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ABSTRACT

A COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP STRATEGY
TO DEVELOP A MISSIONAL FOCUS AT THE
ANDERSON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH

by

Murray L. Miller

Adviser: Del Dunavant

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Document

Andrews University

Doctor of Ministry

Title: A COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP STRATEGY TO DEVELOP A
MISSIONAL FOCUS AT THE ANDERSON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH

Name of researcher: Murray L. Miller

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Del Dunavant, DMin

Date completed: February 2019

Problem

The problem addressed in this project was the lack of missional focus at the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church. Four symptoms were correlated to this problem. First, from 2010 to 2013 the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church witnessed a slight decline in tithe and a drop in mission offerings. Second, conference archive data from 2003 to 2013 showed that the membership had remained steady while attendance had gradually been in decline. Third, though no formal surveys were available at the initiation of this project, anecdotal evidence from the conference to the local level showed varying opinions concerning the focus of the church. Such opinions ranged from the church lacks “missional focus” or “the church is dead!” to the opposite, where there

was a sense of optimism from members involved in ministries. Some of the elders also expressed a desire for a unified goal or mission. Last, prior to this project the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church had no documents stating its mission or vision—no emphasis in its bulletins, in its building (plaque or banner), or on its website. These four symptoms pointed to a need to develop a process to help the church reconsider its current and future course. Such a process would have as its main outcome the development of a mission/vision document and five-year goals. Such a document would be formulated after receiving input from as many members as possible.

Methodology

The task of this project was to develop, implement, and evaluate a biblically-based collaborative strategy to help the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church draft a mission/vision document and five-year goals. Besides this overarching goal was the evaluation of other areas commonly associated with Church health: increases in giving, accessions, etc.

This strategy combined biblical concepts, leadership literature, with some emphasis on collaboration, and a corporate collaborative process to generate the mission/vision document and five-year goals. Some elements included: seasons of prayer, Sabbath afternoon sessions with study guides and presentations along with various other components that were utilized to create the collaborative environment that was experienced. The Church's self-perception, though not a major outcome, was evaluated twice using an assessment tool produced by the Northern California Conference at the beginning and the end of this process. Specifically, this process began with an assessment in August of 2014 and ended with the second assessment in April of 2016. Also, financial

data for tithe, church budget and mission giving were evaluated before and after the project. Coupled with these financial factors were the evaluation of membership, attendance, and ascension trends.

Results

After the 21-month process, the following was observed:

The Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church developed a mission/vision document and five-year goals.

The Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church saw an increase in its score for missional focus on its second self-assessment survey even though the total number of respondents was less than the first survey. Specifically, the average for each of the four questions relating to missional focus increased by one to two points. This improvement, moved the Church on a scale of 1 to 5 closer to the score of 4 for each of the four questions relating to missional focus.

Financial giving improved in the areas of tithe (up to \$225,973.51 in 2014 and \$234,442.11 in 2015 from \$187,722.65 in 2013). This effectively reversed a downward trend that began in 2011. Other contributing factors to an increase in tithe besides the implementation of this project could be: the arrival of a new pastor, members returning to Anderson after the departure of the previous pastor, and the addition of new members as a result of public evangelism.

Missions giving increased from \$1,867.10 in 2013 to \$6,525.14 in 2014 and \$5,172.62 by the end of 2015. The downward trend was ended that began in 2011 in this area though it did not restore it to the over \$8,000 per year levels that were experienced pre-2011.

The local Church Budget went from an unclear status, where for the previous two years, a loss was presented to the congregation and reports to the Church Board were not always clear, to an increase of over \$5,000 in 2014 and a moderate surplus in 2015, with clearer reporting.

Membership increased from 287 in 2014 to 306 in 2015 which was a level that had not been experienced prior to 2011. Also, the trend of no baptisms for the previous three years was effectively reversed during the time of this project.

Community outreach ministries in the areas of health, youth, felt needs, fellowship meals, community service and public evangelism saw the number of their events increase. However, as the activity level increased adjustments needed to be made in order that these ministries could be sustainable: realistic ministry calendars, budgets and intentional breaks were developed and implemented.

Conclusion

A strategy to help a church revise or regain its missional focus that endeavors to include the whole church in an environment of collaboration can be a contributing factor in reversing downward trends and guiding a church towards a goal of revitalization. Though the process followed in this project is subject to revision and improvement, the overarching principles learned can be utilized in endeavors to engage in Church revitalization; members must be mobilized to take ownership for the future direction of their church and clergy must equip them to do so. Such concepts are clearly outlined in the Bible and have been utilized in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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TO DEVELOP A MISSIONAL FOCUS AT THE
ANDERSON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH

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

by
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February 2019

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Collaboration is becoming a well-known and often used leadership term in various organizations as a recent literature review briefly highlights (see chapter 3). Within the Seventh-day Adventist denomination the concept of *collaboration* is given, in principle, some attention in the *Church Manual* when the idea of a representative style of government is assigned to our organizational structure with the thought that “authority rests in the membership and is expressed through duly elected representatives at each level of the organization” (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2015, p. 26). However, though the Seventh-day Adventist Church has classified itself as representative in nature, the mechanisms to facilitate *collaboration* do not appear to have been fully developed. It can readily be shown that the term has been utilized in articles (<http://www.nadadventist.org/news/oakwood-and-southern-collaborate-during-technology-summit>), and that some attempts have been made to get feedback from groups (p. 26), but often the format is primarily deductive in nature rather than inductive—instructing rather than allowing information to surface from the group.

In congregational life, some may espouse the idea of being a representative system, but in practice there are few activities that exhibit this. For example, often pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist Church serve as the chair of the Church Board and bring agenda items to the group without any active solicitation of the leaders for what they

want to discuss. Also, sometimes little time is given prior to the meeting to consider the items on the agenda and inevitably the Board looks to the pastor to help them make decisions. Similarly, though the concept of member involvement has been promoted by Russel Burrill (2004), the process of rediscovering the vision of the Church that is suggested by him is one primarily relegated to the pastor and Church Board (see Chapter 3 for more details).

This introductory chapter will describe a ministry context in which the challenges of developing a missional focus are heightened by what appears to be a decline in several indicators of church health: membership, attendance, number of accessions (members joining by baptism or profession of faith), contributions (tithe, missions, church budget giving) and lack of corporate outreach endeavors. Also, included in this chapter are an overview of the development of the project, steps in the theological reflection, a brief outline of relevant literature and a description of how the intervention will be evaluated. The chapter will conclude by offering definitions for technical terms that are unique and central to this study, along with a brief summary of the chapter.

Description of the Ministry Context

The Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church, at the beginning of this project, was a 298-member church located on a busy street near shopping areas in the city of Anderson, California. At that time community of Anderson was considered a “sparsely populated suburban area with 23,499 residents” and was well below the national average when it pertained to income, and was composed primarily of White residents and approximately 10% Hispanics (neighborhoodlink.com, n.d.; United States Census Bureau, 2010). Congregational demographics are similar to the community with the

congregation being composed of Whites, a few Pacific Islanders and almost 10% Hispanics. Regarding the religious make-up of the community, the Association of Religion Data Archives estimates that Shasta County, where Anderson is located, has 85% of its population unclaimed by any church (www.thearda.com). I became the solo pastor of this congregation in April of 2014 after having pastored for eight years in multi-church settings where my emphasis was on administration, evangelism, and church revitalization.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this project is the lack of a written mission/vision document and five-year goals at the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church. This can also be designated as a lack of missional focus. Four other factors accompanied this problem. First, from 2010 to 2013 the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church witnessed a slight decline in tithe and a drop in mission offerings (see Northern California Conference, 2014). Second, conference archive data from 2003 to 2013 showed that the membership had remained steady while attendance had gradually been in decline (2014). This data also documented a decline in the number of accessions (members joining by baptism or profession of faith) and was coupled with local data which noted sporadic outreach endeavors. Third, though no formal surveys were available at the start of this project, anecdotal evidence level showed varying opinions concerning the focus of the church. Such opinions vary from the church lacks “missional focus” or “the church is dead!” to the opposite where there is a sense of optimism from those involved in ministries. Some of the elders also expressed a desire for a unified goal or mission. Last, the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church had no documents stating

its mission or vision prior to this project (see <http://anderson.adventistfaith.org>). These four symptoms pointed to a need to develop a process to help the church reconsider the current and future course. Such a process' main outcomes would be the development of a mission, vision, and five-year goals document that would have as its basis the input of as many members as possible.

Statement of the Task

The task of this project was to develop, implement and evaluate a biblically-based collaborative strategy to help the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church draft a mission/vision document and five-year goals. This strategy combined biblical concepts, principles from a literature review, including sources on *collaboration*, and a corporate collaborative process. The Church's self-perception, though a secondary outcome of this project, was evaluated using an assessment tool produced by the Northern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists to assist churches in a self-evaluation in several areas (Northern California Conference, n.d.). Besides the assessment, archive data was evaluated in the areas of decline mentioned previously before and after the implementation of the project.

Delimitations

This project was limited to a 21-month time frame that started in August of 2014 and ended in April, 2016—though some preliminary tasks were necessary before the project began. Such a time frame did not take into account the overall perception change that could occur when the church accomplishes its five-year plan.

Description of the Project

The project process included engaging in theological reflection, conducting a literature review (including some recent literature on the topic of *collaboration*), gathering archival data on several quantitative measurements of Church health (giving, attendance, membership and accessions), the consideration and synthesis of two strategies into a contextualized one that fostered prayer, dialogue, group discussion times, and the clarification of the pastor's role in the process of developing a congregational vision. Furthermore, the congregation evaluated itself using a survey at the beginning and end of the project which is available through the Northern California Conference Church Growth Department (Northern California Conference, n.d.) which is directed by Del Dunavant.

Theological Reflection

A theology of *collaboration* to develop a missional focus concentrated on four areas. First, a reflection on the example of *collaboration* in the Godhead in relationship to the creation of humanity and subsequent events in the Old Testament took place. Second, the continuation of these principles in the ministry of John the Baptist and the incarnation of these principles in the life of Jesus were considered in order to show continuity between the Old and New Testaments. Third, the continuation of *collaboration* in the praxis of the first century Church was documented. These first three areas focused on the concept of oneness and how it can be fostered amongst God's people. The fourth area considered was the writings of Ellen White on the collaborative nature of God, especially in the plan of salvation, and the need for the pastor to help the members plan the work of the church.

The theological reflection yielded some concrete conclusions. First, the Bible and Ellen White make it clear that unity, also aptly described as oneness, is paramount to the church understanding and fulfilling its part in the plan of salvation. In order for a church to have a missional focus, it must first encourage its members to individually have a relationship with God which will result in greater unity. Once some semblance of unity is attained, then a church can consider using dialogue sessions to corporately consider its purpose or mission. Second, the pastor's role in the corporate sessions is that of a *facilitator* who aids the group in seeking God's guidance regarding His mission for their church and helps them develop plans to carry out that mission.

