The Initiation of an Intentional Ministry Within a New Pastorate in the Dalton, Georgia, Seventh-day Adventist Church

Benjamin Carl Maxson
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ABSTRACT

THE INITIATION OF AN INTENTIONAL MINISTRY WITHIN A NEW PASTORATE IN THE DALTON, GEORGIA, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

by

Benjamin Carl Maxson

Chairman: Dr. Arnold Kurtz
Title: THE INITIATION OF AN INTENTIONAL MINISTRY WITHIN A NEW PASTORATE IN THE DALTON, GEORGIA, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

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Date completed: May 1984

Problem

The shortness of the average pastoral tenure—2.3 years, and the lack of a systematic process in the selection of pastors for a church as well as in the initial start-up time in a new pastorate are two of the major problems facing the Seventh-day Adventist ministry today. It was the purpose of this project to implement a process of entry into a new pastorate which would inform a continued ministry.

Method

This project focused on principles of "Intentional
Ministry" and "Negotiation." These principles were applied in every possible area of pastoral ministry and church life. The study took between twenty-two to twenty-four months as the initial start-up time, but is written from the perspective of thirty-six months into the new pastorate.

Results

The application of these principles to pastoral ministry were very helpful in the initiation of the new pastorate. The relationships of trust and confidence between the pastor and members were facilitated and provided the foundation for a style of ministry that is strong, open, and yet flexible. The process of self-evaluation which was a strong component of the project was helpful in establishing an atmosphere for change and growth.

The pastor and church leadership are committed to a continuation of this style of leadership and envision further growth and development.

Conclusions

The principles of an intentional ministry are helpful during the start-up time of a new pastorate and can be applied in a continued ministry. Outside help in the form of church consultants would be helpful in pastoral selection and the start-up time.
THE INITIATION OF AN INTENTIONAL MINISTRY WITHIN
A NEW PASTORATE IN THE DALTON, GEORGIA,
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

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

by
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May 1984
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APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

Arnold Kurtz, Chairman

Dean, SDA Theological Seminary

Abraham Terian

5/22/84 Date approved
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife Mary for her patient support and help throughout my doctoral program and to the members of the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist Church who have helped me grow.
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I would like to express special appreciation to my father, Elder Glen Maxson, for the inspiration and example of his unreserved commitment to the Seventh-day Adventist ministry.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

There is within the Seventh-day Adventist church structure a pattern of pastoral ministry which includes several areas of concern. The average length of pastoral tenure has been 2.3 years, or an average of three moves every seven years.¹ This tends to create a difficult environment for church growth, as it has been shown that short pastorates are one of the major factors contributing to poor growth in a church.² It also tends to make it very difficult for a pastor to reach his maximum effectiveness, which appears to come somewhere between years five to eight of a pastor's tenure in a church.³

The lack of a systematic program to facilitate the pastor's initial experience in his new district is another area which could be improved within the SDA ministry. This is crucial as a pastor's initial entrance

²C. Peter Wagner, Your Church Can Grow (Glendale, Calif.: Regal Books, 1976), p. 61.
and the first few months in his new pastorate may well set the pattern for the rest of his ministry in that district. It may also help establish habit patterns which could last for the rest of his ministerial life. More thought and planning needs to be given to the entire moving and start-up process. Through a carefully planned, "intentional" entrance into a new pastorate, the start-up time can be facilitated and a pastor will be able to reach a higher level of effectiveness much earlier in his time in a church.

Within the SDA polity appointment system the choice of a pastor for a church or district of churches is usually made by the conference administration with little consultation with the church where the new pastor will serve. Often the process of matching a pastor with a church is a matter of "plugging holes." While conference administrators strive to do the best they can in matching pastor and church, much more could be done in the way of systematic matching of a church and pastor in order to facilitate the best possible combination. The premise of this project is that better matching can be done, and that this matching process can be facilitated even after the appointment of a new pastor. By using an "intentional" style of ministry, and through careful "negotiation" on the part of all involved, the ministry of both the pastor and the laity can be enhanced and made more effective.
One other area in pastoral ministry might also be eased through careful planning and negotiation during the start-up time in a new district. Role conflicts are often some of the highest stress-producing factors in a minister's life. Through careful clarification of role expectations on the part of both pastor and congregation, these tensions can at least be eased.

**Justification of the Project**

There is a need to explore some additional methods of pastoral placement within the Seventh-day Adventist Church polity. While it may be true that because of the structure of the organization the congregational "pulpit search committee" is not workable, there may be some other viable options which would improve the present system.

This project is an attempt to study, develop, and apply a possible method. This report focuses on (1) the principles of "Intentional Ministry" and "Negotiation" that were applied to the Dalton, Georgia, Seventh-day Adventist Church; (2) the process that was followed; and (3) a brief summary of the results. It is not designed as a "model"; instead, it is the report of a learning process which has room for many improvements.

Limitations of the Project

Obviously, not everything that has been done in Dalton can be applied in every church. Each church and each pastor is different. However, some principles, when applied and adapted to any given setting, will facilitate a pastor's entry into a new pastorate. In some situations, such as a multi-staff church, additional elements must be taken into consideration. This project seeks to address the principles which apply primarily to the church with only one pastor. The implementation of the process used here would have to be adapted or expanded to meet the situation in a multi-church district.

Definition of Terms

Conference

Where the phrase "the Conference" (capitalized) is used, it means specifically the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, which is the judicatory body directly responsible for the administration and coordination of work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in all of Georgia and the Eastern part of Tennessee.

When "conference" (uncapitalized) is used, it means that part of the organizational structure within the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization which has regional responsibility over a geographical area such as the one named above. It is the conference which is responsible for the placement of pastors and organization
of church districts as well as the supervision of the
overall program within a specific area.

Church

Where "church" (uncapitalized) appears, it represents the church body of a local congregation. Where "Church" (capitalized) is found, it points to the "Body of Christ" in the sense of the Biblical concept of the Church as the corporate body of all God's people.

District

A district is that area of responsibility directly under the responsibility of a pastor. It may be composed of only one church, with its assigned geographical territory, or it may include several churches and their respective territories.

Abbreviations

"SDA" represents the name Seventh-day Adventist.

Explanatory Note

At this time there are no ordained lady pastors within the SDA church, though there are a few ladies who serve in that role. When a pronoun is used to indicate the pastor, I have chosen to use the male he, his, or him in the generic sense. This procedure is not intended as a reflection on ladies in the pastorate, but instead is done to simplify the writing and reading process.
Overview

This project consists of several sections in addition to this introduction. A major chapter deals with the theoretical considerations involved with the "Intentional Pastor." Three chapters follow dealing with the process of starting a new pastorate in Dalton, Georgia, and the application of the major principles of this project. A chapter evaluating the start-up procedure and detailing some of the implications and recommendations for ministry within the Seventh-day Adventist Church complete the paper.
CHAPTER II

THE INTENTIONAL PASTOR

This chapter presents the theoretical basis for this project. It begins with a description of intentional ministry and its basic components of intentionality and negotiation. The major portion of the chapter consists of a discussion of the issues which are crucial to an intentional ministry. A number of Biblical and theological aspects are included.

Since much of what is pastoral ministry or leadership today involves some form of administration or management, it is important to understand some of the dynamics involved. In our society it appears to be impossible for the pastor to avoid church administration and working through people to accomplish the mission of the church. Yet a large portion of pastors consider church administration to be at best a "necessary evil," and at worst something which should be forgotten if at all possible. This is one of the greatest areas of frustration for many pastors.\(^1\) In a study dealing with morale in ministry, three of the top four areas of problem or


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tension experienced by pastors dealt with some form of administration.¹

It would seem to be impossible for a pastor to truly function as leader without administration, which can be just as much a function of ministry as preaching, counseling, or visitation. Ultimately the purpose of pastoral ministry is to lead in the development and growth of the church as the Body of Christ. This involves working with people—leading them, equipping them, and training them for growth and ministry within the church and the community in which they live. This cannot be done without administration, and "administration properly understood simply provides the means through which a group can fulfill its purpose."²

It is a basic assumption of this project that administration can be an effective and rewarding form of ministry. In order for this to happen, it must be done within the context of sound Biblical principles of ministry and a healthy understanding of motivational and leadership theories. Limited consideration is given to several of the areas which helped direct this project. The first area which is the foundation for this project is the concept of intentional ministry.


²Lindgren, p. 25.
Intentional Ministry

A number of points are included under the heading of "intentional ministry." Basically this term designates the view that ministry should not be accidental or the result of merely reacting to circumstances; instead it should be carefully planned and purposefully directed. The first part of intentional ministry is quite apparently "intentionality."

Intentionality

A pastor's work is to a great degree one of meeting the needs of a parish and meeting situations as they come. While it would be impossible to completely eliminate this "reactive" form of ministry, this project was an attempt to use "intentionality" where possible.

The most obvious meaning of "intentionality" is that one has intentions, definite plans, purposes, goals toward which energy and resources are mobilized. ... it means purposefully directing one's life as much as possible rather than simply allowing it to be determined by past and present pressures.¹

A similar concept is that of "purposeful church administration," in which the church is involved in discovering its nature and purpose; and in fulfilling its mission of working together to reach the world.²

An awareness of a need for this style of ministry


²Lindgren, p. 60.
came to me after a number of years in several areas of ministry. Through personal experience as well as observation of other pastors while working as Youth and Stewardship director for two different conferences, there developed within me a sense of need for some better way of ministry. Frustrated by role conflicts which came as a result of cloudy or poorly defined expectations and torn by what I wanted to accomplish as compared to what circumstances demanded of me, I began studying further into leadership and church administration. While studying for a Master of Divinity degree, I gained the insight which led to further study on the Doctor of Ministry level, and more specifically to this project. In the process of this project a working definition developed:

Intentional ministry is that ministry which assumes the initiative to purposefully direct one's life and create one's roles as much as possible, focusing resources in a pro-active way toward definite goals while maintaining flexibility and openness in the negotiation of that ministry (See also p. 33).

This intentionality is expressed within the parameters of ministry found in Scripture and best expressed in the life and ministry of Jesus. These are explored further below under the section on "Crucial Issues in an Intentional Ministry."

The local situation is another factor that helps to determine the boundaries of intentionality. Ministry
is performed within and by the Church as the Body of Christ. Therefore a pastor cannot isolate his ministry from the body to whom he is ministering and of whom he is a part.

In this context sharing one's intentional ministry becomes crucial. The pastor can be fully intentional only when his congregation has caught a vision of what this style of ministry can mean and shares in the purposeful negotiation of that ministry. This applies to every form of ministry:

The ministry is successful only if lay persons learn, understand, and integrate into their own lives that for which it stands. We have fulfilled our calling only when others know what we know, when we communicate to them the gospel of Jesus Christ, and when we have helped them to lead a more fulfilled life.¹

In order to be fully intentional, a process of give and take must exist between the pastor and his or her membership. This process can be termed "negotiation" and can be done "intentionally."

Negotiation

In a technical sense negotiation is the process of interaction that takes place between any two individuals or groups when they work together. Often these negotiations are unintentional and haphazard—perhaps even unrecognized. The process of intentional negotiation in

pastoral ministry involves the transactions between the pastor and the people or groups with whom he works in a voluntary organization. There are three dominant reference groups with whom the pastor must negotiate: the local congregation, the denomination, and the peer group.¹

Through this interaction, the pastor builds relationships which provide the opportunity to minister and a base of authority from which to lead. This builds a constituency while taking into account the diversity of interest and resources found within the group with whom the pastor ministers. Negotiation focuses on developing a working consensus in effective strategies which will meet the important issues facing the church. It also helps to clarify the various role expectations on the part of the pastor and membership and to reconcile these different expectations, as well as to help to resolve any problems caused by these different expectations.

Negotiation played a significant part in this project. As is seen in the ensuing chapters, negotiation was used consciously and intentionally throughout the start-up time in the new pastorate, and even before the call to the new pastorate was accepted. Negotiation was beneficial in clarifying expectations and tailoring or shaping the ministry of the church. It served as a form of effective ministry by involving some of the inactive

²Ibid., p. 41.
members in the decision-making process of the church and in giving them a sense of ownership. This was actually helpful in bringing them back into active church life.

Along with "intentionality" and "negotiation" there are a number of other areas which are crucial to an intentional ministry.

Crucial Issues in an Intentional Ministry

In a truly "intentional ministry" several factors are extremely critical. Intentional ministry does not come on a mere instinctive basis. It is the result of careful planning based on a commitment to the Biblical parameters of ministry as shaped by an understanding of the theology of the church; on an understanding of the nature and function of authority; on a thorough knowledge of oneself and one's environment; and on a commitment to an open, shared style of ministry.

Biblical Parameters of Ministry

The first important issue is a knowledge of Biblical principles of ministry. These are best understood in light of the nature of the church and as portrayed in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. After all, ministry within the church as the Body of Christ is but a continuation of that ministry which was established by Christ. In this sense, ministry is shaped by one's theology of the church as well as an understanding of the Biblical nature of ministry. Certain models or images of the
church help clarify the role of the pastor within his pastorate.

The theology of the Church

It is impossible to attempt a thorough coverage of the theology of the Church within this project. However, certain aspects of the Church served to inform the direction of this project and are discussed below.

The Body of Christ

Scripture, aptly presents the concept of the Church as the Body of Christ. (Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:12-31) In these two passages, Paul focuses on the way different members of the Church work together in accordance with their various gifts. The Body functions as one cohesive whole, working in unity. This unity is not uniformity, as different members function within the scope of the gifts which the Holy Spirit has chosen to grant them.

In saying that "each member belongs to all the others" (Rom 12:5, NIV), Paul emphasizes the closeness and sense of belonging which should exist within the church. Gifts may differ; form may follow function; but within this diversity is an element of oneness which should not be forgotten.

The implications for the pastor are strong and direct. There is no position of hierarchical status for the one who is chosen by the Holy Spirit to be a
shepherd. The pastor is not the head of the church—Christ is! All other positions or distinctions are ones of service and function. Each member has an area of ministry determined by the gifts given of the Spirit.

The fact that the Church must function as a whole or unified body under the direction of Christ as the head means that no one individual is in a controlling position. There is room for each member, and each one is to be in submission to the Body. In reality the whole Body is greater than the sum of its members and finds its identity in the cohesiveness of a community under God.

The community of believers

"The church is a community of people gathered around Jesus, committed to him, worshiping him and ready to serve his kingdom in the world."¹ Community implies ties which bind a group together. The members of the church are no longer merely a group of individuals, but rather a part of a greater whole. They find their identity from their ties to each other and to Jesus Christ. They are "believers" who have committed themselves to God in Jesus Christ and thus to each other.

The sense of identity as a community is rapidly being lost within today's society. Part of the function and purpose of the pastor must be to restore this sense

and can only be done as the pastor finds his own functional identity in Christ. He must also model this sense of community in his life and ministry.

The Church as a community has as one of its primary functions the role of providing the standard of values for living which is consistent with the character of God. To do so, the church must truly be a community. The members must have the feeling of belonging and must experience love and caring for each other. They must in a sense find their own identity within the Church and not the world. Their contribution to the world comes as a result of their belonging to this community of God.\(^1\) They are in the world but not of the world (John 17:15, 16). But while not of the world, the Church has a primary ministry to the world.

This ministry and church life find shape and structure in an organizational or institutional form, but the Church is more than merely organization or institution. It must be seen as an entity that is more than a normal human structure.

Organization and organism

There has been considerable discussion during the last few years as to the applications of management concepts to the ministry of the Church. Much has been written about Management by Objectives and other business

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 115.
organizational techniques and their use within the Church. Different forms of leadership have been presented as ideal for church organization.

On the other hand, others have expressed the view that management concepts from the business world cannot be applied to overall leadership of the Church. Certain concepts may be used in specific tasks, but not for the overall management of the Body of Christ. One key statement illustrates this basic position:

Scripture teaches that in its essential nature the church is a living organism. We are members of a body, not an institution. Any expression the church takes must be an expression in harmony with its nature, not a stumbling copy of man's notions for organizing institutions.¹

The basic point that the church is an organism is valid. This concept helps to pull the church together into a cohesive body and is crucial to the growth and development of the Church. It is the whole Body which functions as an organism with each part fulfilling its function. "The church of today is failing to fulfill its purposes largely because it has ceased to be an organism."² Spectator religion as seen too often in churches today is a denial of the reality of the Church as the Body of Christ in the form of a living organism. The

¹Lawrence O. Richards and Clyde Hoeldtke, A Theology of Church Leadership (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980) p. 37.

model of the Church as the Body of Christ implies that the church is more than mere organization. It lives and breathes as the members function together under the leadership of Christ as its head.

The Church has two dimensions—organization and organism:

Because of its dual nature, the church faces two kinds of problems—administrative and spiritual. Too frequently, church leaders attempt to give spiritual answers to organizational problems and organizational answers to spiritual problems.¹

This distinction may involve a thin line, but it must be remembered that even Moses had to use some management concepts and did so under direct guidance of God. Whenever a group of people come together for any given purpose, organization comes into effect. It is difficult if not impossible to accomplish anything as a group if no organization exists.

The purpose of the Church as an organization or institution is to advance the realization of God's will. This cannot be forgotten, whatever organizational form the Church assumes. The church as institution must always be kept in perspective by the Church as an organism—the Body of Christ. The primary purpose of the Church is not self preservation; for if the Church is truly the Body of Christ, that can be left in Divine hands. Instead, the Church finds its mission and justification for

in the continuation of the ministry and purpose of its Creator and Master.

The institutional elements in the Church must ultimately be justified by their capacity to express or strengthen the Church as a community of life, witness, and service, a community that reconciles and unites men in the grace of Christ.¹

The fact that the Church is neither a purely voluntary organization nor a regular business corporation with clearly delineated lines of accountability complicates the situation even more. Balance must be kept between the authority of the human organization and the freedom of the voluntary individual within the Church the Body of Christ.

While there is a strong element of a voluntary organization within the Church, it has to be recognized that membership in the Body of Christ is a natural result for one who has accepted Him. Christ is the Head of the Church and, as such, has already established the parameters within which each member and each church must operate. To say that the church is dependent on volunteers may be a failure to recognize the implicit responsibility and accountability of the individual Christian. The Christian does not choose whether or not he will belong to the Body of Christ. He chooses to accept Christ and is then automatically a member of His Body. Nor does the Christian simply choose where to serve. It is the Holy

Spirit that gives the spiritual gifts which equip and help determine one's area of ministry.

... everything at the heart of a God-centered understanding of the church says that humans are expected, indeed commanded, to act responsibly as God's agents in the church.¹

This transcends the concept of the church as a voluntary organization. At the same time, this compulsory element of being under the control of God is tempered by His character and the free will of the individual and must be understood within the current reality of the form of the church being seen in many different denominations.

It was the Reformation's legitimizing of denominationalism "which provided the theological basis for perceiving the church as a voluntary organization."² The leader within the SDA organization must remember that most members of the church in North America probably come from a Protestant background. They see themselves as volunteers. To treat them otherwise is to fail to recognize the practical reality of today's church and the freedom of each member under Christ.

From a leadership perspective, one must recognize that the pastor's role is different from the leadership of a corporation or business. The church does not set its own direction, nor does the pastor function as president or chairman of the board. Each individual member is

²Ibid., p. 33.
part of the Body, and God works His will for the Church through the different members. Fortunately or not, most pastors do not have the prophetic gift enabling them to know God's will in such a way as to provide solitary and autocratic leadership. The pastor must lead within the boundaries of the "givens" and through the authority relationships discussed below.

It is precisely in this area that the voluntary element of church leadership appears. People follow only where they want to go, and within the church there is no practical way of forcing them to go in any other direction. Within the boundaries of the relationship with God, each individual chooses where he or she goes and how he or she will participate. There is a crucial balance which must be maintained on local as well as on judicatory levels.

