusions, it seems appropriate to believe they represent a solid foundation for developing an environment for an effective SMT in the religious world.

The External Leadership and Environment of Effective SMTs in the Religious World

It is reasonable to say that, with some adaptation, most of the findings regarding the external leadership of effective SMTs in the business world would apply equally to SMTs in the religious world (see above). However, there is one unique practice that SMTs in the religious world may need from external church leadership if the SMT is to succeed: public, ceremonial recognition of the SMT so that the team is seen as valid by the wider church (Sell, 2010).

In the business world, SMT validation occurs in part through the inherent authority conveyed by the fact of upper management involvement. However, in a church, external leadership needs to help establish this validity through some sort of spiritual recognition ritual, as well, perhaps including the laying on of hands and prayer. This is ideally done during a public worship service (see Sell, 2010, p. 9).

When it comes to establishing a healthy external environment for religious SMTs to thrive in, the need is just as urgent as for SMTs in the business world (Barna, 2001; Lawson & Eguizabal, 2009; Sell, 2010). It is self-evident that most of the methods detailed earlier for establishing this healthy external environment for SMTs in the business world should also apply readily to SMTs in the religious world.

Summary and Implications of Literary Findings

In this chapter, I have surveyed the phenomenon of SMTs in the business and religious worlds. In both worlds, an SMT is a group of people with a thoroughly enhanced level of internal management. Team members as a whole are responsible for aspects of work normally reserved for external management, including individual work assignments, team member schedules, approaches to work tasks, etc. One unique facet of SMTs in the religious world is that they require a spiritual goal or focus, while in the business world spiritual concerns are optional.

SMTs are often utilized because they are associated with increased productivity, increased effectiveness, and elevated worker morale. SMTs can also decrease absenteeism issues, as well as help curb the abuses of power that can occur in more vertically oriented governance structures. In the religious world, SMTs may help involve more lay members in ministry and thus decrease unhealthy dependency on a pastor.

Members of SMTs are to be chosen after due consideration is given to the concepts of homogeneity and heterogeneity. Once this spectrum has been addressed, team member resources/skills and (for religious SMTs) spiritual qualifications must also factor into the selection process.

In both the business and religious worlds, the internal leadership of an SMT can be appointed from the outside or distributed within the team in some fashion (such as regularly rotating leadership or leadership that's dependent on the task the team is tackling). Regardless of the form internal leadership takes, it must foster an internal environment of cohesiveness and collaboration through the facilitation of common purpose, crystal clear roles, accepted leadership, effective processes, solid relationships,

and excellent communication. While creating this environment, internal leadership in the religious world should be in some measure pastoral/chaplain-like; focused on ministry objectives and goals; and facilitative of leadership being diffused among team members as a part of discipleship. If a fully diffused leadership mode (i.e., no one team leader) is chosen for a religious SMT, the following protocols may be beneficial: decisions are to be made by the appropriate people (based on competency); team members as a whole are to set and affirm team goals; the pace and approach to the teams' work are to be determined by the team as a whole; the team is to rigorously and consistently evaluate the results of their work; team members as a whole are to set high standards of achievement for the group; and team members are to hold themselves and each other rigorously accountable in such a way that when success or failure comes, it is a team experience rather than an individual one.

The external leadership of an SMT needs to do a number of tasks, particularly when the SMT is starting out. The external leader must provide: clear, engaging direction; a real team task; rewards for team excellence; basic team resources; authority to manage the work; team goals; and team norms that promote strategic thinking. Nearly all of the external leading of an SMT should be done in the mode of a coach/consultant/coordinator rather than a command-and-control boss. Furthermore, for SMTs in the religious world, public ceremonial validation coordinated by external leadership can help legitimize the team in the eyes of the church and facilitate its success.

Implications of Literature Review

The preceding review of the literature relevant to SMTs reinforces the notion that SMTs are a viable means of approximating a New Testament-style priesthood in a local

church, thereby reducing church member dependence on the pastoral staff to make substantive ministry decisions. Consequently, the insights gleaned from the literature as well as the theological foundations established in Chapter 2 will now be combined to help formulate an SMT implementation plan in Chapter 4.

Questions for Further Research

In considering possible questions for further research, two rise to the top. First, in my opinion, it is significant that in the business world, the external culture of SMTs is so pivotal to their success. If this is true in the business world, where employers have the ability to influence non-SMT employee compliance through a variety of means (both ideological and monetary), will it also be true in a local church (where member compliance is nearly always attained through ideological means alone)? This wider issue of external, cultural facilitation of SMTs in a local church merits more study, as I sense it will impact how successful religious SMTs will be.

Second, since information on specifically religious SMTs is difficult to find, further study on the specific methods used to start more traditional (non-self-managed) ministry teams in a hierarchically-structured church may prove especially helpful. Such study may inform on how SMTs can be best started in a similar environment.

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION

In a local Seventh-day Adventist Church (as undoubtedly in churches of other affiliations), the call to increase membership in the church is seen as integral to the church's reason for being. Many churches see themselves in the light of the New Testament as both extensions and extenders of the kingdom of God, and thus aspire to bring as many other people as possible into a relationship with Christ.

The challenge lies in turning these aspirations into reality. As was pointed out previously, Thom Rainer's research in the United States clearly shows that "the majority of the churches in our country are not growing" (2013, para.1). What can be done to reverse this trend?

It is my contention that this lack of growth is due in part to how the individual pastor is functioning in his or her leadership with regard to the Old and New Testament priesthoods. I further contend that a return to a leadership approach that approximates the New Testament-style priesthood rather than the Old Testament-style priesthood can offer substantial, fresh opportunities for spiritual and numerical growth.

Chapter 4 of this paper will describe in detail a ministry intervention that will be implemented at the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church. The intervention will attempt to approximate a New Testament-style priesthood in a significant portion of the congregation. To begin, this chapter will review the three major sources of information

used to develop the intervention, and will include a description of the criteria to be used at the conclusion of the intervention to determine its level of success. Next, a detailed description of Phase 1 of the intervention will be given, including how participants will be selected, and the specific parameters of their new ministry (goals, start times, duration, lines of authority, etc.). The chapter will then give a brief overview of Phase 2 of the intervention. Finally, a summary of the main points made will draw the chapter to a close.

Development of the Intervention

Three major sources of information have been examined in an attempt to provide a solid foundation on which to build an appropriate intervention. These sources are: a) the local context of my current ministry assignment; b) the biblical descriptions of how ministry is to function in the local church; and c) the relevant literature in the business and religious worlds regarding self-managed teams. Each of these plays a role in shaping the intervention strategy.

The Local Context

My local context is centered in the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Market, Virginia, USA. I will not repeat the previously detailed description of my context (see Chapter 1) except to remind the reader of the need the New Market Church has for greater independence of church members from our local pastoral team (currently comprised of three pastors). Two outside studies of the church (done in 2008 & 2012) clearly identified an unacceptably high level of dependence on the pastoral team for such things as creating new ministries and/or improving existing ones. Thus, the intervention developed needs to effectively address this problem.

Biblical Descriptions of Ministry in the Local Church

As was noted previously in Chapter 2, the advent of the Christian church in the first century A.D. brought in a new priesthood to replace the old. The New Testament church no longer needed a located, exclusively male, spiritually stratified, expensive priesthood. Instead, Christ came to begin a new priesthood that would have at least eight characteristics.

These characteristics are essentially mandates and thus need to be integrated into the implementation strategy (though as will be seen, local context will at times demand that some concessions be made). They will be evaluated at the end of the project through my personal observations and interviews with SMT participants. Below is a description of how each of the eight priestly mandates will help form the basis of the intervention.

Gender and Ethnic Inclusivity

Among the active adult membership of the New Market Church, there are slightly more women than men, and a mild range of ethnicities. In keeping with the New Testament mandate for gender and ethnic inclusivity, participation in the intervention will be open to and promoted to both genders and all ethnicities equally. This openness will continue when it comes time for leading various aspects of the intervention.

An important clarification needs to be made at this point. No research takes place in a vacuum, but rather is interpreted and applied within a specific cultural context. The current context of Western Adventism has been awash to a great or lesser degree in the issue of women's ordination. Understandably, then, some readers may be strongly tempted to see the success of this project's intervention as being in part determined by whether or not it ends up supporting women being ordained as local pastors.

But this would be to misconstrue the biblical foundations of the intervention. The measure of the intervention's success will not be its support of women's ordination, but rather that lay ministry occurs at new, less-clergy-dependent levels. In other words, the gender of the *pastor* is irrelevant, here. What is instead crucial is the gender of the lay participants in the intervention. That, at least for the purposes of this project, is where the inclusivity must be seen.

Spiritual Equality

The evidence studied in the New Testament made it clear that no one in the new priesthood is to consider themselves inherently spiritually superior to another. Consequently, it is one goal of the intervention that participants will be clearly endowed with authority levels usually assigned to the pastor—heretofore probably the role seen as “the highest” in the local church.

This should help participants see two things. First, they should see that something genuinely new is being attempted, namely, that lay people are being given pastor-like authority to do genuine, frontline ministry. Second, they should at least begin to grasp that the pastor is not inherently spiritually superior to any lay person.

This is of course a positive, yet risky thing to do. It is positive in that real authority can lead to lay members making real ministry decisions that make a substantial difference in the work of the church. However, that very authority—and the responsibilities that inevitably come with it—may make some church members reluctant to be part of the intervention. This is part of the profound challenge of moving towards reduced dependence on settled clergy: to stretch church members, but to not push them

away at the same time. This tension must be taken into account when developing the intervention.

New Forms of Intercession

One of the core facets of New Testament-style priestly intercession is to offer spiritual (as opposed to physical/animal) sacrifices. These spiritual sacrifices include regular service to others, as well as instructing them in the ways of God. Because of this, the intervention used in the New Market Church will intentionally call participants to make these sacrifices central to their mission, whether they are working with people within the congregation or outside of it.

Geographic Agility

A hallmark of the New Testament priesthood was its call and ability to leap over geographic boundaries. However, I quickly point out that it is beyond the scope of this intervention to implement substantial, lay-led ministry initiatives in new locations far from New Market (e.g., church planting in more distant towns). True, such efforts can be very effective. But they also require more time than this project will allow. It is therefore not intended that the intervention developed here will lead to marked geographic agility, i.e., new ministries begun by lay people in the New Market Church in locations well removed from New Market (though such ministry will not be discouraged should church members seek to do so on their own). However, within New Market and the small nearby towns (of which there are many), the intervention will be structured such that any participating member can take their ministry and carry it out in any portion of that area they choose.

Financial Affordability

The New Testament priesthood was substantially less expensive than the Old Testament priesthood. The intervention in the New Market Church will therefore need to be designed to be genuinely affordable.

Personal Responsibility for Spiritual Health

The Bible calls Christians in the new priesthood to take personal responsibility for the quality of their relationship with God. They are not to rely any longer on a separate, spiritually stratified priestly class to do this work for them. Consequently, the intervention being planned will need to clearly place spiritual responsibility on the individual participants rather than on someone else (such as one of the pastors).

Easily Reproducible

The new priestly order was inherently more simple in its structure than the Old Testament priesthood. This, combined with other traits such as a substantially larger workforce (since every Christian was now a priest of God) and greatly improved financial affordability, meant that the church could reproduce itself far more easily than previous conditions would have allowed.

In keeping with this, the intervention in the New Market Church will need to be reproducible, as well. For instance, no part of the structure of the intervention should be so closely tied to the unique context of the congregation or community that it cannot be reproduced elsewhere. Moreover, the structure of the intervention must be sufficiently simple that participants can reproduce it wherever they wish.

Global Reach

Closely related to the concepts of geographic agility and reproducibility is the concept of global reach. Whatever type of intervention one might plan for reducing pastor-dependency in a local church, if it is to be a truly New Testament-style intervention, it should be able to be implemented in any ministry context anywhere in the world with a minimum of adaptation. To be clear, the intervention being developed for the New Market Church does not envision itself becoming a global phenomenon during the project's research timeframe. However, repeatability on a global scale is nonetheless a concern. It cannot simply be an "American" or a "Canadian" intervention, for instance, but must have sufficient simplicity and applicability to be useful to kingdom growth globally.

Self-Managed Teams in the Business and Religious Worlds

As was noted in Chapter 3, the information on self-managed ministry teams (SMTs) in the religious world is extraordinarily scant. However, that small pool of information, when combined with the great wealth of information available on SMTs in the business world, provides a number of key points that will guide the development of the intervention.

First, in the last 40 years, the literature shows that there has been an undeniably growing receptivity in Western society to the notion of diffused leadership. For example, many business organizations that historically have been hierarchical in their leadership structure have begun to show a notable openness to sharing leadership authority via SMTs (see Chapter 3).

Critics may contend that the church is lagging behind business in its embrace of this more egalitarian approach to mission accomplishment. I would contend that while this may be true in some cases, it nonetheless seems self-evident that the wider societal trends driving the business world to utilize SMTs could be driving similar trends in the religious world. Given this potentially increased receptivity in the religious world, and given that this project seeks reduced levels of dependence on established hierarchical leadership (e.g., the pastoral staff), SMTs adapted for use in the local church seem like a very appropriate intervention to develop.

But while SMTs seem a natural fit, here, a second point must be quickly made that must also guide the intervention development process: there are potential conflicts between how SMTs are supposed to function in the business world and how ministry was originally supposed to function in the local Adventist Church.

Perhaps the greatest of these conflicts is how the literature recommends SMTs be supervised in the business world versus how the founders of Adventism insisted ministry be supervised in the local church. For instance, in the business world, there is essentially nothing in the literature that advocates that SMTs be *completely* independent of any immediate, local, external leadership. To the contrary, the consensus is nearly universal that healthy SMTs have regular interaction with a supervisor of some sort that is not a member of the SMT. This interaction is often minimal, but it exists nonetheless.

In contrast with this, authoritative sources from Adventist history (see Chapter 2) are abundantly clear that professional, settled clergy (what might be described as the “vertical” leaders of a local church) are *not* to remain in local leadership over a church. They are instead to move on to other locations, adopting an apostolic role, allowing for

and indeed requiring an environment in which meaningful lay leadership/ministry is the default mode of ministry rather than the exception.

Here, of course, is where the current reality of my local ministry context asserts itself. I do not have the option of leaving my church to be an apostle. It is simply not part of the structure of the regional church governance body I am a part of, nor to my knowledge of nearly any other regional governance body (at least in the Adventist Church) in North America. Consequently, whatever intervention is selected, it cannot include the removal of my position from the local church.

This is not ideal. However, there is consolation in knowing that the business world does have material on how local supervisors can interact with SMTs to help them achieve maximum efficiency. Several examples of these interactions were given in the Literature Review of this project paper. These will be used where appropriate in the proposed intervention to help guide how the pastoral staff (the rough equivalents to “local supervisors” in the business world) should interact with church members who are becoming significantly less dependent on the pastoral staff for the accomplishment of ministry.

Implications for the Intervention

As proposed, the three major sources of information on which to build an appropriate intervention have been reviewed. In light of the information now gleaned, I propose that an effective intervention to reverse the problem of undue dependency on paid clergy in the New Market Church should include the following four elements:

1. The implementation of self-managed ministry teams in a portion of the congregation.

2. An accounting of the fact that the professional pastoral role cannot at this time be fully removed from the New Market Church. The ideal of the New Testament and early Adventism with regard to the role of the clergy will therefore be approximated rather than fully implemented.
3. The use of best practices from the business and religious worlds regarding SMT implementation, maintenance, and growth, while adjusting these best practices for the realities of the situation in the New Market Church.
4. The use of the following three criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention:
 - First, the intervention results in the creation of new ministries or substantial improvements in existing ones.
 - Second, the intervention results in the characteristics of the New Testament-style priesthood, as clarified above, being manifested in intervention participants.
 - Third, both of the first two criteria occur without significant intervention from professional clergy.

With these four elements in mind, a practical intervention can now be formed.

Description of the Intervention

The intervention will take place in two phases. Phase 1 can be outlined with a reasonably strong degree of certainty in advance. However, Phase 2 will be slightly more difficult to describe in advance, as its nature will be determined in part by the results of Phase 1. A measure of educated guessing will thus be necessary in describing Phase 2.

Phase 1 of the Intervention

Phase 1 will seek to implement self-managed teams in the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church in the rawest form possible—in fact, the self-managed aspect of the new teams will be intentionally exaggerated. An absolute minimum of pastoral contact will be maintained with the SMTs after their initial orientation, even to the point of neglecting my “better judgment,” at times.

This may seem like a denial of some of the best practices for dealing with SMTs identified previously. However, the reason behind this perhaps odd-sounding approach is straightforward. Past personal experience has indicated that church member dependence on a local pastor has substantial cultural inertia behind it. To overcome this inertia, I have previously attempted to moderately increase church members’ ministry responsibilities and authority beyond the norm while marginally decreasing my own responsibilities and authority as the pastor. Part of the rationale for this incremental approach has been what was mentioned above: to keep church member apprehension to a minimum—a “ministry gradualism,” in essence. But the results from these efforts have been only mildly positive. Overall, the weaning from undue pastor-dependency has been minimal, as the subtle shift in the pastor-member balance of power has apparently been too muted to be taken seriously by church members.

Consequently, a different approach will be utilized in this project. Participating church members will be provided with a sufficiently strong measure of independence (to be detailed shortly below) that they are forced to confront the culture of pastor dependency and must purposely decide to move against it if they are to be a part of the SMT.