Literature Review

Literature was reviewed that included four areas. First, a brief history of the strategic planning and mission statement field from the 1920s to the 1990s provided a context to understand not only the shortcomings in mission statement processes that should be avoided, but also noted that many organizations still appear to be using obsolete praxis. Second, more recent scholarly sources noted the shift in literature towards *collaboration* and revealed deficiencies in mission statement processes that point to the need for a more collaborative approach. Third, empirical evidence was considered demonstrating the value of mission statements that are developed using a collaborative approach. Fourth, a summary of two effective processes that use a collaborative approach to develop mission and vision statements at the local church were considered and synthesized due to some contextual needs present in the project context. Overall, it was concluded that to foster a biblically based collaborative process, both the findings of the

theological reflection and the literature review must be taken into account while synthesizing the two methodologies referred to in chapter 3.

Archive Data

Data from the Northern California Conference concerning giving, attendance, and membership trends at the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church over the last 10 years was collected and an evaluation made. This data proved helpful in evaluating secondary outcomes of this project since initial figures showed a decline in attendance, baptisms, tithe, church budget, and missions giving. As noted previously, this project resulted in an increase in each of these areas, though it should be noted that the church budget being in the positive has other contributing factors that are beyond the scope of this project to fully diagnose. However, a cursory observation of the change in accounting practices, such as cutting expenses, developing a way to fund ministries that complete an annual evaluation and better book-keeping, could be noted as possible helping factors in the overall better standing for church budget giving. Also noteworthy is that no full-scale public evangelism series, alignment of ministries in an annual ministry calendar and an intentional method to produce a corporate purpose had taken place prior to this project. This means that some of the accessions may have been because a lack of a full-scale reaping event in recent times. Membership gains may have shown a gain by the management of previous conflicts resulting in members feeling they could return to Anderson. Though such areas were not intentionally studied, these could be seen as contributing factors when the principles of this project are evaluated.

Development of a Collaborative Strategy

A strategy to help encourage an atmosphere of dialogue between the congregation, its leaders and God to articulate their mission, and vision was developed. The goal of this strategy was to foster an annual prayer focus, draft corporate mission and vision statements, and a five-year master plan based upon this missional focus. The development and implementation of four session guides appear to have helped foster a collaborative atmosphere that endeavored to include all members in the drafting of the mission and vision statements, etc. Prior to the implementation of this strategy was the development, presentation and promoting of missional concepts in sermons, a weekly newsletter, during Board Meeting devotionals and interpersonal visits with leaders. Also, the project proposal was presented to the elders and church board for approval prior to implementation.

Structure of Intervention

Initially, the project began with a series of sermons that emphasized some of the concepts gleaned from the preliminary theological reflection and literature review. Missional sermons began in April, 2014 to emphasize the need for unity and mission (see Appendix A). This set of sermons culminated in a communion service in June 2014. From June onward the focus shifted towards the book of Acts and the continuation of missional concepts in our Adventist Heritage. Concurrent with these sermons were attempts to build rapport with the elders. This occurred by meeting with the elders, hearing them voice the need to have a cohesive ministry at Anderson where all the departments have a common goal. Coupled with elders' meetings were opportunities to eat together and enlist their support in promoting the 10 days of prayer materials that

would be used prior to administering the Church Health Assessment in August of 2014. One result from times of prayer and meetings with the elders, was the suggestion that we conduct the Landmarks of Prophecy series by Doug Batchelor after the *Vision Quest* process.

Concurrent with the sermons, rapport visits, and surveys were missional Board devotionals using Dwight Nelson's book entitled, *The Called* (see Appendix A), weekly newsletters that supplemented the sermon material and highlighted the process we were embarking on, and the 10 days of prayer from September 9 to 19, 2014. The 10 days of prayer materials emphasized the need for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, unity, and various other topics (see Appendices B and E). Repeatedly from the pulpit the importance of coming together for the *Vision Quest* sessions was emphasized for weeks leading up to the first session (September 20, 2014) by both the pastor and elders. The verbal announcements were bolstered by bulletin inserts and announcements along with other media outlets (Facebook, E-mail, and website). Additionally, during the time leading up to the sessions I wrote four discussion guides, along with some ballots and PowerPoint presentations to serve as an overview for each meeting.

During the first two sessions, the results from the initial Church Health Assessment were shared and the low scores in four missional categories were highlighted emphasizing the need for a renewed focus on our purpose. Additionally, it was during these two sessions that the archive data that was mentioned previously was also shared. As a result of session one, and the utilization of a mission statement ballot at the beginning of session two, a mission statement was chosen. During sessions two through four, a vision statement was drafted, goals outlined and ways to keep fostering the

missional focus were gleaned from congregants. This data was the beginning of what would become the five-year master plan and annual calendar emphasis that continues as of this writing.

One additional element of data would be suggested by the board: surveying the community to see what their needs were and adjust the five-year plan to minister to some of those needs. As a result, the initial five-year plan was amended as we progressed along—though one deficiency was that it was not completely revised due to the increase in activity that was experienced at the Church. Concurrent with the formation of the strategic plan was the emphasis of the mission statement on a new website (see www.andersonadventist.org), the design/display of a banner in the sanctuary above the baptistery, development of a mission statement song, and establishing the practice of making the mission statement paramount in all publications, on e-mails from the church, in letters, etc. Officially, the mission and vision statements were “unveiled” on Sabbath, November 5 with a special bulletin cover, bookmarks, and the displaying of the banner. The sermon and an attempt to develop a mission statement song concluded the service. After this service, Ron Elliot, who has songwriting/ musical ability, drafted the mission statement song, “Jesus at Every Turn” (Elliot, 2015). An attempt to include this song at every baptism and on celebration Sabbaths has been endeavored.

During 2015, many activities took place including 10 days of prayer in January, a prayer service with the elders, a sermonic emphasis for the first quarter on oneness/personal devotions (see Appendix A), the synthesis of department calendars into one ministry calendar (see Appendix A, “2014/2015 Church Calendar”) and the conducting of a series of reaping meetings at the end of 2015. The year 2016 saw a

similar emphasis on spiritual matters and the re-establishment of two ministries: Adventist Youth and Health Ministry (see Appendix A, “2015/2016 Church Calendar”). Additionally, in these two years several baptisms, professions of faith, and transfers in took place. As the project was ending, new people participated in the assessment survey along with many from the first survey. The result was an increase in the scores for each of the aforementioned questions. At the time of this writing, more ministries have been launched that are beyond the time constraints of this project but that resulted from the community assessment process we conducted (such as a homeless ministry, family ministries, and community service projects to the community). Last, as a result of this project, some potential conflict laden board meeting agenda items were handled in a collaborative way by the development of “openness” forms (see Appendix A, “Openness Form”). The utilization of collaborative principles greatly hindered the development of undue conflict over the two issues this form addressed: the sale of property and women’s ordination.

Church Health Assessment Results

The perception of the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church was evaluated using the annual assessment tool developed by the Northern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (n.d.) at the beginning and end of the project. Though there are many statements on this survey to score, four were of utmost importance because of the pertinence they had to this project. Members were asked to rank from one to five, a continuum of one meaning “strongly disagree” and five meaning “strongly agree” the following four statements. The first statement was, “Our members clearly understand our congregation’s mission.” Second, “Our congregation’s mission is often talked about by

our members.” Third, “All our local ministries are focused on achieving our congregation’s mission.” Last, the fourth statement was, “Our members feel personally responsible for preparing the world for Christ’s coming.” The initial survey yielded simple average scores on these four statements ranging from 2.4 to 3.2 and the second assessment showed an average score from 3.7 to 4.34 showing a more positive perception in each of these four areas (see Chapter 5, Table 2). Overall, the scores for the congregation were higher for each of the statements even though the number of respondents was fewer for the second survey. As a result of the higher scores, the pastor believed the members came to better understand what was the mission and vision of their church.

Research Methodology and Protocol

This intervention utilized both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data took the form of anonymous surveys with the intent of gauging the perception of many congregants on a series of statements that they would rank from one to five. The purpose of the survey tool (also known as an “assessment”) was to explore members’ perceptions of some qualitative measures of Church Growth that are seen by the Northern California Conference as characteristics of a “healthy church” (similar to Natural Church Development measurements, but these were written by the Northern California Conference’s Church Growth Department). Quantitative data consisted of attendance, membership, tithe, offerings and ascension data that was available from the Northern California Conference and the local church clerk.

All of the participants were directed to a webpage on the Anderson Church’s website where they were asked to click on a link which stated they agreed to the consent

form. Once they clicked on the link they were redirected to the survey. Since the surveys provided no option to input a name, the data was anonymous. Some did use devices at the Church, but measures were taken to ensure the confidentiality of those who utilized the Church's internet because of the lack of internet availability. Data from the online survey was automatically generated into an Excel spreadsheet which was sent to the pastor by a Northern California Conference Church Growth advisor. The data was in raw format without any interpretation. The raw numbers were then added together and divided by the total number of respondents to gain the average score for each of the statements. Total respondents for the first survey numbered 58 and the second 49. Chapter 5 will provide an interpretive narrative of the intervention data and conclusions from the interpretation of data. Chapter 6 will highlight the overall conclusions from the project as a whole.

Definition of Terms

Throughout the text every effort will be made to define terms as they appear. However, some terms are of specialized meaning and such common usage in this text that a clear, working definition would be best to state at the outset.

Church Health refers to the perceived or actual set of qualities a Church believes it has at a given time. Such quality lists vary and are prone to subjectivity but can be used effectively instead of numerical growth goals (Schwarz, 2005, pp. 25-27). For the purposes of this project, they are nine areas that I have categorized the statements of the survey into: Intimacy with God, Meaningful Worship, Christian Relationships, Community Involvement, Prayer, Missional Focus, Intentional Discipleship, Equipping Leadership, and Evangelistic Outreach. A healthy church would aim to have an average score of four or more for each of these areas.

Collaboration for the purposes of a Church is: a relational environment of communication, learning, and interaction that fosters in the congregation a desire to seek God to reveal His purpose for their organization, which results in a corresponding commitment to work together to accomplish this revealed mission. Though other sources could be considered and are acknowledged (Blanchard, Ripley, & Parisi-Carew, 2015, pp. 15-16), this will be the working definition for the project context.

Collaborative Leadership is a term that specifies the leadership style that is necessary to foster a collaborative environment. Ibarra and Hansen (2013) define collaborative leadership as “the capacity to engage people and groups outside of one’s formal control and inspire them to work toward common goals—despite differences in convictions, cultural values, and operating norms” (p. 10). While there is some overlap with shared leadership, which is an “activity that is shared or distributed among members of a group or organization” (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. xi), collaborative leadership differs in the sense that though there is a transference process (p. 105), it denotes the idea of equality of input not assigned equality by a positional leader. For the business world, engaging people outside of one’s formal control can include stakeholders, individuals beyond the immediate influence of top management and employees across the organization (p. 11). For the purposes of a church setting, collaborative leadership would be the capacity of a leader to engage people and groups, outside of the elders and church board, in order to inspire them to work toward common goals. In a mid-size to large church it could involve the intentional practice of involving departmental leaders not on the Board and the general member (stakeholders) in discussions pertaining to the direction of the Church with their input being equal to or of greater value than the pastor.