The voluntary action of human beings remains in tension with the Lordship of Christ. The basic initiative is God's. Church members voluntarily give up their autonomy when they submit themselves in the church to the rule of Christ.¹

It must be remembered, however, that the members who surrender their autonomy within the church do so to Jesus Christ. Only as the program or activities of the church are seen in conjunction with the will of God will members continue to give up their voluntary status. Even then, as part of the Body of Christ, they expect to and should have a part in shaping or influencing the way in

¹Ibid., p. 104.
which the church fulfills its Divine purpose of redemption.

This purpose is more clearly seen in an understanding of the nature of ministry as seen in Scripture and the life of Christ.

The nature of ministry

The ministry of Christ is the foundation and ultimate model for all Christian ministry.

To say that all ministry is God's ministry is to suggest that ministry precedes and determines the Church. The on-going ministry of Jesus Christ gives both content and direction to the Church in ministry.¹

The world does not set the agenda for ministry, but rather it is God who determines the form ministry will take. The church must test its ministry by the standard of God's ministry as seen in Christ.² This should apply just as surely to the pastor's work as to any other form of ministry within the church. In fact, Christ as the Head of the Church is the controlling force of all that happens within the church and its ministry.

An extension of the ministry of Christ

In essence, the pastor's ministry is an extension or continuation of the shepherd ministry of Christ as


²Ibid., pp. 8-9.
seen in John 10. The very term pastor indicates similar responsibility and finds its role model in the way in which Jesus ministered. Even the power for ministry must come through the presence of Christ in the life of the pastor through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. To minister in one's own strength and ability is to profane the ministry of Jesus. Ministry is service following the example and the spirit of Christ as seen in Phil 2:1-8. Self must be lost in Christ and His service.

Pastoral ministry is unique in respect to other ministries in that it finds its focus in equipping others for their ministry.

Equipping for ministry

The clearest Biblical presentation of the purpose of pastoral ministry is found in Eph 4:12-16 (RSV), where Paul says the pastoral gift was given

to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; . . . we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.

Here Paul points out that the primary purpose of the pastor is to "equip the saints for ministry." This ministry is then shown to have as its purpose the upbuilding of the church until it reaches full maturity. This would include other Biblical "givens" such as the
gospel commission and Paul's counsel to the young pastor Timothy. Even with all the importance of soul winning, it must be seen that soul winning is not the primary work of the pastor. Much more can be accomplished when the church sees that soul winning is the function of the entire church and that the pastor is there to help equip the church for ministry in such a way that it becomes an evangelistic church. The pastor who spends the major portion of his time in evangelism to the exclusion of the training or equipping ministry may be a good evangelist, but he is failing as a pastor. Evangelism, along with other ministries, is the responsibility of the entire church, and the pastor must be able to lead the congregation in evangelism, instead of doing it alone.

The church is a unique organism. It is edified and becomes mature as every member functions. God never intended for the members of the body of Christ to become dependent on one leader to do "the work of the ministry." ... It is a responsibility of church leaders to "equip the saints" to serve. Then—and only then—can a local body of believers grow and develop into a mature church.¹

Leadership must see itself from this perspective of equipping others in order for the church to ultimately reach its intended purpose. When this goal is reached there will be hundreds of "ministers" (lay) where there is now only one. Ultimately, this type of ministry is the greatest service the pastor can provide. An understanding of the servant role of leadership is helpful in

¹Gene A. Getz, Sharpening the Focus of the Church (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), pp. 80, 81.
leading the pastor to the place where he is willing to focus his ministry on the training of church membership for their real role of ministry.

Servant leadership

The position of the pastor with respect to the laity is another area which is critical to an intentional ministry. There is no distinction between clergy and laity in Scripture. Within the people of God there is no status as to position of authority, as Christ is the head of The Body, or Church.

Three Biblical terms are used for the position of pastor: poimēn—pastor or shepherd; presbuteros—elder; and episkopos—overseer. The three terms are relatively interchangeable and were all positions filled by what would be considered today as laymen. The ordination of the pastor is the same as that of the elder. This would tend to imply that there should be no status or power attached to the position of the pastor. Instead, it is merely a distinction of service or form of ministry. As is discussed later, whatever authority one ultimately has as a pastor comes from the position of service which one fills and the confidence one earns.

This concept of servant ministry extends also to the entire membership and should be the dominant relationship within the Church.

Thus a servant approach to ministry is to dominate in every expression of the church. The servant church is composed of members each of whom
is to continue Jesus' servant life. Leadership in the body is composed of those who are committed not to control the members of the body but to give themselves for them.¹

Within the perspective of pastoral leadership this role of service must be at the forefront. "The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first."² Christ said it best:

You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mark 10:42-45 (RSV)

The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, indicates that he came in weakness, dependent on the power of the Spirit (1 Cor 2:3-4). In dealing with the debate over his own or Apollos' greatness he declares that they are both "only servants." It is God who brings the growth and development (1 Cor 3:3-6). "So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow" (1 Cor 3:7, NIV). Paul portrays himself and others like him as "servants of Christ" (1 Cor 4:1).

In his effort to minister to others, he makes


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himself "a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible" (1 Cor 9:19, NIV). This role of service is not for Paul alone, or others like him. In his treatment of the subject of spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12-14), he makes it clear that the purpose for each and every member is service to the rest of the Body.

The primary role of the servant is that of giving aid to those he serves. Within the church that service can finds its special character in a ministry of healing. Servant-leaders are healers in the sense of making whole by helping others to a larger and nobler vision and purpose than they would be likely to attain for themselves.¹

To seek for a position of power, or to even expect to have authority as a pastor in any way other than through service is to betray the divine trust of Jesus' ministry. A pastor must have authority or the power of influence, but it must be kept in balance through a ministry of service.

There are other Biblical principles for ministry which could be discussed, but the above are the primary ones which helped to form and shape this project. Closely related to the last issue discussed above is the subject of authority and the way in which the pastor earns and uses authority.

Pastoral Authority

The process of give and take between all the

¹Ibid., p. 227.
parties involved determines the authority base for a pastor's ministry. There are three basic forms of authority for the pastor: positional, relational, and reflected.

**Positional authority**

Positional authority is that which the pastor has because he is appointed by the conference to be pastor in a certain district. Because he is the pastor, he is expected to lead, and thus comes into the frame of action with a certain amount of authority.

However, this authority is limited by several factors. Often there is a loss of confidence in pastoral leadership due to previous bad experiences with other pastors or church leadership, and society as a whole seems to reflect a distrust of leadership in general.\(^1\) This authority can also be quickly spent or lost through mistakes in leadership or poor relationships within one's arena of ministry.

**Relational authority**

Relational authority is based on the trust and confidence which has developed through the process of negotiations between pastor and members. This kind of authority, once gained, is more effective than positional authority and is not lost or spent as easily. In fact, through careful use, this authority can actually be

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 228, 229.
invested in such a way that it grows as relationships build and solidify. It is my own conjecture that this is one of the contributing factors to the fact that the average pastor does not reach full effectiveness until the fourth or fifth year in a pastorate.

When a pastor operates primarily on the basis of positional authority and does not take the time and effort to establish the necessary relationships, his leadership base is soon exhausted. The authority base for a wide range of ministry is based on relationships which take time to build and develop. The pastor gains power or authority while working with the members in reaching common goals. This authority is bestowed on the pastor as the membership builds a trust relationship with him in working toward mutually agreed upon goals and purposes.¹

Leadership must be public in doing good if it is to gain confidence, trust, and legitimacy from volunteers. Confidence and trust are the basis of legitimacy and have their own power which is given to leaders.²

In reality, the pastor who begins with positional authority must either develop relational authority or lose effectiveness as a leader. The leader must operate from a basis of authority, and in an organization such as the church, authority is ultimately vested in the pastor


²Ibid., p. 29.
by the people to whom he ministers. Only as they come to
trust the pastor and recognize in him the ministry of
service will the members truly grant authority to him by
following him. Ultimately, in order to have the most
complete form of ministry possible, the pastor must re-
fect the ministry and character of Christ.

**Reflected authority**

This last form--reflected authority--is an exten-
sion of God's own authority and is actually the ideal
basis or foundation for all pastoral authority. The
final aim of the pastor is to be God's man in the place
of God's choosing. The knowledge that one is God's man
brings a sense of awesome power. To speak for God and to
lead out in God's cause are an extraordinary privilege.
But before this becomes a basis for ministry, the people
to whom one ministers must see Christ reflected in that
ministry.

The pastor has a choice. He can work from the
basis of positional authority--the conference has sent
him; he can build relationships that enable him to lead;
or he can be a reflector of God's character and author-
ity. This last form can include the first two and is the
most difficult. Human vessels, in all their sinfulness,
have been chosen by God for the role of pastoral leaders.
Their humanity cannot be denied, but it can be the medium
through which the character of God is seen and followed.

As quoted above, from Mark 10, Jesus states very
clearly that leadership is a position of service. To be called of God as a pastor is to be called to a continuation of the ministry of Christ—a ministry of service based on the authority of a trust relationship founded in love. With this type of leadership, the leader has the advantage not only of relational authority but also of the reflected authority of the life and ministry of Christ. And it is in this setting that the positional authority of the pastor is legitimizied.

As one looks at the requirements for a truly intentional ministry as described above a knowledge of oneself becomes extremely important.

Knowing Oneself

In order to be fully intentional as a pastor, one must have as full an understanding of oneself as possible. A knowledge of one's strengths and weaknesses and how to use them or work with them is indispensable, along with a recognition of one's values and interests and a knowledge of how to apply them to one's ministry.

One must also have a knowledge of different leadership styles and a good perception of when to apply them. There is no attempt here to give a full treatment of all the possible leadership styles available. It is enough to say that what is crucial is the flexibility and knowledge which enables the leader to creatively choose and use the appropriate leadership style for each situation.

Actually, the critical factors in selecting
appropriate leadership styles are: (a) the range of different styles within which leaders can function, given who they are and the skills they possess, and (b) the maturity or immaturity of the groups with whom they are working, given the group's background and their ability to accept responsibility.¹

This aspect of flexibility in leadership cannot be overemphasized. The pastor, through careful study of self, may come to an understanding of his preferred roles and activities. At the same time, one cannot limit one's roles to only a few selected areas. One must be able to shift and adapt a great deal. Diversity and flexibility are two key words for the pastor.

If one does not have some desire for diversity of functional roles, then one probably should not attempt to exercise leadership in a voluntary church institution. Multiple expectations put some limits on the intentionality of all ministers, but they also put limits on the kinds of persons who should seek to be clergy.²

One concept which was helpful in the selection of different leadership styles during the time of this project was that of systems theory. Through a careful evaluation of one's own resources and those of the environment within which one is working, one can determine the best style of leadership to use in a given situation. The simple graph in figure 1 helps to place this concept into perspective.³ The line shown as A-C represents the

²Campbell, p. 47.
³Adapted from handout given by Arnold Kurtz in the class, "Leadership for Church Organization," June, 1981.
Fig. 1 System's Theory diagram —

pastor or individual and his perception of his own resources. Line B-D represents the church or environment within which one is ministering.

In the Interactive quadrant the resources of the pastor and the church are both high and an interactive or shared leadership style would be preferable. In the Proactive quadrant the resources of the pastor are high while those of the group with which he is working are lower, indicating that a more proactive or dominant style of leadership would be appropriate. In the case of the Reactive quadrant, the pastor's resources are low in comparison to those of the church, so the choice of leadership style would be more reactive to the circumstances and situation. In the Inactive quadrant, the resources of both the pastor and group are low and an inactive or passive style of leadership should be taken.

In each given situation, the relative resources of
the leader and group are compared in order to determine what the most effective style of leadership would be. In each case it is crucial that one know oneself and one's church as well as possible.

Knowing Your Church

Since ministry is not performed in a vacuum, the pastor must know the church and environment within which he is ministering if he is to succeed in his intentional ministry. This should include an understanding of the local resources; the past history of the church and its interaction with its community; the power or influence structure within the church; its growth profile over a period of up to ten years; the image the church has of itself; and its vision for the future and what it can become.

This is probably the most important step in starting a new pastorate. In the case of this project, the emphasis of the initial stages was the discovery of as much as possible about the Dalton church and its resources. This was helpful not only for me as the new pastor, but also for the membership. Through the processes described in the following chapters, the Dalton church members discovered a great deal about themselves which enabled them to better plan their future.

Along with a thorough knowledge of the Biblical principles of ministry, an understanding of the nature of pastoral authority, and a knowledge of one's own
resources as well as the local situation, one must be committed to an intentional style of ministry.

**Commitment to an Intentional Ministry**

The final prerequisite to an intentional ministry is a commitment to this style or approach to ministry. This means an acceptance of the Biblical principles discussed above, a commitment to a servant leadership style, and an openness to those to whom one ministers. This also requires a realization that the only non-negotiable areas are limited to principles. Anything else can and should be discussed and evaluated on the basis of the needs of the church and the individual pastor, as well as the gifts or resources of the pastor and the people.

This style of leadership initially is more difficult and time-consuming. It is the premise of this project that in the long run it will prove to be more effective, efficient, and will reach more people.

The real challenge for the pastor is to lead the church to Christian maturity in such a way that each part of the Body fits together into its place, and functions in such a way as to help the overall Body build itself up to what God wants it to become. In a sense, the pastor's role is that of a change agent, seeking to identify the direction in which the church needs to go, motivating those involved, and enabling them to bring about the needed changes. "One of the roles of the change agent is to help people see that God desires them to be growing,
not only in their individual lives, but in the life of their organization.¹

The role of leadership within a church is unique and cannot be fully compared with any other leadership role. It requires extreme flexibility and adaptability. At the same time it requires the assurance of knowing one is not alone. It is God's church, and He is actively present, influencing and directing His church.

This means trusting God to direct one as pastor and the church as a whole. It means a faith that God is interested in what happens in the church, and that He is able to influence and control what goes on. It means

an openness and expectancy to God's movement in staff and committee meetings, in the framing of work plans, the shaping of budgets, and a host of specific organizational procedures. ... It means making trust in the Holy Spirit an organizational reality.²

To forget this is to fall into the trap of usurping God's position on one hand or giving up in complete hopelessness on the other.

It is in this context that the style of ministry presented in this chapter offers a great challenge to both the pastor and the members of any given church. At the same time, I believe it offers an opportunity or an approach which can provide solutions to many of the


²Hutcheson, p. 64.
problems of pastoral leadership faced by the contemporary church. The following chapters present a portrayal of the attempt to implement this approach to ministry in a new pastorate in the Dalton, Georgia, Seventh-day Adventist church.
CHAPTER III
LOOKING AT A NEW PASTORATE

This chapter is a report of the process undertaken during the preliminary stages of this project. It begins with a study of the rationale for what was done and then describes the gathering of information on the new pastorate and the initial negotiation with the Dalton church and the Georgia-Cumberland conference.

The prospect of a new pastorate often brings mixed emotions. These feelings need to be recognized and dealt with openly. They are complex, and they are many. How they are handled can complicate one's leaving the current pastorate, make it difficult to adapt to and enter the new pastorate, or facilitate the transition process.

One has strong ties to the present situation. There are friends and relationships built during the passage of time. One's role is established, and there is a certain routine that fits like a comfortable shoe. To think of leaving automatically brings stress and tension into the life of the pastor and family.

At the same time there are expectations of new ground, new situations, new challenges, and new opportunities. There is the excitement and anticipation
of what lies ahead. Yet even this is tempered by the anxiety of wondering how one will be accepted, by concern over the family's needs to adapt and adjust, and by the tension of the unknown.

The ability to handle all of these mixed emotions, and the entire process of change can be facilitated through intentionality. The key factors to making the transition as smooth as possible are:

1. Understanding oneself and the current setting
2. Knowing as much as possible about the new setting
3. Having a well-designed plan for what needs to be done
4. Maintaining flexibility
5. Establishing open negotiation of the pertinent issues with all parties involved.
6. Following the conviction of God's will.

Much can be done in the application of the above factors in the process of moving within the SDA polity. This is an area with a great deal of room for improvement and is addressed in the final chapter.

Transition within the Seventh-day Adventist Polity

Much can be said in favor of the call system which is used within the SDA church. The local church does not have the burden of long hours, weeks, or months spent in the search-and-calling process. Most of the groundwork is done by conference administrators. More and more,
conference leaders are consulting with church leadership about the selection of pastors. (This is a much needed change, too long in coming.) As a result of this system the pastor comes into a new setting without previous commitment or ties to specific influence groups within the congregation.

At the same time, there are some disadvantages to the SDA system. In most cases, there is little detailed or systematic research into the needs of the local church. Instead, the matching process is often done on an instinctive basis. Administrators try to match pastor and church carefully, but there is rarely a careful study of both the church and pastor, and the matching is often haphazard or incidental. Many times it is just a matter of filling openings as quickly as possible.

In contrast to the above picture, one could look at the process involved in the selection of the new rector at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, in Dalton, Georgia, during 1983. A careful self-study was made by the membership, under the leadership of the local vestry or church administrative body. This study was done in consultation with the regional denominational leaders and resulted in the preparation of a twenty-five page Parish Profile booklet. This contained a short but comprehensive over-view of the community and its history, including a detailed community profile and demographic study. The history and profile of the church and its membership
was even more complete and detailed. Perhaps the most significant section dealt with how the congregation saw itself and how the membership visualized their next rector. The profile was then made available to the clergy who had demonstrated an interest in St. Mark's, and the process of interviewing and selection was begun.

While I am not recommending that this same process be initiated within the SDA organization, there is much to be said for increased congregational participation in the pastoral-selection process. If the congregation is involved, the process of adjustment and acceptance between pastor and membership is facilitated, the sense of mutual belonging is augmented, and the start-up process is improved.

Official negotiation prior to the formal call is not allowed within the working policy of the SDA organization. However, an informal system of "feelers" has developed. Through a friend, or even through direct contact, individuals are often contacted to ascertain whether or not they are open to a call. Usually a significant amount of detail is shared with the prospective worker and a tacit acceptance may even be obtained. This varies according to given circumstances and individuals. In a sense, one could conclude that the need for negotiation in the calling process has created this informal "feeler" system.

In order to be truly intentional in moving to a
new pastorate, one obviously must know the reason for moving. There can be many reasons, legitimate and otherwise. Understanding why one is moving can be a major step towards intentionality in entering a new pastorate.

**Reasons for Moving**

The reasons for moving to a new pastorate may be many and varied. Family situations, personal growth, frustration, ability to contribute to the ministry, desire for advancement, and the often elusive will of God are but a few of the reasons for pastoral moves. It is precisely because the reasons are so complex that intentionality is so crucial.

**The Will of God**

Because a pastor is in the position of ministering for God, the assurance that one is doing God's will is the final answer which settles the question. But how do one's family, peers, and congregation know and accept that "will of God"? This is one of the most difficult things to explain to others who do not share the same conviction.

Ultimately, one must be sure of the will of God within one's own thinking. This assurance may come as one sees the providential workings which open and close doors of opportunity; it may come in the presence of the "still small voice" of God; and/or it may come through the use of one's own mind, carefully weighing the
circumstances and alternatives in the exploration of the other reasons listed above and studied in detail below.

Family Reasons

The family is a crucial area that a pastor occasionally ignores. When considering a move, the family should be one of the first concerns and its welfare should be thought through. Are there special education or health needs for some member of the family? Will a move help or hinder the family? And what will be the needs of the family as a result of the move itself? Often a move can help the family situation, but other times it can be very destructive. The way in which the move is made may very well make the difference.

Planning for the family is just as crucial as planning for the new pastorate. One must be aware of the loss in friends and identity which a family experiences with a move. Especially critical is the effect of a move on the spouse and his or her career. Openness and careful planning can be helpful in easing any potential problems.

Moving can actually be good for the family. It can broaden the base of experience for the family members by bringing them into contact with more and different people as well as different ways of doing things. It can help the family become more open, tolerant, and able to deal with life and its many situations. In addition a move can bring increased family identity by forcing the
family to count on each other—on those they know. In fact, through a move, the family members may discover that they are stronger, more adaptable and more flexible than they thought. In essence, moving can be a growth experience for the entire family.¹ But in order for this to happen, the needs of everyone in the family must be carefully considered.