Again, this approach is not without risk. Church members thus challenged may consequently not be inclined to participate in the SMT—which is of course their right—and will instead choose to retreat to other, more dependent ministry pursuits. But for those church members who do take up the challenge, the results will almost certainly be more representative of what a truly pastor non-dependent ministry team is capable of achieving. This is why in Phase 1, the self-managed element of the SMT will be intentionally exaggerated.

With that as a background, the five essential steps of Phase 1 can now be explained. These steps are: a) the recruitment of project participants; b) the orientation session and materials; c) the launch session; d) monitoring the SMTs; and e) evaluating the effectiveness of the SMTs.

Recruitment of Intervention Participants

Three SMTs of seven-to-ten members each will be recruited from the membership of the New Market Church. The first two SMTs will be comprised of volunteers from the congregation who respond to a Sabbath morning announcement made during the worship service. The same announcement will be repeated on two consecutive Sabbaths. (The script and signup sheet that will be used to recruit these participants can be found in Appendix A.) If there are an insufficient number of volunteers to fully form the first two teams, the lack will be made up for by randomly selecting members from the church directory.

A third SMT will be recruited differently, and it will involve a measure of concealment. This third team will be hand-selected by me, with participants being recruited based on their proven performance as top lay ministry leaders in the past. Such

lay members may include elders, board members, teachers from one or both of our two schools, etc. To reduce any unnatural emotional dynamics between the teams, none of the three SMTs will be told of the differing methods used for staffing the teams.

The purpose of having one team comprised of proven and effective lay leaders is to produce a potentially useful contrast. Logic would dictate that the SMT comprised of those with strong ministry experience would easily outperform the other two SMTs, as those of strong ministry experience are often self-motivated and possess solid skills in working with others—two assets noted in the literature that have made SMTs robust in other contexts. Furthermore, this may provide a type of homogeneity that the literature indicates can prove helpful in a team’s performance.

On the other hand, while the literature tends to favor various types of homogeneity as the ideal for SMT composition, my experience is that meaningful homogeneity is difficult to find in most churches. Instead, heterogeneity seems to be by far the order of the day. This may be because people generally seem to join churches based on concerns other than future SMT homogeneity, and thus churches can be comprised people who vary widely in interpersonal and general ministry skills. The literature, particularly from the business world, would suggest that SMTs comprised of such people have low odds of success. (For background on homogeneity versus heterogeneity in SMTs, please see Chapter 3).

Will these concerns prove true in the local church? How does homogeneity and heterogeneity apply to SMTs comprised of church members? Finding answers to questions like these is the rationale behind having a handpicked SMT in Phase 1.

Orientation Session and Materials

Once a pool of people has been successfully recruited for the three SMTs, an orientation session at the church will be scheduled. The purpose of the orientation will be to explain the nature of SMTs and their implementation in the New Market Church. Five documents (all in Appendix B) will be presented at that time.

Document 1

Entitled "Evidence from Early Adventism for a New Testament-Style Priesthood in the Local Church," this document cites evidence from the Bible and early Adventism for a strong New Testament-style priesthood being essential to the health and success of a local church.

Document 2

Entitled "Guidelines for Self-Managed Ministry Teams," this document is the first of the four "Launch Documents." It outlines several points that will be crucial to church members being able to understand and participate in the intervention. Some of these points are:

- *The Goal of the SMT.* The document states that the goal of the SMT is, "With an absolute minimum of pastoral intervention, to genuinely increase the meaningful participation of people who are not yet Adventists in the life of our church while building up fellow [self-managed] team members in Christ." This goal intentionally stops short of saying something like, "The goal of your SMT is to baptize new members," or, "The goal of your SMT is to start a number of Bible studies." While these and goals like them are all laudable,

experience has shown they can also carry unintended and inhibiting connotations for many church members, particularly those that do not have personal evangelistic skills. On the other hand, seeking to engage non-Adventists in the life of the church may strike an appropriate balance between being challenging and being overwhelming.

- *The Methods for Achieving the SMT's Goal.* The methods for achieving the team's goal are entirely up to the individual SMT. Any method that is ethical, legal, and in keeping with church doctrine and policy is possible to use. This lack of structure is characteristic of many self-managed teams in the business world and will undoubtedly serve to test the pastor-non-dependent mettle of the participants in this intervention.
- *The Duration of the SMT's Ministry.* The SMT will conduct its ministry for no more than six months.
- *Team Member Expectations.* This section of the document highlights a number of details regarding the day-to-day functioning of the SMT. For instance, meetings of the SMT are to occur whenever the team wishes, though it is recommended that the team meet at least once a month. Also, team leadership will be determined by the group itself without intervention from the outside and may change if the group wishes during the time the SMT operates.
- *The Role of the Pastoral Staff.* It is reiterated that the pastoral staff will not be leading these teams in any direct sense whatsoever. In fact, the pastors may be consulted only for certain things: resource questions (e.g., "How much money is available for our SMT?"); procedural or policy questions (such as, "Is this

ministry idea our SMT has within church policy?"); and team survival questions ("Our team is dying—can you help us?"). This section of the document will undoubtedly help make it clear that the SMT truly is to operate with extremely minimal guidance from paid clergy. The SMT will thus be held substantially responsible for its own success or failure.

Document 3

Entitled "Helpful Team Guidelines and Practices," this third of the Launch Documents is intentionally confined to a single page. It is designed to provide a fast and easy resource for keeping intra-SMT associations healthy. Team members are reminded in the document, for instance, that "the pace and approach to the teams' work are determined by the entire team," and that "the team rigorously and consistently evaluates the results of their work." The document is intended to be utilized by the SMT as needed through the duration of its tenure.

Document 4

Entitled "Suggested 1st Team Meeting Format," this fourth Launch Document is designed to help the SMT do several key initial functions well. First, it guides them in selecting who will be their intra-team leader and how he or she will function. Second, it leads team members through the process of selecting a methodology for reaching the team's goal. Included in the document is a simple worksheet for laying out specific, step-by-step plans for implementing and monitoring the progress of the chosen methodology.

Document 5

Entitled “Suggested Regular Team Meeting Format,” this fifth and final Launch Document provides a simple, easy-to-follow script for whoever leads the regular meetings of the SMT. It prominently displays the SMT’s goal at the top of the first page. It then asks simple questions to help evaluate the ongoing work of the team towards that goal, such as: “What progress have we made towards The Goal since our last meeting?”; and, “Are we on track for seeing tangible results by our deadline? If not, what can we do to fix that?” These questions can help keep intra-team communication robust and effective. The back page then provides a follow-up worksheet to help the SMT track course changes from meeting to meeting. Finally, there is a section that specifically encourages team members to support one another spiritually through sharing and prayer.

The Launch Session

Once the three SMTs have been through the orientation meeting, a date will be set for their launch. At that launch session, I will meet with the team for only the first few minutes of their total meeting time, walking them through the first portion of the “Suggested 1st Team Meeting Format” document. My task will be to make sure that a leadership mode—either one team leader or some form of rotating team leadership—is successfully chosen by the members of the SMT. I will then turn the rest of the meeting over to the team and leave the room.

Given the importance the literature attaches to leadership being diffused among members of an SMT, it can rightly be asked why I am giving the teams the option of *not* having that type of leadership. The answer is a pragmatic one: Knowing my congregation, it seems unlikely to me that a forced diffused leadership in an SMT will

succeed. The changes in SMT ministry from more traditional forms of ministry are already significant. Having the additional burden of being required to navigate a radically new form of lay leadership within an SMT seems unnecessarily burdensome. So the option will be offered, but not required.

Monitoring the SMTs

Although I will not be attending the regular meetings of the SMTs, I will be meeting regularly with the leaders of the SMTs to get their impressions of how the ministry of their team is going. I will meet with them at least once a month face to face for this purpose, while also communicating in other ways (phone, email, text, etc.) as needed.

It is important to note that, in keeping with the raw nature of Phase 1, it is my intention to avoid giving advice unless absolutely necessary during these follow-up meetings. My goal instead will be to listen, to learn, and to encourage the leader in ways that are in keeping with the aims of the intervention (that is, in ways that will not inappropriately increase the leader's dependence on my support).

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the SMTs

At the completion of Phase 1, an evaluation meeting will be held. Two evaluation instruments (see Appendix C) will be utilized in this meeting.

The first instrument is the "Launch Documents Evaluation." This seven-question evaluation will assess the effectiveness and level of utilization of the Launch Documents, specifically seeking to establish the level of correlation between the counsel given in them and the performance of the SMT.

The second instrument used will be the “Team Effectiveness Evaluation.” This 61-question survey was developed primarily by adapting the work of Yang and Guy (2011). Their survey of the seminal work done by Campion, Medsker, and Higgs (1993); Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1974); Cohen, Ledford, and Spreitzer (1996); Cordery, Mueller, and Smith (1991); and Yuchtman and Seashore (1967), combined with insights from my research of Wageman (1997), provided the necessary foundation for the majority of the questions in the evaluation. Additionally, the excellent work done by Lurie, Schultz, and Lamanna (2011) in assessing teams in the medical field also helped supply the basis for the evaluation instrument questions.

Naturally, most of the "Team Effectiveness Evaluation" instrument questions, being from the business and medical worlds, needed to be adapted for use with SMTs in a local church. Some examples of these adapted statements are, “My ministry team works independently of pastoral supervision;” “My ministry team is effective in reaching its assigned goals;” “Self-managed ministry teams like mine are more effective at making disciples for Christ than traditional forms of outreach;” etc. The instrument asks respondents to evaluate these statements by checking boxes that say “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” “Neutral,” “Disagree,” “Strongly Disagree,” or “N/A [Not Applicable].” There are also several open-ended questions that will allow respondents to share more observations about their experience with SMTs. The data gleaned from participant responses to these questions, as well as from an open discussion time immediately following the administration of the instrument, will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of Phase 1 and to help form the specific strategy and approach of Phase 2.

Phase 2 of the Intervention

Phase 2 is difficult to describe in complete detail, as the lessons learned in Phase 1 will determine some key facets of how the intervention proceeds. But essentially, Phase 2 will seek to repeat Phase 1, but this time on a significantly wider scale, incorporating more of the New Market Church congregation than in the previous attempt. The goal will be to bring the total number of those participating in an SMT to 100 people. This represents approximately one-fifth of the active congregation and may be a sufficiently strong foundation on which to build more SMTs into the church at a later date.

While it is obviously difficult to predict exactly what information Phase 1 will produce that will alter Phase 2, there are at least three issues that logic would dictate could prove impactful. These issues are significant enough that they merit attention now in the hopes of formulating responses ahead of time and thus making the transition to Phase 2 as smooth as possible.

First, there is the issue of *leadership effectiveness*. Can church members truly lead themselves to the extent that they actually achieve critical church goals in the absence of pastoral leadership? If Phase 1 shows that some increase of pastoral leadership is needed (perhaps due to the intentionally exaggerated self-managed aspect of Phase 1), Phase 2 will need to be adjusted accordingly. For instance, more frequent follow-up meetings with team leaders may need to be scheduled. Perhaps some form of electronic pastoral overlap with the SMTs will be necessary, such as a regular training email to the teams as a whole or a brief regular videoconference. Whatever adjustments are made in SMT leadership will need to be done with great care if the integrity of the intervention is to be ensured, as any changes in this area could easily pose a threat to the premise of the

intervention: that lay people can be substantially free from pastoral leadership and still achieve key missional objectives.

Second, there is the issue of *conflict resolution*. While some pastors may be reluctant to admit it, one of the common functions of professional clergy is to mediate the various personalities—both balanced and flawed—that constitute the average local church. This can be especially true when disagreements arise. Can an SMT appropriately deal with intra-team conflict without pastoral intervention? If Phase 1 shows that the answer is “no” or “not well enough,” then a mechanism for resolving such conflicts may need to be integrated into Phase 2. Ideally, this mechanism would still not include the pastoral staff, but some form of basic peace-making resource instead, perhaps in the form of written conflict resolution guidelines or peer counseling.

Third, there is the issue of what might be referred to as *missional maturity*. Can SMTs appropriately pursue the mission of the church from a motivational (i.e., they are truly motivated from within by Christ and do not require a pastor to impel them forward) and methodological (i.e., the methods they employ are wise, faithful to church teaching, yet sufficiently bold and daring) perspective? If Phase 1 shows this to be a weak area, then it may be that Phase 2 will need to add to its launch sequence a segment on spiritual renewal and spiritual responsibility.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter began with the fact that many Adventist churches are struggling to grow. It is the position of this paper that this may be due to clergy functioning essentially in the mold of the Old Testament priesthood, and that a return to a New Testament-style priesthood may help to reverse the trend of decline.

The New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church has been identified as a congregation with an unhealthy dependence on its pastoral staff for the initiation and functioning of ministries. Based on a careful study of the local context; the biblical and early Adventist evidence for how a local church is to function; and the relevant literature in the business and religious world; an intervention has been developed that will attempt to reduce pastor-dependency in the New Market Church through the implementation of self-managed ministry teams.

The intervention will take place in two phases. Phase 1 will be comprised of five elements. First, project participants will be recruited into three SMTs. Second, an orientation session will be held and key documents will be presented that will explain the principles, goals, and functioning of SMTs at the New Market Church. Third, a launch session will occur in which the SMT intra-team leadership mode will be selected as well as a start made on determining the methods the SMT will use in reaching its goal. Fourth, once the SMTs are launched, follow-up meetings as well as more informal contact between the leaders of the SMTs and myself will take place on a regular basis. And fifth, at the end of Phase 1, an exit meeting will take place in which all participants in the SMTs will participate in two assessment instruments and open discussion.

Phase 2 will take the results from Phase 1 and make whatever improvements are needed in the functioning of SMTs in the church. Phase 2 will then seek to engage a total of 100 people from the New Market Church in the ministry of SMTs.

The final criteria for success of this intervention will be that: a) the intervention results in the creation of new ministries or substantial improvements in existing ones; b) participants in the intervention manifest the key characteristics of the New Testament

priesthood; and c) that both of these things occur without significant intervention from the pastoral staff. The achievement of this criteria would show that pastor-dependency among members of the SMTs had been significantly reduced, and that a New Testament-style priesthood had been approximated.

CHAPTER 5

NARRATIVE OF INTERVENTION IMPLEMENTATION

The adoption of a dramatically different mode of lay ministry in any church takes time, careful planning and patience in execution—particularly on the part of the one implementing the adoption effort. All three of these elements were needed in abundance in effecting the transition in at least a part of the congregation from pastor-dependent ministry to lay-led ministry.

The intervention described in Chapter 4 was implemented in the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church over the course of 18 months. What follows is a detailed narrative of that implementation. The narrative is divided into three parts: (a) The implementation of Phase 1; (b) the implementation of Phase 2; and (c) a statement summarizing the implementation process.

The Implementation of Phase 1 of the Intervention

As noted in the preceding chapter, Phase 1 of the intervention was essentially divided into five different successive tasks. First, church members needed to be recruited to participate in the intervention. Second, the members needed to be trained in the science and art of how SMTs function via an orientation meeting. Third, the new SMTs needed to be officially launched into ministry. Fourth, the SMTs needed to be monitored in a non-intrusive, yet efficient way so that information could be gathered regarding their progress.

And fifth, once the Phase 1 timeframe had come to an end, an evaluation meeting would need to be held to assess the effectiveness of the SMTs thus far. How these five steps of Phase 1 were implemented will now be detailed below.

Recruiting Participants for Phase 1 SMTs

Handpicked SMT Members

From the last week of September 2014, through the second week of October, 2014, potential members of the handpicked SMT were personally selected by me via face-to-face invitation. Most were asked after church on Sabbath afternoons, and all seemed to appreciate it. Note that none of the members of this team were told that they were being handpicked. They were simply given an intentionally vague description of a new ministry project I was starting for my doctoral studies (more on this vagueness shortly), and would they please consider attending an orientation session in the near future so they could learn more about the project and decide then if they would like to participate. Nearly all that were asked agreed.

Randomly Selected SMT Members

Recruiting participants for the two non-handpicked SMT members began at the Sabbath morning worship service on October 18, 2014, and was repeated the following Sabbath, October 25. This recruiting effort was straightforward, but nonetheless challenging. It was straightforward in that the goal was simple: find willing church members to volunteer to become SMT members. But this was also quite challenging, as I was fairly certain the raw nature of the Phase 1 SMTs would initially dissuade potential participants from participating if all their decision was based upon was a 60-second

description of it on a Sabbath morning. Consequently, the script used for making the appeal for participants was left intentionally vague, a vagueness seen in an excerpt from the recruiting script. After explaining that a new ministry initiative was being started for my doctoral studies and that it would focus heavily on teamwork, I shared with the congregation that:

I will be giving those of you who volunteer and are approved for this project more details later on so that you can make a fully informed decision as to whether or not you'd like to participate. But for now, I'm going to let a bit of the mystery hang in the air. I'll pass around some clipboards for you to sign up on if you're interested in just a moment. When the clipboard comes to you, think carefully: Does the idea of doing effective ministry with a team of people sound attractive to me? Am I interested in doing a short-term (just under five months) experiment with a team of laypeople so I can help our church function more effectively? If the answer is yes, then please consider placing your contact information on the clipboard.

This approach proved initially successful, as 28 people signed up on the clipboards to come to the orientation session. Together with the nine church members handpicked by me earlier, there were now 37 church members who would be attending the orientation—enough to potentially create the desired three SMTs.