Facilitator is one who encourages and supports participatory decision making. In the context of this project, this was the positional leader (pastor) who led the church through a collaborative leadership process to establish a mission/vision document and five year goals. Though there were some directive elements involved, the overall outcome or choices of the group were respected. It should be noted that there is a difference between the project facilitator and the small group facilitator. Overall, the pastor focused as the project facilitator and members at times, as noted in the project narrative, etc., focused as small group facilitators during the *Vision Quest* sessions, etc.

Mission is a written statement “used by organizations to describe why the entity exists, what it is striving to accomplish, what it stands for” and to some extent, though it is getting into the realm of strategic planning, “how it plans to achieve its objectives” (Cady, Wheeler, DeWolf, & Brodke, 2011, p. 65). For a Church organization, it is the purpose or goal which God has revealed for them to accomplish written in a short, concise statement that incorporates timeless and biblical elements. In short, it is a concise, written statement of what the congregation believes God has revealed to them regarding “what the ministry is supposed to be doing. Often the ministry’s vision will be an expansion of its mission” (Malphurs, 1999, p. 14). So, a congregation regaining a missional focus will have some discovery or re-discovery of why they exist and what God wants them to do in the future.

Oneness is used in this project to refer to a state of being that exhibits a singleness of purpose that the Godhead, an individual and God, or a group and God work together to accomplish. This concept is based upon the Greek word found in Acts 2:1, *homothumadon*, which means “with one mind” or “passion” (E-sword, n.d.) but was in

practice long before the book of Acts. Oneness comes as a result of a deep relationship with God and each other.

Vision is a term used to refer a written statement containing a “clear and challenging picture of the future of a ministry as you believe it can and must be” (Malphurs, 1999, p. 32). Practically, it refers to a longer statement, or an expansion of an organization’s mission (p. 14), that is of future orientation which envisions what the congregation and community will look like as a result of the accomplishment of the mission. Whereas a mission is short, no longer than a sentence, a vision statement is long—“from one paragraph to as many as twenty or thirty pages” (p. 31).

Summary

This introduction has offered a glimpse of how to utilize *collaboration* to foster a missional focus in a church. The insights gleaned are from a pastoral viewpoint and are a work in progress. However, the interpretive analysis of this case study is intended to offer insights as to the spiritual and professional value of utilizing *collaboration* in a congregational setting. The results of such an endeavor were the development of an agreed upon mission/vision document and five year goals along with what appear to be a healthier self-perception of a congregation, more willingness to give financially, the development of ministries, and a renewed impetus for missional service.

CHAPTER 2

A THEOLOGY OF COLLABORATION TO DEVELOP A MISSIONAL FOCUS

Introduction

A theology of *collaboration* to develop a missional focus will be categorized into four areas. First, a reflection on the example of *collaboration* in the Godhead in relationship to the creation of humanity and subsequent events in the Old Testament will take place. Second, the incarnation of these principles prior to and during the life of Jesus, also referred to as *collaboration* in the New Testament, will be considered to show continuity between the God of the Old and New Testaments. Third, the continuation of *collaboration* in the praxis of the first century Church will be documented. The fourth area to be considered will be the writings of Ellen White on the collaborative nature of God, especially in the plan of salvation, and the need for the pastor to help the members plan the work of the church. Each of these areas will be considered followed by a conclusion of how the principles from this reflection can be used in the project context.

Collaboration of the Godhead at Creation and in the Old Testament

Working together for a missional purpose began in the Godhead at the creation of our world for the Bible states, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen 1:1, unless otherwise noted all biblical references will be from the New King James Version). The word for “God” is derived from *‘alah*, “which conveys the idea of strength

and preeminence . . . it is a literary expression of intensity and majesty, rather than an indication of numerical plural ‘gods’” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 49). Though the plural form of the Hebrew word “God” in Genesis 1:1 is not indicative to what Christians consider the triune nature of God present at creation, it can be argued that there are three involved in the creation of our world as the text continues through Chapter 2 (God, the Spirit of God and YHWH). Thus, Moskala, and also Murphy, in separate articles, conclude that plurality cannot be proven by the word *Elohim*, and a wider context for such proof must be considered (Moskala, 2013; Murphy, 2013, p. 172). The name for God in Genesis 1:1 is one that denotes majesty and strength, yet as the text progresses we find evidence of a plurality of beings.

Later in Genesis chapter 1 evidence can be found for plurality in the words “let us make man in our image” (Gen 1:26). So, while the pluralness in the name of God itself is not enough on its own to point to *collaboration*, in this text plurality is clearly used. Commenting on this passage, Murphy states that “the plurals of Gen 1:26 coupled with the return to the consistent use of *Elohim* in conjunction with singular verbs does attest to a plurality of persons within the singular Godhead” (2013, p. 172). Since God is the One who is involved with creating, then this “excludes the involvement of non-divine beings (Jewish tradition) and suggests indeed that only the Divine is involved in this self-deliberation” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 62). Furthermore, and since the “plural is indeed intended, the application of the Trinity is a reasonable interpretation” (p. 62).

Plurality of God is bolstered later in Genesis where the word “us” is used to describe how humankind had become “like one of Us [God]” because they now knew “good and evil” (3:22). The word “us” appears in later occurrences in Genesis, but what

also becomes apparent is the consistent self-talk or musings of God. For instance, God appears to be talking to Himself before the time of the flood by stating, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever” (Gen 6:3), and again in the same chapter when the Lord in deep grief says, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth” (6:7). After the flood, the Lord “said in His heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake . . . nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done” (8:21). Clearly, either there is a monologue going on or God is actually speaking to someone.

Some years later, as the new world after the flood dawned and civilization as a whole appears to have united against God at the tower of Babel, the Lord “came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built” (Gen 11:5). Upon seeing it the LORD says, “Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech” (v. 7). Outside of Genesis there is evidence of plurality in a variety of places including in Isaiah where the Lord seems to be speaking to Himself (6:8), in John 17 where Jesus speaks to the Father and in the writings of the apostle Paul who writes of a “plan” (Eph 1:5) that results in the saving of our world through its implementation by what appears to be all the members of the Godhead (vv. 3, 13). Gulley (2003), who cites plurality examples throughout the Old Testament, concludes, “While focusing on one God to keep them from many gods, He allowed them to glimpse that one God as more than one Person” (p. 84).

Regarding the conception of the plan, it was conceived before humanity was ever created—before “the foundation of the world” (Rev 13:8, KJV). Hence, the very beginning of human life in our world was preceded by a heavenly collaborative process that involved communication and planning by the persons of the Godhead. This is often

described as a “perichoretic image” and this image “of the Trinity is that of the three persons of God in constant movement in a circle that implies intimacy, equality, unity yet distinction, and love” (Cladis, 1999, p. 4). McCarty (2007) concurs with Cladis by saying, “the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have always loved one another in covenant relationship. The Trinitarian covenant of love reveals itself in each treating the others as He would want to be treated were their roles reversed” (pp. 4-5). Such courtesy and love would also overflow to the creation of the World. While the Godhead was involved with the creation of the world in general, the carrying out of various tasks seems to have had an agreed upon designee who performs them.

Personal Agent of Collaboration: YHWH

With a cursory reading of Genesis chapters 1 and 2, one could conclude that there are two creation accounts. However, as one compares the accounts, it becomes apparent that the two “texts belong together, for they both cover the same unique quality of time when the divine creation was still in pristine perfection” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 72). As this factor is taken into account, it becomes clear that Genesis chapter 2 provides an expansion of the concise statement of the creation of humanity found in chapter 1 where God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness” (Gen 1:26).

Chapter 2 provides an expansion of sorts by giving more details to this paramount occasion by saying, “The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being” (Gen 2:7). Not only do we find more details concerning the methodology God employed in creating the first human, we also find the causative agent who carried out this task: *YHWH ‘Elohim*. While the first story of creation ‘Elohim is presented as transcendent, here He is “presented as a

personal God in close relationship with humans” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 72). This closeness that is exhibited by the Godhead is the outflow of a “communion (*koinoniá*) of distinct yet inseparably united divine persons” that share “a common life of mutual love and creativity. That love is not inward-looking or closed, but rather outward-reaching and generative” (Zscheile, 2007, p. 52). The Godhead is united, yet there appears to be an outward expression of their communion when the first human is created. We see this generative focus as YHWH interacts with His people and later know this Individual as the one who accompanies the Israelites in the wilderness (1 Cor 10:4). In fact, the “Hebrew name *yhwh* or ‘Yahweh,’ commonly translated into English as ‘the Lord,’ is the most frequently appearing name for God in the OT (almost 7000x)” and appears in every Old Testament book “except Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and Esther” (Mounce, 2006, p. 421). Such a number of occurrences can indicate that the personal agent of the creation of humanity continued to dialogue, interact, and collaborate even after the Fall.

Many years later in the first chapter of John, we are told that the Word who created all things was God in human “flesh” (1:14). In the same chapter, John identified the Word, who was from heaven or “above,” as Jesus (v. 17). Therefore, from the beginning of humanity the agent of *collaboration* for the Godhead was who we would later know as Jesus. Jesus created humanity giving them access to and care of the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:15-16). Involving humanity in the care of the garden evidences a desire on Jesus’ part to work together in the ongoing care of the world. This service in the Garden, that goes awry, would ultimately culminate in a renewing of our world through the ministry of Jesus. In fact, humanity was told to “keep” the Garden in a state that it had

been given to them but also to “tend” it (Gen 2:15). Some have noted that, “the juxtaposition of these two verbs is associated with the priestly role” and evidence of “humankind’s function as priest in the pre-fall Edenic sanctuary” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 79). So, before the Fall God included humanity in a work of worship and service, which is in a sense is a form of *collaboration*—dialoguing and working together for a common purpose.

Thus, the creation of humanity was a collaborative effort on the part of the Godhead, and since we are made in His “image” or “pattern,” then we would do well to use a similar methodology (Holladay, 1988, p. 72). This methodology would be most useful in ruling or having “dominion” over the world that God tasked the first man and woman to do (Gen 1:26) - and would foster unity (Mounce, 2006, p. 192). More specifically, since we are “created in the image of God, we can expect significant correlations between the life and character of God, and our life and character, both in the church and outside of it” (Zscheile, 2007, p. 44). However, as the Scriptures progress there is one development that undermined the original intent of God to have a collaborative relationship with humanity and change the nature of the pre-fall rule of Adam and Eve: sin.