Personal Growth

The need for personal growth and development is often sublimated in the life of the pastor. This may happen as the result of the intense involvement of the pastor with his work, or it may be the result of the lack of opportunity. On the other hand, it may also come by choice. The pastor may be tired of studying through the years of college and seminary, choose to take a break from any kind of study or growth, and fall into a habit that remains throughout his ministry.

A move can provide the opportunity for growth in several ways. The move itself may place an individual in an environment where growth can be aided or where the opportunity for growth exists. The move also provides the time to begin a new way of life and ministry that includes an emphasis on personal growth and development, since the first few months of a new ministry help shape the pattern for the future.

Personal growth and development are legitimate reasons for a move. If one is not growing and developing professionally, one cannot provide the dynamic leadership of one's full potential. One can reach the place where personal growth is stifled, either by the local situation of the pastorate or by other circumstances. If these cannot be clarified and negotiated to provide potential for growth, then it is time to move for one's own good as well as for that of the church.

Ability to Perform

Circumstances can occasionally develop which make it difficult for a pastor to continue to perform and contribute to the ministry of a given church. This can happen through a conflict within the church or between the pastor and a significant influence group in the church. It can also come as the result of the pastor's own actions, or something in his personal life. Finally, frustration with ministry, whatever the cause, can be one of the most destructive factors in limiting a pastor's potential for ministry.

This reason for moving is one which is often used as a catch-all. If one considers moving because he feels it is no longer possible to contribute or effectively minister, it is important to analyze all the factors involved. Often this feeling of inadequacy can be dealt with through open negotiation with the concerned parties, and or through careful evaluation of one's ministry. The
concept of thinking of the pastorate in terms of chapters rather than number of years can be helpful.

A chapter represents a period of time from several months to several years covering one of a series of stages or phases within a single pastorate. Conscious awareness of chapters and their progress can aid in the evaluation of one's ministry. Analysis of the amount of time which has passed since the beginning of the current chapter can be helpful in determining the appropriateness of a move. If less than two or three years have elapsed, it is probably not time to move. If more than three years have gone by, a new chapter of ministry or a move may be viable options. If more than five years have passed since the current chapter began, it is almost certainly time to consider moving, as few chapters in an effective pastorate extend beyond three or four years. Normally there is a natural transition from one chapter to another, each chapter providing a new stage of growth in a church.

This is significant since most SDA pastors rarely make it through their second chapter. The initial chapter, or start-up time, can take an average of eighteen to twenty-four months. In the case of this project, the latter was closer. When the average SDA pastor moves in less than three years, as stated previously, it is

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obvious that he has scarcely passed through the first chapter.

Another factor which can be helpful in determining one's ability to perform is the fact that many pastors reach a period of vocational depression sometime during the third or fourth year—second or third chapter—in a pastorate. This appears to be a normal pattern.\(^1\) Just knowing this may help clarify the pastor's thinking. It is probably safe to conclude that most SDA pastors move before they need to, and before they have reached their full potential. At the same time, it is important to remember that there are exceptions to this generalization.

If after careful consideration and open discussion of the situation it is clear that one's ability to continue ministering in the current pastorate is hampered or ended, then it is time for a move. Too often, however, even in the situation of open conflict, a move to a new pastorate is used as an escape. Steps in conflict management and negotiation could help to provide a situation for increased growth on the part of both the pastor and the church.

Desire for Advancement

The desire for advancement is another factor that affects moves within the SDA church. In spite of the often-given tribute to the pastoral ministry, a tacit

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 26.
attitude exists which implies that advancement comes with moves to larger churches or into some form of administrative function on a regional or higher level. This entire frame of mind needs to be dealt with openly and carefully. Advancement should be seen as an opportunity to continue the ministry of Christ to the fullest of one's ability. Within this framework, one might aspire to professional advancement as a greater opportunity for ministry and use of talents and gifts.

**Intentionality in Moving**

Within the SDA call system there is little place for a pastor to look for and apply for openings. In a sense, the pastor must play a predominantly passive role until the call is initiated by someone else. In fact, to actively seek a position is usually frowned upon and discouraged. Through friends, one may pass the word around that one is open for or actively seeking a call, but there is no formal way in which a pastor can express any desire for a specific position.

**Interviewing and Negotiating**

As mentioned above, there is an informal system by which "feelers" are extended and the calling system is facilitated. This is where the intentionality and negotiation should begin. From the very first thought of a move, every step should be carefully considered. The process begins with the first contact and should continue
on through the move and start-up process.

Negotiation can go into full swing once the call is received. Most conferences allow prospective pastors to visit the new pastorate before final acceptance of the call is given. Much of what is done in other polities during the interview process can apply to this initial visit. It is here that intentionality should begin. It means discovering as much as possible about the new church and what is involved in moving to the new pastorate. More can be done during the entrance period, but the more that is known before the call is accepted, the further ahead one is upon arrival.

Once the initial contact with the people in the new pastorate has been made, intentionality means disclosing as much of yourself as feasible so that the members in the new pastorate can gain as accurate a picture of you as possible. "If your primary intention is to seek a relationship of mutual growth, then now is the time. And the technique is mutual candor."2

A New Approach

It is here, in the calling process, that I was able to negotiate with the Georgia-Cumberland Conference an opportunity to try an approach that is unusual within the SDA polity. When contacted with the initial "feeler"
I requested the opportunity to meet with the Dalton Church Board and explore the church needs and potential for filling those needs. Following the extension of an official call by the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, Elder Gary Patterson, the Conference president, was open enough to allow this kind of meeting.

Gathering Information

The first stage in this process after the initial agreement with the Conference leadership was the gathering of information. Prior to the meeting, data on the church and community had been compiled and summarized in a "Church Information Form" which had been sent ahead to the church leaders. (See appendix 1 for materials used during this initial meeting.) Some of the information was obtained from the Conference office. The balance was provided by the church treasurer and elder. The final part of the picture was filled in during an inspection tour of the church facilities with the head deacon prior to the meeting with the rest of the members.

The purpose of this form was to collect as much information as possible about the church, its resources, and the community. This included information on the physical and financial resources of the church, as well as a brief profile of the church, its last few pastors, and its ministry record. This information was added to what was obtained during the meeting and aided in making an informed decision as to whether or not to accept the
call to pastor the Dalton SDA church.

Church Board Meeting

On the evening of December 23, 1980, my wife and I met with about fifty members of the Dalton SDA church, including the Church Board. This was well over half of the active, attending membership. The Conference president introduced us to the group, and then left, leaving the meeting in the hands of the local church leadership and myself.

Objectives

In addition to obtaining information about Dalton, the initial meeting had some other objectives. One of the most crucial was to allow the members present to learn as much about us as possible. This included information about our personal lives, my preferred leadership style and philosophy, and my educational plans. Another important objective was the exploration and negotiation of mutual expectations and commitments.

The most important objective for this meeting was the establishment of an open relationship which could lay the foundation for an ongoing style of ministry that emphasized the involvement and input of the membership into every stage of church life.

Description of the process

The meeting, following the introduction by the Conference president, began with a devotional during
which I presented a brief Biblical background of my understanding of leadership and ministry. The rest of the agenda was pretty well followed as outlined. (See appendix 1, p. 135.)

In order to facilitate the sharing of personal information, a resume was given out to each one present. (See appendix 1, p. 136.) I shared the information on my background up through our marriage, and Mary—my wife—shared the remainder of the personal information. This gave an opportunity for the members present to at least observe Mary and come to know her as much as would be possible in one short meeting.

The next major item on the agenda was a congregational evaluation and analysis. This was done with a questionnaire developed for that meeting. Some of the questions were adapted from material in other questionnaires from a number of sources, some from the work by Robert Worley.1 While not perfectly scientific, the form was designed to measure the attitudes, feelings, and expectations of the members. (This form can be found as used and with the results summarized in appendix 1, pp. 137-150.) The completion of the questionnaire, along with the rest of the meeting enabled us to discover a great deal of information about the Dalton SDA church and its members.

The next area covered was that of pastoral  

1Worley, pp. 72 -84.
priorities. Again a form was used to help discover what the members saw as the important priorities for their pastor. (See appendix 1, p. 151.) This served as a basis for understanding what they saw as their needs, for negotiating the primary emphases for ministry, and for helping them to understand the full scope of pastoral ministry and responsibility. While this would not provide definitive parameters for ministry, it would give a number of specific ideas as to what the members expected of their pastor.

Next came a presentation and discussion of my preferred leadership style and philosophy of ministry. Basically this included a Biblical perspective of the servant leader, the need for openness within the church, the need for careful planning and continual evaluation, and the need to understand and follow the priorities for the church as found in Scripture. At the same time, the members had opportunity to present their own feelings and discuss what they felt were the leadership needs of the church.

My Doctor of Ministry program was presented to the group. This included an outline of the course work remaining to be done and a brief presentation of this project which would be done in the church.

The balance of the evening was spent in discussion and negotiation of mutual expectations and preliminary commitments. Contingent on accepting the call I
committed myself not to make any changes in the church structure or organization for six months if at the same time they would commit themselves to a program of careful self-evaluation and goal setting. I also committed myself to the style of leadership which has been discussed.

Other areas were explored with the group and commitments were made. The members present committed themselves to the exploration and development of the mission and purpose of the church, to an open style of mutual ministry as presented, to participation in this Doctor of Ministry project, and to a relationship of mutual growth based on open communication, analysis, evaluation, and feedback.

A steering committee was appointed for the purpose of working closely with the pastor during the first eighteen months. This group would serve as a source of ongoing feedback to evaluate progress and provide sensitivity to congregational needs. More of the work of this committee is discussed in chapter 4.

Although the Board meeting agenda includes the naming of an analysis and evaluation committee, this was delayed until two or three months into the new pastorate.

The final stage of the evening meeting was an opportunity for the church board and other members present to actually vote as to whether or not they wanted us to come, and if they were willing to make the commitments discussed above. We stepped out of the meeting and
a vote was taken. One of the local elders then came to us, expressed the desire of the group to have us come, and invited us back into the meeting. The discussion revolved around if and when we would come. An estimate for a time for the move was set for February, contingent on further conversation with the Conference president following careful study and evaluation of that night's meeting.

Before we could accept the call, or even seriously negotiate with the Conference President, we needed to carefully evaluate the needs of the Dalton church and our ability to meet those needs.

The candidate should learn what both the expectations and the needs are in the church, and then ask himself whether he can meet them. If he thinks he cannot, then it is better for him to withdraw. If the discrepancy appears small, it may be a matter of his accepting it, and adapting to it—perhaps finding a skill or interest that he did not have previously.¹

Study and Evaluation

The two days following the meeting with the church board were spent in careful and prayerful evaluation of the information garnered during the previous step. I discovered very quickly that I knew more about the attitudes and feelings of this group of people than I had my previous church after being there for six months. The intentional process of the board meeting had produced a

great deal of information. Some returned questionnaires were more meaningful than others. Approximately half of the people who returned the Church Evaluation and Analysis forms wrote significant comments which revealed a great deal.

The Dalton church member at this time were fragmented, discouraged, and lacking in vision. They had many strengths and abilities but no consistent focus. They lacked any definite purpose and direction and were unsure of their own future. Their sense of identity found its source in building programs, citrus fruit sales, and a limited health ministry. They saw themselves as having strong potential, but needing spiritual nurture and coordinating leadership. While seeking strong leadership, they wanted a leader that would listen to them and identify with them.

Through a long history of misunderstanding and conflict the relationship of the Dalton church with the Conference was considerably strained. Even the process of calling a new pastor aroused suspicion that they were somehow being manipulated. They wanted a pastor who would minister to their needs through a strong pulpit ministry, through identifying with their concerns, and through providing the leadership to pull them together and coordinate the overall church program.

After careful consideration of these factors, and through the convicting influence of the Holy Spirit, we
concluded that God wanted us in Dalton. I felt that the Dalton situation provided a unique setting to implement much of what I had learned through my past experience and studies. It would not be easy and would be a great challenge. However, here was an opportunity in which, with God's help and guidance, my style of leadership and combination of abilities and talents might be effectively used. At the same time it would require constant growth and maturing on my part.

If we accepted the call to Dalton, the focus of the first year or two of ministry would be on building relationships within the church body, developing trust, leading them to an understanding of the purpose and mission of their church, and nurturing their spiritual lives. Any direct outreach program would have to wait a while, but that in itself would be an area for growth and education.

Negotiating with the Conference

The backing of the Conference administration would be crucial if this approach to the start-up time in Dalton was to be a success. I met with Gary Patterson, the Conference president, on December 26. After looking over some of the questionnaires and discussing the perceived needs of the Dalton church, he agreed to bear with me and support me in any way possible through this approach. Some concern was expressed for maintaining at least a minimum level of outreach ministry and growth,
but he agreed that the membership needed to be brought
together, and concluded that it would be well to give my
planned approach his approval.

The remaining areas of negotiation included back­
ing for my Doctor of Ministry program, timing for the
move, and working out the problem of housing. It is
enough to say that everything was worked out to the
satisfaction of all concerned.

Objectives of the New Approach

The primary purpose of this new approach was to
begin the new pastorate with as much information as
possible about the new church, its needs, and its per­
sonality. Also, it was hoped that this approach would
help to establish the foundation for an open style of
ministry which would solicit input from as many different
individuals as possible. And finally, it was the purpose
of this approach to clarify as many of the mutual expec­
tations as possible in order to limit the number of
surprises and facilitate a truly intentional ministry
which would meet the needs of both pastor and people. It
is here that the pastor must take the initiative.

Ultimately, however, it is the minister himself who
must make certain that every possible expectation
of any importance has been put on the table and
looked at carefully.¹

More is said about the effects of this approach in
the closing chapters of this project report.

¹Smith, p. 85.
Much could be written about the process of leaving a pastorate. This also needs to be done carefully and intentionally. It is a painful experience for the pastor and his family as well as for the church they are leaving. This report cannot begin to cover the needs in this area; therefore, no attempt is made to do so.

While the process described in this chapter helps to form the foundation for what would be done, the next chapter describes the beginning stage of ministry in the new pastorate in Dalton, Georgia.
CHAPTER IV

ENTERING THE NEW PASTORATE

The initial stages of entrance in a new pastorate are critical since they help to set the pattern for one's ongoing ministry. This chapter describes the first four to six months of the new pastorate in Dalton, Georgia. During this time the emphasis was on building relationships and learning to know and understand the church as well as possible while establishing the foundation for a long-range ministry.

It is important to understand the rationale for what was done during the first few months—to learn the reason for spending so much time studying and getting to know the situation.

Principles for Entering a New Pastorate

Some pastors operate from the basis that the first few months are the most productive in a pastor's tenure. One pastor began his new pastorate with a series of evangelistic meetings—stating that during the first few months he would have the full support of the membership in a way he would have it never again. Others believe, "A new broom sweeps clean." They think that the first few
months are the time to make major changes and turn the church around. All of this can be done intentionally, but one wonders about the long-range effectiveness of this approach. The style of leadership explored in the previous chapter indicates that pastoral ministry is something which must be done with the members of the church and not alone. Relationships must be developed, and the pastor must focus on training and working with people in all that is done. This takes time and effort.

A number of concepts helped during the implementation of this project. One of the crucial issues in a new pastorate is the development of a relationship of trust and confidence. In order to accomplish this, the pastor must know and understand the people and situation of the new pastorate.

Building Confidence

People must have confidence in the pastor in order to work together in the style of ministry discussed previously. Confidence is not automatic; it is based on trust developed through the give-and-take of ongoing relationships.

Only as the pastor comes to know, love, and understand the local church, its people, and its historical setting can this kind of trust relationship be established. The initial focus of a pastor's ministry must be on exploring the past and building relationships.

The task of the first twelve months is to be a
lover and a historian—to fully understand what has taken place here and to learn to love these people before making changes.¹

Learning to love

As a pastor comes to love the people and express that love, people follow his leadership. Love implies genuine concern and involvement, and it must be shared by all parties involved. Without it, there can be no trust or confidence in a church situation.

Upon arrival in Dalton, I planned that as soon as feasible I would visit as many members as possible in order to build this love relationship. This visitation program would begin with the leadership and then attempt to reach all the members.

For a number of reasons, I found this very difficult to accomplish. The Dalton membership was a significant contrast to the semi-rural setting of my previous pastorate. Most members in Joplin, Missouri, were easy to find at home, and a casual, drop-in visit was easy to make. This type of visitation proved virtually impossible with the Dalton membership. The pace of life and activity of the Dalton membership was much more rapid and intense. Often I would arrive at a home for a visit and find no one home. By phoning ahead it was possible to find that one or two out of ten families might be free for a visit. In order to visit effectively, appointments

¹Roy Oswald, "The Pastor's Passages," Leadership, Fall 1983, p. 15.
were often necessary. In fact, the area of member visitation is one which has become a focus for improvement and more intentional planning for an ongoing ministry.

The relationship among many of the members in Dalton was formal, and their relationship with any pastor naturally followed the same way. During the initial meeting with the church board after entering the new pastorate, I invited the members to address me by my first name. I explained that they were welcome to call me whatever they wished, but that I would be most comfortable with first names, as that was the kind of relationship I hoped to have with them and the rest of the members. One of the board members, a dentist, replied that first names would be fine if I would treat them in the same way.

This step was a significant factor in building a personal relationship between pastor and church leadership. The distinction between pastor and laity was intentionally limited to one of service and ministry rather than one of title or position. The use of first names facilitated closer interpersonal ties.

**Fulfilling promises**

Along with learning to love the people, the pastor must fulfill whatever promises were made during the calling process. If it becomes impossible to fulfill any promise, then that area must be renegotiated with the parties involved. Trust within the church is based on a
relationship of mutual integrity and clear expectations and is the foundation for pastoral leadership based on relational authority—as discussed in the previous chapter.

In order to try to implement this type of ministry, I was careful to honor any commitments which had been made during the negotiations of the initial meeting with the members of the Dalton SDA church.

Shortly after we arrived in Dalton, several of the members of the church board at the time inquired as to how I would like to change the order of worship in our Sabbath morning services. Remembering my commitment not to make any major changes for six months, I suggested we wait and form a worship committee to evaluate our worship service and make recommendations for a new order of service. These recommendations would then be studied by the church board and if approved, implemented after the initial six months were over. (This process is studied further below.)

Area of ministry which were already in planning were not postponed for six months. After mutual consultation, the church went ahead with their plans for a large health fair in the local shopping mall. This had been planned for a number of months, and there was no need to make any major changes.

To have made any major changes in either of the two situations above would have compromised the initial
commitment made during the opening meeting with the church board. While there were things which needed to be and eventually would be changed, they could wait. Anything of real urgency could be renegotiated with those concerned. This was not only because of the commitment to wait six months before making any changes but also in order to follow through on the open style of leadership promised during the initial interview.

The primary purpose of following through on any initial commitments is one of integrity and trust. Along with this building of trust, there is also a need to learn as much as possible about the local situation before implementing changes.

Discovering Local History, Personality and Organizational Structure

Time spent studying and coming to know the local situation and the dynamics involved is an investment in the success of any pastorate. Pastoring within a vacuum of knowledge about the church, its history, its organizational structure, and its idiosyncrasies becomes a solo act with little chance of developing and fostering maturity on the part of the church.

For this reason it is crucial that the pastor concentrate on learning as much as possible about the church. Some of the areas which need to be explored are:

1) The makeup and historical background of the church and its people
2) The traditions and "sacred cows" that are untouchable

3) The formal and informal organizational structures affecting the life of the church

4) Areas needing change

A comprehensive knowledge of these areas provides the foundation for open, knowledgeable negotiation in the establishment and implementation of a long-term ministry.

Time spent evaluating the social scene from which the particular congregation is drawn will pay enormous dividends in terms of understanding the dominant myths and realities which inform a particular group of laity.¹

Studying these various areas provided insights into how to relate to different individuals in the Dalton church and suggestions as to what might and might not work in leading the congregation in ministry. Each of these areas was critical in the development of this project.