The Orientation Meetings

To ensure high levels of attendance, three orientation meetings were scheduled: Thursday, October 30, 2014; Sunday, November 2; and Tuesday, November 4. All meetings were identical in format and content.

The Historical Basis for SMTs

The orientation meetings began with an approximately 30-minute review of Adventist history, particularly with regard to the role of clergy and lay people in ministry. The document “Evidence from Early Adventism for a New Testament-Style Priesthood in the Local Church” (described in detail in Chapter 4) was used for this portion of the

meetings, a document which makes extensive use of the writings of Ellen White and other prominent figures in Adventist history. Attendees were reminded that for first 60-70 years of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, there were no settled pastors in the overwhelming majority of local churches. It was also pointed out that this inevitably led to an exceedingly high level of lay leadership in meaningful ministry both in the local church and to the surrounding community.

Even though a majority of attendees at these orientation sessions had previously heard presentations on these points from Adventist history, the effect of hearing them again—particularly key statements from Ellen White (e.g., 1901, page 381) and A.G. Daniels (e.g., as quoted in Burrill, 1998, page 178)—was visibly motivating. Attendees were stirred as they not only heard afresh the dangers of depending on pastors in ministry, but also were presented with a potential solution to that dependency via SMTs.

Explaining SMT Function in a Church

The next portion of the orientation meetings explained the basic premises of SMTs (see Chapters 2 and 3) and how they might function in the New Market Church. Four separate documents that were introduced as the “Launch Documents” were then presented (the content of these documents was discussed in detail in Chapter 4; see Appendix B). The document “Guidelines for Self-Managed Ministry Teams” was particularly important for the orientation attendees, as it specified the goal and duration of the SMTs, and the methods the SMTs could employ in reaching their goal.

Reaction to the Raw Nature of Phase 1

As was pointed out in Chapter 4, the raw-ness of Phase 1 was intentional—a raw-ness that was palpable during the orientation meetings. For instance, by way of review, the goal of Phase 1 SMTs was stated in the opening words of the launch document “Guidelines for Self-Managed Ministry Teams” and reads as follows: “With an absolute minimum of pastoral intervention, to genuinely increase the meaningful participation of people who are not yet Adventists in the life of our church while building up fellow team members in Christ” (p. 1). Not only did this goal call potential members to reach out to those who are not members of the church—a challenging and even paralyzing prospect for many Christians—but the same document also provided only the following guidelines for how to accomplish that goal:

Method(s) chosen must be ethical, moral, legal, financially responsible, and in keeping with biblical principles and church policy. Within these guidelines, the sky’s the limit; the team may do as it wishes, when and how it wishes, to achieve the team’s goal. (p. 1)

After hearing these sections read, some attendees (in both orientation meetings) commented that the level of freedom in ministry being offered was intimidating. This was followed by numerous nervous smiles and nodding heads around the room.

Asking for Commitment

After going through the remaining three Launch Documents, time was given for questions to be asked. Attendees were then asked to consider committing to actually joining a new SMT. It was emphasized that if some were not yet ready to decide, they were welcome to make a decision after a few days had passed.

Recruiting Additional Members

The results of the orientation meetings were such that insufficient numbers of members volunteered to have three full SMTs. In fact, while the handpicked SMT's membership was already sufficient, and a random team was nearly full, there were no members for the hoped-for third team. Given the energy and time expended in getting the limited number of volunteers so far, I reluctantly decided to proceed with two teams.

To fill the membership gap in the randomly selected SMT, I went through the New Market Church directory and located every 70th name, beginning alphabetically. If the name was unqualified (under 18 years old, moved out of the area, etc.), I went to the next listed name. I then contacted those people and did a shortened orientation meeting with them by phone, arranging to get them hardcopies of the orientation documents as soon as possible. I repeated this process until I had enough to staff the team.

Once sufficient numbers of team members were recruited, both the randomly selected team (hereafter referred to as "Team 1") and the handpicked team (hereafter referred to as "Team 2") were notified via email as to which teams they were on. (Remember that the members both SMTs were still unaware of the handpicked nature of Team 2. As far as they were concerned, they had been randomly put together just as Team 1 was.)

Prospects for Both Teams' Success

At this point in Phase 1, it seemed abundantly clear to me that Team 1 was unlikely to have the success that Team 2 would inevitably enjoy. As already noted, Team 2 was comprised of seasoned church leaders with proven track records of achievement in ministry. But Team 1 seemed a very unlikely hodgepodge of good-hearted-but-

mismatched volunteers who would likely never have been placed together except for a doctoral research project. True, Team 1 did have one member that had strong organizational ability, and two others that had good leadership track records in various types of church ministry. However, the personality mix, as well as the lack of leadership experience of the other members, seemed at this time to be an ill-advised basis for an SMT. All of this gave reason to expect success for Team 2, but struggles for Team 1.

Launching the New SMTs

Team 1 Launch Meeting

Team 1's launch meeting took place on Sabbath afternoon, November 8, 2014, at the church. I redistributed the launch document "Suggested 1st Team Meeting Format" and chaired the meeting only long enough to review the contents of the document aloud; help them select the type of leadership ("rotating" versus "one leader"—they immediately selected the second option); and finally, to help them select a leader. All of this took less than 10 minutes. I then left the meeting, quipping as I left that I would see the team "in five months." This was done intentionally, as I wanted one final message of pastor non-dependency to be clearly conveyed before they began their work.

Team 2 Launch Meeting

Team 2's launch meeting took place one week later on Sabbath, November 15, 2014, at the church. I performed the same functions as I had for Team 1, taking approximately as much time. Team 2 followed the same leadership path as Team 1, electing to have one leader—a choice they made with almost no discussion. I was mildly surprised at this. Considering how many strong leaders Team 2 had, I thought they might

follow the path I had explained is often taken in the business world where leadership rotates through various (or all) members of the team. But they did not consider that as an option at all. I left the room, making my same comment about seeing them in five months' time.

Monitoring the SMTs After Launch

As has been mentioned, Phase 1 of this intervention was to maintain a raw feel—that is, lay people were to be given almost excessive amounts of ministry freedom in a context of little-to-no pastoral support. Balancing this with my own instinct to keep tabs on the project without unduly interfering was challenging (there are genuine lessons here for myself and other clergy—more on this in Chapter 6). Since there is essentially no peer-reviewed literature on the topic of SMTs in the local church (much less launching them for the first time), I was left to my own judgment as to how to best appropriately keep in touch with the SMTs.

Initial Contact With Team 1

My first contact with Team 1 came after church on Sabbath, November 22, 2014. I talked to the Team 1 leader (hereafter “T1L”) for about ten minutes. To my surprise, he was elated at his team’s progress: They had settled on a method to reach the assigned SMT goal at the launch meeting back on November 7. Their plan was to hold an afternoon story hour for children and their parents at a local low-income apartment complex in New Market. The plan was to slowly develop what would be essentially an off-site Sabbath School program for children, and eventually transition them and their families to the New Market Church. The SMT would start its ministry by knocking on

every door in that community (over 100 doors), presenting each family with a homemade loaf of bread, some literature, and an invitation to attend the first Saturday-afternoon story hour. The T1L was extremely excited, and said his team was, as well. He further stated that he “had never done anything like this before” and felt nervous about the future. But he expressed heartfelt commitment to the project, and was very pleased to be involved.

Initial Contact With Team 2

My first contact with Team 2 came at a Christmas dinner party on our campus on December 17, 2014. There, I met with the leader of Team 2 (hereafter “T2L”). I had intentionally waited a significant amount of time for this meeting to occur, as I felt confident that the members of Team 2 needed far less supervision than Team 1, and thus would need to be “left alone” without any pastoral contact longer in order to understand the true, pastor-non-dependent nature of SMTs.

Challenges With Team 2

It was surprising therefore to learn from the T2L that after four SMT meetings, the team had still not been able to decide on a method for reaching the assigned goal. Their next meeting was to be on December 20, 2014, and the T2L did not seem very hopeful for progress to occur then. He also said that the group was almost impossible to work with from a scheduling point of view. All the experienced leaders on the team were already engaged in many other important duties and projects, he explained, and getting them together for an SMT meeting was extremely difficult. The T2L was visibly

disappointed about this, but also expressed clear resolve that the team would succeed in the end.

On January 10, 2015, I met again with the T2L. He said that his team had not been able to decide on a single outreach project, so had elected to do two: (a) a community choir to which they would invite current church members and community members to join to prepare for both church and community performances; and (b) an English language class for non-native speakers focused on speaking the language rather than mastering its grammar.

Both of these ideas seemed to have excellent merit. For instance, the Shenandoah Valley and the town of New Market in particular have long and rich histories of community-based choirs that are sponsored by churches. Though it had been many years since one had been sponsored in our town, it was strongly felt by many in the New Market Church that the time was ripe for another. The fact that a member of Team 2 was an outstanding professional singer and keyboardist only served to strengthen this sentiment. The English language speaking class seemed equally likely to succeed, particularly since one of the Team 2 members was also a professional Spanish teacher with extensive translation experience in both domestic and foreign contexts. Both outreach efforts would seek to build relationships with people outside the church, with an eye towards bringing them to Christ over time and into the church.

Over the next month, I met casually with both the T1L and the T2L after church. They would give me updates on details of their projects. I offered no advice, but did encourage them to keep going and trust in God.

Joint Meeting With Both Team Leaders

On February 26, 2015, I called a formal meeting with both the T1L and the T2L at my office at the church for the purpose of not only updating me, but to give the two leaders a chance to compare their experiences so far and learn from one another.

The T1L reported that Team 1's outreach was a mixture of blessings and challenges. On the blessing side, the Team had held their Sabbath afternoon story hour many times now, and had had a moderately good response from the community. The T1L said the maximum number of people that had attended at one time was "five or six children from the apartments" and occasionally some of their family members, as well. While pleased that these residents were coming, the low attendance numbers were endangering the SMT's ministry: The manager of the apartments was considering revoking the team's right to use the large room they were using at the apartments, as she wanted something there that would engage more kids.

While these developments were not what the team was hoping for, the T1L said, he also said that the team was building good relationships with the guests that were coming. Furthermore, team members themselves were having "a great time" working together to accomplish what they saw as a very exciting ministry. The team was also inviting a number of other church members that were not officially a part of their SMT to come and help them (with music, storytelling, etc.) and that in this way their ministry was expanding well beyond their team membership.

The T2L was not as sanguine in his assessment of his team's success. The community choir, he said, "was not going to fly," even though he and others on Team 2 still feel that it was a good idea. He said that they should have "put out more advertising"

in the community and thus attracted more guests (they had only managed to attract one guest in three meetings so far). The English language class was going reasonably well, he said, with 8-12 guests coming regularly. But he also said that outside of the instructor, few of the other SMT members were helping it take place. Perhaps two or three at the most would assist, he said, but that was all. The T2L explained that as a result of this, the team would be meeting on March 5 to determine what to do with the two ministries.

Subsequent Meetings With Team Leaders

I met informally with both team leaders in March and April, 2015. By April, the T1L reported that his group “had nearly died” the previous month due to internal disagreements and the fact that the manager of the apartment complex had finally terminated the team’s use of the room. However, the group had since rallied because one of the attendees (a grandmother of some children at the story hour) had expressed how much the story time meant to her and her family and that it simply had to continue on in some form. The team had subsequently decided to rent a different building several blocks down the street, and was in the process of redirecting their efforts towards that new location. They would “continue [their ministry] indefinitely,” he said, which at the very least meant his team would not stop on the official ending date of March 15.

As for Team 2, the T2L reported in April that the community choir was dead and would not be revived. The English class was holding steady in its attendance, but was essentially being run by the Team 2 member who taught the class. The T2L reported that the team was committed to moving forward with some other type of ministry, but did not yet know what that might be. He did not sound enthusiastic as he said this, and while I

appreciated his verbal optimism, I privately doubted whether anything more would happen with Team 2's ministry.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Phase 1 SMTs

Two identical evaluation meetings were held to assess the effectiveness of Teams 1 and 2 in reaching their assigned goal. These meetings took place on June 6 and June 13, 2015, in one of the Sabbath School rooms at the New Market Church. Fourteen of the sixteen members of Teams 1 and 2 attended.

The Evaluation Instruments

At the evaluation meetings, SMT members were asked to fill out two evaluation instruments (see Appendix C). As mentioned previously, the first, entitled "Launch Documents Evaluation," was a seven-question survey designed to assess the role and effectiveness of the Launch Documents in the performance of the SMTs. The second evaluation instrument, entitled "Team Effectiveness Evaluation," was a 61-question survey designed to assess the overall performance and effectiveness of the SMTs. The instrument assessed five areas: (a) the SMT's level of self-management; (b) the members' level of teamwork within the SMT; (c) members' personal level of ministry satisfaction derived from being in the SMT; (d) the SMT's performance, i.e. were they effective in reaching their goal; and (e) the SMT's ability to obtain the resources needed to carry out their ministry. The evaluation instrument concluded with several open-ended questions asking for feedback on members' experience while involved with the SMT.

Open Forum—and Confirmation

The evaluation meetings concluded with a time for me to ask members to share their general impressions from their SMT experience, as well as for them to ask any questions of me they wished. This led to a lively and (to my surprise, given the challenges the teams had faced) extremely positive discussion. I took careful notes from these discussions, as they would be helpful in making improvements in Phase 2.

It was during this open forum that both teams reported some surprising statistics. Team 1, for instance, said that in spite of their challenges, they had made extended, positive contact with 14 previously unreached non-church members during the course of Phase 1. Four of those 14 had recently attended the New Market Church for the first time. Furthermore, Team 1 had successfully engaged 15 other members of the New Market Church to help them at regular intervals with the SMT's ministry.

Team 2 shared similar results. In spite of the severe challenges to their community choir outreach and the non-native speaker English class, 14 non-church members had been engaged with in meaningful, significant ways. Moreover, 15 other church members had helped Team 2 carry out their ministry.

Frankly, I was shocked by the strength of these results. I had been so concerned about the problems the SMTs were facing that I had not sufficiently appreciated the fact that ministry—halting and stumbling though it was—was nonetheless being accomplished. Such results, when combined with other positive information gleaned from the open forum, confirmed to me that the process used in Phase 1—though clearly not free from difficulty—was basically sound. I could thus move forward with Phase 2 using much of what was done in Phase 1 as a starting point.

The Implementation of Phase 2 of the Intervention

One Major Change From Phase 1

The feedback received at the evaluation meetings at the end of Phase 1 did make it clear that one major change might improve the effectiveness of Phase 2: the type of ministry that the SMT would be doing needed to be determined *before* the SMT started its work. True, a handful of Phase 1 participants had stated that they were invigorated by the “blank slate” nature of their team, and that they enjoyed starting something from scratch. However, the great majority of participants said they would have preferred knowing the type of ministry they would be doing prior to joining the SMT.

There were at least three reasons given for this. First, knowing the type of ministry that the SMT would be doing to reach others for Christ could save valuable time. Team 2 pointed out that they had spent many weeks trying to agree on the type of ministry they would do—time that could have been spent doing ministry rather than holding frustrating planning sessions.

Second, while both groups did manage to engage a surprisingly large number of other church members to assist them in their work, knowing ahead of time what their type of ministry would be might make that recruitment process even easier. Most people, some Phase 1 participants said, find it naturally easier to join a group with a known ministry rather than one that is unknown.

Third, knowing in advance what type of ministry an SMT would be doing might promote greater dedication to the SMT’s efforts over time. To be clear, no participant from Phase 1 explicitly said this. However, in both the evaluation meetings and in my prior meetings with the team leaders, it seemed that those SMT members who did not

participate as strongly as others held back for a simple reason: The ministry chosen by the SMT was either not to their liking or not in accordance with their skill set. Knowing an SMT's type of ministry in advance, therefore, could make it easier for like-minded people to join up in an SMT and be more dedicated than in a "blank slate" environment.

A New Recruitment Process

The change to pre-determining the type of ministry an SMT would be doing called for a different recruitment process in Phase 2 than was used in Phase 1. The new process would need to somehow elicit ministry ideas from the congregation that at least one member was enthusiastic about. Then, a process would need to be provided through which additional potential SMT members could investigate those ideas and, if they wished, eventually join an SMT dedicated to carrying out that ministry idea.

Generating Ideas for Potential SMTs

In order to help create an atmosphere conducive to a second and larger wave of SMTs in the congregation, I preached a three-part series of sermons entitled "A Deeper Vision for Sharing Christ" (Anderson, 2015). (Note that the official occasion of the series was to help promote our newly voted church vision statement: "We do cross-generational ministry in such a way that we grow life-long disciples of Christ and have a baptism every month." I utilized this statement as a natural launching pad for SMTs.) These sermons were presented on September 12, 19, and 26, 2015. The series focused on the privilege and duty Christians have of personally sharing their faith in Christ with others, even when circumstances make that a challenge.

Prior to the sermon on September 26, and again on October 3, I stood and made an appeal to the congregation essentially as follows:

If you were the only Adventist in your town, and needed to share the message of Christ with others who were not yet ready for the second coming of Christ, what would you do? Ignore what you think is possible or affordable, etc. Just imagine: What would you do for Christ if *all* of the options were on the table?