Sin Results in the Undoing of Collaboration

While it is true that sin is the “transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4), one of the unfortunate results of sin was the deterioration of the collaborative relationship with humanity that God established. This deterioration would also impact human relationships. The need to dialogue, converse, and be in a relationship with someone besides God is clearly referred to in Genesis 2:18 where God says it “*is* not good that man should be

alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” The word “helper” is *`azar* which refers most often to God, in no way denotes inferiority “to the one who receives help” and implies standing “together” to “fight the battles of life” (Mounce, 2006, p. 332).

Adam’s response to this new being denoted not just fondness but oneness when he said she was of his “bone” and “flesh” (Gen 2:23). Now Adam had a counterpart and was in perfect unity with her. Unfortunately for humanity, sin would damage and undo this perfect relationship—the results of which would be total separation from God and each other in death.

The deterioration of *collaboration* began because of a separation from God and culminated in Adam and Eve eating from the forbidden tree (Gen 3:6). One commentator suggests that the interaction between Eve and the serpent “recalls the only previous dialogue between God and Adam” and concludes that the “God-man dialogue has now been replaced with the serpent-woman dialogue” which suggests the “usurping interference of the serpent” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 91). The results of the dialogue and separation lead to sin and one of sin’s first fruits in human relationships appears to be the development of individualistic thinking that chooses to blame-shift. One example of the results of individualistic thinking is found in Genesis 3:12-13 where the man blames the woman and in turn she blames the serpent which God made. Speaking of the relationships after the entrance of sin, Craig (2000) notes, “They are no longer one. The where-are-you question sets in motion a new perspective on the situation: after their mutual hiding, the man and woman act and speak as individuals” (p. 244). And the “breakdown of communication and understanding” is one of the “deepest concerns of Eden” (p. 247). Such a concern is not left un-addressed because as the text continues, we

see God’s willingness to condescend to their level, to serve them, when God comes to talk with them “in the cool of the day” *after* they had sinned (Gen 3:8).

It should be noted, that while the human race had a break-down in communication and a lapse in *collaboration*, the Godhead did not. God’s willingness to converse with humanity before and after the fall shows that God wanted humanity to play a significant role in the mission of the Godhead to redeem our world (Gen 3:15). God evidenced His willingness to involve them, though with some limitations, after the Fall by pointing them to the One who would restore the face to face communion with God that had been lost (v. 15). This is why Doukhan comments on the creation story as an attempt to be “fundamentally a work of communication” (as cited in Bell, 2014, p. 35). Such a notion would then make clear that one of the results of sin is the undoing of communication. He goes on to say that “leaders collaborate, listen, and dialogue with mutual respect” (p. 36). Thus, even after the fall we can learn from the ideal that God portrayed—He continued to communicate with sinful humanity even though they had chosen a path that of its velocity undoes the practice of communication. God’s example gives hope that even in the most toxic of situations, communication can continue and *collaboration* be fostered if there are willing parties.

Evidence of God’s Desire to Restore Oneness and Collaboration With Humanity

In Genesis chapter 3 the promise of a Restorer of oneness and *collaboration* is found. This chapter appears to outline the whole plan of salvation in just a few words, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (v. 15). This promise was

given after God conversed with Adam and Eve about their fear of hearing His voice (Gen 3:8-13). Also subsequent at this point is God's address of the serpent regarding the future consequences of its collusion with evil in the fall of humanity—the serpent would be cursed and be of the “dust” (v. 14). God then addressed the issue of the cosmic and “permanent” conflict that the word “enmity” denotes, but He addressed what seems to be an “institution” that utilized the serpent rather than just the serpent itself (Doukhan, 2016, p. 100).

The serpent represents one, whom Scripture will later call Satan in Revelation 12, and that “the ancient Near East in general” saw as a “figure of chaos, evil and destruction” (Joines, 1975, p. 8). In addressing the serpent, God portended a dismal end for evil while promising to send One to restore humanity back to the original relationship He designed them to occupy. But what would the methodology for this plan entail? The next verses provide pertinent data to answer this question.

The text mentions “his heel” and signifies a personal agent that God would send to restore humanity by uniting with it (Gen 3:15). As White (1985) points out, “It is evident then from the biblical record of antediluvian history that God would unite himself with the human family through the mediation of an appointed family head” (p. 63). Collins (1997), after an in-depth syntactical analysis, concludes that the singular pronoun for “he” in Genesis 3:15 “is quite consistent with the pattern where a single individual is in view” (p. 145). The *Seventh-day Adventist International Bible Commentary* asserts that the “he” in this text refers to a “masculine singular human individual” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 101). Clearly, God planned to send a personal agent to enact restoration.

This promise of a personal agent shows God's desire to *personally* restore what

had been lost because of the rebellion of humanity: oneness, *collaboration*, and direct dialogue. Other aspects of life after sin to be reversed by this Promised One would be: the rulership of man over woman (Gen 3:16), pain, death, and changes in creation that resulted from the fall of humanity. However, such a reversal would come at a price. The promised Deliverer would crush the serpent, but would also be “bruised” in the heel which implies the idea of being bitten in a fatal way (see Gen 3:15; Doukhan, 2016, p. 102). Collins (1997), after providing an in-depth analysis of the word “offspring” or “seed” concludes that it would be fair to read Genesis 3:15 as “God’s threat to the snake, of an individual who will engage the snake in combat and win” (p. 146).

It is important to note that in the prophesied battle both “antagonists will die as a result of the attack” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 102). Therefore, Genesis 3:15 provides evidence that God will send a personal agent of restoration to humanity in the future who would give His life for the ones He created. This, arguable, is symbolized by God’s presentation of animal skins to Adam and Eve for clothing (v. 21) which prefigured a Suffering Servant later alluded to in Scripture (Isa 53), and ultimately points to Jesus as the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of world” (John 1:29). Thus, the death of the animals would be a reminder to our first parents of what lengths God would take in order to restore oneness, dialogue, and *collaboration*. For it appears clear from the text that He does not desire a separation to go on forever or the necessity of barring Adam and Eve from the tree of life would not be emphasized (see Gen 3:22).

What also seems apparent is that though Adam and Eve separated from God, He decided to continue serving them as is evidenced by seeking them out, providing a promise of a Restorer, and giving them the animal skins. Davidson (as cited in Bell,

2014) states clearly that from the Old Testament a “profound theology of servant-oriented leadership emerges, culminating in the example of servant leadership par excellence—the Messianic Servant” (p. 24). This Messianic Servant is the personal agent of the Godhead that would restore humanity to its pre-fall state. Overall, it can be concluded from these texts that God desires humanity to be restored to oneness with Him at all costs. The natural outcome if such a restoration were to take place would be conversations without fear, superiority, or pain that resulted from the fall of humanity.

Old Testament Texts Highlighting *Collaboration*

In Genesis 3, God brought humanity “coats” of animal “skins” to cover their nakedness (v. 21). This presentation of clothing comes after the promise of a “seed” and the consequences of sin are noted (v. 15). This is in line with what is later written in Scripture, that without the “shedding of blood” there “is no remission” of sin (Heb 9:22). Therefore, as Adam and Eve received these garments, they were also receiving by faith the forgiveness of their sins (Abel’s future sacrifice is referred to as an act of faith in Heb 11:4). Hence, it appears that the sacrificial system was instituted by God as a reminder of the cost to restore humanity back to the nature that He originally designed. What follows are an assortment of texts that show the struggle to restore continues.

Continued Attempts to Undermine Collaboration

In Genesis 4 the establishment of the first family is witnessed along with the continuation of the sacrificial system, the worship of God being overshadowed by an undoing of relationships and dialogue resulting in the first murder (4:8). Indeed, this chapter is worthy of consideration because it not only evidences two different approaches

to encountering God, but also provides the specifics of how an unwillingness to listen to God results in selfishness, hostile communication, anger, and murder.

After describing the birth of Cain and Abel, the text states that in the “process of time” Cain brought the fruit of his labor and Abel the “firstlings” of his flock as offerings (Gen 4:3-4). It appears that some commentators believe the timing of this would be referring to the “Sabbath” (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1871) or as Byron (2008) notes, “In rabbinic literature the phrase ‘after some days’ tended to be understood as indicating a specific date in relation to creation and the feast days of the year” (p. 10). Considering that the only other mention of time or “end” was the Sabbath in Gen 2, this suggests that the time being referred to “was the Sabbath since this day was, then, the only ‘end’ and only appointed religious time they knew” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 117).

As the narrative unfolds in the ensuing verses, God is witnessed trying to interact with Cain and work with him, collaborate, regarding how to worship Him fully (Gen 4:6-7); however, this conversation resulted in Cain choosing not to rule over anger, but to allow it to guide his actions (v. 7). Cain sought Abel and “talked” with him but the outcome was one of anger and murder (v. 8). After the death of Abel, God sought to have an interchange with Cain, and when “the questions end, the scene moves from charge and countercharge by questions to sentencing, and the scene’s accusation-sentencing pattern recalls events narrated in chapter 3” with Adam, Eve, and the Serpent (Craig, 1999, p. 107). This results in God to telling Cain the results of his sin, and expelling him from his family, and the presence of God (Gen 4:9-16). This story exhibits God’s willingness to continue conversing with fallen humanity in spite of their sins that inhibit *collaboration*

and dialogue—not only with each other but with Him. It should also be noted that sin undermined two monuments of oneness: the Sabbath and the family.

Monuments of Oneness and Collaboration

At this point it would be well to consider briefly the two perpetual reminders of God’s willingness to dialogue, collaborate with and experience oneness with humanity: the Sabbath and the family. The Sabbath, or at minimum worship, was alluded to in the Cain and Able story and yet began before Genesis chapter 4. Prior to the Sabbath, God “put” or “settled down” Adam in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:15). The Hebrew word for “put” is *nûach* and can also mean to “rest” (Mounce, 2006, p. 584). At this point it appears that the rest is not physical for Adam had not done any work yet but instead denotes rest in *relationship* with God as one commentary notes, God provided the Sabbath as a day to “commune with” and share with humanity (Bell, 2014, p. 37).

More specifics of the creation of humanity are highlighted as the text progresses to say that Adam was led on the sixth day by the LORD into the Garden where he (Adam) named various creatures (Gen 2:19-20). The word “led” or “took” can also mean to “take” as a wife (Mounce, 2006, p. 704). Clearly, this language hints at the second monument of Creation that God would usher in before the Sabbath: marriage. Adam had no counterpart for himself. No one to talk to or dialogue with, and so God created “woman” from him (Gen 2:20).

A possible leadership principle emerges at this point: community and decision making do not take place solitarily—human beings need others to converse with in order to be truly complete. We then find a statement of how close humanity should be when

they are married: they will be “one flesh” (Gen 2:24). This term has been linked to the establishment of the family and not just the husband and wife dynamic but also involves having children (Dearman, 1998, p. 119).