Exploring the historical background

Very early in the discovery process, I found that the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist church is unique in many ways. The membership is comprised of a very broad spectrum of personalities and backgrounds, each with its own way of relating to the church and each other.

Membership composition

The basic historical ingredient of the church

¹Campbell, p. 50.
membership is an indigenous North Georgia element. This group of individuals are primarily of the working class with a limited amount of education. They are typical to the South and have strong extended-family ties. They tend to have strong commitments to traditional values and resist change initiated by any newcomer. Over the years this tended to contribute to some resentment towards the next major group in the church.

Dalton, as a community, has grown over the years as a result of the carpet industry, which employs a large number of blue-collar workers. This same industry has provided the basis for the influx of a strong professional group making Dalton a regional center for medical and other professional services. This same trend is reflected in the church.

In contrast to most other small-town SDA churches, Dalton has a significantly large proportion of members from the medical and dental professions. This group is primarily composed of "outlanders" or those who are not indigenous to North Georgia. As a general rule these professionals tend to be more open to change, and because of their natural leadership abilities, they soon came to be the predominant leaders in the church.

A third group or element of members has developed during the last few years. In a sense this group could be called the middle group. They are predominantly younger than those mentioned above. Some of these are
second generation Adventists, born and raised in Dalton. Others are relative newcomers to the church, having transferred from other areas. Some are young professionals, while others are from other middle-class occupations. This group is forming a bridge between the other two groups and assuming strong church leadership.

A number of individuals from several different ethnic groups added to these three major groups increases the complexity of the church membership. The only real homogeneous factor which can unite this diverse group is a strong commitment to the Seventh-day Adventist message and to the mission and ministry of the local church. But this is not enough. There is also a great need for both formal and informal social interaction among the members.

Conflict and tension

Over the years some hard feelings have developed between the indigenous group of members and the strong professional element. At one time, the pastor would convene a church board meeting composed of all the professionals gathered at one doctor's house. The first group accused the doctors of wanting to "run" the church. After considerable conflict, many of the professionals just withdrew from any involvement in church life.

This history of tension, rivalry, power struggle, and hurt feelings has been a factor in leading some members to see the church as being divided into cliques. The actual situation is more one of fragmentation rather
than division, but these feelings must be met and resolved. Dregs of this resentment are still found in the church today and form a challenge that must be met in order to unite the church in ministry and mission.

Relationship with the conference is another area of tension which developed through the years. Misunderstandings, poor communication, and what was perceived as autocratic leadership led to distrust of the Conference on the part of many of the Dalton members. This, for many, became a distrust of leadership in general. Evangelistic campaigns and other programs had been brought into Dalton with little consultation with the church membership. Sometimes the Conference was seen as an adversary rather than as an advisor and an integral, contributing part of church life.

These feelings carried over and contributed to a distrust of pastoral leadership which was compounded by experience with previous pastors. Some of these had been autocratic, choosing to run ahead of the church or do their own thing. Other pastors had become embroiled in power struggles as to who was going to run the church and make the decisions. Still others, tired of struggling with what they perceived as a group of people who were unwilling to become involved, just went ahead and found some particular area of ministry which appealed to them and left the membership to stumble along on their own.

All of these factors contributed to what was
rapidly becoming a dying church. With a membership of 228, there was an average attendance, including children, of between 65 and 90 people for Sabbath services. Internal strife, distrust of leadership, and little consistent focus for ministry had the church floundering for life itself. Fortunately, there were a number of unifying factors on which to build—factors which could form the foundation for a healthy, vibrant church.

Unifying factors

Over the years, the Dalton members had involved themselves in some type of construction program on the average of every ten years. Each time this happened, the construction project and the ensuing debt reduction program would focus energies and unite the majority of the members behind a common goal.

At the time this project was initiated, 1981, the members had recently completed a new sanctuary of which they were rightfully proud. The construction process, though at first somewhat divisive, had served, once again, to pull the membership together. The new building was a source of identity and strength. The members had worshiped in their school gymnasium for ten years; now they had a sanctuary of their own.

This new sanctuary helped to round out the physical plant. The school complex, with a gymnasium and classrooms, and the church together provide a strong resource for activities, ministry, and mission. The
church had nearly all the facilities it could need for any purpose it might have.

The majority of the members had a strong commitment to the SDA church as a body. Most members were either second-generation Adventists or had been members of some SDA church for a number of years. While this was a weakness in the sense of potential evangelism, it was a strength as to their commitment to the SDA message and movement.

Many members also had strong historical roots in this church and these provided strong ties. The church might have its problems, but it was their church, and they wanted it to survive and thrive.

Perhaps the greatest strength existing in the church was the desire for change and growth. The members were aware of many of their weaknesses and needs, and they wanted help to find solutions for growth and maturity. Though unsure how to attain it, they had an idea of what they should be. Given opportunity and guidance, they could develop into a strong and vibrant church. The potential and hope were there.

This background information was extremely valuable to me as the pastor in knowing how to relate with the church as a whole. It provided insights into the thinking of different individuals as well as knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the church body. It also helped create an understanding of the frame of mind from
which the church membership operated. This understanding would help give direction to pastoral leadership. But it was also crucial to know more details about the way in which the church had operated in the past.

Learning about traditions and "sacred cows"

Because each church and situation is unique, it is important that a pastor learn what the church sees as important and non-negotiable. To attempt to bring change in areas that the majority of the membership considers hallowed ground is to invite disaster. The only way to avoid this kind of costly and almost irreversible mistake is to know the traditions of the church. These traditions may be so strongly entrenched as to be impossible to change. Why waste energy and effort attempting to modify the unchangeable? Where principle is involved adequate information, carefully and lovingly presented, normally opens the doors to change. However, it may be necessary to wait and allow time for growth and maturity before initiating change in some areas.

During the first few months in Dalton, I quickly discovered that the Citrus Fruit Sale program had become one of the traditions which must be treated with care. In this program, fresh Florida citrus was sold to the community each month, November through April. It brought a strong subsidy into the church which helped sponsor special projects. It was the focus of a great deal of
hard work by those working with the program. Any change made here would have to be made with great care, thoughtful preparation, and input from all involved.

The organ in the new sanctuary was another "sacred cow" which was not open to discussion or comment. It had been the center of some light controversy during the construction process. This had been resolved into a truce, though mixed feelings still existed. The major investment in a pipe organ obviously could not be changed, but it was a subject to be discussed with care.

Other areas would also have to be explored carefully, but the very newness of the sanctuary helped establish greater openness towards change in many areas that in other churches would have been difficult. In order to make any effective changes in major areas, it was important to know how the organizational structure of the church worked.

**Organizational structures**

Every church has its formal and informal organization. Both are unique and must be understood in order to fully incorporate the church membership into ministry.

Like an iceberg, the organization has its formal tip which is highly visible and understandable, while underneath the water lies a much larger informal organization.¹

The formal structures found in Dalton included the traditional church board and school board, the finance

¹Engstrom and Dayton, p. 47.
committee, Sabbath School council, and one or two smaller task groups. It was very soon apparent that the real power of influence and decision making was not always found in these formal organizations. Through careful observation and discrete conversation, it was easy to quickly discover where the strength of influence lay within the church.

Certain individuals had more power or greater influence in the decision-making process than others. At times, discussion during a board meeting would continue until one of these individuals made a motion which would be quickly approved by the majority of the other members. At other times, a decision might be made which would be reversed when questioned by one of these more influential members. As a result, occasional resentment appeared toward one or more of these members.

This is no attempt to pass judgment on any of the members involved. Rather, it is a description of a reality found in most churches. The special influence or power held by some people may come from any of a number of sources. They may be the matriarchs or patriarchs of the church. This status may come from positions which they hold in the community, from their personality, their ability to articulate ideas or, perhaps, from their relationships with others in the church. Whatever the cause, these dynamics must be understood and taken into consideration in dealing with the church.
Gaining and respecting the input and contributions of these individuals can do much to facilitate a pastor's ministry. It is my strong conviction, and experience, that most of these people of influence in the church have the best welfare of the church at heart. They want to see the church grow and become all that God wants it to be, but they want to be part of the action. Incorporating them into the process and allowing them to make all the contribution they can to church life can make the church a stronger and happier body.

However, a balance must be kept, and the opinion of each member must be solicited and respected. The key to using these situations for the good of the church is to provide opportunity for each member to have a part in the decision-making process. In many cases this is an area for clarification and negotiation of expectations.

Recognizing both the formal and informal organizational structures within the church, and learning to work with them, is a major step toward implementing any changes which may be necessary.

**Areas for change**

Effecting change within any institution is one of the most difficult things to do. People are by nature creatures of habit. They fall into regular routines of life, including their relationship with the church. Therefore much care is needed by the pastor in initiating change. Too often, change is perceived as judgment on
the past situations or on the persons involved. This automatically produces defensive behavior and resistance to change.

The best method of change may well be that of innovation and addition, rather than substitution or replacement. Innovation "does not stand in judgment of the past—it only recognizes that the future will probably be different."¹

Careful observation during the initial few months of the new pastorate, with a commitment to make no major changes during the first six months, was to be helpful in effecting needed changes during the later stages of this pastorate. These changes were explored with different individuals.

A steering committee composed of a number of key persons was very helpful in the exploration of areas for potential change. This committee was named by the church board during the first meeting of the new pastorate. Individuals from different areas of church life were included. This group met with the pastor about once a quarter during the first year, and then every six months for the next year.

Because of the broad distribution of its membership, this committee was able to provide good feedback on an ongoing basis. At first, these members were a source of information as to areas of needed change. Later, as

¹Ibid., p. 50.

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change began to be implemented, they gave feedback regarding the effectiveness of the changes made and made, recommendations for the rate of change that would be best. These changes could be in the church, its program, or some area of my own pastoral ministry. The purpose of this group was to provide a pastoral support and information group who would give honest, straight-forward, and kind information.

The church board, and even the entire church membership was invited to participate in the process of discovering areas for change. This is explained in greater detail in the chapter 5. But during this stage--the first few months--I as pastor wanted to gain as much insight into the areas of change which were crucial in light of either Biblical or sociological principles.

One needed area of change which was quickly apparent was the social life of the church. The social committee was also concerned about this, and they began to initiate a strong program involving a greater number of members in social interaction.

The formal organizational structure was another area needing a great deal of improvement. Job descriptions for church offices did not exist, and many offices were seen as mere status positions rather than functions of ministry. There was need for a total, in-depth training and reorganization. This had to be done carefully and would take a great deal of time--much of it
going on beyond the start-up time of eighteen to twenty-four months.

The concept which the members had of the church and its function and purpose within God's plan also needed changing. Attitudes toward evangelism and other areas of church ministry had room for growth and change.

A change in the structure of the worship service was suggested by a number of the members. It was one of the first areas for change and is described in the chapter 5.

Perhaps the greatest need for change was the church's own self-concept. Members saw themselves as being a problem church, divided into cliques, and having little hope of change or growth. They had great potential, but were discouraged as to the possibility of ever attaining that potential. My attitude and ministry would have to focus on the positive instead of the negative.

While looking for areas that need change, the pastor must at the same time look for aspects of the church that are well worth keeping. A special effort must be made to affirm these areas.¹ This affirmation serves the dual purpose of helping to ensure that they continue and at the same time of showing that the new pastor has no intention of completely revolutionizing everything with which the members are familiar.

When anticipating any area of change, the pastor needs to think through carefully the reasons for making this change. Is there a real need for this change in the congregation? Or is the change primarily in an area of one's own favorite programs or customs? This does not mean that a pastor cannot make any changes based on his or her own special interests or talents. But the agenda for change, especially at first, must be set by the congregational needs and priorities.

While there was much in the Dalton SDA church which would need changing, there was also a great deal of good which could be affirmed. The new sanctuary which had been completed within the last two years was a source of great pride and sense of accomplishment. Though a few details could be changed, I could rejoice with them over this new structure. Health-ministry seminars had been the primary focus of ministry to the community. Other programs of outreach and evangelism needed to be added, but the health programs could form a foundation for continued development.

The style of ministry and leadership used in these areas just suggested would do much towards the one other major function of the initial six months. They would begin to set the trend or pattern for the ongoing ministry experience.

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1Ibid., p. 64.
Establishing Patterns of Ministry

First impressions are extremely important. Most people form their ideas about a pastor on the first or second meeting. While there is not much one can do to change this reality, one can be as authentic as possible during these initial contacts.\(^1\) This same principle applies to the style or approach to ministry. People expect their pastors to continue in much the same way as they have begun their ministry. Patterns established during the initial start-up time can be changed only through purposeful renegotiation with all parties involved. So it is crucial to think carefully through what one does during the first stages in a new pastorate.

In the case of this project within the Dalton SDA church, there were a few specific areas which I wanted to be sure to develop as patterns for ministry.

**Christ-centered preaching**

Because I wanted to set the pattern for my ministry around a strong, Bible-based, Christ-centered preaching, the very first sermon was the initial one in a series entitled "Focus on the Savior." This series concentrated on the life and ministry of Christ and continued for almost three months.

The next series of sermons focused on the nature of the Church as the Body of Christ. The implications

\(^{1}\text{Ibid., p. 25.}\)
for the Dalton SDA church were explored together, seeking an understanding of what God wanted this church to be. This led naturally into the next series on the role of laity and clergy along with a study of spiritual gifts.

The purpose of all of these sermons was to show that each individual in the church has a specific ministry to fulfill; that ministry is an extension or continuation of the ministry of Christ and must be performed in His strength and following His example; that the only distinction between the pastor and laity is one of function, not status; and that each member is part of the church and has a responsibility to share in its ministry and life. This even includes the area of decision making.

Decision-making process

The subject of who makes the decisions in a church is often the focus of a great deal of controversy within a church. The style of leadership explored in the second chapter of this work is based on a strong foundation of lay involvement in every area of church life, especially in the making of decisions.

It was for this reason that more items and issues were brought to the church board and congregation in Dalton than they had experienced before. Any area that involved members of the church demanded the input of others. If the issue affected a significant number of the members, it had to be brought to the entire
congregation. Because of this, many items which previously had been decided by the pastor were brought to the church board.

In order to facilitate the participation of as many members as possible in the decision-making process, all church board meetings were made open meetings. Any member was welcome to attend and to present his or her point of view. Instead of using Robert's Rules of Order, the church board changed to a consensus style for its normal work. After discussion, the members were asked if there was any objection to a specified decision. Objections were discussed, alternatives were explored, and then a possible decision was again presented. There was no specific aim to reach 100 percent unanimity, but if a major objection existed, alternatives were explored, or the issue was tabled pending further study and discussion.

Each member had opportunity to give his or her input into the decisions of the church. This input was actively sought on a regular basis through surveys, congregational business meetings, and visitation. This pattern is still followed and once a year there is a concerted program to involve as many members as possible in the formation of the plan for the next year of ministry and church life. More details about this are presented in the chapter 5.

The concept of equality of members as part of the
body of Christ has a direct impact on the way decisions are made. While some members always have more influence, each member has the opportunity to help determine the direction the church takes. The implementation of this concept has not been automatic, but it has been welcomed. This concept also affects the way in which members relate to one another.

**The use of first names**

The way in which the use of first names instead of titles first began was explained above. As members began calling their pastor by his first name, it became easier for them to use first names with each other. While there were reservations at first, it has been one of the significant patterns established early during the new pastorate. First names have facilitated the development of closer relationships and given a foundation for an understanding of the church as the Family of God.

However the use of first names by itself is not enough to bring a sense of community or family to the membership of a church. Relationships are built through interaction on many different levels, including the social.

**Social interaction**

The wide diversity of membership backgrounds as well as the extent of fragmentation existing within the Dalton membership emphasized the need for planned social
interaction. The social committee was of great importance in trying to build body life within the church.

One of the first committee meetings I attended at the very start of the new pastorate was with the social committee. During that meeting we discussed the importance of the committee's work and what needed to be accomplished. It was the start of what was to be a carefully planned yet diverse program of social interaction. The culminating high point of these plans was a church retreat during the month of October at the nearby Conference camp. The focus of the entire weekend was on fellowship, both spiritual and social.

Another spiritual and social opportunity to build relationships was the first communion service. This took place shortly after the beginning of this new pastorate and was celebrated as an "Agape Feast" held on a Friday night. Tables were set up in the candlelighted school gym. A supper of finger foods such as fruit, nuts, crackers, and cheese was served. After a period of fellowship, opportunity was given for any who wished to share a testimony with the rest of the members.

This time of personal sharing was followed by the footwashing, during which spouses who wished to do so were encouraged to wash each other's feet. Facilities were provided for the rest of the members to choose a partner and participate in the footwashing service. Then came a very simple, yet extremely moving communion
service. The actual distribution of the emblems representing Christ's sacrifice was done in an informal, family manner—passing the trays along the long table. To close, all present formed a large circle around the gym and sang a hymn. So moving and special was this service, that a yearly tradition was established.

Along with the work of the social committee and other organized functions, there was need for extensive interaction of the pastor with the church membership. This was to be more than regular visitation. It involved opening our home to members and inviting them for meals and Saturday night games. It meant going to wherever the members were in their everyday life and feeling with them.

One of the more significant parts of this interaction with the members was encouraging and participating in a church softball team in the local church league. It is absolutely impossible to maintain any kind of status distinction on the ball field. This involvement also provided the opportunity to build relationships with some of the men that could not have been built in any other way.

This social interaction, both by the entire church and by the pastor, was crucial in developing trust and building relationships. Along with these factors, it was important to establish patterns as to what the new pastoral ministry would be.
Pastoral involvement and participation

Patterns for pastoral ministry are also traditions in a church. Each member remembers how certain pastors did things and often expects every pastor to follow in the same or similar patterns. These expectations must be taken into consideration when initiating a new pastorate. New patterns of involvement and participation need to be clearly negotiated during the first few months.

Starting a new pastorate in Dalton provided the opportunity to negotiate new roles of pastoral ministry. Even though they had fairly well-defined expectations, the church members were open to change. They were willing to allow me a great deal of freedom in defining my own pastoral roles. They needed to be included in the clarification and definition of these roles, but the initiative in this process was mine. In fact, my own already-established patterns of ministry proved to be the more difficult to modify.

Much of the change in pastoral ministry needed to be done over a period of time longer than these initial few months. There were areas which would have to be renegotiated during an ongoing ministry. Careful evaluation indicated that a gradual change in church expectations and membership involvement would be crucial. In fact, the primary area of change involved the delegation of areas of ministry which have traditionally been limited to the pastor—areas such as evangelism and
pastoral visitation of members. This required commitment on the part of the elders of the church as well as other members. This commitment and understanding did not come easily or quickly—not even during the eighteen to twenty-four months of the start-up time. But the process of change was begun.

The actual assumption by laymen of some of these areas of ministry did not take place until nearly the end of the third year of the new pastorate. It took that long to bring about an understanding of the need for and a commitment to lay involvement. But the foundations were laid early in the start-up process.

The negotiation of what the people wanted in their pastor, begun during the initial interview, helped to set the pattern for continued negotiation. This was accompanied by a process of education achieved through sermons and board meetings, as already described, as well as personal contact with different members.

**Evaluation of Initial Entrance**

By the time the first six months were finished, there was a strong relationship of trust built between pastor and people, especially the leaders. A number of areas still needed further attention, but the patterns for ministry and leadership were fairly well defined. As pastor, I knew and understood the members of the church better than I had ever known any group of people, and I had come to love them. This relationship would continue.
to build through the rest of the start up-time, but the foundation and patterns for an ongoing ministry had begun.

The principles of ministry outlined in this chapter and above were effective in directing my ministry and in meeting the needs for leadership evident in the Dalton church. The flexibility and adaptability of this style of leadership provided the means to a meaningful entrance into a new pastorate.