I expounded on these questions for a brief amount of time longer, and then had the deacons pass out yellow slips of paper. I asked the congregation to write down on that paper their idea for a way to reach others for Christ, and then fold it in half and drop it in the offering plate when it came by. By this means, 40 ideas (listed in Appendix D) were eventually turned in.

Signups to Consider the Ideas

With a strong pool of congregation-generated ideas in hand, the next step was to gather potential SMT members to consider them. To this end, on the Sabbaths of October 17, 24, and 31, clipboards with signup sheets entitled “A New Way for You to Reach Others for Christ?” were passed around during the worship service with each idea listed on a separate sheet (see Appendix D for a sample). Beneath each idea was a space for interested church members to sign up to attend a brainstorming session concerning the idea. It was clearly stated that no one was committing at this time to carrying out that particular ministry. Instead, by signing up, they would merely be expressing their willingness to attend a meeting at which the idea would be discussed.

To facilitate interest in the signup sheets, I placed all the ministry ideas on the video screen at the front of the church. The effect was surprisingly galvanizing as dozens of members said an enthusiastic “Amen!” when they saw the various ideas placed one by

one on the screen and heard them explained. It was as though they were very pleasantly surprised at the caliber (and thus, at the enticing nature) of the ideas generated. More than 100 people signed up to come to the initial brainstorming session.

The First Two Brainstorming Sessions

Ultimately, three brainstorming sessions were held. The first two were held on November 7 and 14, 2015, during Sabbath School time in the Fellowship Hall of the church. This choice of meeting time and place seemed to provide the highest chance of church members attending the sessions.

At the sessions, attendees were asked to sit in groups according to the idea they were attracted to. Each group was then given a worksheet entitled, “Great Idea! Now What?” (see Appendix D). The purpose of the double-sided worksheet was summed up in the following statement from the back page:

If we [the attendees at the brainstorming session] could form this ministry to reach others for Christ, what would it look like? In other words, what exactly might we do? When and where might we do it? Who would we be most likely to reach? Let the ideas flow! Then, write the ideas that seem to really grab your group’s attention below. (p. 2)

As the groups began their discussion, it was again clearly stated to all attendees at these two sessions that no one was committing to actually doing anything with the ministry idea. It was purely a brainstorming session, and anyone could bow out at any time. This dynamic proved to be very helpful, as it provided a low-pressure and effective environment for fleshing out mere ideas into something much more tangible. It also had a galvanizing effect for many attendees: As they engaged in brainstorming, they became more personally engaged with the idea.

At the end of each of these first two sessions, participants were invited to sign up to attend another brainstorming session. This had a two-fold effect. First, it winnowed out the uninterested in a tangible way, since to not sign up was to opt out. Second, for those who remained interested, signing their name heightened their incentive to continue.

The Final Brainstorming Session

A third and final brainstorming session was held on November 21, 2015, in the church sanctuary at 2PM in the afternoon. The change in time was intentionally less convenient than with the previous two sessions, as the third session needed to attract only those that were strongly considering carrying out their ministry idea.

As a result of the previous two sessions, two important situations had developed. First, roughly half of the 40 ideas originally generated had failed to attract a following. I made no attempt to recruit supporters for those ideas (even though many of them seemed highly desirable to me personally) as that would be emphatically against the spirit of this project. Second, the “Great Idea! Now What?” worksheets (which I had collected and personally reviewed after each session) had now gathered a substantial amount of writing, ideas, and concrete plans on them. These were now passed out to the attendees of the third brainstorming session.

With their worksheets in hand, the attendees were told that today was the day for commitment. There would be no more brainstorming sessions, but rather, the signup sheet at the end of the day’s session would be to indicate that one would actually begin *doing* the ministry that heretofore had only been hypothetical. At the end of the session, 16 groups were formed, staffed by 139 people from the congregation.

A brief aside may be helpful, here. SMTs had not yet been introduced to these 139 people. I had spoken to them of team ministry, yes, but not of SMT ministry. Instead, I was relying on the upcoming orientation meetings to make the case for SMTs. Consequently, of those 139 who signed up that Sabbath afternoon, I privately projected at the time that less than half of them would wish to follow through by joining an SMT to carry out their chosen ministry idea. This would be due, I felt, to the realities of the challenging nature of SMTs as revealed in Phase 1. Once the SMT orientation meetings were completed, I thought, many initially interested people would drop out. That said, the prospect of even 70 SMT members was something I felt quite positive about.

A Final Appeal for Recruits

To ensure that all willing parties had been reached, on December 5, 2016, I gave the congregation an update on progress with the new ministry ideas. I shared the number of groups formed so far and a bit about the ministries they were committing to doing. I finished by making a final call for anyone who wanted to join these groups to do so now.

Phase 2 Orientation/Launch Meetings

Because of the larger number of people involved, Phase 2 needed three identical orientation meetings rather than Phase 1's two. To prepare for these, bulletin and verbal announcements were made during pre-worship announcement times on December 19 and 26. The orientation meetings were then held on January 5, 6, and 7, 2016, at 7PM, at the church. Three successive meetings seemed to allow for the best chance of having all who committed to a certain ministry idea to be orientated to SMTs.

With one notable exception, the orientation offered to attendees at these meetings was identical to what was offered to Phase 1 participants. The same documents were handed out and explained, and the same verbal presentation was utilized. But note that in Phase 1, the subsequent launch meeting had been necessary in large part to establish the type of ministry the SMT would do and to help coalesce team members around that new ministry. Since this process had already been largely accomplished for Phase 2 participants via the brainstorming sessions, the Phase 2 orientation meetings could also double as launch meetings.

To this end, at the conclusion of each of the meetings, attendees were asked one final time to sign their name on a commitment sheet to indicate that not only were they committed to doing a particular type of ministry, but that they would carry it out specifically by joining an SMT. These January meetings thus marked the launch dates for all 16 Phase 2 SMTs, now staffed with 102 church members (clearly an improvement over my previous projection of 70). They were to carry out their ministry until May 30.

Monitoring Phase 2 SMTs After Launch

Because of the larger numbers of people involved in Phase 2, it was clear that I could not schedule regular face-to-face meetings with members of all 16 SMT leaders every month (and yes, all 16 chose to have just one leader). So while meeting with those that I could, I also relied on email communication with at least one member (either the leader or the team's appointed communication person) of the SMTs I could not meet with. This combination of face-to-face and electronic communication allowed for me to sufficiently monitor the various teams' progress.

Giving Limited Advice

After completing Phase 1, it seemed clear that while the “raw” nature sustained then was helpful for research purposes, it did not need to continue as strongly in Phase 2. True, I wanted the independent nature of the SMTs to continue, and I determined that I would still not become significantly involved in the various SMTs problem-solving efforts. However, I did feel that in Phase 2, I would offer occasional suggestions and point to additional resources that could help various SMTs, both when requested by an SMT or when circumstances seemed to call for it.

Consequently, there were numerous times during Phase 2 when I did offer advice to various SMTs. For instance, several groups needed assistance in meshing the various personalities on their teams. Based on my 12 years of experience in the same church with many of the same members, I was able to offer some counsel as to how to do that effectively. Some SMTs simply needed process and logistics advice, such as how to request and receive funding for unusual ministry activities or what location would be best to hold a specific ministry outreach event. All of my conversations of this type were relatively brief—perhaps 15 minutes at the longest, usually 2-3 minutes. This seemed to contribute to the health of the SMTs while still preserving their independence.

Launch Challenges and Failures

It soon became apparent that many of the groups were struggling to get started—in fact, by March 1, seven of the 16 groups were essentially defunct. (For a specific listing of all Phase 2 SMTs that launched, but ultimately did not succeed, see Appendix D.) They had either met only one more time or not at all since their January launch date.

Additionally, two other SMTs, while not defunct, were definitely struggling to get started with their ministry.

I made no concerted effort to revive or prop up these groups. There were three reasons for this. First, I wished to preserve the independent nature of SMTs. Second, seven SMTs failing at the same time seemed too many for one person (me) to help simultaneously, and to attempt to do so seemed to contradict the spirit of pastor non-dependency this project is built on. Third, nearly all of the seven defunct groups had failed due to lack of interest. In other words, from my interaction with members of the struggling SMTs, it appeared that there were no internal or external challenges per se that were damaging the SMTs, such as personality conflicts, lack of funding, etc. Rather, there was simply insufficient interest in the SMT concept for team members to carry on. Such lack of interest did not seem to be sufficient grounds for concerted intervention on my part, and I decided to respect their decision.

However, I nonetheless did do three things for the SMTs that were struggling or defunct. First, whenever I saw members of the failed or struggling SMTs, I made it a point to encourage them to keep going, to give the SMT concept a chance, that it was not too late to start, etc. Second, I continued to include the representatives of the defunct/challenged groups in the SMT emails I would occasionally send out, which at times contained encouragement from the Bible and/or general advice for making SMTs successful. Third, as mentioned above, I did offer a limited level of problem-solving advice when appropriate. Such advice, though, was given for the purpose of stimulating discussion and action within the SMT rather than to draw me into the SMT as a chief problem-solver.

Launch Successes

Seven of the original 16 Phase 2 SMTs launched successfully. These were:

- Art for Christ: Creating gospel-storytelling works of art and giving them away to public facilities that will display them.
- ABLE Ministries: A gospel-based helping ministry to those with physical and mental disabilities and their families.
- Pillars of Hope: A grief recovery ministry to help those who have experienced loss find healing.
- Health Outreach: Holding health events for the public.
- Moms-n-Tots: Holding a play day twice a month to reach non-Adventist moms.
- Prayer for the Holy Spirit: Praying for the Spirit to fuel SMTs and other outreach ministries in the church.
- Prison Ministry: Visiting prisons, holding worship services and Bible studies there, etc.

It is perhaps not surprising that monitoring the progress of these successfully launched SMTs was easier than monitoring the struggling ones. It generally required less effort on my part because the successful SMTs often would voluntarily contact me, not for advice, but simply to share the blessings that were coming from their team's ministry.

Publicly Recognizing the SMTs

In Chapter 3, it was seen that the literature addressing SMTs in the religious world recommends publicly recognizing the SMTs in the church as a means of legitimizing them and thus making their work easier within an otherwise traditional

ministry environment. Phase 1 saw relatively little such recognition, as I calculated that the potential for either of the SMT's to fail seemed sufficiently high that public recognition might later result in embarrassment (a precaution that in the end proved overly cautious). However, in Phase 2, public recognition was significant. For instance, the recruiting process alone was nearly six weeks long, being announced on successive Sabbaths at length with clipboards being passed around and updates being given on SMT formation progress. Additionally, after launching, several of the SMTs were showcased at length during the worship service, with two of the SMTs actually planning and executing an entire worship service (complete with unique guest speakers, special music, and more) to highlight what their new ministries were doing. Such recognition clearly established that SMTs were not only legitimate, but also hailed a new and essential wave of lay-led ministry.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Phase 2 SMTs

Phase 2 concluded on May 30, 2016. By this time, a total of nine of the original 16 SMTs had stopped functioning. Nonetheless, all SMT members, regardless of whether or not their team had succeeded, were invited to one of two identical evaluation meetings. These meetings were held on the Sabbath afternoons of June 4 and 11, 2016.

The Phase 2 evaluation meetings followed the same pattern and used the same materials as Phase 1 with one exception: an additional evaluation instrument was introduced. This instrument, entitled “Self-Managed Ministry Team Alternate Assessment” (see Appendix C), was designed to be taken by members of the SMT’s that did not survive in an effort to diagnose what had led to their team’s demise.

Summary

In order to reduce undue dependence on the pastoral staff in making substantive ministry decisions, self-managed ministry teams were implemented in the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church from September, 2014, through May 30, 2016.

This intervention was implemented in two Phases. Both phases followed essentially the same pattern. First, church members were recruited to participate in the SMTs. Second, these members were trained in the science and art of how SMTs function via an orientation meeting. Third, the new SMTs were launched into ministry. Fourth, the SMTs were monitored in a non-intrusive, yet efficient way so that information could be gathered regarding their progress. And fifth, once the phase timeframe had come to an end, evaluation meetings were held to assess the SMTs' effectiveness.

Phase 1 concluded with both teams having faced significant challenges. However, both teams also had truly impressive levels of contact with those that are not members of the church, as well as substantial numbers of other church members that had assisted the teams in carrying out their ministries. This seemed to confirm that the process used in Phase 1 could thus be used as a starting point for Phase 2.

Phase 2 concluded with seven of an original 16 SMTs successfully forming. At the evaluation meetings, a new evaluation instrument (for those whose SMTs had failed to launch) was added that was not used in Phase 1.

The specific data and results from both Phase 1 and Phase 2 will be discussed in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

EVALUATION AND LEARNINGS

Project Summary

As pointed out previously, the New Market Seventh-day Adventist Church has a large number of well-educated and/or entrepreneurial-minded members. These traits are regularly expressed in these members' lives outside of church. However, since 2004, church members have independently—that is, apart from the pastoral staff—initiated only a handful of new ministries (either for in-reach or outreach) and have only occasionally attempted to substantially improve existing ministries. This has stunted the church's ability to reach, baptize, and mature new members. Two professional assessments of the church (Christian Coaching and Consulting Ministries, 2008; Potomac Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Ministerial Department, 2012) indicated that this problem is caused largely by an unhealthy dependence on the pastoral staff to make the majority of substantive ministry decisions.

Self-managed ministry teams (SMTs) were proposed as an intervention that would successfully address this problem. To help develop the intervention, the roots of lay ministry in the Bible and in Adventist history were studied, as well as relevant literature in the business and religious worlds. This paved the way for a two-phase implementation of SMTs in a significant portion of the church from September 2015 to

May 2016. As a result, 16 SMTs were started, seven of which continued successfully beyond the initial launch stage.

Description of the Evaluation Method

To evaluate the project accurately, two components are required: data generated from the results of the project, and a set of criteria by which to judge that data.

Four means were used to gather pertinent data: (a) personal interviews by me with selected individual team members; (b) a group exit interview with all participants at the end of both phases of the project; (c) my own personal observations; and (d) SMT member's answers on two of three evaluation instruments (see Appendix C). Of these evaluation instruments, those SMTs that launched successfully filled out the "Launch Document Survey" and the "Team Effectiveness Evaluation," while those SMTs that did not launch successfully filled out the "Launch Document Survey" and "Self-Managed Team Alternate Assessment." (These instruments were described in detail in Chapter 4.)

As projected in Chapter 4, all data collected through these four means must be filtered through the following criteria generated from the research done prior to project implementation: (a) Did implementing SMTs fulfill the project task—that is, did they lead to church members independently implementing new ministry initiatives and/or making substantive improvements in existing ministries? (b) Did the SMTs exemplify the characteristics of the New Testament-style priesthood identified in Chapter 2? (c) Did both of the first two criteria occur without significant intervention from the pastoral staff?

Outcomes of the Intervention

Because of the high volume of data generated from the various means of evaluation—particularly the 61-question “Team Effectiveness Evaluation”—not all of the data and its interpretation will be addressed in the confines of this chapter. (To see a wide range of the remaining data generated from the various evaluation instruments, see Appendix E.) I will instead focus on the most pertinent highlights, beginning with data from the Team Effectiveness Evaluation instrument. Note that data may be reported in a condensed format, e.g., “(P1:85%/P2:78%).” This means 85% of Phase 1 participants and 78% of Phase 2 participants responded in a given way to the question under discussion.

Data From “Team Effectiveness Evaluation” Instrument

Level of Self-Management

This first section of the instrument revealed high levels of self-management in the SMTs. For instance, 78% of Phase 1 participants and 100% of Phase 2 participants agreed or strongly agreed that “My ministry team works independently of pastoral supervision.” Additionally, 92% of *all* participants agreed or strongly agreed that “My ministry team makes decisions autonomously (without outside help).”

Level of Teamwork

The survey responses revealed a reasonably high level of teamwork among the SMTs. For instance, SMT members in both phases agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements: “My ministry team members share team responsibilities” (P1:86%/P2:88%); “Everyone in the ministry team feels able to act on the team goal” (P1:79%/P2:80%); “My teammates are helpful to me” (P1:79%/P2:90%).

There was at least one area where teamwork was challenged, though. In evaluating the statement, “There is frequent and good communication throughout the team about how ministry is going,” 75% of Phase 2 participants agreed or strongly agreed. But a mere 36% of Phase 1 participants said the same. Based on my personal observations and interviews, I believe this low level of agreement is due in large part to Phase 1 SMTs neglecting the counsel found in the Launch Documents.

Personal Ministry Satisfaction

This section revealed reasonably high levels of satisfaction. For instance, a majority of participants agreed or strongly agreed with statements like “My ministry on my team gives me a sense of accomplishment” (P1:64%/P2:88%) and “My ministry on this team is satisfying” (P1:64%/P2:80%). (Note the marked improvement in agreement from Phase 1 to Phase 2.)

A deeper look at the data, though, presents a more nuanced picture of SMT member satisfaction. When asked to evaluate the statement, “My sense of satisfaction in doing my ministry on my team is comparable to what others in non-team ministry experience,” only 43% of Phase 1 participants agreed or strongly agreed (with 29% saying they were neutral on the question), while only 40% of Phase 2 participants agreed or strongly agreed (with 28% voting neutral). This might at first seem to indicate ambivalence to the SMT concept becoming a permanent fixture in the church. However, that ambivalence is tempered with the responses to the question, “If asked, I would serve on a self-managed ministry team (structured like the one I am currently on) in the future” (P1:50%/P2:88%). (Again, note the dramatically increased positive response in Phase 2—from my observations and interviews, validation of the improved recruiting process.)