Hence, by the end of the first week the establishment of two monuments of oneness took place: the Sabbath and the family. The Sabbath was to be a perpetual reminder of God’s desire for a close relationship with us and marriage as a perpetual reminder of God’s desire that humanity would have close relationships with one another. It is interesting to note that dialogue (God talking to humanity), *collaboration* (God giving them a task to work together with Him on) and oneness (the deep relationships that develop as result of dialogue and *collaboration*) are all present at creation. It appears that such concepts continue throughout the Old Testament as an ideal to be pursued. As Doukhan aptly notes, “God’s blessing (*brk*) and His sanctification of the Sabbath mean that God set apart this particular time, at the end of creation week, for a manifestation of His special relationship with humanity” (cited in Bell, 2014, p. 34). Apparently, the Sabbath was to be a weekly reminder of the need for relationships with God and fellow humans.

As the Old Testament progresses, two signs of oneness continuing can be found. Inevitably, the true worship of God would be hindered during Noah’s day, but God would still have his faithful people (Gen 6). And before the flood, God had a personal agent of communication from the Godhead, the Holy Spirit that appealed to humanity (v. 3). As for the Sabbath, it continued unspoken but attested to by the concept of worship down through Genesis and into Exodus (see Exod 16, 20). The LORD re-established it as a crucial part of the Israelite worship system as they came out of Egypt, began to settle

Canaan and set up the monarchy (2 Kgs 11, etc.).

As the monarchy progressed and apostasy permeated Israel, Ezekiel specified that one of the main reasons for the Babylonian captivity was the profaning of the Sabbath (Ezek 22:8, 26, 23:38). The captivity was also linked to agrarian and human relationships because Israel was to rest the land every seven years and eventually have a Jubilee whereby the restoration of members of the Israelite community might occur on an economic basis (2 Chr 36:21). As their relationships with God and each other failed, subsequent suffering resulted.

When the nation of Israel returned to rebuild Jerusalem, the concept of Sabbath worship returned with them (Neh 9:14), and as the Old Testament progresses to the last prophecy before the intertestamental period, Malachi portends that there would come a prophet to help the people “remember” the law of Moses (Mal 4:4). Malachi also pointed to the re-establishment of oneness in the family through the Elijah message. This message would result in the turning of the hearts “of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers” lest God come and strike the earth with a curse (vv. 5-6). Though some contend that the word “children” refers to Israel and “fathers” refers to God thus renewing a covenant relationship, this interpretation is brittle at best and relies heavily on a personal reinterpretation of otherwise straightforward definitions of the terms (Assis, 2011, pp. 212-213). Also, with the tenure of Scripture that emphasizes both the Sabbath and the family, this interpretation is rather shaky and problematic.

Truly, then, the Sabbath stood as a weekly reminder of God’s desire to maintain oneness with Israel both on an individual and corporate basis. Dearman emphasizes the relational elements founded at creation and which continued down through time by

saying, “While other ancient accounts might concentrate on the role of a particular deity in establishing creation's order or on the founding of a significant temple at the dawn of creation, the biblical account concentrates on the relationship established between God and humankind, and that between man and woman” (Dearman, 1998, p. 118). On a weekly and daily basis oneness was to permeate Israel.

Collaboration in Israelite Relationships

Oneness in the family took place on a daily basis in the Israelite culture as each home had roles for men and women. These roles were complimentary and reflected the counterpart idea that began in Genesis 2:18 when Eve was to be a “helper” or “counterpart” who would ultimately have a significant “role in the process of salvation” (Doukhan, 2016, p. 80). This role would be paramount in the home. A fascinating read on the Israelite household by Nelly Stienstra illustrates many aspects of the daily life of families, but also the concept of them working together—*collaboration*. Specifically, she points to archaeological finds that have revealed that in towns some “houses were so small that they cannot have accommodated more than a conjugal family” (Stienstra, 1993, p. 75).

These close quarters in the cities did not do away with the need for “all its members being very much dependent on the patriarch and one another” (p. 75). This dependence on one another is what Stienstra points to and states that the Israelites “could not have conceived life without this notion of the close-knit family” (p. 75). This family provided them with “structure, protection and a sense of ‘belonging,’ but it also mirrored the larger units of society” (p. 75). The closeness of the family was to permeate the society and was also seen as an ideal that the “clan, or kin group, the tribe and even the

entire nation, were all modelled on this pattern” (p. 75). It appears that if the family was functioning well, then so would the whole nation.

Stienstra goes on to point out the family bonds between parents and their children, which included a close relationship between a father and a daughter, were more than economic in nature (p. 95). There were many rights that women had in Israelite society including honor (Prov 31), the ability to counsel (Prov 1:8; 6:20), the right to make vow pledges (Num 30:10), participate in sacrifices (Deut 12:12), and the right to sexuality (Exod 21:10) to name a few. Citing Mace (1953), Stienstra (1993), “observes that women were really part of the center of community life and ‘The Hebrew wife’, therefore, as the proper mistress of the home, far from being a slave in her own world, was something decidedly more like a queen in it” (p. 95). Such an arrangement is contrary to some stereotypical descriptions of ancient cultures and is definitely a model that societies could use today—including the sub culture of the church.

Overall, the Old Testament points to the happiness of the clan and the nation being linked to the positive relationships that existed in the home (Ps 127:5; Prov 31, etc.). Relationships that had “mutual help, love and trust” were the ideal (Stienstra, 1993, p. 95). These were relationships “in which the wife is indeed under the authority of her husband, but by no means his slave or even subservient to him, although she was expected to keep the household going” while he was engage in agrarian labor (p. 95). Such was the ideal family experience that God had in mind for humanity after the Fall, which would obviously involve dialogue and *collaboration* in its very fabric. As a result of having healthy families, God would have a healthy nation. A nation that after the Exodus would include other elements that space does not allow a full treatment of, but

nonetheless evidenced a desire for *collaboration* (such as the priesthood, the establishment of elders, etc.).

Conclusions From the Old Testament

As we end this brief survey of the Old Testament it appears that Malachi's message could serve as a clarion call for Someone to restore oneness and *collaboration* amongst God's people. Such a restoration could provide the possibility that many would be saved and restored to face to face communion with God. As Assis (2011) says, "There was a need for a 'prophet' to come and "renew the mutual covenantal relationship between God and Israel" (p. 213). A covenant that was likened to a "marriage between God and Israel" and its breakage likened to divorce (Wolf, 1991, p. 151). If a divorce had taken place, then restoration would definitely be needed.

Oneness and Collaboration in the New Testament

As the Old Testament concluded and entered into the intertestamental period, the prophecy of Malachi remained unfulfilled and produced anticipation in Israel who was looking for a "prophet-messiah" (Assis, 2011, p. 220). Later, the concept of the prophet-messiah was "relinquished" and Israel returned to the "belief in the coming of a king-messiah" (p. 220). However, though the receding of the expectation of a prophet-messiah took place, questions did remain in select circles as many believed that "Elijah was to become the herald of the Day of the Lord on which the messiah of the House of David would come" (p. 220). Such questions included: When will Elijah come? When will he usher in the time of the Messiah?

With such questions on the minds of Israelites, some began looking for variations of an intermediary Messiah, suggesting a "scribe-king," who in turn would prepare the

way for the Lord to reign (Klein, 1972, p. 510). The varying expectations did at times find themselves formulated into questions as is evidenced by Jesus' disciples when they ask, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" (Matt 17:10). Though some scholars used to believe that "almost no evidence has been preserved which indicate[d] that the concept of Elijah as forerunner of the Messiah was widely known or accepted in the first century C.E." (Faierstein, 1981, p. 86), others point out that if we remove the idea of the concept of Elijah coming first being *widely* accepted, then the problem would be remedied (Allison, 1984, p. 257). In fact, Allison goes on to cite some possible sources that pointed to an Elijah figure and then draws a pertinent conclusion, "We by no means have certain knowledge of all the eschato-logical expectations held in the variegated Judaism of Jesus' time. . . So it is always hazardous to conclude too much from arguments mostly about silence" (p. 257).

Bailey (2008) documents that during the Maccabean revolt, Galilee was conquered by the Jews Judaizing it and it "remained an all-Jewish town until the fourth century" even having priests after the destruction of Jerusalem settling in Nazareth (p. 152). With such a long history "intensely nationalistic" tendencies, it could very well be the case that the question the disciples posed was in circulation—though not widely in Israel. However, a closer look at the New Testament reveals that years before the disciples asked a question about Elijah's coming, God had already revealed the answer.

The Elijah Message Through John the Baptist

The gospel of Luke portrays John the Baptist as the fulfillment of the Elijah message prophesied in Malachi. Specifically, an angel said of John: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the

spirit and power of Elias [Elijah], to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1:16-17). From a New Testament perspective, John was the fulfillment of the Elijah message in Jesus’ day, who would prepare the way for “Yahweh and his Kingdom” (Hughes, 1972, p. 218).

John’s role was to call them to a baptism of repentance and have them follow the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). This was a form of prophetic leadership, but also a servant role. Would the nation of Israel repent, turn to God, accept the Messiah and fulfill their mission to share Him with the nations? Unfortunately, the answer is no to each of these questions as is evidenced by the “brood of vipers” comment that was spoken against Israelites in Luke 3:7-9 and whose leaders subsequently received the woes from Jesus in Matthew 23.

Therefore, before Jesus’ death He began to establish a movement that would continue the fulfillment of His mission by calling disciples as can be seen in Matt 4:18 and is evidenced in the sending out of the twelve in Matt 10. In short, “Jesus’ exclusive mission to Israel” that he underwent at first, “becomes sort of a hinge; it establishes the continuity of his movement with historical Israel but also becomes the point of transition to the mission to the Gentiles after Israel as a whole rejects Jesus” (DeSilva, 2004, p. 256).

The Prophetic Role of John Transferred to the Disciples

Jesus affirmed the prophetic and servant role of John beginning in Matthew 11. Here Jesus stated that John was the “messenger” who would prepare the way before Him

(v. 10). Jesus went on to say that the ones that are least in the kingdom are greater than John who was the “Elijah who is to come” (v. 14). This can be taken to mean that the prophetic role of John would be heightened by others who would echo a similar message. Though the people did not have “ears to hear” at that time, this prophetic message would stretch beyond Jesus’ day because Jesus stated in a future tense: Elijah “will” restore all things (Matt 17:11; Grosvenor & Zerwick, 1981, p. 55). How would this take place? What was the provision of this restoration of relationships, *collaboration*? If the example of John is any hint in this matter, then it would have something to do with the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

The Provision for Collaboration

The provision for true *collaboration*, besides employing methods of dialogue, can be found in the statement in Luke describing what Moses and Elijah talked to Jesus about on the Mount of Transfiguration. Luke 9:30-31 reads, “And, behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.” The “vision” provided to Moses and Elijah (see Matt 17:9) and of which they “spoke” was not only a fulfillment of a promise given to Moses that he would see the Lord as some scholars have noted (Bucur, 2010, p. 17), but was also about Jesus’ “decease” or death in Jerusalem (Luke 9:31).