The next chapter explores the process of self-evaluation by the church and the negotiation of the direction the church would follow in its ministry and life. This process was begun during the last part of the first six months, but reached its peak during the second six-month period. The next chapter also presents a brief description of the implementation of the goals established during the negotiation process.
CHAPTER V

DISCOVERING DIRECTION

Any pastor coming into a new pastorate has dreams and hopes he plans to accomplish. The temptation often comes to go ahead and try to accomplish one's own goals. With the enthusiasm of being a new pastor and with the "honeymoon" atmosphere of the first few months, it is easy to go ahead with one's own agenda. Too often, this agenda is formed by one's own background and interests and fails to meet the needs of the new situation.

The primary role of the pastor is helping the church members discover their own needs. The member is the one who decides his or her participation. "The task of leaders is to help create the conditions under which members will decide to activate themselves."¹

This chapter describes the processes which were followed in Dalton in order to avoid the above temptations while attempting to provide the atmosphere for more active member participation. Over a period of six to eight months, the Dalton church membership took a close look at itself while carefully deciding the direction for its ministry and life. This overlapped the work

¹Worley, p. 69.
described in chapter 4 and was carried out while continuing the work of an ongoing pastoral ministry.

The final part of this chapter includes the first steps of the implementation of the goals established by the church during its self-analysis. This covered the second year of the new pastorate, during which the church membership began what was to be a long process of change and growth.

The first step in this procedure was the development of a church-mission statement.

**Developing a Church-Mission Statement**

Before a church can really look at itself in a valid self-evaluation, it must have a standard against which to measure itself.\(^1\) The members must be able to articulate the standard by which they will measure themselves. While this standard is primarily Biblical, it must be clearly understood by the church membership.

For this reason the process initiated in Dalton was to take a number of months and was to involve a great deal of education and exploration. The first stage in that process was an on-site retreat on the weekend of April 19, 1981.

**Symbols of the Church**

Friday night began with a study of the theology of the Church, with a special emphasis on the symbols used

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 42.
in Scripture for the Church. This was done in the form of a Biblical study in which opportunity was given for the members present to share. The members were asked to take special note of the models or images of the church with had significant implications for the local setting.

The final activity of the evening was an exercise developing a history of our local church. Three sheets of paper, each approximately 20 feet long, were taped to the wall of the school gym. Each paper had a long horizontal line across the entire length. At the right end of each sheet was a vertical line with the word "NOW." The members were organized into three groups, and each group was asked to develop a history of our local church. They were given as long as they wished, and the evening program was over when they were through. The groups were free to compare notes and make any additions or corrections they wished. The members were asked to look for any significant patterns they could see in their church history. This exercise was an excellent way for older members to remember their own history while providing an opportunity for newer members to develop and share a sense of church heritage.

The retreat continued the next afternoon, following a fellowship dinner. The members were asked to spend some time looking over the three different histories of the church which had been written out on the long sheets

2Adapted from Oswald, New Beginnings, p. 29.
of paper. Since other members were present who had not been there the previous night, they were encouraged to make any corrections or additions which might further complete each history. Again, all were asked to look for any significant patterns or emphasis which might have special meaning to our church.

After studying the different church histories for some time, the members formed several groups with no more than eight or ten individuals in each group. These groups formed the basic work groups for the balance of the afternoon in the exercises described below.¹

Exercise No. 1: Significant Church History

Each group was given a period of 20 to 25 minutes to discuss and list the significant points or patterns they had noticed while developing and studying their own church history. They then marked the most meaningful or relevant points they had discovered and shared these with the entire group of members present. Among the things listed were the following:

1. There was a major construction project which had served to help unite the church on the average of once every ten years.

2. There was a change of pastors on the average of every two or at most three years.

¹Adapted from Alvin J. Lindgren and Norman Shawchuck, Management for Your Church (Nashville: Abingdon, 1977), pp. 50-59.
3. There had been no significant outreach experiences which the members remembered during the previous fifteen or twenty years.

4. Much of the history consisted in remembering when different individuals with significant influence within the church family had either moved into the community or joined the church.

   This exercise helped to strengthen the sense of heritage while at the same time pointing out significant patterns which indicated areas needing change.

**Exercise No. 2: Biblical Images of the Church**

During the Biblical image exercise, each group was asked to spend 15 to 20 minutes brainstorming and listing the Biblical images of the church and the most relevant theological concepts. These were based primarily on the Biblical study from the previous night.

The groups had a few minutes to browse and compare the lists compiled by other groups, and then the members of each group met to discuss the different items on their lists. Each group chose the two most significant images or concepts, wrote them on a new sheet of paper, and then shared them with all those present.

**Exercise No. 3: Definition of Needs**

The definition of needs exercise involved a series of questions which each group was to consider during a brainstorming session. The groups were given 5 to 8
minutes for discussing and listing their answers to each of the following questions:

1. What needs of the people in this church should we be concerned with and doing something about?

2. What needs of our community should we be concerned with and doing something about?

3. What needs of our world-wide church should we be concerned with and doing something about?

A break followed the completion of this process and members were encouraged to browse and compare different lists. Following the break, the groups gathered again, modified or completed their lists, marked the four most important items of their choice, and then shared their selections with the entire group.

Exercise No. 4: Formation of Mission Statement

Each group was asked to consider the lists from the previous exercise and then to draft a brief statement beginning with: "The mission of the Dalton Seventh-Day Adventist Church is . . ." 

These statements were then shared and posted. Two individuals were chosen from each group to meet with the pastor at a central table. This small group worked on developing one statement which would be the suggested Mission Statement for the church. Two drafts were formed and written. All the members present selected one as their choice. This statement was brought to the entire church membership the following week for a vote of
approval. This Mission Statement is now printed on the back of the church bulletin and forms the standard for measurement and self-evaluation. This statement reads as follows:

THE MISSION OF THE DALTON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IS: to develop a fellowship of believers whose lives focus on a knowledge of God's Word and a personal relationship with Christ beginning in our homes and then our church family, in order to present Christ to the community and world through: our lifestyles, loving our neighbors as ourselves, and meeting community needs through actively caring for others, while being aware of our local and worldwide church needs and supporting them in every way possible.

The purpose for all this procedure was to try to broaden the personal ownership of the church and its ministry to include as many members as possible. In order to accomplish this, all the members had to have the opportunity to be involved at the very first step and on through to the conclusion of the process. While every member cannot be involved in every step of church life, or even in every part of the decision-making process, each one can be given an opportunity to help shape or influence as much as possible.

The next section covers an area usually left in the hands of the pastor but, in this case, involved a number of members.

Developing a New Order of Worship

Even though some members requested that the pastor

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1Lindgren, p. 71.
initiate a new order of worship, implementation was held off for the first six months. Near the close of this period, a Worship Committee was named by the Church Board. Other members were invited to give suggestions and share ideas with the committee. Each member of the Worship Committee was asked to read sixty to seventy pages of material. This material covered topics such as the psychology of worship, theology of worship, and examples of worship. A week later, the committee met with the pastor on a Friday evening to discuss the material and to clarify the high points. At the close of the meeting, the committee members were asked to spend some time thinking about what they had studied and to list the different ingredients they wanted to include in the new order of worship.

On the next afternoon, after a fellowship dinner, the Worship committee met once again to formulate the new order of worship which would be presented to the Church Board and the entire membership.

The first step was to list all the different ingredients each one wanted to include in the worship service. This list was then integrated to eliminate any duplication. The remaining items were grouped according to major sections and then organized in a systematic way which would provide form, function, and focus.

After organizing the final list of ingredients in a sequential and thematic way, time was taken to
brainstorm on possible titles for the different sections. These titles or headings would help to tie the entire worship service together, while presenting the main meaning of each section. (A sample of the new order of service can be seen in appendix 2, p. 153.)

This completed order of worship was presented to the Church Board for approval. Then, in order to facilitate the transition and to add meaning to the worship experience of each member, the new worship service was presented on two Sabbaths. The sermon each week dealt with aspects of worship. A handout explaining the new order of worship was given to each member (See appendix 2, pp. 154-155), and the new order was implemented on the second Sabbath.

One of the strengths of the new services was the feeling that the church had helped to design its own response to God. The members felt it was their own worship service. The process which had been followed also emphasized that the members and pastor should work together to design and implement different aspects of church life. This, along with the previous ground work mentioned above, helped to contribute to the understanding of a philosophy of ministry which was to strongly influence the leadership of this church.

Forming a Philosophy of Ministry

A basic understanding of what my approach to
ministry within the Dalton community should be began to take shape through the study of the Biblical concept of the church and basis for ministry. These concepts formed the focus of study and discussion in Church Board meetings and private discussion for a number of months. This gradually led to thinking about some basic pre-suppositions which would provide the foundation for church life and ministry. Several theological principles formed the basis for these concepts.

Theological Principles

The three areas of theology which influenced our thinking at this point were:

1. The Church as the body of Christ
2. Every member a priest and a minister
3. The promise of the Holy Spirit -- specifically His ability to lead and the promise of spiritual gifts equipping each member for ministry.

After considerable discussion, these issues began to crystallize in our thinking and led to the development and articulation of basic pre-suppositions which were to form the parameters for ministry within the Dalton SDA church family.

Philosophical Pre-suppositions

As these concepts began to take shape, I was convinced that others should be part of the process of forming and articulating our basis for ministry. A brief
outline of these thoughts was presented to the Church Board. After discussion and some modification, the Board voted to adopt these concepts as its own. A final draft was prepared and presented to the entire church family. These concepts were the focus of a special sermon after which opportunity was given for discussion. The church then voted to adopt these concepts for ministry as they had been presented. In addition to the theological principles listed above, the final draft presented to the church included the following pre-suppositions:

1. The Dalton SDA church is the "Body of Christ" in its community.
   a. This is not meant in an exclusive or proud form, but a recognition of theological reality that the church is a visible part of the "Body of Christ."
   b. This concept gives focus to who and what we are.

2. Christ is the Head of the Dalton SDA church.
   a. This implies that He is in control, if we let Him.
   b. He will direct the church through His Spirit, as He wants it to go, if we let Him do so.

3. The attending members of the Dalton SDA church are committed Christians.
   a. They want the Holy Spirit to guide the church as well as their personal lives.
   b. Each member is at a different stage of maturity.
   c. Each member wants to grow spiritually and to contribute effectively to church life.

4. God will provide, within the church family, the personnel, talents, and other resources for whatever He wants to accomplish. Our challenge is to let Him lead us.
a. We must discover the ministries for which He has provided.

b. We should exercise the gifts/abilities He has given to use.

c. We must seek to know what He wants us to do.

5. The membership of the Dalton SDA church has the right and responsibility to know and participate in the leadership and management of the church.

6. Because people and circumstances change, careful consideration should be given to every part of the church program to make sure that it is as effective and meaningful as possible.

These concepts challenged us all, both pastor and members, to rely more on God. They took much of the pressure of running a church off shoulders of the church leadership as long as we were willing to follow through on what we had articulated. They formed another step in a growth process which continues. As pastor, I discovered what a tremendous struggle it is to accept some of these concepts and really trust God to be in control, and to accept each member just as he or she is in relation with God. At the same time, a great sense of freedom came when I consciously acted on this foundation.

The adoption of these concepts led naturally into a study of spiritual gifts.

**Spiritual Gifts Discovery**

On July 11, 1981, the members were given an opportunity to explore and discover their spiritual gifts. The morning sermon on spiritual gifts was followed by a fellowship dinner. After dinner each member...
had the opportunity to go through a Spiritual Gifts Questionnaire. Each gift was discussed and each member was able to discuss his or her specific gifts with a group of four or five other members. The discussion focused on seeking ways to implement and use the gifts each one had.

The discovery of specific gifts helped individual members to know what areas of ministry might appeal to him or her. It also helped the church to discover new talent which could be recruited for active ministry. This created an interest in developing a more active church ministry and in creating an exciting climate of expectation for better things in the life of the church. The next step helped to give direction to any changes which would be implemented.

Church Self-assessment and Goal Setting
The final stage in the process of discovering direction for the church involved as many members as possible in a systematic self-examination of the church and in determining church goals.

Goal-setting and self-assessment are the life-giving processes of an organization. Without them a church tends to stagnate, become apathetic, and even die.

The needs of the church must be clearly understood

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1This questionnaire was a form which at the time was being developed by Roy Naden, of Andrews University.

2G. Douglass Lewis, "Church Organizational Development," in Creating An Intentional Ministry, p. 150.
by the members if they are to be involved in the programs of the church.

Unless there is such a clear and common recognition of the basic need to be met, any proposal of a plan or program will seem as pointless as scratching where there is no itch.¹

Self-assessment is one way of creating within the church membership an awareness of needs. "When the congregation is weighed in the balance and found wanting, there is fertile ground for a long look at how to effect the kind of change that is called for."²

The process of self-assessment and goal setting in the Dalton SDA church began in July of 1981. The Mission Statement which had been developed in the previous stage was used as a basic standard for this stage. Over a period of four months (July-October 1981), the church members had opportunity to be involved in an in-depth analysis of their own church. During this activity they would be able to look at every part of the church program and evaluate its contribution to the life and growth of the church. They would also have input into the design of the goals and objectives for 1982.³

The first step in this process was the selection of group leaders for ten groups, and the assignment of each church member to one of the groups. Then a training

¹Lindgren, p. 72.
²Ibid., p. 237.
³Adapted from Worley, pp. 59 - 84.
session was held with the group leaders. During this session the leaders were trained for their role and purpose, and each was given a "Group Leader Guide" (See appendix 2, pp. 156-157). This guide outlined the purpose for their work, provided an agenda for their meeting, and focused on special areas of concern for their actual work as group leaders.

Each group leader was responsible for contacting the different members in his or her group of eight to twelve members, and for setting a time for the initial meeting. During the actual meeting, each group followed the suggested agenda in the "Group Leader Guide" and used the Church Self-assessment Questionnaire, which included a copy of the Church Mission Statement (see appendix 2, pp. 158-159). Each group included a number of active members as well as a proportion of inactive members.

It was interesting to note that the very act of including some of the inactive members in this process led some of them to become involved and to begin attending church. They began to feel that their input was desired and important to the rest of the church.

The next step in this process was a meeting of the group leaders with the Planning Committee. Here the results of their group meetings were shared and synthesized. A list of concerns and ideas was formed. These ideas fell into five different areas: inreach or internal ministry, upreach or spiritual growth and worship of
God, church organization, physical plant, and outreach or evangelism. These ideas were discussed, additional concerns were listed, and then directions were given for the next group meeting which would deal with goal setting. These directions were typed up along with the lists of concerns and ideas. This served as the basis for the "Group Leaders' Guide" for the goal-setting meeting (see appendix 2, pp. 160-161).

The following step, the final meeting of the group leaders and Planning Committee, was in order to pull together and synthesize the goals given by each group. These became the proposed goals and objectives for 1982 (see appendix 2, p. 162). These goals were presented to the Church Board for approval and then brought to a church business meeting for final vote.

This program resulted in a greater involvement of church members in the goal-setting process as well as increased participation of the church membership in the overall church program. It also served to set the stage for ongoing involvement and negotiation on the part of the pastor, church leadership, and membership in an intentional way. The results were well worth the extra effort, and this type of process has been repeated in some form on a yearly basis.

The time spent involving as many members as possible in discovering the direction the church should take was well worthwhile. Patience in working with the church
and waiting for a base of ministry to develop was valuable. As pastor I had to work with the people—help them to be discover their needs and to determine the shape and direction of their church.

The final part of the implementation of this project involved the consolidation of what had begun during the first year in the new pastorate. In a sense, the second year completed the initial stage or chapter of my ministry and set the tone for continued ministry.

During this second year, the church membership began what was to be a long process of change and growth. The time had come to begin to implement some of the changes which the members had determined were necessary.

Facing Reality

At the conclusion of the process described earlier in this chapter, I was excited. The church had looked at itself and set its own goals. Now it was time to implement those goals. But a great deal of growth was still needed. It was very difficult to avoid impatience and expecting too much.

A radical change in patterns of member involvement does not come overnight. In fact, retraining church leadership is necessary in order to achieve any change in those patterns. Three additional factors may demand this kind of retraining: a change of pastors, a major shift in congregational goals, or a change in the criteria for evaluating or measuring a church. This type of program
demands a great deal of time and intentionality. Without it, there will be a high level of frustration as people learn to adapt to the new reality.\textsuperscript{1} In the case of the Dalton SDA church, all three factors contributed to the need for a major retraining program.

Even though the very process which was described earlier was a beginning in the retraining program, the need for more extensive retraining was not fully understood by either myself as pastor or some of the other local church leaders. We expected more from the members than they could realistically produce in a short time. This led to disappointment and some discouragement. Results which fell short of our expectations were interpreted as lack of interest or commitment when the real problem was a need to move more slowly and spend more time in retraining and building relationships.

The reality of life in the new pastorate is that the people rarely move as fast as the pastor desires. There is also lag time between the agreement to change and the actual achievement of that change. If that change is at all a significant departure from what has been the accepted norm, more time, greater preparation, and more retraining will be needed.

The changes which took place for the Dalton church in all three areas listed above were significant. As the

new pastor, my style of ministry and leadership was radically different from that of the previous pastor or pastors. The goals and criteria for measurement which were developed were greatly different from those to which the church had been accustomed. Much of the new was not only change but innovation and development of concepts in areas that were totally new.

Some of the goals which had been chosen proved to be unreachable for the congregation and its position at the time. In a sense, our vision as a congregation was greater than our ability or commitment at that point. The membership needed to grow into its vision, and a number of areas would require on-going renegotiation.

Another factor, mentioned earlier, which had to be taken into consideration was that the average pastor does not reach full effectiveness for four or five years. Many of the changes which were desired and needed could not realistically take place during the first chapter of a new pastorate. This initial "honeymoon" chapter normally takes at least eighteen months.\(^1\) As discussed in the next chapter, in the case of Dalton, this chapter came to a close after almost twenty-four months. Much of what needed to be done in implementing change would simply have to wait for more growth on the part of all involved and for a stronger relationship between pastor and people. The primary purpose of this start-up time

\(^1\)Roy Oswald, *New Beginnings*, p. 1.

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was the establishment of mutual trust as a foundation for further ministry.

There are some other changes which naturally take place with the change of pastors, and these influence the way in which the church grows and develops.

**Leadership Growth and Change**

It is impossible for any one pastor to relate to everyone in a church in the same way. Some members are just naturally able to relate to a given pastor better than to others. Some members who had been relatively inactive will, with a change of pastors, appear to suddenly become involved. Others who have been active seem to drop back to a less active role.

Some change in church leadership is only natural in the first nominating committee that functions after a change of pastors. In Dalton, we were fortunate that this did not take place until near the close of the first year of the new pastorate. By the time the nominating committee met, the major portion of the self-evaluation and goal-setting process described in the previous chapter had already taken place. As a result, the members had a good idea of the direction they needed to go, and a strong relationship of trust was already established between the church and pastor. This helped in the work of the nominating committee by identifying more clearly what was expected of those who were chosen.

The open style of leadership would also affect the
way in which the nominating committee would work. This committee was given the responsibility of designing job descriptions for each position it was seeking to fill. These job descriptions were made available to the membership, and the members were asked to volunteer for areas of ministry to which they felt led by God. During the actual work of the nominating committee, the pastor served primarily as a consultant. The members were the ones who determined their own officers and leaders.

Change of any kind tends to build resistance and friction. This was no different in Dalton. Some individuals felt greatly threatened by changes in the structure or operation of the church. Those who expressed any feeling of being threatened were mostly ones who had not been involved in the decision-making process which had determined the areas of change. Though every member had an opportunity to be involved, some saw it as unimportant at the time. Later, some of these same individuals were the very ones who reacted negatively to the changes taking place.

Some negative feelings were also expressed towards changes taking place in the leadership structure of the church. Some of the traditional leaders who had been very active in the past were now choosing to take a less active role and allow newer and younger members to take their place. Even though much of this was by choice, for some the adjustment process was somewhat painful.
A significant change began to take place during the second year of the new pastorate. A growing awareness developed in a number of members that they needed to be more involved in church life. They began to see a need to assume more initiative, instead of waiting for the pastor to do everything or provide the total drive within the church. This process did not happen quickly, nor has it reached its full potential even after a full three years of the new pastorate. But the sense of this need began to develop during the final months of the "honeymoon."