Ministry Team Performance

The data from this section reflects the fact that Phase 1 participants struggled at times to see their team as performing well, while Phase 2 participants showed markedly higher but still moderate confidence. This is illustrated by the responses to statements like, “My ministry team’s productivity is high” (P1:43%/P2:58%) and “My ministry team is effective in reaching its assigned goals” (P1:50/P2:68%). Add to this the response to “Self-managed ministry teams like mine are more effective at doing ministry than traditional ministry teams” (P1:38%/P2:50%) and there may seem to be reasons to doubt SMT members’ impression of the value of SMTs. However, the surprisingly affirmative responses to the statement “I believe there should be more self-managed ministry teams like mine in our church” (P1:93%/P2:96%) would seem to indicate that SMTs are nonetheless soundly embraced.

Ministry Resource Attainment

The data from this final section of the survey revealed a mixture of positive and negative results. On the positive side was the response to the statement, “People on this team have what they need to do their ministry well” (P1:79%/P2:96%). However, much of the rest of the data indicates this positive response may have been the result of SMT members learning to make minimal resources stretch. For instance, when asked to evaluate the statement, “My ministry team is given opportunities for training and ministry development,” the results were tepid (P1:51%, with 36% neutral/P2:56%, with 36% neutral). Similar feedback came in response to the statement, “People [in my SMT] receive frequent and helpful feedback about their ministry” (P1:50%, with 29% neutral/P2:48%, with 44% neutral). While the can-do attitude I frequently observed in

SMT members is a plus, clearly, there is a need in future SMTs to increase the level of resources given to them.

Data From the Launch Documents Evaluation Instrument

This instrument generated data that is very useful for those wanting to know more of the mechanics of launching SMTs. Conversely (and disappointingly), it generated little data directly relating to the evaluative criteria for this project. Commentary on this instrument is thus included in Appendix F rather than here.

Data From the Alternate Assessment Instrument

This instrument was only filled out by those in Phase 2 whose SMTs failed to survive. Perhaps understandably, such members were reluctant to come to the evaluation meetings, and only 11 (out of roughly 50) of them actually completed the instrument. While a larger sample would definitely have been preferable, their responses are nonetheless helpful in addressing a number of key issues.

First, there is the obvious question: Why did their SMT fail to survive? In answer to this, the top boxes checked (on seven of the 11 surveys) were either “Other team members didn’t follow through like they said they would” or “I got too busy”—both answers pointing to a simple lack of follow-through and/or interest on the part of new SMT members. “Many people signed up originally,” said one respondent, “but very few ever came to any of the [subsequent] meetings.” “Our group members met three times,” said another, “but [those members] never were the same people.”

Second, in response to the open-ended question, “What advice would you give regarding future attempts to launch new self-managed ministry teams?”, six of the 11 surveys cited competent leadership as an issue that needed to be addressed.

Third, and perhaps surprisingly, there remained a strong, positive regard for SMTs, even though the respondents’ SMTs had failed: Ten of 11 respondents answered the question, “If asked, I would consider serving on a self-managed ministry team in the future” with a “Yes”—a remarkable level of agreement from members of failed SMTs.

Data From Open Questions, Interviews, and Discussions

These sources of data were rich with insights into SMT ministry. Three of the most important will be mentioned here.

First, supportive relationships are clearly a key component of SMT ministry. When asked what they enjoyed most about being in an SMT, one team member said: “Teamwork, praying together, meeting regularly, encouraging each other, handling whatever comes together, making slow (but steady) progress, being accountable and helpful to others instead of trying to ‘go it alone,’ feeling valued and supported.” Sentiments like this one were repeated by other SMT members to me dozens of times.

Second, the passion exhibited for the more independent style of ministry that SMTs offer was palpable throughout both Phase 1 and 2. True, there were many obstacles to overcome, and many SMTs did fail to thrive. However, even the members of those SMTs generally remained enthusiastic about the concept. This is best illustrated by the concluding response at each of the evaluation meetings conducted in both Phase 1 and 2. I asked the assembled group—which again included members of both SMTs that had

thrived and died—“Should we continue having SMTs in our church?” The answer was strong, fervent, audibly loud, and said in surprising unison: “YES!”

Third, my interviews with individual SMT leaders yielded key data regarding the results of their team’s ministry. Between the two teams of Phase 1, significant contact was made with 28 non-church members, four of which later attended church. Additionally, 30 church members were recruited to assist in the SMTs’ ministry. Adding the results from all Phase 2 teams that launched successfully, significant contact was made with 135 non-church members, with an additional 18 church members recruited to assist with ministry. This means that a grand total of 163 non-church members were contacted in significant ways, with 48 additional church members being recruited to assist the SMTs—in my estimation, genuinely impressive results.

Data From Personal Observations and Interviews

While my personal observations and interviews generated detailed notes on a wide range of topics, I will only share information here that specifically relates to the exemplification of New Testament-style priesthood characteristics in SMT members.

First, the SMTs were solidly inclusive. Members, for instance, were of both genders, as were the SMT leaders (seven females, eight males, with one SMT led by a married couple). Different ethnicities were well represented, and a wide range of ages.

Second, a sense of inherent spiritual superiority among members, if present, was not observed or heard about in any interview. Spiritual stratification seemed to be absent.

Third, the SMT members regularly interceded for others through the spiritual sacrifices of service and evangelism. Nearly every member I spoke with saw such intercession as their reason for being on the team. One member (whose SMT worked

with children), when asked, “What have you appreciated most about your ministry team experience so far?”, summed up the feelings of many when he said, “The opportunity to reach children and direct them to their best friend [Christ].”

Fourth, geographic agility was reasonably shown in the nine successful SMTs. Five of them held ministry events outside of the church building, and all of them made significant contacts outside the church’s membership in preparation for their events.

Fifth, while some teams wished for more money, all SMTs that succeeded performed ministry that was clearly affordable.

Sixth, personal responsibility for one’s own spirituality, while observed in many members, could not be adequately evaluated across all SMTs due to the often private nature of this attribute. (See the “Recommendations” section below for more on this.)

Seventh, throughout Phase 1 and 2, it seemed clear that SMTs are easily reproducible and could be used in any part of the world. Because SMTs place a high value on the allowing team members to shape their ministry according to their context, I see no reason why SMTs’ adaptability to any locale the world over should be questioned.

Conclusions

Before final conclusions are drawn as to the effectiveness of the project intervention, a review of the conclusions drawn in previous chapters is in order.

- Chapter 1 concluded that the implementation of SMTs may reduce dependence on the pastoral staff to make substantive ministry decisions.
- Chapter 2 concluded that a return to an eight-faceted, New Testament-style priesthood in the local church could lead to improved church health both spiritually and numerically.

- Chapter 3 concluded that evidence from the business and religious worlds indicates that SMTs, properly used, can improve the quality of work/ministry done by employees/church members when compared to the work/ministry done in the more traditional, hierarchically structured organization.
- Building directly on the findings of Chapter 3, Chapter 4 concluded that a carefully planned, two-phase implementation of SMTs in the New Market Church would provide the strong possibility of: (a) members starting new ministries and/or improving existing ones; (b) members doing so while exhibiting the characteristics of a New Testament-style priesthood; and (c) both of these things occurring without significant intervention by the pastors.
- Chapter 5 concluded that the previously theoretical implementation of SMTs into a significant portion of the New Market Church was now a successful reality.

In light of these conclusions and the data reviewed above, several final conclusions can now be made regarding the effectiveness of the project intervention.

First, SMTs, as implemented in the New Market Church, did indeed lead to members starting new ministries—nine, to be exact. These ministries were effective in establishing more than 160 new contacts in the community and in recruiting 48 church members to assist with the ministry of these SMTs. This meets the first criterion for the project's success.

Second, it is clear that the selected characteristics of a New Testament-style priesthood were generally exhibited through the SMT members. With the exception of one of these characteristics (that of taking personal responsibility for one's spirituality),

all remaining projected characteristics were substantially observed in all successful SMTs: gender and ethnic inclusivity, spiritual equality, intercession for others through spiritual sacrifices of service or evangelism, geographic agility, and ease of reproducibility. This meets the second criterion for the project's success.

Third, the above two results were achieved in the absence of significant pastoral intervention. From the internal organization of each SMT, to their choice of ministry, to their method of carrying their ministry out, and more, the SMTs enjoyed a high level of independence and did not rely on the pastoral staff in any significant way. This clearly meets the third criterion for the project's success.

Professional Transformation

My professional development through the Doctor of Ministry project experience has been at least twofold.

First, the project forced me to take seriously the call to make pastor non-dependency tangible for the average church member *without* leaving the church. Previously in another district, I did leave the existing church in order to plant a new one. It was a positive and rewarding experience for both the old and new church. But it is not easily repeatable, as there are few churches willing to send their pastor off as an apostle/church planter. The Doctor of Ministry project brought me face to face with what it means, in real terms, to give lay people genuine freedom while remaining in a settled pastor environment. To me, this is significant.

Second, the project forced me to a deeper faith in God and people. I have spent most of my ministry being able to control a fair amount of what happens in my church—and banking at least part of the church's success on that fact. But SMTs really are a

fundamentally different type of ministry. Even when staffed by good people, they can be erratic, or even fail completely. It is genuine, unpredictable, lay-led ministry, and it has helped me to trust God and His people in a more intelligent and deeper fashion.

Recommendations

Four recommendations seem to be in order. First, future research on SMTs in local churches should consider supplementing personal observations of spiritual traits with additional data collection methods (e.g., a written survey instrument). As illustrated above, there are some spiritual traits that are more personal in nature and thus more difficult to adequately evaluate in large groups of people through outside observation or personal interviews only.

Second, the fourth part of my definition of an SMT states that team members should be “committed to fellowship with and the spiritual maturation of each team member in Christ” (see p. 54). However, the SMT meeting agenda that I prescribed was not as strong as it should have been when it came to helping the team grow spiritually. To address this weakness, future SMTs should include in their meetings such things as: time for each member to share about their week; a brief Bible study; intercessory prayer for one another and the goals of the team; etc.

Third, further study is needed on ways to lower the failure rate of SMTs (for some preliminary thoughts on this topic, please see Appendix G). While I do not regret avoiding heroic measures to save the SMTs that failed to thrive, I am disturbed that so many did indeed stop functioning. It seems possible to me that further refinements in the recruiting of SMT members; additional training for potential and actual SMT leaders (while avoiding making them “little pastors”); and improved methods of communication

from the pastor to the SMTs and from the SMTs to each other could all be fruitful areas to research further.

Fourth, further study is needed on ways to assess the relationship between New-Testament-honoring ministry methods (such as SMTs) and the exemplification of New Testament priestly characteristics in believers' lives. It is tempting, for instance, to say that the priestly characteristics (inclusivity, spiritual equality, etc.) come first, and thereafter, Christians will naturally engage in New Testament-honoring ministry methods. But the ease with which participants in my project gravitated towards the priestly characteristics once operating in their SMTs was surprising. (To be clear, the SMT members were nearly universally committed Christians prior to joining their SMT. But once in the SMT, many New Testament priestly virtues seemed to be much more obviously and enthusiastically expressed.) Could it be that proper structure generates solid spiritual growth rather than merely the other way around?

APPENDIX A

SELECTED PHASE 1 RECRUITING MATERIALS

[SCRIPT FOR RECRUITING PHASE 1 SMT
MEMBERS ON SABBATH MORNING]

“As most of you know, I have been pursuing my Doctor of Ministry degree for over a year now. As part of my work on this degree, I am needing some volunteers to help me with a new ministry project. It will focus heavily on developing *teamwork* in ministry in ways that most of you have probably not experienced before, ways that will hopefully help the ministry of our church and campus move forward more effectively.

I will be giving those of you who volunteer and are approved for this project more details later on so that you can make a fully informed decision as to whether or not you'd like to participate. But for now, I'm going to let a bit of the mystery hang in the air. I'll pass around some clipboards for you to sign up on if you're interested in just a moment. When the clipboard comes to you, think carefully: Does the idea of doing effective ministry with a team of people sound attractive to me? Am I interested in doing a short-term (approximately 6-8 months) experiment with a team of laypeople so I can help our church function more effectively? If the answer is yes, then please consider placing your contact information on the clipboard. I'll be in touch with you next week to fill you in on more of the details—and please remember, this is completely voluntary, and no one need feel compelled to participate. Thanks in advance for taking the time to consider this.”

[SIGNUP SHEET FOR RECRUITING SELF-MANAGED MINISTRY
TEAM MEMBERS ON A SABBATH MORNING]

**“Yes, I would like to be considered for the
new team-based ministry project!”**

As many of you know, I have been pursuing my Doctor of Ministry degree for over two years now. As part of my work on this degree, I need some volunteers to help me with a new ministry project. It will focus heavily on developing teamwork in ministry in ways that most of you have probably not experienced before, ways that will hopefully help the ministry of our church and campus move forward more effectively.

I will be giving those of you who volunteer and are approved for this project more details later on so that you can make a fully informed decision as to whether or not you'd like to participate. But for now, I'm going to let a bit of the mystery hang in the air. So please consider carefully: Does the idea of doing effective ministry with a team of people sound attractive to you? Are you interested in doing a short-term ministry experiment with a team of laypeople so I can help our church function more effectively? If the answer is yes, then please consider placing your contact information on the list below. I'll be in touch with you next week to fill you in on more of the details—and please remember, this is completely voluntary; no one needs to feel compelled to participate in this project.

(Unfortunately, due to guidelines at Andrews University, you must be at least 18 years old to participate in this project. I hope this ministry can expand to our younger church family members soon!)

Thanks in advance for taking the time to consider this!

--Pastor Shane

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APPENDIX B

SMT ORIENTATION MEETING AND LAUNCH DOCUMENTS

EVIDENCE FROM EARLY ADVENTISM FOR A
NEW TESTAMENT-STYLE PRIESTHOOD IN
THE LOCAL CHURCH

Adventist History and the Non-Settled Pastor

Listed below are a number of quotations from Adventist history and the writings of Ellen White that illustrate how pastors and churches functioned for the first 60-70 years of the church's history.

The Pastor as Church Planter

1. Interview with G. B. Starr, reported in the Wabash, Indiana, *Plain Dealer*, October 1, 1886. p. 5

The Seventh-day Adventists

Some Facts and Figures Gathered from Elder Starr—How They Have Grown in Forty Years—and What They Believe

“By what means have you carried forward your work so rapidly?”

“Well, in the first place,” replied the Elder, “we have no settled pastors. Our churches are taught to take care of themselves, while nearly all of our ministers work as evangelists in new fields. In the winter they go out into the churches, halls, or schoolhouse and raise up believers. In the summer we use tents, pitching them in the cities and villages where we teach the people these doctrines. This year we shall run about 100 tents in this way. Besides these, we send out large numbers of colporteurs with our tracts and books, who visit the families and teach them the Bible. Last year we employed about 125 in this manner.

“Bible reading is another class of work. The workers go from house to house holding Bible readings with from one to twenty individuals. Last year they gave 10,000 of such Bible readings. At the same time we had employed about 300 canvassers, constantly canvassing the country and selling our larger works. In addition to this, every church has a missionary society. Last year these numbered 10,500 members. Every one of these members does more or less missionary work, such as selling books, loaning or giving away tracts, obtaining subscriptions to our periodicals, visiting families, looking after the poor, aiding the sick, etc. Last year they made 102,000 visits, wrote 40,000 letters, obtained 38,700 subscriptions to our periodicals, distributed 15,500,000 pages of reading matter and 1,600,000 periodicals”

2. *Seventh-day Baptist Sabbath Recorder*, December 28, 1909 reported in *Review and Herald*, January 14, 1909

“All Seventh-day Adventist clergymen are missionaries—not located pastors—and are busy preaching, teaching, and organizing churches the world over.”

3. *George I. Butler Replies to Elder Canright’s Attacks on Seventh-day Adventists, “Assumption of Facts”* (Battle Creek: *Review and Herald*, 1888 and 1895, p. 24

In the quotation taken from the Kalamazoo Telegraph, we find this statement: At the time he [Canright] dissolved his connection with them, he had the charge of eighteen churches in Michigan. The facts in this case are these: Seventh-day Adventist churches in Michigan maintain their regular worship without the assistance or any located pastors, having our entire ministry free to act as evangelists in new fields. As a consequence, many of our churches pass long periods without any preaching, and consequently conference committees aim to arrange the labor in the State so that ministers will occasionally be at liberty to visit the churches, to help and encourage, them in the Christian life by a few meetings. At a general meeting for the state of Michigan, held at Ithaca during the closing days of 1886, Elder C. was present, and it was there arranged that the minister of the State should spend a little time not favorable for other work in making brief visits to the churches, each one being requested to take a certain district, so that the whole State might be covered. The district which Eld. Canright was requested to visit, though no special charge was committed to him, contained, we presume, eighteen churches; we take his count for it. To enter upon this duty he left his work in the College, to which he never returned, and commenced the visitation of these churches, which he never completed. And this is the extent of his ‘charge’ of eighteen churches.

Ellen White’s Endorsement of This Clergy
Role/Church Planting Strategy

4. *Christian Service*, p.61

As churches are established, it should be set before them that it is even from among them that men must be taken to carry the truth to others, and raise up new churches; therefore they must all work, and cultivate to the utmost the talents that God has given them, and be training their minds to engage in the service of their Master.