The word “decease” comes from the Greek word *exodus* and, though one could note this as another of the many similarities between the transfiguration and Mount Sinai as scholars have done (Maier, 2015, p. 102), it appears clear from the text that a covenantal matter is being stressed by the One who gave the covenant at Sinai (Bucur, 2010, p. 20). In other words, Jesus is the “Messenger of the Covenant” (Mal 3:1), but also

the provision of the covenant! This is the provision for restoration that was referred to in Genesis chapter 3 and that the types of the Old Testament pointed forward to. What is the significance practically for the Church? Pauline (2004) states, “Just as Israel went down to ‘death’ at the bottom of the Red Sea and came out to a new life on the eastern shore, Jesus’ death became a new Exodus for a new Israel. . . He becomes a new Moses for the new Israel” (p. 164). We no longer need a human Moses figure because we have a Divine-human Moses figure in Jesus!

Understanding and focusing on the death of Jesus as the component that was to provide the basis for the restoration of *all* relationships has important implications for the Church context. A belief that Jesus dies for each of us is the equalizer of relationships as we are all equal in Jesus Christ because He paid the same price for each of us (Rom 1:16; Gal 3:28; Col 3:11). Furthermore, because of Jesus’ death we are all His children if we believe in His name (Phil 1:27; John 1:12), and are led by His Spirit (Rom 8:14). Thus, the cross provided the perpetual provision to restore what was lost in Eden: pure and true *collaboration* with God and each other.

The concept of the cross has strong implications for Christian leaders. As each person (including the pastor) recognizes that Jesus is the leader of the Church, for He has bought it with His blood, then this enables them to relinquish the role of CEO to Jesus (Eph 4:15; 5:23). And how did Jesus lead? As Beed and Beed (2015) state, “It does not seem that Jesus or any subset of his followers in his own time sought rights to power, domination, or authority within his movement; instead, Jesus argued in the opposite direction” (p. 606). This truth also makes the role of the pastor or leader clear: a facilitator to help the people understand the provision of Jesus for their personal salvation

and their need for *Him* to guide the church on a corporate level. Otherwise relationships may suffer, communication can break down, and possibly similar sins as occurred after the fall may transpire: fear, blame and the undoing of creative life.

A Prayer of Jesus That Denotes Collaboration

The message of John, Elijah and Moses was clear: Jesus was to go to the Cross as the Lamb for us. Fortunately, as the ministry of Jesus continued, He taught more explicitly about the deep relationships the Church must have. After describing what could potentially sever their ties with Him (see John 16:25-33), and praying that His followers might know the Father and Jesus, Jesus utters words that give the true pathos of love: Jesus prays that His followers would be “one” (John 17:11). The word “one” denotes “a unity” that is different than being “one person” since it is in the neuter and not masculine (Grosvenor & Zerwick, 1981, p. 336). This oneness denotes a “singularity” such as the Godhead has and which is what Jesus refers to in the same verse by adding “as we are” (Mounce, 2006, p. 485). Such a statement makes it clear that the oneness that was present in the Godhead, and which was referred to earlier in this chapter, can be present in the Church. Such a oneness would allow the disciples to be “sent” into the world to represent Christ (John 17:17-18).

What is also interesting is that Jesus laced the concept of the cross throughout this discourse in John (John 14:19, 25, 28, 15:18, 16:16, 20, 32). For truly the cross would be the means of bringing true oneness to those whom He has sent. Hence, they would need to focus on Jesus’ sacrifice which exhibited God’s great love. In regards to their corporate methodology, gathering together for prayer and reaching agreement regarding their purpose would be a necessity in order to be an answer to Jesus’ petition (Matt

18:19-20). Such unity would require dialogue and the willingness to work together—to collaborate. Last, the concept of oneness was not just for the time of Jesus’ first disciples, for we read, “neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20-21, emphasis added). It appears that Jesus desired future disciples to be of one purpose.

Establishment of the New Testament Church on Collaboration

Besides noting the transfer of the term Israel to the Church and Jesus being considered the “new Moses” (Paulien, 2004, p. 164), who intercedes for and prays that His people will be “one,” we can note four other important concepts that show the New Testament Church was established with a collaborative foundation in mind: the Great Commission, baptism, oneness at Pentecost, and the continuing practice of *collaboration* by the Godhead as will be shown to be evident in the book of Revelation. We will begin with the Great Commission.

The Great Commission

Jesus’ establishment of the church was a pivotal point in the plan of salvation and the goal of restoring oneness. The great commission of Matthew 28 portrays an interesting scene. The disciples, whom many would later become positional leaders, were worshipping Jesus. Jesus stated that all “authority” had been given to Him (vv. 17-18), yet He did not commence to finish the gospel work Himself, but told the disciples to “go”

and make disciples of all nations (v. 19). Thus, as they went forth and brought in Jews and Gentiles, they showed “themselves to be the true Israel precisely because within their body the purpose of God for all nations is being accomplished” (DeSilva, 2004, p. 263). What would be the sign of oneness or that they were one people? Baptism takes up that question in the next section.

Baptism

It is important to note that at the baptism of the new disciple the candidate was to be baptized in the “name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt 28:19). This three-fold name seems to echo the baptism of Jesus where all three were present (Matt 3:16-17) and with the previous considerations of the Godhead in mind, we should not be surprised to see this designation pronounced when someone responds to the plan of salvation that They initiated. In the act of baptism one can easily see correlations between the stories of creation, the flood, and Exodus noting that “God’s saving actions follow a clear pattern” (Paulien, 2004, pp. 34-42), but it is also important to note that all three that were present at creation, as well as the other acts of God in the Old Testament, are present when a person is baptized. Hence, baptism is an important aspect to consider and a rite which emphasizes that we are all part of “one body” and this is through “one baptism,” which is an outward expression of an inward experience whereby the “Father” is in us “all” (Eph 4:1-6). Thus, one meaning of baptism is that it is a symbol of oneness and equality.

Not only would He would be with *them* always even to the “end of the age” (Matt 28:20), baptism as a symbol of oneness and equality would also remain. Also, the authority that Jesus gave is available to every believer. To receive this authority, we must

personally and corporately come to Him. For leaders, it is important to remember that this authority is not something that is given to just one individual, but to the whole group—though some are responsible for shepherding that group (see John 21:15-19). Thus, the Great Commission that Christ gave appears to be the establishing of the Church as a community of equality and oneness—one that invites *all* members of the church to come to Jesus and allow Him to lead them to fulfill His mission. To equate His giving of authority solely with that of positional leadership (pastor, administrator, etc.) is to deny the need for His continual presence. This also hinders the Great Commission for it is Jesus alone “who merits the community’s worship and obedience” (Rogers, 2012, p. 398). When speaking of the Matthean community and Church discipline in Matthew 18, McIver (2000) states, “There is a basic egalitarianism in the ethos of the Matthean community. Even though some members took teaching and other leadership roles, they all considered themselves equal, with only one leader, Jesus” (p. 76). Baptism was the rite that represented this equality and one which accompanied the preaching of the gospel.

Of One Purpose at Pentecost

God’s intent for Israel, and later the Church, was for them to be “a kingdom of priests” or instruments of oneness (Exod 19:6). It was through continued oneness of purpose and oneness with each other that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurred after 10 days in the upper room (Acts 2). The context of this outpouring was that the disciples received instruction from Jesus for 40 days and then as a group they sought the outpouring for another 10 days following His ascension to heaven (Acts 1:3). Forty days is a significant number since it could be linked to the time Jesus spent in the wilderness

before entering His ministry which in turn “may signify several events: Moses’ time of in the desert after fleeing Egypt, Israel’s years in the wilderness, or Moses’ time of fasting on the mountaintop” (Rogers, 2012, p. 388). What is clear from the allusions the phrase “40 days” conjures is that that something important is about to happen.

As a result of the time with Jesus and the time they spent corporately seeking the Holy Spirit, they were of one “accord” or “mind” (Acts 1:14). The Greek word for this is *homothumadon* and can signify not just “accord,” but “thought” (Mounce, 2006, p. 764). The one “thought” that had their total attention was the “power” that they would receive from the “Holy Spirit”, and it was this power that they prayed for (Acts 1:8). This model is still relevant today because we do not have Jesus present for forty days of instruction, but we still have the Holy Spirit that He promised to send who will testify of Him (John 16-17). The Holy Spirit was present at Creation (Gen 1:2), in the days of chaotic relationships before the flood (6:3), and after Jesus ascended to Heaven (Acts 2:1-4). Therefore, a group would do well to spend time corporately seeking the presence of Jesus and experiencing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in addition to their private relationship with Him where they contemplate His sacrifice. For it is in seeking the promise of Jesus, that they experienced the outpouring that resulted in unity of purpose and thought rather than just having one person’s thoughts dominate the group.

Furthermore, if the Church recognizes the importance of the contribution of each member, and each member knows Jesus as their friend, then same unity of the early church can be attained. Such a relationship needs dialogue, positive communication and the willingness to work together—*collaboration*. Hence the concept of *collaboration* continues to this day as a means by which the church fulfills the mission of God to

restore humanity to oneness with Him. For the very fact that Jesus established the Church and gave them a part in the gospel mission is evidenced by the working of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. Truly, Acts shows the working of heaven with the Church to accomplish a heaven-born mission. This could be called a commission or as the business world is now coining the term: *collaboration*. Otherwise, Jesus could have simply used nature, Scripture, dreams, visions, angels, or theophany to accomplish His mission.

The result of *collaboration* with God and each other in Acts two was they were of “one mind,” “thought,” or as we might say, “purpose” (Mounce, 2006, p. 764). What was that purpose or object of their unanimity? Their purpose was to share Jesus as the means by which humanity could be restored to a right relationship with God—called the gospel. The method they used to attain this clarity of purpose was: “they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). It appears that leaders pointed the people to Jesus, collectively they spent time seeking Him in prayer to clarify their purpose, Jesus then poured out the Holy Spirit and empowered them to go forward united in this purpose to share a common message about Jesus (Acts 2). The modality that was utilized should also be pointed out: both corporate and small group contexts. Both should be used with a group of believers.

Also, there is a top-down-methodology in the Acts model, but it is not the pastor over the people methodology that is often present in churches today. It is authority *from* Jesus *to* the church with leaders *facilitating* this process. Davies (2014) rightly concludes that from Pentecost, “through Spirit and Son, the world will unfold in and through the body of Jesus, in its passage towards its final consummation” (p. 169). Since the body of Jesus is His Church and Christ is the Head, (Eph 4:15), the Church needs a revelation

from Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to be of one mind and purpose in order to have “every joint” supplying what is needed (v. 16).