In order to continue developing the style of ministry which had been initiated, it was necessary to again provide opportunity for members to be involved in determining the direction for the church.

Finishing the Cycle

The final step in closing off the initial chapter of the new pastorate was another opportunity for the church to look at itself and determine its direction for the next year.

It was decided to do this in congregational meetings at the church. A questionnaire was designed, partially adapted from materials used earlier in this project (see appendix 3, pp. 163-166). This process was not as productive as the self-assessment and goal setting described in the previous chapter since even though the opportunity was provided, not as many people
attended. Group meetings in homes worked better in the Dalton SDA church. In future years it would probably be better to use some form of small-group meetings in different homes.

With this reevaluation of the church and the reformation of congregational goals, the church had come full cycle and completed the first stage of the new pastorate. In this case it took between twenty-two to twenty-four months. The patterns for ministry were fairly well established, even though they needed further growth and development. The concluding chapter evaluates of the entire start-up process and its effect on the church, as well as a study of the possible implications for ministry.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This chapter is being written during the fourth year of this pastorate. The start-up time is long past and the long-range ministry has been implemented and is going well. Without question, the implementation of this project has shaped the local church as well as the pastor and his ministry.

This chapter is an evaluation of the approach to ministry implemented through this project, its benefits for the pastor, the results in the church, and possible implications for ministry within the SDA church.

Summary of the Start-Up Approach

The basic emphasis of the first twenty-two to twenty-four months of this pastorate was in learning to know the church and its people, leading them through a process of self-analysis, and helping them to discover the direction God had for them as a church.

There was a commitment on the part of the pastor not to run ahead of or abandon the church in the pursuit of his own ministry. Instead, the purpose of this pastoral ministry was defined as leading the church into an ongoing growth relationship with God and each other.
towards spiritual maturity—a ministry which was most clearly defined and articulated in Eph 4. The focus of that ministry was on helping the church members to discover their own gifts and abilities while awakening them to their potential and responsibility.

It was recognized from the start that it would take a great deal of time to implement this approach, and that much time and effort would be spent in doing things which were not traditional in most churches. Intentionally involving as many members as possible in every stage of church life would appear awkward and slow. The results in the form of church growth and traditional goals and programs would probably lag somewhat from what is normally expected. But if it resulted in greater involvement, it would be well worth the effort.

This approach held potential for threatening the pastor in that some of his traditional authority would be given to lay members. Furthermore, the visible results were slow in coming. Waiting and depending on others who did not see everything in exactly the same way or who were slower to react than what I as pastor wished was frustrating. Occasionally I felt discouraged, thinking that progress, growth, and change would never come.

Some members also found this approach threatening. It certainly was not what they were accustomed to, and it made greater demands on their time and talents. The success or failure of the church was on their shoulders.
On the other hand, this style of ministry was an opportunity for the members to become more involved in the life and ministry of their church. It held an exciting potential for them to be creative and use more of the initiative which God had given to them. Also the benefits the pastor would far outweigh the extra work involved in the implementation of this project.

Benefits for the Pastor

Perhaps the greatest benefit provided for the pastor by this approach to the new pastorate was the amount of information about the local church which was gained so quickly. This information facilitated working with the membership by giving greater understanding of where the membership was and deeper insight into how the church functioned. It provided a foundation for directing the pastor's ministry as well as for leading the church into growing involvement and action.

This style of ministry and pastoral leadership also provided a sense of direction and certainty. Even though the membership would determine the actual goals and ministry of the church, the pastor's ministry was determined through careful study and intentional planning. The pastor's work became one of planned action instead of unplanned reaction.

While more authority for directing the church was placed in the hands of the members, the process of open negotiation coupled with an ongoing self-evaluation made
it possible for the pastor to have more control over his own ministry. An added benefit was the fact that this control was neither arbitrary nor capricious, but instead was informed and planned.

Though a great deal of frustration was felt because of the time involved in ministry with little visible results during the first few months or even the first year, the end product was well worth the wait. The difference can definitely be seen three years after initiating this program.

Results in the Church

A Project Closure Questionnaire was used at the close of the start-up time in order to try to gain an objective measurement of any growth or progress which the church membership saw in itself (see appendix 4, pp. 168-175). This form was a modification of the Church Evaluation and Analysis form used during the initial interview described in chapter 3 (see appendix 1, pp. 137-150). The focus was on the key questions which measured the way the church saw itself.

The first result of this approach to ministry was that the members felt they had a part in the selection of their pastor. The Conference had consulted with them before calling the new pastor, and they had been given the opportunity to meet the new pastor and question him before the final decision was made. This gave the Dalton SDA church members the feeling that they were important
and that they could have a voice in shaping their own future.

Another result of this start-up procedure was the commitment on the part of the pastor and leadership to an open discussion and continual give and take in any area of church life. This added a great degree of flexibility and potential for creative change. Any change could be reversed if it was seen to be counterproductive, and no change would be forced upon the members—they would be the ones who would determine the future for their church.

One of the more significant results of this approach was the breaking down of many formal barriers within the church family. The sense of belonging was increased, even though this area still needs a great deal of growth.

An understanding of the purpose for the Dalton SDA church was greatly increased along with a greater sense of accomplishment and ability to reach church goals. The way in which the members saw themselves improved. They felt there was more opportunity for creativity and for involvement in decisions of the church.

One of the most exciting changes was the way in which different members began to show personal initiative in different areas of church life. What began slowly has at the time of this writing begun to mushroom.

The breakthrough did not come quickly or easily. Visible results did not really begin to appear until near
the end of the first year. During the second year there was a slight plateau, then another slight surge. By the middle of the third year a downturn appeared. It was here that the style of ministry which had been established really paid off. A process of renegotiation and self-analysis was initiated once again. The results were very rewarding—leading to a new stage of growth.

The elders have now volunteered for much more than they would have been willing even to consider three years ago. A significant number of members have offered their time and efforts in ever increasing amounts to a number of different areas. The year 1984 has been set aside for the specific purpose of training as many members as possible for both internal ministry and personal soul-winning work.

Not everything in this project went as planned. I was unable to do as much pastoral visitation as I wanted. Much of my visitation and ministry to individuals was limited to crisis ministry. Pastoral counseling increased as the trust level continued to build. The implementation and use of job descriptions has not been totally successful. More time needs to be given to refining the current job descriptions and to following through with their implementation.

Prayer meeting is another area which needs improvement. Attendance is very sporadic at best, and probably reflects the general pace of life of the church.
members as well as the level of their commitment.

Small group life as a support base within the church and emphasis on growth and evangelism are two other areas which need to be fostered.

While the members have grown in their understanding of the purpose of the church, the commitment level is still far behind their understanding of what God wants the church to be. This commitment will come only as their personal relationships with God continue to grow.

There is still a great deal to do and a long way to grow, but the foundations are laid and the relationships are stronger than ever. Patterns of ministry and church life are established which allow for continual self-measurement and sharpening of focus. What had been considered a "difficult" or "problem" church has not really proved to be so. It has been hard but exciting work. Attitudes have changed, participation has increased, and the future seems brighter than ever before. In a way, it can be said that this pastorate has just begun, and its full potential is yet to come.

A number of the members have expressed approval for the work of this project (See appendix 4, pp. 176-177). They have articulated the feeling that the welfare of this church is my primary interest. The more recent questionnaires indicate a high level of satisfaction with the direction of the church. These same questionnaires
also verify the need for more growth in the areas of conflict resolution, member involvement, fellowship within the church family, and evangelistic outreach.

The results of this project indicate that the time and effort expended were worthwhile. There is more to learn, and plenty of room to grow. But the basic principles applied in this project may be helpful to SDA ministry in general.

**Implications for Ministry**

A project of this nature is always somewhat limited in its application on a broad basis. What works in one place does not always work in every other place. Culture and situations differ. One must try to sort out the principles involved and be flexible in their application to any given situation.

This concluding section attempts to articulate some of the more crucial implications for ministry which have come out of the work of this project. These implications first of all apply to the local situation in Dalton, Georgia. There is a wider implication for pastors working within their own pastorates, and finally some possible implications for the Seventh-day Adventist organizational structure.

**Implications for Dalton**

The primary implication for the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist church is that the pastor and membership must
continue what has begun. To change styles of leadership and church life at this juncture would require a complete re-education of the entire membership. Because the current trends are not completely entrenched, they might be more easily changed than those of the past, but any significant change would lead to disappointment and a need for readjustment.

The crucial areas that need to be continued and fostered are the process of negotiation and periodic evaluation, as well as the continual push or emphasis on growth and development. Change is still needed, not for the sake of change, but for further progress.

One area which needs improvement is that of more consistent and regular feedback. One possibility is to take time to do more evaluation with the church leadership on a quarterly basis. Specifically, further negotiation is needed in what the members expect from the pastor in the way of regular visitation.

New patterns of ministry need to be reinforced—patterns of increased lay involvement, continued ongoing evaluation, and continued openness between pastor and laity. More creative ways of dealing with conflict need to be developed. Healing within the church as a body must continue in order to deal with the unresolved pain due to past conflicts.

Along with the emphasis on the church as a body, there also needs to be increased attention to the needs
of individual members. Programs and church activities must not be allowed to overshadow the fellowship of believers. Persons should have priority over programs.

In addition to these implications, the Dalton SDA church needs to be constantly reminded of its ultimate purpose—fostering the Kingdom of God. It cannot afford to focus all its energies internally but must intentionally direct itself in the accomplishment of its mission within the community—a mission that belongs to each member as part of the Body of Christ.

Implications for the Pastor

There are many different ways of carrying out one's pastoral ministry—probably as many as there are pastors. However, this project and its success points to several direct implications which need to be taken into consideration. There are principles which can apply in any situation and within any culture—principles that have foundations in Scripture and in the realities of human nature.

The first is that all members have equal rights to be involved in the decision-making process of the church. It is their church, and they are as much a part of the Body of Christ as anyone else. Not only do all members have the right but they also have the responsibility of being involved in shaping the church. God works through and in the Church as the Body, not merely through the pastor.
In order to meet each different situation, the pastor and church leadership must develop a flexibility that avoids the rigidity of control by traditions. It is precisely here that intentionality as described in this project comes into place. Planning is necessary—planning which carefully evaluates as much information as possible about a given situation and then involves as many others as possible.

The laity want and need to be involved in every area of church life. Their ministry is just as legitimate as that of the pastor. Any distinction or differentiation must be on the basis of function and service rather than status. While this may seem to be a surrender of some pastoral authority, that authority may have been held illegitimately. It also frees the pastor from a terrible burden of responsibility that he or she does not need to bear alone.

Another important implication for the pastor is the need for longer pastoral tenure. Most pastors within the SDA polity do not stay long enough to even begin to reach their full potential. This may contribute to the number of pastors who fail to find satisfaction in the local pastorate and therefore seek to go on to other forms of ministry.

More than anything else, there is a need for greater patience on the part of pastors. It is much easier for a one to go ahead with one’s own program than
to wait and meet the needs of the local church and then take them along to fuller growth. Working with people takes time. The larger the group of people, the longer it is going to take to achieve change and growth.

The final and most important implication for the pastor is to learn to trust the Biblical principles which apply to ministry. Knowing that God's power is at work in the local situation and that one is allowing Him to lead takes the pressure off the pastor. Church growth of any kind is ultimately not the sole responsibility of the pastor. It is a function of the living Body of Christ which as a church goes forward following its Head.

Implications for Organizational Structure

The importance of the conference and other administrative bodies within the SDA church cannot be overemphasized. In a very real way they influence the tone and attitudes of members all through the church. At the same time, the structure must be influenced by the membership of the church.

There are three major trends in society which need to be taken into consideration when looking at the organizational structure of the church: the move from centralized forms of leadership to decentralized control, providing greater opportunity and choices for individuals; the shift from a representative democracy to a participatory democracy in which each individual has the opportunity to shape organizational structure; and the
move from hierarchies to networking in which information acts as an equalizer in determining the role of the individual.¹

The church organization needs to be aware of the changes within society and adapt itself to those changes. The information society in which the church now finds itself provides many ways for facilitating the life and ministry of the church. It can also facilitate and simplify organizational structure. The church cannot afford to ignore major trends within society except at its own cost. Each of these major trends indicates the need for greater lay involvement on every level of church organization. This increased involvement on the local level in Dalton was one of the major factors in the success of this project. Ways can be discovered for implementing greater lay input on other levels.

If there is one factor which appears to be more significant than any other, it is the length of pastoral tenure. There is a need for more in-depth research on the SDA pastorate in relationship to effectiveness and length of pastoral tenure. There may be some factors unique to the SDA ministry which can help it to reach a higher degree of effectiveness earlier in a pastorate. But there is a need for lengthening the average stay of the SDA pastor.

There is also a need for the development of some form of systematic pastoral placement. This system should include careful analysis of the local situation and of each potential pastor in order to facilitate the matching of a pastor with a church or district. Greater lay involvement in the pastoral-selection process would contribute to greater lay participation in the ongoing ministry of the church and to more effective pastorates.

The use of carefully trained personnel working as church consultants during the matching process of filling pastoral vacancies, as well as in other areas of church life, could be a tremendous help toward increased growth and longer pastoral tenure. This could be in the form of a new position of ministry, or it could be through the careful training of departmental leaders on the conference and higher levels. This training needs to include specific consulting skills and needs to focus on training and service rather than promotion.

The implications for organizational structure can be summarized in three basic areas:

1. There is a need for greater lay involvement in every area and on every level of church life.

2. There is a need for more study into ways of facilitating pastoral ministry and other areas of church ministry.

3. There is a need for less centralization of the organizational structure with more use of personnel in
areas of ministry and service rather than institutional or organizational maintenance.

Conclusion

The concept of an intentional ministry is one which has the potential to strengthen the Seventh-day Adventist ministry on every level. This form of ministry is able to adapt to a given situation, meet the needs of that situation, lead those involved into a process of shared growth and development, and has the potential of meeting many of the needs which the church faces today.

The initiation of an intentional form of ministry within the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist church was successful in facilitating the entrance into a new pastorate. The cost in time and work has resulted in growth on the part of myself as well as on the part of the church.

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APPENDIX 1

LOOKING AT THE NEW PASTORATE

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CHURCH INFORMATION FORM

1. Local Church Data:
   a. Number of churches in district: _______________
   b. Number of members: ____  Average Attendance: ____
      Sanctuary Seating Capacity:____  Overflow: ______
   c. Location:  Type of area (Urban, etc.): __________
      Type of Neighborhood: ___________________________
      Amount of land owned: __________________________
      Additional comment: ____________________________
   d. Membership composition:  Average age: __________
      Classification (White?blue collar): _____________
      Racial makeup: _________________________________
      Additional comment: ____________________________

2. Church School Data:
   a. Location:  _____________________________________
   b. Number of students: _____  Number of grades: _____
   c. Staff: Number of teachers: ______
      Principal: _________________________________
      School Board Chairman: ____________________
   d. Financial picture: Tuition per child: ____________
      Total monthly tuition: ______
      Church Subsidy (Month) ______
      Average Income ______
      Average Monthly Expenses: _____________
      Outstanding debt: _________________________
2. School, continued:
   e. Facilities: Number of classrooms: _______________
      Gymnasium: _______ Cafeteria: ____________
      Playground: _____________________________
      Additional comment:

   f. Equipment:

   g. Hot lunch program: ____________________________

   h. Home & School Organization: __________________
      Leader: _________________________________
      Special projects: __________________________
      Additional comments on school:

3. Church Financial Data:
   a. Tithe base: Previous year: ____________
      Current year (Estimated): ____________

   b. Type of Stewardship program: _______________________

   c. Local budget: Previous year: ______________
      Current year (Estimated): ______________

   d. Debt structure: Mortgage: ______________ at ___%.
      Monthly payment: ____________
      Present Status: ______________
3. Church Finances, continued:
   e. Average monthly expenses: __________________
   f. Average monthly income: __________________
   g. Current balance on hand: __________________
   h. Reserve fund balance: ______________________
   i. Percentage of families tithing: ________%
   j. Amount spent in outreach: __________
      Percentage of budget: ________%

4. Church Facilities and Equipment:
   a. Number of children's classrooms: ________________
      Condition: __________________
   b. Number of adult classrooms: __________________
   c. Choir area: __________________
   d. Pastor's study: __________________
      Location: __________________
      Furniture: __________________
   e. Church Secretary's office: __________________
   f. Lay Activities office: __________________
   g. Church Kitchen: __________________
      Equipment: __________________
   h. Fellowship area: __________________
      Tables to seat: _____(#) Chairs: _____(#)
   i. P. A. System: __________________ Tape deck: _____
      Number of mikes: _____ Lavalier mike: ________
   j. Music: Piano: ______________ Organ: __________
4. Church Facilities, continued:

k. Equipment: Typewriter: ____ Photo copier: _______
   Mimeograph: _____ Offset: _____ Folder: _____
   Stencil or Platemaker: ______ Addressograph: ___
   Dictaphone: ____ Slide Projector: _____________
   Movie Projector: ______________________________

Additional Comment:

5. Previous Pastors:

   Last: ________________________ Time here: ______
   Previous: ___________________ Time here: ______
   Previous: ___________________ Time here: ______
   Previous: ___________________ Time here: ______

Additional Comment:

6. Church Inreach:

   a. How active is social committee: ________________
   Frequency of activities: ________________________

   b. Group fellowship: _______ Prayer groups: _______
      Discussion groups: ___________

   c. Member visitation program: ___________
      Number of inactive/non-attending members: ______

Additional Comment:
7. Church Outreach:
   a. Membership -- 3 years ago - 19 : ________
      2 years ago - 19 : ________
      last year - 19 : ________
      Now - 198 : ________
   b. Number baptized --
      3 years ago - 19 : ________
      2 years ago - 19 : ________
      last year - 19 : ________
   c. Number of members involved in active outreach: ________
      Percentage of membership: _______%
   d. Number of evangelistic campaigns during last five years: ________
      When: ________________________________
   e. Average number of Bible studies given by laity per month: ________.
   f. Ingathering: Goal this year: ________.
      Has the goal been reached the last 3 years? ________
      Percentage of church goal donated by members: _______%
      Number involved in door-to-door work: ________
      In business solicitation: ________

8. Community Data
   a. Population of town or city: ________
      Is it growing or decreasing? __________________
   b. Population in county: ________
      Is it growing or decreasing? __________________
   c. Dominant population type (White/blue collar): ________
   d. Percentage of local people who commute to a larger city: ________%
e. Community college or university: __________________________

______________________________

f. Main industries: __________________________

______________________________

______________________________

Additional Comments:
1. Introduction
2. Devotional
3. Personal Information -- Give out resume' -- QUESTIONS????
4. Complete Church Information Sheet
5. Congregational evaluation and analysis. --
   Hopes and dreams, etc.
6. Pastoral priorities: What type of leadership is needed now.
7. Personal leadership style and philosophy.
8. Doctoral project -- give out outline.
9. Areas for negotiation:
   a. Time involved in study program.
   b. Pastoral duties -- relate with # 6 above.
   c. Staff relationships: if any.
   d. Accountability -- elaborate!!!
   e. Office -- furnishings and hours.
10. Pastoral commitments:

11. Congregational commitments
    a. Areas under # 9.
    b. Philosophy and style of ministry.
    c. Church mission and purpose.
    d. Doctoral project.
    e. To seek and develop a relationship of mutual growth
        based on: Open communication, analysis/evaluation,
        and feedback.