5. “Go Ye Into All the World,” *Review and Herald*, June 11, 1895

There has been too much spiritual energy expended in the church at Battle Creek. Those who have listened to the precious truth that has been pouring forth in such a free manner as it has there, have generally failed to receive or to appreciate the light

given. They have failed to communicate what they have received. The persons who have been attending the ministerial institutes, have had presented before them line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. But they have failed to receive any great benefit, because they have not imparted the light to others. The great outlay caused by these institutes, which have been held so often, would have brought far better returns if expended in maintaining the ministers in some part of God's neglected vineyard where there are no Sabbath-keepers. If the large churches settled in some of our cities were scattered to the four quarters of the globe, they might reveal how much the truth they have appropriated has to do with the shaping of individual character, and many eyes would be opened to behold the light of the truth. As they saw the great ignorance existing among the people, they would realize that there is work, solid, earnest work, for all in the neglected portions of the Lord's vineyard. If they were sons and daughters of God indeed, they would see that there is need of decided effort to reach the heathen in America as well as in heathen lands. The gospel is to go to every nation, tongue, and people, and ministers are not to devote their labors so entirely to the churches which know the truth. Both ministers and people lose much by following this method of labor. It is by engaging in earnest work, by hard painful experience, that we are enabled to reach the men and women of our cities, to call them in from the highways and byways of life. But many of our people are surfeited with the privileges they have enjoyed, and have lost the sense of the value of human souls.

6. *Review and Herald*, May 7, 1889

Do not depend on the ministers to do all the work in your church and neighborhood. The pastors must seek the lost sheep, and you must help them; and while the ministers are called to labor in other parts of the vineyard, the people of God must have light in themselves, speaking to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts and making melody unto the Lord. While you should respect the ministers highly for their work's sake, you must not trust them as your saviors, but build yourselves up in the most holy faith. When you assemble in the house of God, tell your experiences, and you will grow stronger. While you speak in meeting, you are gaining an education that will enable you to labor for others.

7. "The Work in Greater New York," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, January 8, 1902

There should not be a call to have settled pastors over our churches, but let the life-giving power of the truth impress the individual members to act, leading them to labor interestedly to carry on efficient missionary work in each locality. As the hand of God, the church is to be educated and trained to do effective service. Its members are to be the Lord's devoted Christian workers.

8. *Review and Herald*, October 27, 1910

God calls for pastors and teachers and evangelists. From door to door His servants are to proclaim the gospel message. The knowledge of present truth is not to lead those who receive it to settle down and colonize; it is to lead them into new places.

9. *Loma Linda Messages*, p. 179-180

It has often been presented to me that there should be less sermonizing by ministers acting merely as local pastors of churches, and that greater personal efforts should be put forth. Our people should not be made to think that they need to listen to a sermon every Sabbath. Many who listen frequently to sermons, even though the truth be preached in clear lines, learn but little. Often it would be more profitable if the Sabbath meetings were of the same nature as a Bible class study.

10. *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 6, pp. 29 & 30

An American business man [sic], who was an earnest Christian, in conversation with a fellow work, remarked that he himself worked for Christ twenty-four hours of the day. 'In all my business relations,' he said, 'I try to represent my Master. As I have opportunity, I try to win others to Him. All day I am working for Christ. And at night, while I sleep, I have a man working for Him in China.' In explanation, he added: 'In my youth I determined to go as a missionary to the heathen. But on the death of my father I had to take up his business in order to provide the family. Now, instead of going myself, I support a missionary. In such a town of such a province of China, my worker is stationed. And so, even while I sleep, I am, through my representative, still working for Christ.'

Are there not Seventh-day Adventists who will do likewise? Instead of keeping the ministers at work for the churches that already know the truth, let the members of the churches say to these laborers: 'Go work for souls that are perishing in darkness. We ourselves will carry forward the services of the church. We will keep up the meetings, and, by abiding in Christ, we will maintain spiritual life. We will work for souls that are about us, and we will send our prayers and our gifts to sustain the laborers in more needy and destitute fields.'

11. *Pacific Union Recorder*, Dec. 4, 1902

God desires His workers to make the world their field of labor, rather than to work only for those who already know the truth. Never did the Lord Jesus confine His labors to one place. We read of Him that He 'went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom....'

12. 6 Manuscript Release, p. 200, paragraph 3—a letter to A.T. Jones and Prescott, June 7, 1894

We are to labor interestedly for the whole human family. Much more time has been devoted to instructing those who already know the truth than is consistent to devote to them; for in this way the ignorant, and those who are in error, and who know not of the light heaven has sent, and the provision heaven has made for the salvation of their souls, are robbed of the message of the gospel.

Christ said, ‘I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.’ We should do very much more to carry the light into ‘regions beyond’ that sinners may be converted to the truth. Many of those who profess to believe the truth, have heard a great deal from the Scriptures, have had golden opportunities and valuable privileges. Because of the abundance of privileges that have been given them they have not valued them as they should, or appropriated the truth to their souls as they should. Had the people had less instruction, and had unbelievers had a great deal more, it would have been more after the order of God. The living testimony should have been borne, and regular organized efforts should have been made in every church, and persons should have been set to work for those who are unbelievers. Christian growth is promoted by active work for others.

The Pastor as Trainer/Equipper

Ellen White defined the pastoral role as trainer/equipper when working with existing churches, so that when the people are trained, the pastor can resume church planting.

13. Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 7, p. 20

“Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received.”

14. Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 7, p. 21

“It is not the Lord’s purpose that ministers should be left to do the greatest part of the work of sowing the seeds of truth”

15. Gospel Workers, p. 196

“In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members for acceptable co-operation.”

16. Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 7, p. 18

God has not given His ministers the work of setting the churches right. No sooner is this work done, apparently, than it has to be done over again. Church members that are thus looked after and labored for become religious weaklings. If nine tenths of the effort that has been put forth for those who know the truth had been put forth for those who have never heard the truth, how much greater would have been the advancement made!

17. Review & Herald, March 11, 1902, para. 9

The Lord will not approve of ministers' spending much of their time with churches that already believe the truth. When they preach to those who understand the truth for this time, and labor with them, devoting their time to the flock, they teach the people to depend upon them in their various perplexities. It is needful that our churches should be visited by ministers, but the churches must not expect that the minister is to hold them up, and make them believe. By such a course, the church is weakened rather than strengthened. Ministers have a work to do that will call them forth from believing companies, for they are to preach in 'regions beyond', and bear the warning message to those who have never heard the truth for this time.

18. Evangelism, p. 113

Sometimes ministers do too much; they seek to embrace the whole work in their arms. It absorbs and dwarfs them; yet they continue to grasp it all. They seem to think that they alone are to work in the cause of God, while the members of the church stand idle. This is not God's order at all.

19. Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 7, p. 19

“The greatest help that can be given our people is to teach them to work for God, and to depend on Him, not on the ministers.”

20. Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 7, pp. 18 and 19

“So long as church members make no effort to give others the help given them, great spiritual feebleness must result.”

21. Gospel Workers, p. 197-198

In some respects the pastor occupies a position similar to that of the foreman of a gang of laboring men or the captain of a ship's crew. They are expected to see that the men over whom they are set, do the work assigned to them correctly and promptly, and only in case of emergency are they to execute in detail.

The owner of a large mill once found his superintendent in a wheel-pit, making some simple repairs, while a half-dozen workmen in the line were standing by, idly looking on. The proprietor, after learning the facts, so as to be sure that no injustice was done, called the foreman to his office and handed him his discharge with full pay. In surprise the foreman asked for an explanation. It was given in these words: 'I employed you to keep six men at work. I found the six idle, and you doing the work of but one. Your work could have been done just as well by any one of the six. I cannot afford to pay the wages of seven for you to teach the six how to be idle.'

This incident may be applicable in some cases, and in others not. But many pastors fail in not knowing how or in not trying, to get the full membership of the church actively engaged in the various departments of church work. If pastors would give more attention to getting and keeping their flock actively engaged at work, they would accomplish more good, have more time for study and religious visiting, and also avoid many causes of friction.

Why Established Churches Do Not Need Settled Pastors

22. Acts of the Apostles, p. 105

Forgetting that strength to resist evil is best gained by aggressive service, they began to think that they had no work so important as that of shielding the church in Jerusalem from the attacks of the enemy. Instead of educating the new converts to carry the gospel to those who had not heard it, they were in danger of taking a course that would lead all to be satisfied with what had been accomplished. To scatter His representatives abroad, where they could work for others, God permitted persecution to come upon them. Driven from Jerusalem, the believers went everywhere preaching the word.

23. Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 267

“Those who would be over-comers must be drawn out of themselves, and the only thing which will accomplish this great work, is to become intensely interested in the salvation of others.”

Note that Ellen White’s primary rationale for the church to be into this model of ministry had to do with the spiritual nurture of existing Adventists. She clearly envisioned a working church to be a healthy church, and a pastor-dependent church to be unhealthy.

24. H.M.S. Richards, Feed My Sheep, (Washington: Review and Herald, 1958), p. 156

H.M.S. Richards refers to this common understanding among early Adventists churches needing pastors as being in poor spiritual health:

Then he went on to write about something which I suppose is hard for some of us today to understand and feel about as he did. He mentioned what he called the ‘unfortunate growing tendency in our denomination toward settled pastorates.’ The time of too many of our preachers, instead of being occupied with carrying the message into new fields, is taken up in settling church difficulties and laboring for men and women who should be towers of strength instead of subjects for labor.

When I was baptized, and later became a young preacher, we looked upon churches that had to have settled pastors over every flock as being decadent. Most of our preachers were out on the firing line, holding meetings, winning men to Christ, and raising up new churches. Then every few months they would come around and visit the churches that had already been established. This seemed to be, according to our view of it, the plan of the apostolic church.

On Troubled Churches Calling for a Settled Pastor

25. Evangelism, p. 381

The churches are dying and they want a minister to preach to them. They should be taught to bring a faithful tithe to God, that He may strengthen and bless them: they should be brought into working order, that the breath of God may come into them. They should be taught that unless they can stand alone, without a minister, they need to be converted anew, and baptized anew. They need to be born again.

26. “The Most Effective Agent for God,” *Signs of The Times*, Jan. 27, 1890

The success of a church does not depend on the efforts and labor of the living preacher, but it depends upon the piety of the individual members. When the members depend upon the minister as their source of power and efficiency, they will be utterly powerless. They will imbibe his impulses, and be stimulated by his ideas, but when he leaves them, they will find themselves in a more hopeless condition than before they had his labors. I hope that none of the churches in our land will depend upon a minister for support in spiritual things; for this is dangerous. When God gives you light, you should praise him for it. If you extol the messenger, you will be left to barrenness of soul. Just as soon as the members of a church call for the labors of a certain minister, and feel that he must remain with them, it is time that he was removed to another field, that they may learn to exercise the ability which God has given them. Let the people go to work. Let them thank God for the encouragement they have received, and then make it manifest that it has wrought in them a good work. Let each member of the church be a living, active agent for God, both in the church and out of it. We must all be educated to be independent, not helpless and useless. Let it be seen that Christ, not the minister, is the head of the church. The members of the body of Christ have a part to act, and they will not be accounted faithful unless they do act their part. Let a divine work be wrought in every soul, until Christ shall behold his image reflected in his followers.

27. *Medical Ministry*, p. 315

“Upon all who believe, God has placed the burden of raising up churches, for the express purpose of educating men and women to use their entrusted capabilities for the benefit of the world, employing the means He has lent for His glory.”

28. *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 109

It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of soul saving depends alone upon the ministry. The humble consecrated believer upon whom the Master of the vineyard places a burden for souls is to be given encouragement by the men upon whom the Lord has laid larger responsibilities.

29. *Christian Service*, p. 58

God expects His church to discipline and fit its members for the work of enlightening the world. An education should be given that would result in furnishing hundreds who would put out to the exchangers valuable talents. By the use of these talents, men would be developed who would be prepared to fill positions of trust and influence, and maintain pure, uncorrupted principles.

30. Christian Service, p. 61

As Churches are established it should be set before them that it is even from among them that men must be taken to carry the truth to others, and raise new churches. Therefore, they must all work, and cultivate to the utmost the talents that God has given them, and be training their minds to engage in the service of their Master.

A Foreshadowing of Decline

Perhaps the most stunning quote of all concerning settled pastors and church planting comes from A.G. Daniells, who at the time he said the following was GC President. He and Ellen White were the last and strongest opponents to settled pastors. And though A.G. was not a prophet, it appears that for at least one moment he prophesied quite accurately.

31. A.G. Daniells, Ministerial Institute Address, Los Angeles, California, March, 1912

We have not settled our ministers over churches as pastors to any large extent. In some of the very large churches we have elected pastors, but as a rule we have held ourselves ready for field service, evangelistic work and our brethren and sisters have held themselves ready to maintain their church services and carry forward their church work without settled pastors. And I hope this will never cease to be the order of affairs in this denomination; for when we cease our forward movement work and begin to settle over our churches, to stay by them, and do their thinking and their praying and their work that is to be done, then our churches will begin to weaken, and lose their life and spirit, and become paralyzed and fossilized and work will be on a retreat.

Conclusion

In 1915, Ellen White died. In 1920, A.G. was voted out of office. Within the decade, settled pastorates were well on their way to becoming the norm. And an amazing thing happened – or perhaps not so amazing when we stop and think about it. Our growth rate dropped sharply, i.e., less and less people met Jesus through the Adventist Church.

No, we didn't stop growing. But our rate of growth declined drastically. "Israel" had gotten the "kings" she so desperately wanted, indeed making her like the other denominations around her which today are facing nearly mirror-image decline. We adopted their ways of doing church, and now we have their problems.

GUIDELINES FOR SELF-MANAGED MINISTRY TEAMS

Team Goal: With an absolute minimum of pastoral intervention, to genuinely increase the meaningful participation of people who are not yet Adventists in the life of our church while building up fellow team members in Christ.

I. Method(s) for Achieving the Team Goal. Method(s) chosen must be ethical, moral, legal, financially responsible, and in keeping with biblical principles and church policy. Within these guidelines, the sky's the limit; the team may do as it wishes, when and how it wishes, to achieve the team's goal.

II. Duration of Ministry Project. The project is slated to end on Sunday, March 15, 2015, though the team may choose to continue on their own as long as they wish.

III. Team Member Expectations

1. *Team Schedule.* Teams may meet whenever they wish. However, it's recommended that they meet twice during the first month, then at least once a month thereafter to pray together, plan, coordinate/improve activities, and support one another in the achievement of the goal. Meeting times and locations are up to the team (after potluck on Sabbath is often a good time for most people). The "Team Meeting Format" can be used as a guide at each meeting.

2. *Team Leadership.* At the team's first meeting, leadership of the group must be determined. The team can choose to have no leader, one leader, or a rotating leadership (for instance, a different leader at each new meeting, or different leaders for different phases of goal achievement). If no leader is chosen, a team member must be selected who can act as contact person for the pastor. A secretary (to keep notes of the meetings) is also to be selected at the first meeting.

3. *Team Meeting How-To's.* (See "Helpful Team Guidelines and Practices," too.)

a. All team members are essential to the team's success and are therefore strongly encouraged to appropriately share their opinions during team discussions.

b. Diversity of opinion should be highly valued. Of course, this must be balanced with the necessity of actually reaching decisions that the team in general can support and implement.

c. As much as possible, decisions are to be made by the team as a whole, though this does not require unanimity. How this process happens is up to the team.

d. Creativity is encouraged! Feel free to think outside the normal ministry box, even if it's "risky."

4. *Teamwork Among Teams.* All teams should feel abundantly free to share information with one another. To help facilitate this, the contact information of each team leader and/or contact person will be shared with the other teams.

IV. Pastor-as-Consultant/Coach. The pastors will not lead any of the teams. They can be consulted with as coaches, though with a constant eye on preserving team independence.

a. There are three things about which the pastor can be freely consulted: 1) resource questions, such as, "How much funding is available for the ministry we're planning to do?"; 2) procedural/policy questions, such as, "Is what we're planning allowed by church policy?"; and 3) team survival questions (as in, "Our team is dying—can you help us?").

b. There are other areas the pastors may help with when asked. However, the pastors may respond to some requests by gently encouraging the team to deal with the issue in question on their own.

c. Pastor Shane will be monitoring the progress of each team for the sake of gathering information and offering help when needed. He may ask various team members for their impressions throughout the duration of the project.

V. Final Evaluation. At the conclusion of the ministry project, there will be a final evaluation meeting with all available team members (as well as some personal interviews) to assess how things went. There will be a teamwork effectiveness survey that each team member will be asked to fill out. I do not anticipate the evaluation process going over two hours.

HELPFUL TEAM GUIDELINES AND PRACTICES

- It can be useful at times to have decisions made by the appropriate people (based on competency) rather than a designated leader (if there is one).
- Team members set and affirm team goals, not just one vocal person.
- The pace and approach to the teams' work are determined by the entire team.
- The team rigorously and consistently evaluates the results of their work.
- Team members as a whole set high standards of achievement for the group.
- Team members hold themselves and each other appropriately accountable in such a way that when success or failure comes, it is a team experience rather than an individual one.
- Furthermore, healthy teams:
 - Foster unified commitment to team goals
 - Develop a collaborative climate
 - Build team morale and confidence
 - Draw on team member's strengths
 - Value team member assessment (evaluation) and development
 - Encourage clear communication and thus coordination
 - Nourish the spiritual growth of team members

To achieve this environment, it is recommended that teams insist on the following:

- 1) Shared power and decision-making
- 2) Involvement of other team members in problem solving
- 3) Recognition and use of special skills and contributions of team members
- 4) General support one another, just as Christ would were He in their place.