This type of collaborative process continued through many episodes of Church history that space does not permit a full explanation of including: the Jerusalem council (Acts 15), establishing positional leaders in new areas who understood servanthood (1 & 2 Tim; Tit 1:5), and in general having a willingness to collaborate. Truly, when problems arose that threatened to take the focus off of the corporate mission that Christ had revealed, dialogue took place even in the smallest spheres of relationship (see Matt 18:15-20) as well as corporately (Acts 15). What Deutsch, Coleman, and Marcus (2008) state is true in regards to the challenges of the Church in Acts and some of its outcomes: “One can generalize by stating that collaborative (as compared to individual) problem solving—when the *collaboration* is effectively cooperative—usually provides more resources, more diversity in ideas, and more social support for the work involved in creative problem solving” (p. 405). As the church began to grow and reach beyond Judea, the use of dialogue and *collaboration* would be needed to effectively deal with rising challenges.

Practically, we see a glimpse of what the leadership methodology was like in the New Testament Church—participatory yet with leaders having responsibility to Christ for the flock. Once again, Bell’s seminal work on leadership, the Jerusalem Council is referred to (Acts 15) and some of the conclusions about godly leaders is that they “communicate their spiritual discoveries with conviction and courtesy” and “listen to one another” (Bell, 2014, p. 175). As Zscheile (2007) states succinctly, “While there are prominent instances of solitary visioning in the Old Testament (such as Moses), in the

New Testament, visioning is a communal process” (p. 59). From the precedence at Pentecost onward it appears the New Testament church understood this, even if they did not fully employ it.

Collaboration on the Island of Patmos

The book of Revelation finds an apt illustration of this principle of the leader being a facilitator to point the people back to Jesus so they together can collaborate on the future of the church. John on the island of Patmos received a message from heaven that had gone through a chain of communication to which he was responsible for sharing it with local elders back in Asia Minor (Rev 1:11). Such a method involved God giving a message to Jesus who in turn gave it to His angel who gave it to John through the Holy Spirit (v. 10). John then wrote this message down and delivered it to the Churches of Asia Minor.

As the letter was circulated, the elders in turn read the message to the people which served to point the congregations back to Jesus. As Revelation begins and ends, it has a focus on Jesus and His communication with His church through the Holy Spirit which is portrayed as speaking to the churches so they can “hear” and in turn share what they have heard (see Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6, 13, 22, 22:16-17). Though some have noted the covenantal content of the letters to the Seven Churches and the concept of the Spirit speaking as a “prophetic formula”, the main emphasis is nonetheless on hearing as well as receiving a message (Bandy, 2011, p. 191). Revelation of all books appears to be one of the clearest examples of God’s intent to communicate or “speak” to His Churches so that they will “hear” and be overcomers. Stefanovic (2009) notes, “Every Church is known by its name. Christ addresses the churches individually” (p. 81). Apparently, God

has a message and a purpose for each church as is evidenced by the communication process to the Seven Churches. Furthermore, the message to each church in some way introduces Jesus as the one speaking but the conclusion of each letter refers to the Holy Spirit. This “means that Jesus talks to the churches through the Holy Spirit . . . and through his speaking the voice of the risen Savior is heard among God’s people” (Stefanovic, 2009, p. 81). But what are the outcomes of this communication?

Pauline (2004) points out that there are two types of “hearers.” You can hear “without understanding or you can hear with understanding. . . Revelation 1:3 combines the verb ‘hear’ with an object (‘the words’) in the accusative case, and that means that understanding accompanies the ‘hearing’” (p. 99). Paulien’s main point is that the book of Revelation was meant to be heard and understood. The church is “either called to repent and to change its ways, or it is encouraged to remain firm in faithfulness and obedience” (Stefanovic, 2009, p. 83). Stefanovic goes on to say, “What Christ says to those seven local congregations in the first century is what the Holy Spirit says to the universal church and individual Christians everywhere and in every time” (p. 83). What we can conclude from Paulien’s statement on Revelation being an open book, and Stefanovic’s statements on the universality of the messages contained therein is that the book of Revelation is a prime example of God’s willingness to communicate with His people a special message that they can hear and obey if they are willing. But are there particular themes in Revelation that we should pay close attention to?

For many years Paulien (2004) has noted the structure of Revelation as a chiasm with its central point being the “final crisis” found in Revelation 11:19 through 15:4 (p. 123). What message is found in this, arguably, key section of Revelation that the

churches are to communicate with the World? It appears to be a similar message that Malachi, John the Baptist, and Jesus proclaimed: the everlasting gospel (Rev 14:6), including the Sabbath which in turn influences the family. Truly, the ones who read the book of Revelation would witness God’s continued desire to work with humanity to accomplish the plan of salvation as people from many different backgrounds prayed, dialogued, and worked together to fulfill their agreed upon purpose—sharing the everlasting gospel. Any attempt to accomplish this mission or share the message of Revelation would do well to employ the methodology of God employed when giving the messages contained in Revelation: *collaboration*.

Writings of Ellen G. White on Oneness, Collaboration, and Working Together

For the context of a local Seventh-day Adventist Church, it is appropriate to consider the writings of Ellen White as informative regarding the methods that could be used to re-focus a congregation on the mission of Christ. In this section, we will consider the writings of Ellen White on some of the concepts already highlighted in Scripture and the role Adventist pastors can take when they apply this counsel today. We will begin by considering the plan of salvation and the method the Godhead uses when they work in harmony for our salvation.

Oneness in the Godhead and the Plan of Salvation

Ellen White makes it clear that the Godhead is in constant oneness that can be exhibited in what is called a “counsel.” Specifically, after the fall of humanity she saw Jesus approach three times “the exceeding bright light which enshrouded the Father. Said my accompanying angel, He is in close converse with his Father” (White, 1858, p. 22).

Jesus then emerged from this counsel and described to the angels the necessity of His death for our sins to be forgiven. Specifically, He said, “through the merits of his blood, and obedience to the law of God, they could have the favor of God, and be brought into the beautiful garden, and eat of the fruit of the tree of life” (White, 1858, p. 22). This could be argued to be a form of *collaboration* to re-establish oneness between God and the human race. It could also be an argument in favor of the need for dialogue in order to fulfill the mission of God—for even God converses amongst Himself.

Furthermore, this scene begs the question: Since the Godhead uses conversation and collaborates, then why should not the Church do the same? Some might say, “Well the Godhead is a top-down model because they decided in the counsel to rescue us and then imposed that plan on humanity.” However, it could also be argued in the opposite direction: Since we are fallen human beings, we need to recognize that in Jesus we are equal and need to seek the wisdom of God to fulfill His part of the plan of salvation for our area (mission). So, since the Godhead uses dialogue, so should the pastor and the congregants. It cannot be a case of the pastor being the sole person who receives the “vision” and casts it *on* the congregation. Yes, the pastor must receive a personal mission to accomplish from God, but the pastor must also lead the congregation to receive a similar “vision” from God and facilitate a blending of the various viewpoints. Furthermore, the pastor must be like Jesus who humbly volunteers to serve if it will benefit the fulfillment of God’s plan of salvation (see Phil 2:5-6).

As one reads the writings of Ellen White further, the use of *collaboration* and dialogue in the Godhead can be seen. For before the cross Jesus plead with the father three times (Matt 26; White, 1898, pp. 464, 547), just as He did at the beginning of the

plan of salvation that was referred to by White (1898). Therefore, the servant attitude of Jesus is both in the planning stages of the mission to save us and the implementation stage as well. Truly, a pastor would do well to continue the servant relationship in both the planning and implementation stages of the local church's focus on mission.

Coming Close to Christ as Preparation for Collaboration

Once the mission is focused on, how does a pastor help foster unity so that the mission is not undermined? This question can be answered not by establishing another program in the church, but instead by helping members continue a spiritual relationship with Jesus. Some would call this “spiritual disciplines” or “theological foundations,” but I choose to call this “oneness” or continued “collaboration with God.” Such a relationship was later modeled by Jesus who had this “oneness” with the Father when He became human and subsequently prayed that we too would have it through the Holy Spirit (John 17; White, 1946, pp. 615, 630).

Practically though, how is this done? Ellen White writes that when the instruction of Christ is brought into the “daily life of God's people, unity of action will be seen in our ranks. Brother will be bound to brother in the golden bonds of the love of Christ. The Spirit of God alone can bring about this oneness” (White, 1904, p. 243). She confirms that the Holy Spirit is the personal agent of the Godhead to bring about this oneness—like we saw earlier in the theological reflection. She goes on to say God wants us to strive for this oneness, and if we do, then God will send it (p. 243). Apparently, while it is helpful to have corporate sessions of seeking God's guidance for what He wants the mission of the church to be, this should be coupled with an emphasis on maintaining unity through Christ-centered personal devotions. In essence, in addition to dialogue and

“vision casting” the congregation must be encouraged to have a daily focus on Jesus in addition to times on Sabbath to refocus on Him. Such a spiritual emphasis must first begin with the leader, who “hears the voice of God through the Holy Spirit” (Tutsch, 2008, p. 32). I believe the personal aspects of oneness can run concurrently with the corporate aspects and would bolster any plans that are made.

The Church Working Together With the Minister to Accomplish God’s Mission

Facilitating the mission of the Church can be a heavy burden for leaders. As Wilkes observes, “By sheer weight and magnitude, the mission forces the leader to share her responsibility with others. In order to accomplish the goal—which goes beyond the abilities and self-interest of the leader— every member of the group must have a sense of responsibility and authority for the task at hand” (1993, p. 179). Commenting on Ellen White’s writings, Tutsch states that for “the leader, planning and visioning should involve others” and she goes on to cite a key selection: “We must be willing to take advice and caution from our fellow laborers. Connected with the service of God, we must individually realize that we are parts of a great whole” (1888 Materials, 4:1620, cited by Tutsch, 2008, p. 33).

In Ellen White’s writings, it is clear that there should be a united effort because time is short, and the church must be “organized” to do a larger work (White, 1909, p. 27). Some may say this has to do with organizing for a worldwide work, but it can also be applied to the local church. She specifically mentions that the pastors are to do less “sermonizing and more planning” (p. 82). Though she does not specify what this might look like, the aforementioned principles of dialogue and recognizing that the work will be done by more than just the minister can be employed.

Therefore, the methods and plans to carry out the work should also rely on more than just the minister! Furthermore, White (1909) goes on to describe the beautiful movement at the end of time that has every Christian acting a “part in sustaining this work” (p. 125). The result of such a movement in which the whole body is involved in the planning, implementing and carrying out the mission is a time of thanksgiving and praise! Which means there can also be intentional ways to foster thanksgiving, praise and continual oneness as the people of God move forward with God’s mission by corporately, not just with the pastor’s ideas alone, planning this work (White, 1946, p. 105). Furthermore, God has made the whole church a channel of light to the world, and through “it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself” (White, 1911, pp. 162-163, cited in Tutsch, 2008, p. 121).