12. Steering committee -- 3 individuals --
    who are open, strong, committed, and kind.

13. Analysis & evaluation committee --
    Steering comm., head elder, head deacon, head deaconess,
    Church treasurer, S.S. Supt., Personal Ministries Leader,
    and School principal(head teacher). (suggested -- no more
    than 10 in all).
RESUME OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: Benjamin (Ben) Carl Maxson
Date of Birth: 6-14-49
Spouse: Mary Holmes Maxson
Children: Laura Louise - born - 11-18-74  
Benjamin Elwyn - born - 10-11-78
Current Address: Rt. 4, Box 193-AA  
Joplin, MO 64801  
Phone: 417-623-6929

Academic Record:
Secondary - Little Creek Academy, Knoxville, TN
College - Southern Missionary College (B.S. - Theology)
Graduate - Andrews University (Seminary) M. Div. 1978  
Andrews University Doctor of Ministry in progress  

Service Record:
1970 - Assoc. pastor - Morristown, Tenn.
1971 - Assoc. Pastor - Cleveland & Knoxville, TN
1972 - Pastor - Waycross, GA
1973 - Director - Youth, Temperance & Stewardship  
North Argentina Mission
1975 - Director - Youth, Temperance & Stewardship  
Uruguay Mission
1976-78 - Graduate Work at Andrews University
1978 - Pastor - Joplin, MO

Areas of Interest: Church Administration, Lay Training, Facilitation  
of Membership Involvement; Theology & Doctrinal Studies (Conservative  
but open)
Programs: Spiritual Gifts Seminar  
Lay Leadership Planning Retreat  
Marriage Enrichment Seminar (G.C. Family Services,  
Certification)
Missing Members Outreach Program  
Sabbath School Effectiveness Program  
Church Leadership Retreat

Hobbies: Amateur Radio, Electronics, Construction, Electrical,  
Auto Mechanics, Sports
CHURCH EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

I. Purpose of the Church.

A. The purpose of the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist Church is:

B. I would like the Dalton church to be known for:
   (List several if you wish; please star * the most important.)

C. Please use your best judgment in answering the following:
   1. The main purpose of the Dalton church is:
      ______ Clear
      ______ Cloudy
   2. The average commitment of the members to this purpose is:
      ______ Strong
      ______ Weak
   3. We are reaching our goals and accomplishing our purpose:
      ______ Very Well       ______ More or less
      ______ Very poorly
   4. Congregational goals agree with personal goals:
      ______ Totally       ______ Occassionally
      ______ Not at all     ______ Don't know
   5. There is individual "ownership" of congregational goals:
      ______ It's mine       ______ Don't care
      ______ It's theirs
6. God is in control of this church:
   _____ Completely   _____ More or less
   _____ Hardly at all

II. Church Administration

A. Accomplishments:

1. Our congregation can accomplish any task it sets for itself:  _____ Agree   _____ Disagree

2. Whenever a program is developed, most of the members support it 100%:  _____ Agree   _____ Disagree

3. When something is accomplished, everyone knows about it and celebrates:  _____ Agree   _____ Disagree

4. Whenever something needs to be done, the same 10-20% end up doing it:  _____ Agree   _____ Disagree

B. Decision making:

1. Members from every part or level of the congregation help shape the decisions here:
   _____ Agree   _____ Disagree

2. The elected leaders, along with the pastor, make the important decisions here:  _____ Agree   _____ Disagree

3. Persons and groups are open to be influenced by the ideas and concerns of others in making decisions:
   _____ Agree   _____ Disagree

C. General attitude and style:

1. Individuality and creativity are encouraged.
   _____ Yes   _____ Need more   _____ Not at all

2. The level of motivation in the congregation is:
   _____ High   _____ Mediocre   _____ Very low
3. Communication channels are open and working well:
   ______ Yes   ___ More or less   ____ Blocked

4. Disagreement and conflict are dealt with:
   ______ Well   ___ More or less   ____ Avoided

5. Evaluation of the congregation and its accomplishments is:
   ______ Regular   ___ Occasional   ____ Not at all

6. Accountability within the leadership and congregation is:
   ______ Clear   ___ Uncertain   ____ Not there

III. CHURCH CLIMATE

A. Opinion Poll:

1. What words best describe the Dalton church?
   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________
   ___________________   ___________________   ___________________

2. What is "special" about the Dalton church?

3. What do you like about the Dalton church?

4. What do you think others like about the Dalton church?

5. What about the Dalton church appeals to the community?
6. To whom does the Dalton church appeal the most?

7. What have been the major "successes" of the Dalton church in the last five years?

8. What are the strengths of the Dalton church?

9. What are the weaknesses of the Dalton church?

10. What are the major "needs" of the Dalton church?

B. Mark where you feel the church is at this time.

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IV. SPIRITUAL GROWTH

A. What are the factors that have helped your personal spiritual growth?

B. What are the factors which have helped the spiritual growth of the congregation as a whole?

C. What factors have hindered your personal spiritual growth?

D. In your judgment, what factors have hindered the spiritual growth of the congregation?

E. Please mark the following according to your opinion:
   1. The quality of our worship services are:
      _____ Outstanding _____ Mediocre _____ Very poor
   2. Our week of prayers have been:
      _____ Excellent _____ Poor _____ Have not had any
3. Are there any doctrinal areas that are currently a focus of discussion or disagreement within the church?

If so, what are the areas?

4. What has been the major area of outreach in which you have been involved?

5. What have been the major outreach programs for the church in the last five years, and how successful have they been in your judgment?

F. What would make church life more satisfying for you?

G. What "dreams" do you have for the Dalton church?
V. CLARIFICATION: Please choose and rank in order of importance any or all of the items under each list.

A. I believe the purpose of this church is to:
   ___ Have a comfortable place to meet when we want to.
   ___ Be a source of help, inspiration, and growth to members.
   ___ Be a center for spiritual entertainment.
   ___ Be the center of salvation for the community.
   ___ Be a support base for the work of God in other areas of the world.

B. I think the Dalton church should:
   ___ Spend more time in fellowship.
   ___ Concentrate more on theological issues.
   ___ Be more involved in community social improvement.
   ___ Spend more time in prayer.
   ___ Get out and work more, even if it hurts.
   ___ Sacrifice more of self—in time, money and abilities.

C. It is my personal opinion that the order of importance for the following should be:
   ___ Developing mature Christians in the church.
   ___ Strong public evangelism.
   ___ Increased personal evangelism.
   ___ Child evangelism—Sab. Sch.; Ch. School; & Pathfinders.
   ___ Fellowship and sharing between church members.

D. In your estimation the relationship between the church and conference is:
   ___ Excellent   ___ Stable   ___ Strained
I. Purpose of the Church.

A. The purpose of the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist Church is:

B. I would like the Dalton church to be known for:
   (List several if you wish; please star * the most important.)

C. Please use your best judgment in answering the following:

1. The main purpose of the Dalton church is:
   8 Clear
   19 Cloudy

2. The average commitment of the members to this purpose is:
   2 Strong
   22 Weak

3. We are reaching our goals and accomplishing our purpose:
   1 Very Well    12 More or less
   15 Very poorly

4. Congregational goals agree with personal goals:
   2 Totally    19 Occassionally
   1 Not at all   4 Don't know

5. There is individual "ownership" of congregational goals:
   11 It's mine    4 Don't care
   7 It's theirs
6. God is in control of this church:

_____ 4 Completely  ____ 16 More or less

_____ 5 Hardly at all

II. Church Administration

A. Accomplishments:

1. Our congregation can accomplish any task it sets for itself:  ____ 21 Agree  ____ 4 Disagree

2. Whenever a program is developed, most of the members support it 100%:  ____ 7 Agree  ____ 19 Disagree

3. When something is accomplished, everyone knows about it and celebrates:  ____ 12 Agree  ____ 11 Disagree

4. Whenever something needs to be done, the same 10-20% end up doing it:  ____ 25 Agree  ____ 2 Disagree

B. Decision making:

1. Members from every part or level of the congregation help shape the decisions here:

_____ 8 Agree  ____ 16 Disagree

2. The electors, along with the pastor, make the important decisions here:  ____ 17 Agree  ____ 8 Disagree

3. Persons and groups are open to be influenced by the ideas and concerns of others in making decisions:

_____ 23 Agree  ____ 2 Disagree

C. General attitude and style:

1. Individuality and creativity are encouraged.

_____ 4 Yes  ____ 19 Need more  ____ 3 Not at all

2. The level of motivation in the congregation is:

_____ 1 High  ____ 17 Mediocre  ____ 9 Very low

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3. Communication channels are open and working well:
   __2__ Yes  ___16___ More or less  ___9___ Blocked

4. Disagreement and conflict are dealt with:
   ___1___ Well  ___16___ More or less  ___11___ Avoided

5. Evaluation of the congregation and its accomplishments is:
   ___2___ Regular  ___15___ Occasional  ___10___ Not at all

6. Accountability within the leadership and congregation is:
   ___4___ Clear  ___20___ Uncertain  ___2___ Not there

III. CHURCH CLIMATE

A. Opinion Poll:

1. What words best describe the Dalton church?
   Dead / Asleep  Warm / Respected  Angry at self
   Fragmented/ Lazy  Lukewarm / Cold  Potential

2. What is "special" about the Dalton church?

3. What do you like about the Dalton church?

4. What do you think others like about the Dalton church?

5. What about the Dalton church appeals to the community?
6. To whom does the Dalton church appeal the most?

7. What have been the major "successes" of the Dalton church in the last five years?

8. What are the strengths of the Dalton church?

9. What are the weaknesses of the Dalton church?

10. What are the major "needs" of the Dalton church?

B. Mark where you feel the church is at this time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

not alert  
trustful  
uncooperative  
not supportive  
impersonal  
and distant  
stagnant

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IV. SPIRITUAL GROWTH

A. What are the factors that have helped your personal spiritual growth?

B. What are the factors which have helped the spiritual growth of the congregation as a whole?

C. What factors have hindered your personal spiritual growth?

D. In your judgment, what factors have hindered the spiritual growth of the congregation?

E. Please mark the following according to your opinion:
   1. The quality of our worship services are:
      
      6 Outstanding  12 Mediocre  3 Very poor

   2. Our week of prayers have been:
      
      3 Excellent  9 Poor  8 Have not had any
3. Are there any doctrinal areas that are currently a focus of discussion or disagreement within the church?

If so, what are the areas?

4. What has been the major area of outreach in which you have been involved?

5. What have been the major outreach programs for the church in the last five years, and how successful have they been in your judgment?

F. What would make church life more satisfying for you?

G. What "dreams" do you have for the Dalton church?
V. CLARIFICATION: Please choose and rank in order of importance any or all of the items under each list.

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   - 4 Be a center for spiritual entertainment.
   - 1 Be the center of salvation for the community.
   - 3 Be a support base for the work of God in other areas of the world.

B. I think the Dalton church should:
   - 3 Spend more time in fellowship.
   - 6 Concentrate more on theological issues.
   - 5 Be more involved in community social improvement.
   - 1 Spend more time in prayer.
   - 4 Get out and work more, even if it hurts.
   - 2 Sacrifice more of self—in time, money and abilities.

C. It is my personal opinion that the order of importance for the following should be:
   - 1 Developing mature Christians in the church.
   - 5 Strong public evangelism.
   - 2 Increased personal evangelism.
   - 4 Child evangelism--Sab. Sch.; Ch. School; & Pathfinders.
   - 3 Fellowship and sharing between church members.

D. In your estimation the relationship between the church and conference is:
   - 5 Excellent
   - 12 Stable
   - 3 Strained

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Pastoral Priorities

Please rank the following on a scale of 1 - 10 (10 as most important) and estimate how many hours per week the pastor should spend in that activity.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Preaching &amp; preparation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pastoral calling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Crisis counseling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Social interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Training &amp; Organizing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Building maintenance (supervision/work)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Public worship/celebration (not including preaching)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Evangelism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Funerals, weddings, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Building church fellowships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Continuing education &amp; professional development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Personal devotions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Personal family time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Hobbies, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared by Ben Maxson
APPENDIX 2

DISCOVERING DIRECTION

Sample Order of Worship ..................... 153
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WE WORSHIP

WE MEDITATE
Organ Prelude                Bach
"Prelude in F Major"

WE COME TOGETHER
In Family Fellowship

WE COME TO GOD
With Chimes
With a Call to Worship Nelson Chandler
Isaiah 25:1-8
With an Invocation Nelson Chandler

WE PRAISE GOD
*In Singing Hymn No. 160
"O Thou In Whose Presence"
+In Praying Bob Read
In Giving To: Evangelism
Offertory "Prayer"
*Doxology
Thanksgiving Prayer Bob Read

WE LISTEN
To the Children's Story Vesta Maxson
To the Reading of Scripture N. Chandler
To the Sacred Anthem
To the Word Ben Maxson
"When Faith Seems Wrong"

WE LEAVE WITH GOD
Benediction Ben Maxson
Postlude Niedermeyer
"Exaltation"

* Congregation standing  + Congregation kneeling
ORDER OF WORSHIP

This is an explanation of the new order of service which we will be implementing on Sabbath, July 11. Please look this over carefully. It is our prayer that this new order might be deeply meaningful and helpful to your relationship with God. If you feel there are some areas which could be improved, please contact the pastor.

WE MEDITATE
Organ Prelude

The purpose of this section of the worship service is to prepare an atmosphere of worship, and to help us meditate on what God has done for us. Worship is a celebration of God's saving acts.

WE COME TOGETHER
In Family Fellowship -- During this time we want to build our relationships with each other. We should welcome each other in the love that we share for Christ. This is also the time to express any special concerns or blessings which we might wish to share with our church family. In short -- this time is to bring us together in unity, so that united we might come to God.

WE COME TO GOD
With Chimes

With a Call to Worship -- This will consist of either a Scripture reading, a responsive reading, or some special music which will act as a call to us as a congregation to come to God in worship. If you would like to share in this by writing a short responsive Call to Worship, we would like to have your help. In a sense this a corporate act by which the congregation invites one another and God to this time of worship together.

We have an Invocation

WE PRAISE GOD
In Singing -- This will be the hymn of praise as we join our voices in celebrating the greatness of God and His love towards us. This should be a time of great joy as we celebrate the blessings He has given to us and worship Our Creator.

In Praying -- As the congregation kneels together, we will be led in prayer as we come together to God. In this prayer we seek to recognise our need of God, while acknowledging our sinfulness and coming to Him in repentance. We give thanks for our salvation. We also bring our congregation and any special requests we might have to Him in intercession and thank Him for accepting and answering our prayer.
WE PRAISE GOD (continued)

In Giving
Offertory
Doxology
Prayer of Thanksgiving -- In this act of bringing our tithes and offerings to God, we acknowledge His ownership of all that we have and are. We also celebrate His many blessings, and share in the extension of His ministry through our means. But in a greater sense, along with our offerings, we give to Him ourselves in dedication, and in thanksgiving, to be used as He desires.

WE LISTEN

To the Children's Story -- At this time we want to recognise our children and include them in our worship in a special way and meet them as they are.

To the Reading of Scripture -- It is our feeling that worship must focus around the Word of God. This is the time to meditate on what God has revealed directly to us through His messengers. We invite you to make His Word the focus of your life.

To the Sacred Anthem -- In this special music we wish to praise God and minister to each one in the congregation. We hope this will help to prepare our minds for the study of the Word.

To the Spoken Word -- In a very real way, the sermon is part of worship. As we focus on the message from the Bible, please pray that God's Spirit might be able to work through the preacher and in each of our hearts. We hope that this might help lift our lives up to God.

WE LEAVE WITH GOD

Benediction -- We ask God to go with us and impart to us the blessing and protection of His presence.

Organ Postlude -- During this time, we ask that you remember that we are in God's house as you leave and fellowship with each other. This is a time to share our love for God and for each other. Please take advantage of this time to encourage each other and draw closer to God.
RESPONSIBILITY -- As a group leader you have been asked to lead out in this process of self-assessment. While your ideas are valuable, please do not make this a forum for your own thoughts. Try to involve each of the individuals in your group.

PURPOSE: 1. To discover where our church is and where we want to go.

2. To discover common purposes, tasks, and challenges as a basis for effective congregational involvement.

AGENDA FOR HOME MEETINGS --

1. Introductions -- 10-15 minutes
   A. Take 2 minutes for each person to interview another person whom they know least well in the group. Try to discover three interesting facts about the other person in one minute.
   B. Take 15 minutes for each person to introduce to the group the person they interviewed, and share the interesting facts they discovered.

2. Take 3-5 minutes to share the purpose of this meeting, then share the questionnaire and ask each one to complete it.

3. Develop a group profile --
   Exchange papers among members. Then request each individual to raise their hands as you indicate the number (1-7) under each item

Example: A group profile may look like the following on the indicated item. The numbers above the line indicate the number of persons in a group of eight who marked the number on their instrument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4. After noting those items (8-10) with the broadest spread, or showing the greatest concern, choose two or three as most important. Then take a few minutes to discuss them together.

5. Additional areas for discussion (10 minutes per area)
   A. What do you like most about the ministry and mission of the congregation?
   B. What additional hopes do you have for the life of the church? What needs to happen that is not now happening?
C. What specific changes would you like to see in our church?

D. How can our congregation more effectively reach the community?

6. Summarize what has been said, making special note of the most important ideas, facts, and/or feelings which have been shared.

7. Ask each individual to write on a piece of paper those areas where they feel a special concern, and which they would like to help improve.

SPECIAL POINTS

1. Your principle task is to facilitate the work of the small group.
2. Avoid focusing on "gripes". Clarify the essential idea and move on to other items. Ask for suggestions of action or programs which would respond to gripes or concerns.
3. Be sensitive and help others contribute.
4. Assure the members that their contribution will make a difference—that the church board and pastor are committed to including their suggestions in any plan of action.
5. Record all data, and have the group indicate the most important ideas.
6. Make sure you have a secretary who can record all relevant information.
7. Test the group when they come up with an idea by asking if they would be willing to help implement their idea.

GROUND RULES FOR DISCUSSION

1. No one is allowed to tell anyone else that they are wrong—only that they are different.
2. Use first person, and own your own comment.
3. Do not argue with another person until you have restated their position to their satisfaction.
4. Document the reason for your feeling.
Church Self-Assessment

The mission of the Dalton SDA Church is to develop a fellowship of believers whose lives focus on a knowledge of God's Word and a personal relationship with Christ beginning in our homes and then our church family, in order to present Christ to the community and world through: our lifestyles, loving our neighbors as ourselves, and meeting community needs through actively caring for others, while being aware of our local and worldwide church needs and supporting them in every way possible.

Please give your opinion on the following items as honestly as you possibly can. Your opinion is important and will help our church grow and define its needs and objectives. Keep our mission statement in mind and rank your response along the number line according to the intensity of your feeling.

1. I am happy with my current spiritual status and growth.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree

2. I am involved in some rewarding form of ministry.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree

3. Our church is as active in ministering to the needs of the people in the community as I would like it to be.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree

4. I feel I can trust other members enough to talk with them about personal problems.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree

5. Our church handles disagreement and conflict well, without taking sides.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree

6. I feel free to participate and help in any part of the church program.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree

7. Our church is open to change, growth, and new ideas.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree

8. I feel that I belong to this church family.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree

9. I want to be more involved in church life.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
10. I am active in the decision making process of this church.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
11. This church is united in purpose and feeling.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
12. I am satisfied with the Sabbath School as it now is.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
13. Prayer meetings are meaningful, and I want to attend.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
14. I want to be more involved in some form of active witness.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
15. I am concerned with our youth program, and would like to help.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
16. We need more activities and training programs in the area of family life.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
17. My tithes and offerings are proportionately distributed between the local church, conference and General Conference.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
18. I would like to see a few additions or improvements to the church plant.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
19. Our church has a good school program and I support it.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree
   Please mark this one only if you have school age children.
20. I send my children to church school.
   Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree

Thank you for helping with this questionnaire. As your group discusses this and other areas, please take part and give your opinion freely. Obviously, we may not be able to follow every idea or incorporate every suggestion, but this will help us find areas of concern and ideas as to how to grow further.
GROUP LEADERS GUIDE
GOAL SETTING

I. PURPOSE: This meeting is to allow each individual member to participate in shaping the goals and objectives of our church. Through this process, we hope to go in the direction which our members choose.