SUGGESTED 1ST TEAM MEETING FORMAT

*(Suggested Meeting Duration:
45-90 Minutes)*

TEAM GOAL:

With an absolute minimum of pastoral intervention, to genuinely increase the meaningful participation of people who are not yet Adventists in the life of our church while building up fellow team members in Christ.

I. Opening Prayer [someone volunteers]

II. Key Questions for the Team to Discuss

A. How will leadership happen in our group? We can choose to have no leader, one leader, or a rotating leadership (for instance, a different leader at each new meeting, or different leaders for different phases of goal achievement). If no leader is chosen, a team member must be selected who can act as contact person for the pastor. A secretary (to keep notes of the meetings) is also to be selected at the first meeting. List these positions below:

Sole Team Leader (if chosen):

Rotating Team Leaders (if chosen):

Contact Person (if no team leader is chosen):

B. What does “meaningful” participation in the life of our church mean? Make your definition as measurable as possible and state it below:

C. What method(s) will our team use to reach The Goal? [Suggestions: Simple is good. Method(s) should lead to “meaningful” participation of those who are not yet Adventists in the life of our church. Include team as a whole in the brainstorming process.]

D. What resources—time, talent, know-how, money, etc.—do we need to obtain to effectively reach The Goal for God? How will we go about getting those resources?

E. With the answers to letters “B” and “C” in mind, list on the tables on pages three and four the action steps needed to implement our chosen method(s) and achieve The Goal.

F. Looking over our plans on pages three and four, is it clear that every team member is going to be meaningfully engaged in reaching The Goal? If not, are there any barriers to their engagement that our team can appropriately remove?

G. Do our plans place us on track for seeing tangible achievement of The Goal by our March 15, 2015, ending point? If not, what can we do to fix that?

III. Encouragement and Closing Prayer

[For each team member:] What is something I appreciate about the team’s current or future ministry? Who on our team can I pray for? [Close with those team members who wish praying for at least one other team member.]

IV. Our Next Team Meeting Will Be: _____

Action to be taken	Person Responsible	Cost	Date to be completed:

Action to be taken	Person Responsible	Cost	Date to be completed:

SUGGESTED REGULAR TEAM MEETING FORMAT

*(Suggested Meeting Duration:
45-90 Minutes)*

I. Opening Prayer

II. Key Questions for the Team to Discuss

*[Notes: 1) The answers to some questions below may overlap with others.
2) Any actions the team or team members need to take should be written down on the table on page two and be reviewed at each subsequent meeting during item "A".]*

- A. What progress have we made towards The Goal since our last meeting?
- B. What's holding back our progress? How will we overcome these barriers?
- C. What additional resources—time, talent, know-how, money, etc.—do we need to obtain to improve our team's effectiveness for God? How will we go about getting those resources?
- D. Is every team member meaningfully engaged in reaching The Goal? If not, are there any barriers to their engagement that the team can appropriately remove?
- E. Are we on track for seeing tangible results by our March 15, 2015, ending point? If not, what can we do to fix that?

III. Encouragement and Closing Prayer

Have each team member cite aloud one thing they appreciate about the team's ministry. Then each team member should choose one other team member and pray aloud for them and their needs (if shared).

IV. Our Next Team Meeting Will Be: _____

Team Goal: With an absolute minimum of pastoral intervention, to genuinely increase the meaningful participation of people who are not yet Adventists in the life of our church while building up fellow team members in Christ.

Action to be taken	Person Responsible	Cost	Date to be completed:

APPENDIX C

SMT EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Launch Documents Evaluation

The “Launch Documents” were the four documents each member of your self-managed ministry team received prior to the start of your team’s ministry. The documents were entitled:

- “First Team Meeting Format”
- “Guidelines for Self-Managed Ministry Teams”
- “Helpful Team Guidelines and Practices”
- “Team Meeting Format”

Please read through and answer each of the following questions. The questions can be answered by placing an “X” in the appropriate box. N/A means the question does “Not Apply” to your situation. Please select only one answer for each question.

1. “My ministry team referred back to the Launch Documents for guidance:”

Never Almost Never Occasionally Regularly

2. “The Launch Documents have been very helpful to my ministry team.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

3. “The Launch Documents were easy to understand.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

4. “The Launch Documents described The Goal of our ministry team clearly.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

5. “I personally know the content of the Launch Documents.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

6. “The Launch Documents helped my ministry team solve problems we encountered.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

7. “The Launch Documents can help make a ministry team successful.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

Team Effectiveness Evaluation

Please read through and answer each of the following questions. Most of the questions can be answered by placing an “X” in the appropriate box. N/A means the question does “Not Apply” to your situation. Please select only one answer for each question, except where a written answer is asked for (question 34, for instance).

A. Level of Self-Management

1. “My ministry team works independently of pastoral supervision.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

2. “My ministry team makes decisions autonomously (without outside help).”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

3. “Church leadership (pastor, church board, etc.) trusts my team.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

B. Level of Teamwork

4. “My ministry team members share team responsibilities.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

5. “Leadership in my team is shared among the members.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

6. “My teammates are helpful to me.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

7. “I am unhappy when my ministry teammates perform poorly.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

8. “My ministry team relies on consensus to get the work done.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

9. "This ministry team encourages everyone to share ideas."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

10. "People in this ministry team can rely on others to perform their roles well."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

11. "After trying something new, people in this ministry team take time to think about how it worked."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

12. "When people in this ministry team experience a problem, they make a serious effort to figure out what's really going on."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

13. "This ministry team tends to be flexible."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

14. "People on this ministry team actively seek new ways to improve how they do things."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

15. "My opinions are valued by others in this ministry team."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

16. "There is frequent and good communication throughout the team about how ministry is going."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

17. "This ministry team has a clear, expressible goal."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

18. "Everyone in the ministry team feels able to act on the team goal."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

19. “The ministry team appears to let setbacks and problems stop its change efforts.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

20. “Once this ministry team implements a change, the change tends to stick.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

21. “People in this ministry team openly discuss errors that happen in the team.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

C. Personal Ministry Satisfaction

22. “My ministry on my team is valued.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

23. “My ministry on my team is interesting.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

24. “My ministry on my team gives me a sense of accomplishment.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

25. “My sense of satisfaction in doing my ministry on my team is comparable to what others in non-team ministry experience.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

26. “Having been on this team, I now have a good chance for expanding my ministry responsibilities elsewhere.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

27. “I’m doing something worthwhile in my ministry on my team.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

28. "My ministry on this team is challenging."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

29. "My ministry on this team is satisfying."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

30. "Most of the people who work in this team seem to enjoy their ministry."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

31. "Working in this ministry team is stressful."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

32. "Expectations in this ministry team are clear."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

33. "If asked, I would serve on a self-managed ministry team (structured like the one I'm currently on) in the future."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

34. "If asked, I would consider serving on a self-managed ministry team if the following changes were made to it:

D. Ministry Team Performance

35. "My team's quality of ministry is high."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

36. "My ministry team's productivity is high."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

37. "My ministry team's financial costs are low."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

38. "My ministry team is effective in reaching its assigned goals."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

39. "My teammates are creative in their ministry roles."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

40. "My ministry team helps to achieve the church's mission."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

41. "This ministry team learns from its mistakes."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

42. "People on my team, regardless of their skill level in ministry, openly talk about what is and isn't working."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

43. "Leadership in this ministry team creates an environment where things can be accomplished."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

44. "The leadership in this ministry team is available for consultation on problems."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

45. "People in this ministry team are connected with outside organizations that serve community members."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

46. "Self-managed ministry teams like mine are more effective at making disciples for Christ than traditional forms of outreach."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

47. "I believe there should be more self-managed ministry teams like mine in our church."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

48. "Self-managed ministry teams like mine are more effective at doing ministry than traditional ministry teams."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

49. "The culture of our local church works well with self-managed ministry teams."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

50. "My ministry team is rewarded when we do ministry well."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

51. "The culture of Adventism in general works well with self-managed ministry teams."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

E. Ministry Resource Attainment

52. "My ministry team has been able to obtain the funds it needs."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

54. "My ministry team has been able to obtain information necessary to do our work."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

55. "My ministry team has been able to receive the equipment that it needs."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

56. "My ministry team is given opportunities for training and ministry development."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

57. "People on this team have what they need to do their ministry well."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

58. "Everyone in this team has access to the information they need for ministry when they need it."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

59. "People receive frequent and helpful feedback about their ministry."

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

F. General Feedback

60. What have you appreciated most about your ministry team experience so far?

61. What has caused you the most concern?

62. Please list any additional comments you may have about your self-managed ministry team experience thus far:

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey!

**Self-Managed Ministry Team
Alternate Assessment**

The questions below are for members of SMMTs that never quite got off the ground. There's no shame in not launching! Instead, there are often valuable lessons to be learned when things don't turn out like we intended.

This survey is intended to generate information that will help future SMMT efforts be fruitful and to overcome obstacles to lay-led ministry. So please: Be honest in your answers! And of course, what you say will not be connected to your name.

Thanks in advance for your help!

* * *

1. What do you believe are the reasons your new ministry group never got off the ground? Please check all that apply:

I got too busy I lost interest I got discouraged

Lack of money for ministry we were going to do

Conflict with other team members

I and/or other team members lacked the skills needed to do the ministry

Other team members didn't follow through like they said they would

Other reason(s):

2. What advice would you give regarding future attempts to launch new self-managed ministry teams?

* * *

Please read through and answer each of the following questions. Most of the questions can be answered by placing an “X” in the appropriate box. N/A means the question does “Not Apply” to your situation. Please select only one answer for each question, except where a written answer is asked for (questions 8-11, for instance).

3. “Self-managed ministry teams are more effective at making disciples for Christ than traditional forms of outreach.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

4. “I believe there should be more self-managed ministry teams in our church.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

5. “Self-managed ministry teams are more effective at doing ministry than traditional ministry teams.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

6. “The culture of our local church works well with self-managed ministry teams.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

7. “The culture of Adventism in general works well with self-managed ministry teams.”

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

8. “If asked, I would consider serving on a self-managed ministry team in the future.”

____ Yes

- ____ No
- ____ Yes, if the following changes were made:

9. What did you appreciate most about your ministry team experience?

10. What caused you the most concern?

11. Please list any additional comments you may have about your self-managed ministry team experience:

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey!

APPENDIX D

SELECTED PHASE 2 RECRUITING MATERIALS

Phase 2 Ministry Ideas
(Pre-Brainstorming Sessions)
(Ideas in italics later did launch, but did not ultimately succeed; ideas in bold launched and were ultimately successful)

1. **Regular prayer time for the outpouring of Holy Spirit**
2. **Some sort of regular meeting for moms with young children**
3. *Christian drama team that would perform locally and/or travel*
4. *Take community people on mission trips*
5. *Door-to-door work*
6. Start a house church
7. **Health outreach of various types**
8. *Financial ministry*
9. *Christian book club: Read spiritually-oriented books and discuss them*
10. Some sort of regular meeting for older adults
11. A get-to-know-your-neighbors night-out meeting
12. **Some sort of regular meeting for adults and children with disabilities**
13. Some sort of regular meeting for Christian businessmen in the area
14. *Handyman/Handy-woman ministry*
15. Use the library for a speaking series of some sort
16. *Some sort of regular "Soup-&-Sandwiches" meeting*
17. *Music outreach of some sort*
18. Give personal Bible studies
19. **Create Christian art and give it away as gifts to the community**
20. Various community events
21. **Prison ministry (note: both men and women can sign up for this)**
22. Just make friends!
23. Weekly Bible study
24. Running club
25. Men's meeting to read "Wild at Heart"
26. Table game night, just for fathers and sons
27. Sign language group
28. *Sanctuary Alive: Building the OT sanctuary as a scale model for tours*
29. Bible study designed to reach teens for Christ
30. Children's friendship ministry: Ministering to neighborhood children
31. Communication skills for all ages
32. Basketball/Sports night
33. At Christmas time especially and other holidays, give neighbors cookies, etc.
34. Hiking club
35. Using the SVA Fitness Center to work out and give classes to the community
36. **Community grief recovery group**
37. DVD Ministry
38. GLOW Ministry
39. Teen/Youth outings, inviting community teens, as well
40. Bake bread and leave it at people's doors with a Bible verse

A New Way for You to Reach Others for Christ?

October 24, 2015

Listed below are most of the ministry outreach ideas that have been turned in so far. Would you be willing to meet with others to pray and brainstorm further about the ideas you're attracted to?

NOTE: By signing up below, you are not committing to leading that ministry or even to participating in it if gets going. Signing up simply says, "I'm interested, I'm willing to pray and talk about it, and I'm open to seeing where the Lord leads me."

*(Please choose up to, but no more than, **three** outreach ideas.)*

MINISTRY IDEA	YOUR NAME	A WAY TO CONTACT YOU
1. Regular prayer time specifically to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and for people that have not yet accepted Jesus	- - - - - -	- - - - - -
2. Some sort of regular meeting for moms with young children	- - - - - -	- - - - - -
3. Christian drama team that would perform locally and/or travel	- - - - - -	- - - - - -

GREAT IDEA!!!

Now What? ☺

I. Goal for Today

Thanks for coming! This morning, **our purpose is to pray, talk about the ministry idea, and see where God leads.** Perhaps the ministry idea will just stay an idea. Perhaps it will become reality, with you participating and perhaps even leading it. It all depends on where your group's discussion goes and where you believe the Lord is leading you.

II. How to Get Started

A. **First**, get some chairs and circle up with the others that are interested in the same ministry idea as you are. (Pastor Shane will tell you which idea meets where in just a moment.)

B. **Second**, choose the following two people from within your group: 1) someone to lead the discussion for this meeting only; and 2) someone to write down the ideas your group will generate.

C. **Third**, the leader reads through the "Group Discussion" agenda below one item at a time and gets the group's feedback.

III. Group Discussion

A. [5-8 minutes] Have each person introduce himself or herself by giving their name, where they're from, and why they like this ministry idea.

B. [25-45 minutes] Now ask the "Ministry Idea Brainstorming Worksheet" questions on the back of this page. (Be sure that everyone who's willing gets a chance to participate in the discussion.)

C. When you think your group has finished its discussion, come and see Pastor Shane for further instructions. (He will bring all the discussions to a close around 10:15AM at the latest.)

Thanks for coming!

MINISTRY IDEA BRAINSTORMING WORKSHEET

Ministry Idea: _____

Leader for Today's Meeting: _____

Who's in this group today?

NAME:	NAME:

Q. If we could form this ministry to reach others for Christ, what would it look like? In other words, what exactly might we do? When and where might we do it? Who would we be most likely to reach? Let the ideas flow! Then, write the ideas that seem to really grab your group's attention below:

(Pastor Shane has more paper to write on if you need it. ☺)

APPENDIX E

SELECTED RESULTS FROM SMT EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Phase 1 – LAUNCH DOCUMENTS EVALUATION - Teams 1 & 2								Percentage
Question	Never	Almost Never	Occasion-ally	Regularly			Number Answering	
1	1	5	5	3			14	
	7.2%	35.7%	35.7%	21.4%				100.00%
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A		
2	1	4	1	5	2		13	
	7.7%	30.8%	7.7%	38.5%	15.3%			100.00%
3			1	10	3		14	
			7.2%	71.4%	21.4%			100.00%
4			3	6	4	1	14	
			21.4%	42.9%	28.5%	7.2%		100.00%
5	1	4	4	5			14	
	7.2%	28.5%	28.5%	35.8%				100.00%
6	1	4	8	1			14	
	7.2%	28.5%	57.1%	7.2%				100.00%
7		2	1	7	3	1	14	
		14.2%	7.2%	50.0%	21.4%	7.2%		100.00%

Phase 1 TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION - Teams 1 & 2								
A. Level of Self-Management								
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	
1	1	1	1		11		14	
	7.2%	7.2%	7.2%		78.4%			100.00%
2	1			5	8		14	
	7.2%			35.8%	57.0%			100.00%
3	1		2	5	6		14	
	7.2%		14.2%	35.8%	42.9%			100.10%

Phase 1 TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION – Teams 1 & 2								
B. Level of Teamwork								
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	
4		1	1	9	3		14	
		7.2%	7.2%	64.2%	21.4%			100.00%
5		3	2	6	3		14	
		21.4%	14.3%	42.9%	21.4%			100.00%
6			3	6	5		14	
			21.4%	42.9%	35.7%			100.00%
7	1	4	2	5	1	1	14	
	7.2%	28.5%	14.3%	35.6%	7.2%	7.2%		100.00%
8			1	9	4		14	
			7.2%	64.3%	28.5%			100.00%
9			1	5	8		14	
			7.2%	35.6%	57.2%			100.00%
10			2	7	5		14	
			14.3%	50.1%	35.6%			100.00%
11	1	1	1	7	4		14	
	7.2%	7.2%	7.2%	50.0%	28.4%			100.00%
12	1	2		8	3		14	
	7.2%	14.3%		57.1%	21.4%			100.00%
13			4	7	3		14	
			28.5%	50.1%	21.4%			100.00%
14		2		10	2		14	
		14.3%		71.4%	14.3%			100.00%
15		2	1	8	3		14	
		14.3%	7.2%	57.1%	21.4%			100.00%
16		6	3	4	1		14	
		42.9%	21.4%	28.5%	7.2%			100.00%
17		1	1	8	4		14	
		7.2%	7.2%	57.1%	28.5%			100.00%
18		2	1	7	4		14	
		14.3%	7.2%	50.0%	28.5%			100.00%
19	1	7	2	3	1		14	
	7.2%	50.0%	14.3%	21.3%	7.2%			100.00%
20	1	2	1	9	1		14	
	7.2%	14.3%	7.2%	64.1%	7.2%			100.00%
21		4		8	2		14	
		28.6%		57.1%	14.3%			100.00%