II. STEPS TO SUCCESS
A. Invite all your group members to your meeting, and explain to them at the time of the invitation just what the purpose of the meeting is to be.

B. Introductory exercises:
1. Be sure and start your meeting with prayer.
2. First question -- (Go around circle and share their answers.) What was the warmest spot, or source of physical warmth in your childhood home?
3. Second question: -- What was the source of emotional warmth or well-being in your childhood home?
4. State purpose of this meeting, and emphasize that their input is important. Explain the process by which the goals will be set -- Starting with this group -- then Evaluation & Analysis Comm. -- then Church Board -- Then the entire membership in business session.
5. Begin discussion in each of the areas below. Note: on the left are the major areas of concern raised in the group self-assessment; on the right are ideas that came up during the Spiritual Gifts Study or in the process of developing our Mission Statement. Use these ideas as possible discussion starters.

III. AREAS FOR DISCUSSION

Major concerns Possible ideas

INREACH

1. Increase nurture of membership 1. Visitation programs -- especially of elderly & sick (Possibly Hospital )
2. Increase social interaction 2. Develop a "Helps" Organization who could be phoned when there is special need.
3. Minister to the elderly 3. Continuing Education Prog. offering classes in different areas.
4. Lack of friendliness 4. Tape ministry
5. Missing member program 5. Health programs for members.
6. Pathfinders
7. Family Life programs

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UPREACH (Spiritual life with God)

1. Increase Prayer meeting attendance.
2. Facilitate personal devotional life

3. Special group for special prayer requests (those with gift of "Intercession and/or faith)
4. Special prayer request box
5. Sab. Sch. class for parents and teachers of children's S.S. Class.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION

1. Officers who do not fulfill their responsibilities.
2. Participation of members is inhibited -- need more involvement.
3. Youth Sab. Sch. class
4. Main Sab. Sch. Program
5. Give youth responsibility
6. Church dismissal after service.
7. Minority "power" group?
8. Problems handling conflict.
9. Decision-making process

PHYSICAL PLANT

1. Community Center
2. Parking lot paved/repaired
3. Bell tower finished off.

OUTREACH

1. No organized plan.
2. Community center
3. Increase contact
4. Better Living Seminars
5. Reach ethnic/cultural groups.
6. Nursing home programs
7. Bible Study training programs
8. Vacation Bible School
9. Column in paper
10. Local radio program
11. Newspaper adds
12. Listing of services in Friday paper
13. Branch S. Sch. program.
14. Build relationships with neighbors

ALSO: Please discuss and consider the possibility of helping with the large Evangelistic program for Chattanooga in March of 1982. We could take our friends and family. Also, what about meetings in Dalton as the climax of a systematic outreach program for 1983.

Please discuss these areas in each group. Keep a good record of all specific ideas, goals, or objectives which are chosen by your group. Then ask who would be willing to help in each area.
PROPOSED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 1982

INREACH
1. Develop and implement a program to reach our missing members.
2. Bring our church membership list up to date.
3. Develop a way of taking the church service to shut-ins -- tape or telephone.
4. Develop a Couples or Young Adults Club.
5. Develop and implement a Continuing Education Program offering seminars in areas of felt needs.
7. Develop a tape library program for members.
8. Increase the use of the gym for planned social activities.

UPREACH
1. Develop a Children's Prayer Meeting.
2. Start a regular meeting for the Sab. School teachers.
3. Implement the Positive Way Program
4. Offer courses for self-improvement -- Bible Study, Personal Devotional life, etc.
5. Have 2-3 S.S. Teacher Training programs.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION
1. Start a youth class for S. Sch.
2. Develop a new and more creative Sab. School Program.
3. Increase the involvement of the membership in decision making in order to create a broader base for action.

PHYSICAL PLANT
1. Reorganize the use of rooms in the entire church and school.
2. Consider a Community Services room.
3. Develop a Master Plan to include the long-range development and improvements in the: Church Foyer, Bell Tower, Parking Lot, Grounds, Air Conditioning, etc.

OUTREACH
1. Plan and implement a Vacation Bible School.
2. Investigate listing our services in Friday's paper.
3. Implement a Bible Study Training Program.
4. Develop a ministry to the Nursing Homes in our community.
5. Develop and implement a Planned Evangelistic Program.
DALTON SDA CHURCH BUDGET

Proposed for 1982

<table>
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<th>CHURCH EXPENSE</th>
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MONTHLY BUDGET $5426.13 $5940.00

*This reflects an increase to $350.00 per month x 8 months, $315.00 for two months, and $275.00 for two months, adjusted to school year.

+These areas will be receiving help from the fruit fund, and the Local Outreach and Local Student Fund will receive additional funds from interest earnings.
CHURCH EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

I. Purpose of the Church

A. The purpose of the Dalton SDA Church is:

B. Please use your best judgment in answering the following:

1. The main purpose of the Dalton Church is:
   ___Clear
   ___Cloudy

2. The average commitment of the members to this purpose is:
   ___Strong
   ___Weak

3. We are reaching our goals and accomplishing our purpose:
   ___Very Well   ___Very poorly   ___More or less

4. Congregational goals agree with personal goals:
   ___Totally   ___Occasionally
   ___Not at all   ___Don't know

5. There is individual "ownership" of congregational goals:
   ___It's mine   ___It's theirs   ___Don't care

6. God is in control of this church:
   ___Completely   ___More or less   ___Hardly at all

II. Church Administration

A. Accomplishments:

1. Our congregation can accomplish any task it sets for itself:   ___Agree   ___Disagree

2. When something is accomplished, everyone knows about it and celebrates:   ___Agree   ___Disagree

3. Whenever something needs to be done, the same 10-20% end up doing it:   ___Agree   ___Disagree

B. Decision Making

1. Members from every part or level of the congregation help shape the decisions here:   ___Agree   ___Disagree

2. The elected leaders, along with the pastor, make the important decisions here:   ___Agree   ___Disagree

3. Persons and groups are open to be influenced by the ideas and concerns of other in making decisions:
   ___Agree   ___Disagree
Church Evaluation and Analysis
Page 2

C. General Attitude and Style:
1. Individuality and creativity are encouraged.
   ☐ Yes ☐ Need more ☐ Not at all
2. The level of motivation in the congregation is:
   ☐ High ☐ Mediocre ☐ Very low
3. Communication channels are open and working well:
   ☐ Yes ☐ More or less ☐ Blocked
4. Disagreement and conflict are dealt with:
   ☐ Well ☐ More or Less ☐ Avoided
5. Evaluation of the congregation and its accomplishments is:
   ☐ Regular ☐ Occasional ☐ Not at all
6. Accountability within the leadership & congregation is:
   ☐ Clear ☐ Uncertain ☐ Not there

III. Church Climate
A. Opinion Poll:
   1. What words best describe the Dalton church.

   ____________________ ____________________ ____________________
   ____________________ ____________________ ____________________

   2. What do you like about the Dalton church?

   3. What about the Dalton church appeals to the community?

   4. To whom does the Dalton church appeal the most?

   5. What have been the major "successes" of the Dalton church in the last year?

   6. What are the strengths of the Dalton church?

   7. What are the present weaknesses of the Dalton church?

   8. What are the major "needs" of the Dalton church?
B. Mark where you feel the church is at this time.

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IV. Spiritual Growth

A. What are the factors that have helped your personal growth?

B. What are the factors which have helped the spiritual growth of the congregation as a whole?

C. What factors have hindered your personal spiritual growth?

D. Please mark the following according to your opinion:
   1. The quality of our worship services are:
      ___ Outstanding  ___ Mediocre  ___ Very poor
   2. Our Week of Prayers have been:
      ___ Excellent  ___ Poor  ___ Have not had any

E. What would make church life more satisfying for you?

F. What "dreams" do you have for the Dalton church?

V. Clarification - Please choose and rank in order of importance any or all of the items under each list.

A. I believe the purpose of this church is to:
   ___ Have a comfortable place to meet when we want to.
   ___ Be a source of help, inspiration, & growth to members.
   ___ Be a center for spiritual entertainment.
   ___ Be a center of salvation for the community.
   ___ Be a support base for the work of God in other areas of the world.
Church Evaluation and Analysis
Page 4

V. **Clarification (con't.)**

B. I think the Dalton church should:
   ____ Spend more time in fellowship.
   ____ Concentrate more on theological issues.
   ____ Be more involved in community social improvement.
   ____ Spend more time in prayer.
   ____ Get out and work more, even if it hurts.
   ____ Sacrifice more of self -- in time, money & abilities.

C. It is my personal opinion that the order of importance for the following should be:
   ____ Developing mature Christians in the church.
   ____ Strong public evangelism.
   ____ Increased personal evangelism.
   ____ Child evangelism-S.S.; Church School; & Pathfinders
   ____ Fellowship and sharing between church members.

D. In your estimation the relationship between the church and conference is:
   ____ Excellent  ____ Stable  ____ Strained

---Prepared by Ben Maxson---
APPENDIX 3

CONCLUSION

Project Closure Questionnaire ............... 168

Project Closure Questionnaire
(Partially summarized) .................... 172

Project Evaluation Statements ............... 176
PROJECT CLOSURE QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of my Doctor of Ministry project was to facilitate the first 18 months of my new pastorate in Dalton. The key elements to this process were open discussion—giving input to as many members as possible—and careful, planned program for our church activities.

Please answer these questions as honestly and carefully as possible. They will help me evaluate the project and complete the writing of the project report.

Check here if you remember filling out a questionnaire like this on the night of December 23, 1980, when Mary and I met with the Church Board and a number of others to decide if we would accept the call to Dalton.

A. Please use your best judgment in answering the following:

1. The main purpose of the Dalton Church is:
   ___ Clear ___ Cloudy

2. The average commitment of members to this purpose is:
   ___ Strong ___ Weak

3. We are reaching our goals and accomplishing our purpose:
   ___ Very Well ___ More or less ___ Very poorly

4. There is individual "ownership" of congregational goals:
   ___ It's mine ___ Don't care ___ It's theirs

5. God is in control of this church:
   ___ Completely ___ More or less ___ Hardly at all

6. Our congregation can accomplish any task it sets for itself:
   ___ Agree ___ Disagree

7. Whenever a program is developed, most of the members support it 100%:
   ___ Agree ___ Disagree
8. When something is accomplished, everyone knows about it and celebrates:
   ___ Agree ___ Disagree

9. Whenever something needs to be done, the same 10-20% end up doing it:
   ___ Agree ___ Disagree

10. Members from every part or level of the congregation help shape the decisions here:
    ___ Agree ___ Disagree

11. The elected leaders, along with the pastor, make the important decisions here:
    ___ Agree ___ Disagree

12. Individuality and creativity are encouraged:
    ___ Yes ___ Need more ___ Not at all

13. The level of motivation in the congregation is:
    ___ High ___ Mediocre ___ Very Low

14. Communication channels are open and working well:
    ___ Yes ___ More or less ___ Blocked

15. Disagreement and conflict are dealt with:
    ___ Well ___ More or less ___ Avoided

16. Evaluation of the congregation and its accomplishments is:
    ___ Regular ___ Occasional ___ Not at all

17. Accountability within the leadership and congregation is:
    ___ Clear ___ Uncertain ___ Not there

18. What words best describe the Dalton Church?
    ____________________ ____________________ ____________________

19. What do you like about the Dalton Church?
20. What about the Dalton church appeals to the community?

21. What have been the major "successes" of the Dalton Church in the last five years?

22. What are the strengths of the Dalton church?

23. What are the weaknesses of the Dalton church?

24. What are the major "needs" of the Dalton church?

25. What are the factors that have helped your personal spiritual growth?

26. What are the factors which have helped the spiritual growth of the congregation as a whole?

27. What factors have hindered your personal spiritual growth?

28. In your judgment, what factors have hindered the spiritual growth of the congregation?

29. The quality of our worship services is:
   _____ Outstanding   _____ Mediocre   _____ Very Poor

30. What would make church life more satisfying for you?

31. What "dreams" do you have for the Dalton Church?
CLARIFICATION: Please choose and rank in order of importance any or all of the items under each list.

A. I believe the purpose of this church is to:
   - Have a comfortable place to meet when we want to.
   - Be a source of help, inspiration, and growth to members.
   - Be a center for spiritual entertainment.
   - Be the center of salvation for the community.
   - Be a support base for the work of God in other areas of the world.

B. I think the Dalton church should:
   - Spend more time in fellowship.
   - Concentrate more on theological issues.
   - Be more involved in community social improvement.
   - Spend more time in prayer.
   - Get out and work more, even if it hurts.
   - Sacrifice more of self—in time, money and abilities.

C. It is my personal opinion that the order of importance for the following should be:
   - Developing mature Christians in the church.
   - Strong public evangelism.
   - Increased personal evangelism.
   - Child evangelism—Sab. Sch.; Ch. School; & Pathfinders.
   - Fellowship and sharing between church members.

D. In your estimation, the relationship between the church and conference is:
   - Excellent  —  Stable  —  Strained

E. Share your evaluation of the success and/or failure of the first 18 months of this new pastorate.
PROJECT CLOSURE QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of my Doctor of Ministry project was to facilitate the first 18 months of my new pastorate in Dalton. The key elements to this process were open discussion—giving input to as many members as possible—and careful, planned program for our church activities.

Please answer these questions as honestly and carefully as possible. They will help me evaluate the project and complete the writing of the project report.

Check here if you remember filling out a questionnaire like this on the night of December 23, 1980, when Mary and I met with the Church Board and a number of others to decide if we would accept the call to Dalton.

A. Please use your best judgment in answering the following:

1. The main purpose of the Dalton Church is:
   - Clear
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2. The average commitment of members to this purpose is:
   - Strong
   - Weak

3. We are reaching our goals and accomplishing our purpose:
   - Very Well
   - More or less
   - Very poorly

4. There is individual "ownership" of congregational goals:
   - It's mine
   - Don't care
   - It's theirs

5. God is in control of this church:
   - Completely
   - More or less
   - Hardly at all

6. Our congregation can accomplish any task it sets for itself:
   - Agree
   - Disagree

7. Whenever a program is developed, most of the members support it 100%:
   - Agree
   - Disagree

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8. When something is accomplished, everyone knows about it and celebrates:

   12 Agree   20 Disagree

9. Whenever something needs to be done, the same 10-20% end up doing it:

   30 Agree   31 Disagree

10. Members from every part or level of the congregation help shape the decisions here:

   14 Agree   16 Disagree

11. The elected leaders, along with the pastor, make the important decisions here:

   26 Agree   5 Disagree

12. Individuality and creativity are encouraged:

   13 Yes   17 Need more   1 Not at all

13. The level of motivation in the congregation is:

   5 High   23 Mediocre   4 Very Low

14. Communication channels are open and working well:

   11 Yes   19 More or less   1 Blocked

15. Disagreement and conflict are dealt with:

   14 Well   16 More or less   1 Avoided

16. Evaluation of the congregation and its accomplishments is:

   15 Regular   15 Occasional   1 Not at all

17. Accountability within the leadership and congregation is:

   14 Clear   16 Uncertain   1 Not there

18. What words best describe the Dalton Church?

   Cliquish/Friendly   Talented/Unique   Stubborn/Wealthy
   Capable/Concerned   Overburdened/Busy   Laodicean/busy

19. What do you like about the Dalton Church?
20. What about the Dalton church appeals to the community?

21. What have been the major "successes" of the Dalton Church in the last five years?

22. What are the strengths of the Dalton church?

23. What are the weaknesses of the Dalton church?

24. What are the major "needs" of the Dalton church?

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26. What are the factors which have helped the spiritual growth of the congregation as a whole?

27. What factors have hindered your personal spiritual growth?

28. In your judgment, what factors have hindered the spiritual growth of the congregation?

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30. What would make church life more satisfying for you?

31. What "dreams" do you have for the Dalton Church?
CLARIFICATION: Please choose and rank in order of importance any or all of the items under each list.

A. I believe the purpose of this church is to:

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1 Be a source of help, inspiration, and growth to members.
4 Be a center for spiritual entertainment.
2 Be the center of salvation for the community.
3 Be a support base for the work of God in other areas of the world.

B. I think the Dalton church should:

3 Spend more time in fellowship.
5 Concentrate more on theological issues.
6 Be more involved in community social improvement.
1 Spend more time in prayer.
4 Get out and work more, even if it hurts.
2 Sacrifice more of self—in time, money and abilities.

C. It is my personal opinion that the order of importance for the following should be:

1 Developing mature Christians in the church.
5 Strong public evangelism.
2 Increased personal evangelism.
3 Child evangelism—Sab. Sch.; Ch. School; & Pathfinders.
4 Fellowship and sharing between church members.

D. In your estimation, the relationship between the church and conference is:

10 Excellent  18 Stable  3 Strained

E. Share your evaluation of the success and/or failure of the first 18 months of this new pastorate.
PROJECT EVALUATION STATEMENTS

The following statements were given by various individuals in evaluation of this Doctor of Ministry project in response to the following statement:

The purpose of my Doctor of Ministry project was to initiate a style of ministry which assumed the initiative to direct my ministry in such a way as to facilitate the first 18 to 24 months of my pastorate in Dalton. In order to accomplish this, I tried to develop a relationship of mutual growth with the church. This would be done through trying to establish open communication, and opportunity for analysis, evaluation, and feedback on an ongoing basis. Please take a few minutes to write your evaluation of how well these objectives were accomplished. Thank you.

Elder Gary Patterson, Georgia-Cumberland Conf. President

It was a rather new idea to the people in Dalton as it would be most anywhere to have a pastor outline in advance of his coming just what was expected of all parties involved in the pastoral transition.

To all indications which I have received it seems to have been a good plan. I would like to see more of this kind of thing done and I believe we are moving in this direction in the church as a whole.

The key to it all will be how the church continues to relate to the program as it grows. A few problems will always develop as time goes by. How they are dealt with now will reflect on the beginning events.

Fred Holweger, Local church elder.

The objectives of the study were accomplished in a relatively satisfactory manner. With the accomplishment of these objectives I feel that the church in Dalton is ready to make a major step in beginning a larger work in the Dalton area in the fields of learning new skills, health work, and general outreach with the goal of
preparing a people to relate better with one another on a personal level, but more important, a people who are in a right relationship with God so that we all can be prepared for the coming of Christ, our Hope of Glory.

Beverly Holweger, Church musician and Kindergarten leader.

Not only have the lines of communication between members been opened to a greater degree, but in many cases, the expanding of communication between individual members and God. We have been made aware of gifts we have been given and seeing how inadequately we use them, are now ready for instruction, with much prayer, in using them for God's glory and man's benefit.

Larry Jackson, Local church elder, and Valerie Jackson, Church clerk.

The mechanism to direct your ministry was put into action as evidenced by the various opportunities the membership had in open communication, evaluation, feedback, and analysis. Mutual growth within the church probably was not achieved to the extent that you would like. Part of the reason is that our church membership is so "busy" and mobile that it is hard to develop continuity and consistency with the individuals. Thos who participate in new or ongoing programs certainly benefit but, on the whole, consistent participation is lacking. The approach you have outlined is good for inward growth and I think, without exception, those who have shown an active interest have grown.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


—. *Liberating the Church*. Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1983.


V I T A

Name: Benjamin Carl Maxson

Date of Birth: June 14, 1949

Current Address: 690 Shadow Leaf Lane
                 Tunnel Hill, GA 30755

Academic Record:

1971 - B.S. in Theology, Southern Missionary College

1978 - Master of Divinity, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University

Service Record:

1971 - Associate Pastor - Cleveland and Knoxville, Tennessee

1972 - Pastor - Waycross and Brunswick, Georgia

1973 - Director—Youth, Temperance, and Stewardship Departments—North Argentine Mission

1975 - Director—Youth, Temperance, and Stewardship Departments—Uruguay Mission

1976 - Graduate work at Andrews University, M. Div.

1978 - Pastor - Joplin, Missouri

1981 - Pastor - Dalton, Georgia

Areas of Personal Interest:

Amateur Radio and Private Pilot