Phase 1 TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION – Teams 1 & 2								
C. Personal Ministry Satisfaction								
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	
22		1	2	8	3		14	
		7.2%	14.3%	57.1%	21.4%			100.00%
23		1	2	7	4		14	
		7.2%	14.3%	50.0%	28.5%			100.00%
24		2	3	7	2		14	
		14.3%	21.4%	50.0%	14.3%			100.00%
25		4	4	4	2		14	
		28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	14.5%			100.00%
26	1	1	4	7	1		14	
	7.2%	7.2%	28.4%	50.0%	7.2%			100.00%
27	1	1	1	6	5		14	
	7.2%	7.2%	7.2%	42.8%	35.6%			100.00%
28		2	2	6	4		14	
		14.3%	14.3%	42.9%	28.5%			100.00%
29	1	1	3	5	4		14	
	7.2%	7.2%	21.5%	35.6%	28.5%			100.00%
30	1	1	9	3			14	
	7.2%	7.2%	64.2%	21.4%				100.00%
31	1	4	3	5	1		14	
	7.2%	28.5%	21.5%	35.6%	7.2%			100.00%
32		4	1	5	4		14	
		28.6%	7.2%	35.6%	28.6%			100.00%
33	1	2	4	6	1		14	
	7.2%	14.3%	28.5%	42.8%	7.2%			100.00%

Phase 1 TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION – Teams 1 & 2								
D. Ministry Team Performance								
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	
35		2	1	7	4		14	
		14.3%	7.2%	50.0%	28.5%			100.00%
36		3	5	5	1		14	
		21.4%	35.7%	35.7%	7.2%			100.00%
37		2	1	9	1	1	14	
		14.3%	7.2%	64.1%	7.2%	7.2%		100.00%
38		7		7			14	
		50.00%		50.00%				100.00%
39		2	3	6	3		14	
		14.30%	21.40%	42.90%	21.40%			100.00%
40		1	2	8	3		14	
		7.20%	14.30%	57.10%	21.40%			100.00%
41		1	2	8	3		14	
		7.20%	14.30%	57.10%	21.40%			100.00%
42		2	1	7	4		14	
		14.30%	7.20%	50.00%	28.50%			100.00%
43		4	1	8	1		14	
		28.50%	7.20%	57.10%	7.20%			100.00%
44		2	4	6	2		14	
		14.30%	28.50%	42.90%	14.30%			100.00%
45			1	9	4		14	
			7.20%	64.30%	28.50%			100.00%
46	1	3	6	3	1		14	
	7.20%	21.40%	42.80%	21.40%	7.20%			100.00%
47	1			9	4		14	
	7.20%			64.30%	28.50%			100.00%
48			8	3	2		13	
			61.60%	23.10%	15.30%			100.00%
49			6	6	2		14	
			42.90%	42.90%	14.20%			100.00%
50		2		7	4	1	14	
		14.30%		50.00%	28.50%	7.20%		100.00%
51		2	2	8		1	13	
		15.40%	15.40%	61.50%		7.70%		100.00%

Phase 1 TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION – Teams 1 & 2								
<i>E. Ministry Resource Attainment</i>								
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	
52		1	3	5	2	3	14	
		7.20%	21.40%	35.70%	14.30%	21.40%		100.00%
53	(Question 53 not used)							
								0.00%
54		1	1	8	4		14	
		7.20%	7.20%	57.10%	28.50%			100.00%
55			2	8	3	1	14	
			14.30%	57.10%	21.40%	7.20%		100.00%
56		2	5	5	2		14	
		14.30%	35.70%	35.70%	14.30%			100.00%
57			3	8	3		14	
			21.40%	57.20%	21.40%			100.00%
58		2	2	8	2		14	
		14.30%	14.30%	57.10%	14.30%			100.00%
59	1	2	4	7			14	
	7.20%	14.30%	28.50%	50.00%				100.00%

Phase 2 - LAUNCH DOCUMENTS EVALUATION - Teams That <u>DID</u> Launch								Percentage
Question	Never	Almost Never	Occasion-ally	Regularly	N/A*		Number Answering	
1	4	6	13	1			24	
	16.67%	25.00%	54.17%	4.16%				100.00%
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A		
2		3	10	10		1	24	
		12.50%	41.67%	41.67%		4.16%		100.00%
3			1	18	4	1	24	
			4.17%	75.00%	16.66%	4.17%		100.00%
4			2	16	5	1	24	
			8.33%	66.67%	20.83%	4.17%		100.00%
5	1	6	9	7	1		24	
	4.17%	25.00%	37.50%	29.17%	4.16%			100.00%
6	1	6	9	4		3	23	
	4.35%	26.09%	39.13%	17.39%		13.04%		100.00%
7	1	2	3	12	4	2	24	
	4.17%	8.33%	12.50%	50.00%	16.67%	8.33%		100.00%

Phase 2 - LAUNCH DOCUMENTS EVALUATION - Teams That Did <u>NOT</u> Launch								Percentage
Question	Never	Almost Never	Occasion-ally	Regularly	N/A*		Number Answering	
1	3	2	3	1	1		10	
	30.00%	20.00%	30.00%	10.00%	10.00%			100.00%
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A		
2		1	2	3		3	9	
		11.12%	22.22%	33.33%		33.33%		100.00%
3				4	4	2	10	
				40.00%	40.00%	20.00%		100.00%
4				6	2	2	10	
				60.00%	20.00%	20.00%		100.00%
5	2	1	2	4		2	11	
	18.18%	9.10%	18.18%	36.36%		18.18%		100.00%
6	1	1	3			5	10	
	10.00%	10.00%	30.00%			50.00%		100.00%
7		1		6	3	1	11	
		9.09%		54.55%	27.27%	9.09%		100.00%

Phase 2 - TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION - Teams 1-16							
<i>A. Level of Self-Management</i>							
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering
1				7	18		25
				28.0%	72.0%		100.00%
2	1		1	9	14		25
	4.0%		4.0%	36.0%	56.0%		100.00%
3				11	14		25
				44.0%	56.0%		100.00%

Phase 2 - TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION - Teams 1-16								
B. Level of Teamwork								
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	
4		1	2	13	9		25	
		4.0%	8.0%	52.0%	36.0%			100.00%
5		3	1	12	8	1	25	
		12.0%	4.0%	48.0%	32.0%	4.0%		100.00%
6		1	4	8	12		25	
		4.0%	16.0%	32.0%	48.0%			100.00%
7	2	3	6	8	1	5	25	
	8.0%	12.0%	24.0%	32.0%	4.0%	20.0%		100.00%
8		2	2	12	7	2	25	
		8.0%	8.0%	48.0%	28.0%	8.0%		100.00%
9		1	1	7	16		25	
		4.0%	4.0%	28.0%	64.0%			100.00%
10		5		7	13		25	
		20.0%		28.0%	52.0%			100.00%
11		1	3	11	8	2	25	
		4.0%	12.0%	44.0%	32.0%	8.0%		100.00%
12		3	4	6	11	1	25	
		12.0%	16.0%	24.0%	44.0%	4.0%		100.00%
13		2	2	11	10		25	
		8.0%	8.0%	44.0%	40.0%			100.00%
14		4	1	7	12	1	25	
		16.0%	4.0%	28.0%	48.0%	4.0%		100.00%
15		1	1	5	17		24	
		4.2%	4.2%	20.8%	70.8%			100.00%
16		3	3	5	13		24	
		12.5%	12.5%	20.8%	54.2%			100.00%
17		1		10	14		25	
		4.0%		40.0%	56.0%			100.00%
18		1	3	10	10	1	25	
		4.0%	12.0%	40.0%	40.0%	4.0%		100.00%
19	7	9	4	4		1	25	
	28.0%	36.0%	16.0%	16.0%		4.0%		100.00%
20			8	12	2	3	25	
			32.0%	48.0%	8.0%	12.0%		100.00%
21		3	4	8	7	3	25	
		12.0%	16.0%	32.0%	28.0%	12.0%		100.00%

Phase 2 - TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION - Teams 1-16								
C. Personal Ministry Satisfaction								
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	
22			2	12	11		25	
			8.0%	48.0%	44.0%			100.00%
23			3	11	10		25	
			12.0%	44.0%	40.0%			96.00%
24		1	2	9	13		25	
		4.0%	8.0%	36.0%	52.0%			100.00%
25	1	5	7	7	3	2	25	
	4.0%	20.0%	28.0%	28.0%	12.0%	8.0%		100.00%
26		2	5	12	6		25	
		8.0%	20.0%	48.0%	24.0%			100.00%
27		1	3	9	10	2	25	
		4.0%	12.0%	36.0%	40.0%	8.0%		100.00%
28		2	1	13	9		25	
		8.0%	4.0%	52.0%	36.0%			100.00%
29		1	4	10	10		25	
		4.0%	16.0%	40.0%	40.0%			100.00%
30		1	2	13	9		25	
		4.0%	8.0%	52.0%	36.0%			100.00%
31	2	12	2	8		1	25	
	8.0%	48.0%	8.0%	32.0%		4.0%		100.00%
32	1	2	3	14	5		25	
	4.0%	8.0%	12.0%	56.0%	20.0%			100.00%
33		1	2	13	9		25	
		4.0%	8.0%	52.0%	36.0%			100.00%

Phase 2 - TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION - Teams 1-16								
D. Ministry Team Performance								
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	
35	1	2	3	12	7		25	
	4.0%	8.0%	12.0%	48.0%	28.0%			100.00%
36	2	4	4	10	4		24	
	8.3%	16.7%	16.7%	41.6%	16.7%			100.00%
37		2	2	15	4	2	25	
		8.0%	8.0%	60.0%	16.0%	8.0%		100.00%
38		3	5	11	6		25	
		12.0%	20.0%	44.0%	24.0%			100.00%
39		1	3	15	6		25	
		4.00%	12.00%	60.00%	24.00%			100.00%
40	1	1	2	10	11		25	
	4.0%	4.0%	8.0%	40.0%	44.0%			100.00%
41			4	11	8	2	25	
			16.0%	44.0%	32.0%	8.0%		100.00%
42		5	1	10	5		21	
		23.8%	4.8%	47.6%	23.8%			100.00%
43		1	2	16	6		25	
		4.0%	8.0%	64.0%	24.0%			100.00%
44			3	12	9	1	25	
			12.0%	48.0%	36.0%	4.0%		100.00%
45	1	2	3	11	8		25	
	4.0%	8.0%	12.0%	44.0%	32.0%			100.00%
46		1	6	11	6		24	
		4.2%	25.0%	45.8%	25.0%			100.00%
47			1	12	11		24	
			4.2%	50.0%	45.8%			100.00%
48		1	10	6	6	1	24	
		4.2%	41.6%	25.0%	25.0%	4.2%		100.00%
49	2	3	2	12	6		25	
	8.0%	12.0%	8.0%	48.0%	24.0%			100.00%
50		1	6	12	3	3	25	
		4.0%	24.0%	48.0%	12.0%	12.0%		100.00%
51	1	4	2	15	3		25	
	4.0%	16.0%	8.0%	60.0%	12.0%			100.00%

Phase 2 - TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION - Teams 1-16								
<i>E. Ministry Resource Attainment</i>								
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	
52			7	14	3	1	25	
			28.0%	56.0%	12.0%	4.0%		100.00%
53	(Question 53 not used)							
54		2	1	15	7		25	
		8.0%	4.0%	60.0%	28.0%			100.00%
55	1		6	13	5		25	
	4.0%		24.0%	52.0%	20.0%			100.00%
56	1		9	5	9	1	25	
	4.0%		36.0%	20.0%	36.0%	4.0%		100.00%
57			1	15	9		25	
			4.0%	60.0%	36.0%			100.00%
58		2	2	13	8		25	
		8.0%	8.0%	52.0%	32.0%			100.00%
59		1	11	10	2	1	25	
		4.0%	44.0%	40.0%	8.0%	4.0%		100.00%

Phase 2 - ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT - Teams 2, 9, 11-14, & 16 ONLY

1	See Word document for answers to 1							
2	See Word document for answers to 2							
Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Number Answering	Percentage
3			3	7		1	11	
			27.3%	63.6%		9.1%		100.0%
4				6	4	1	11	
				54.6%	36.4%	9.1%		100.0%
5		1	6	1	2	1	11	
		9.1%	54.6%	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%		100.0%
6	1	2	1	4	1	1	10	
	10.0%	20.0%	10.0%	40.0%	10.0%	10.0%		100.0%
7		3	3	2	2	1	11	
		27.3%	27.3%	18.2%	18.2%	9.1%		100.0%
8	See Word document for answers to 8							
9	See Word document for answers to 9							
10	See Word document for answers to 10							
11	See Word document for answers to 11							

APPENDIX F

COMMENTS ON RESULTS FROM THE LAUNCH
DOCUMENTS EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

Data from the Launch Documents Evaluation Instrument

The data from this instrument reveals that the Launch Documents were well regarded, yet grossly underutilized. In response to the statement, “The Launch Documents can help make a ministry team successful,” 100% of Phase 1 participants and 74% of Phase 2 participants agreed or strongly agreed. But when asked to evaluate the statement, “The Launch Documents helped my ministry team solve problems we encountered,” the results were bleak: Phase 1 reported only 7% agreement, while Phase 2 reported only 12% agreement. Agreement with the statement, “I personally know the content of the Launch Documents” was only moderately better (P1:36%/P2:34%).

The irony of this is that from my observations, most of the challenges SMTs faced in Phase 2 and *all* of the substantive challenges faced by SMTs in Phase 1 were addressed clearly in the Launch Documents. This observation is moderately confirmed when some of the responses from Phase 2 SMT members whose teams reached viability are separated out from those Phase 2 SMT members whose teams failed to reach viability. The data reveals that 58% of the teams that reached viability referred to the Launch Documents “regularly” or “ocassionally.” Conversely, only 40% of the teams that failed to reach viability referred to them “regularly” or “ocassionally.” In my estimation, that 18% gap, if bridged, might have paved the way for more SMTs to succeed.

The data (and simple good sense) would therefore seem to indicate that new and/or better ways of inspiring SMTs to utilize the Launch Documents need to be found if more SMTs are to reach viability.

APPENDIX G

PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON WHY NINE SMTS FAILED

The solid success of nine of the 18 SMTs in this project is encouraging, and clearly suggests there is merit in implementing SMTs in a local church. However, there is also no doubt that the demise of the other nine calls for further study. Why did these nine fail to thrive?

One possible explanation is that the SMTs in this project were essentially cross-functional in nature, meaning that people with different church task backgrounds and different skills comprised the membership of the teams. Research indicates that cross-functional teams in the business world usually require notably strong leadership (e.g., a single, competent, recognized individual either in or over the SMT) if they are to succeed. This is because when there are a variety of skills and viewpoints within an SMT, strong leadership can be necessary to regulate these differences effectively. Such leadership can help resolve conflicts, deal appropriately with team process problems, etc. (see Yukl (2013), pp. 256-261). Since clearly not all SMTs in my research project had this kind of strong leadership, it could be argued that this explains why nine SMTs failed.

In my opinion, there is undoubtedly truth in this critique. As already noted in the body of my paper, homogeneity among team members is a genuine consideration when forming healthy SMTs. Having widely divergent skills and perspectives in some of the SMTs, when combined with the absence of a strong and clearly recognized leader, thus probably did contribute to their demise.

However, for at least two reasons, this lack of both homogeneity and strong SMT leadership may not be as relevant a concern as it initially seems.

First, while it is true that the nine successful SMTs nearly all had solid leaders that came to the fore and led their groups, some SMTs did not—and yet still succeeded.

Additionally, three of the SMTs that *failed* had exceptional leaders, yet still failed. (Of course, this could simply mean that otherwise exceptional leaders simply needed better training in how to lead SMTs.) This would suggest caution in granting too much weight to centralized leadership being key to religious SMT success.

Second, while homogeneity and strong leadership are undoubtedly desirable in an SMT, finding either of these traits (much less both) in abundance in the average local church seems unlikely. In the business world, employees can be hired specifically for homogeneity and leadership abilities. But the church must “take all comers” and attempt to engage them in meaningful, effective ministry, often with other church members who vary widely in their skills and abilities. Churches that want to utilize SMTs may thus have to simply accept the challenges that a less-than-ideal leadership pool and a less-than-ideal level of homogeneity pose. (This in fact was one of the primary driving forces behind the research done in this project: to find new ways to effectively deploy church members in ministry while honestly facing the often heterogeneous and leadership-poor conditions church life presents).

None of this is intended to say that leadership training or attempts at SMT homogeneity should be avoided in a local church. It is instead to say that some causes of SMT failure may be more responsive to mitigation efforts than to attempts to simply eliminate those causes of failure.

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