Overall, a greater work will be done if the minister first takes time to focus the Church on the mission of Christ and helps them dialogue with Jesus through daily devotions. This can be followed by corporate dialogue during planning sessions and continued oversight by the Pastor once the plans have been made. In this way, the pastor functions primarily as a facilitator of the work of God who listens to the body to understand God’s will. Such a participatory model will prove most successful as pastors help the people collaborate with God, or as Horsthuis (2011) notes, “We do not lead for God, or *in light* of God, but as participants *with* God” (p. 86).

Conclusion of the Theological Review

In this theological review four elements have been explored: first, a reflection on the example of *collaboration* in the Godhead in relationship to the creation of humanity

and subsequent events in the Old Testament took place. Second, the incarnation of these principles in the life of Jesus were considered to show continuity between the God of the Old and New Testaments. Third, the continuation of *collaboration* in the praxis of the first-century Church and Revelation was documented. Last, the fourth area considered was the writings of Ellen White on the collaborative nature of God, especially in the plan of salvation, and the need for the pastor to help the members plan the work of the church.

The Bible and Ellen White make it clear that unity, also aptly described as oneness, is paramount to the church understanding and fulfilling their part in the plan of salvation. In order for a church to have a missional focus, they must first be encouraged to individually have a relationship with God which will result in greater unity. Once some semblance of unity is attained, then a church can consider using dialogue sessions to corporately consider their purpose or mission. The pastor's role in the corporate sessions is that of a facilitator who helps *the group* seek God's guidance regarding His mission for their church and develop plans to carry out that mission. The pastor also encourages the group along the way as they implement the plans they have made. This whole process of dialogue and the pastor as a facilitator results in what leadership literature calls *collaboration*. In regards to some possible processes to foster *collaboration* and a dialogue driven missional focus, we will consider literature that bolsters such a methodology in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE DOCUMENTING THE VALUE OF USING COLLABORATION TO DEVELOP MISSION STATEMENTS

Introduction

Literature related to the development of mission statements encompasses many disciplines and each of these disciplines could yield a separate review of their own. The previous chapter draws an understanding of *collaboration* at creation, the incarnation, the formation of the church and the continual emphasis on *collaboration* in the New Testament Church directly from Scripture. Although the following literature review includes some sources from the theological arena, its primary emphasis is in four areas and is limited to references published between 2004 to the present, except for the section on the history of mission statements which will include sources from 1920 onward.

The works reviewed are divided into four categories: First, a brief history of the mission statement field since 1920, with its primary emphasis on the 1980's and onward, provides a context to understand both the developments in thinking and any shortcomings in mission statement processes that should be avoided. Second, a shift in leadership literature since the 1990s highlighting the need for more collaborative leadership approaches and works noting the deficiencies in mission statement processes are documented. The third section will consider how the shift in literature to an emphasis on *collaboration*, or similar concepts, has yielded empirical evidence for the value of mission statements that are developed using a collaborative approach. Last, a summary of

two processes that endeavor to use a collaborative approach to develop mission and vision statements at the local church level are considered in order to provide a window into how two approaches can apply both biblical and theoretical principles in a practical way.

This survey surfaces some needed pastoral competencies from the literature considered: the ability to foster an environment of trust, dialogue, and sharing. Also, the ability to develop tools to solicit input, to model and lead a spiritual emphasis, vision casting, listening skills incorporating input from a wide range of congregants in writing the statements, organizational ability with strategic planning emphasis, and team building are a few necessary competencies. In short, a leader must take on the role of facilitator rather than that of a positional, hierarchical leader who functions as the sole-visionary.

A Sample of Leadership Trends From the 1920s and Into the 1990s

Though it is noted that collaborative thinking, and a more “shared” kind of leadership had foundational elements present for as early as 1924, “The notion that leaders and their subordinates might mutually influence one another was largely unthinkable at that time” (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 5). Pearce and Conger begin by referring to Mary Parker Follett who taught the “law of the situation” and that a leader must “let the situation, not the individual, determine the ‘orders’” (p. 4). They go on to note various leadership concepts that paved the way for what we would call collaborative methodologies starting in 1973 with Vroom and Yetton who believed that under “certain circumstances, it is advisable to elicit more involvement by subordinates in the decision-making process” (p. 4). However, though some seeds of *collaboration* and “shared”

leadership could be noted during this period, in the 1970s many business organizations focused on the “development of strategic planning [as a] practice” with the mission statement being a managerial tool (Vizeu & Matitz, 2013, p. 79). In essence, the mission statement functioned as a tool for the leader or manager in casting a vision to the subordinates.

However, after 1980 there appears to have been an emphasis shift from the development of strategic planning to that of defining why a business or organization exists. Accompanying this shift were concepts such as “self-leadership” in which employees, “given certain conditions, are capable of leading themselves” (Manz & Sims, as cited in Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 4) but still the primary vision caster was upper management. A closer look at some of the leadership literature of the 1980s can help us gain a better understanding of the development of the mission statement from being primarily a managerial tool to a major first step in many organizations’ defining why they exist in their current marketplace.

Historical Emphasis on Executive Leadership

We begin with Donnelly in 1981, who was executive vice-president of Bausch-Krey Associates (an international management and consulting firm at the time). Donnelly recognized strategic planning “as the most effective way to manage as we move into the turbulent 80s” (1981, p. 13). He went on to point out that “[i]n most companies strategic planning gets started by the chief executive officer getting bit by the ‘planning bug’” and this can happen when the CEO has “read about it in a magazine,” was introduced to it by a “peer,” “attended a seminar,” or saw other companies using it successfully (p. 13).

After this brief introduction, Donnelly then outlines a process in which the upper management has a brainstorming session where they list the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, develop a plan to address these factors, and then this plan solicits more input in a second session (Donnelly, 1981). In the second session “subordinate management” is asked to consider the proposed plans, which were drafted by upper management, and strategies which “may result in some [of these] strategies being scrapped” (Donnelly, 1981). There is then a third session to vet the strategies developed in the previous sessions and the ideas that emerge from this third session will “constitute the basis for developing the mission statement of the company and the strategic planning document.” Last, the strategic planning document is drafted along with budgets being approved to facilitate this document. The process outlined by Donnelly (1981) would be utilized for many years to come and the development of a mission statement would have its emphasis on upper management as the primary visionaries regarding the direction of the organization with subordinates carrying out the articulated mission with arguably token input.

Another example of an emphasis on executive leadership is John Pearce. Pearce who was then at the University of South Carolina, wrote in 1982 that “when systematically and comprehensively developed, a firm’s mission statement can serve as an invaluable tool in directing the formulation and implementation of strategy” (1982, p. 15). One can easily see the philosophical goal of mission statements in the 1980s from this article: to serve as a tool in formulating and implementing the strategic plan of the organization.

Practically though, the mission statement was to be used to “provide the basis for a culture that will guide future executive action” (Pearce, 1982, p. 15). Once again it is hard to miss the emphasis—executive action. Not only does the mission statement help the executive, but the mission is a “broadly defined but enduring statement of purpose that distinguishes a business from other firms of its type and identifies the scope of its operations in product and market terms” and embodies the “strategic decision makers’ business philosophy” (Pearce, 1982, p. 15). Pearce goes on to emphasize that the culture of an organization was established by an entrepreneur at the inception of the organization and therefore, even if the mission statement is re-defined, it will have the same “elements as did the original” (p. 16).

Hence, the mission statement will have been built on the philosophy of one or a few individuals in key leadership positions in the organization. Yet, the development of an organization’s mission statement with limited involvement of any except upper management would go on to be described as “the starting point for an organization’s entire planning process” (Stone, 1996, p. 32). Such an emphasis on executive leadership developing and casting the vision will be further documented in the section on the leader’s role, but along with the emphasis on upper management came a widespread use of mission statements in the 1980s. Our next section will document this briefly.

Use of Mission Statements in Fields Outside of Business

Under a decade later from the time of Pearce, we find the use of mission statements and strategic planning by a plethora of organizations, educational institutions, and some non-profits. One example of this is in the technology realm.

Information Services

As information technology became more prominent in the United States society, and Information Services (IS) businesses began sprouting across the land, they too began using the mission statement/strategic plan model. Often IS was seen as a department of its own almost functioning as a separate entity (Jackson, 1989, p. 216). Jackson writes that there needed to be an IS strategy that is “linked with the business strategy.” He goes on to describe a process of evaluation whereby the following questions would be answered: Where is the organization now? Where does it want to be in the future? What is the most appropriate way of getting there?

After answering such questions, the IS department can then engage in a strategic planning sequence. The sequence that Jackson (1989) cites is one that is adapted from Rowe and others (1985) where there is a “situation audit,” defining of “purpose, mission, goals,” the development of a “competitive” and “resource strategy,” and finally the development and implementation of the plans (Jackson, 1989, p. 217). Last, Jackson concludes that “just as with the organization as a whole, it is the IS customers (i.e., its internal users) who must inevitably determine the *raison d’etre* for the information systems function” (p. 217). Overall, according to Jackson one must look at Information Services “on a value added basis” while at the same time making sure that “the overall corporate focus is kept in perspective” (p. 229). Clearly, by 1989 the many applications of the mission/strategic planning model were well underway and being applied to a variety of organizations—including information services.

Other Fields Utilizing Mission Statements

The use of mission statements and strategic planning tools were not limited to the Information Services field. A brief survey of scholarly journal articles available from the 1980s and onward to 1990 shows that such tools were utilized by law firms (Malone & Santangelo, 1986, p. 58), industry (Crainic, Florian, & Leal, 1990, pp. 1-24), libraries (American Libraries, 1977, p. 816; Mission Statement for Monterey, 1989), and scientific/educational groups (Wadley & Lindgren, 1987, pp. 392-404) to name a few. Once again, the emphasis, in most cases, was on upper management directing the content and plans for the accomplishment of the mission that they promote to subordinates.

Mission Statements in Congregations and Non-Profits

As the use of mission statements progressed into realms outside of the business field, non-profits, including the church, were not excluded from the influence of this organizational tool. In 1978, McConkey equated goal setting with accomplishing the church's mission:

Goal setting requires active involvement and participation by all members of a church. It involves the pastor, the governing body, and the congregation, all actively working together to further the church's work. Study after study has demonstrated that people will not be really committed to helping achieve a result unless they have had a voice in determining what the result will be. Conversely, people will be more motivated to work for the success of a project if they have had a part in developing it. (p. 11)

Little empirical evidence was cited by McConkey, but using the term "goal setting" provides evidence that the church was heavily influenced by concepts being promulgated in the business realm. Admittedly, McConkey seems to have exhibiting a

more collaborative approach to strategic planning than the traditional format utilized by the business world from which he borrows some of his language.

The model of McConkey sits in stark contrast to other Christian authors who seem to have latched onto the business model of the 1980s many years later. For example, Malphurs, arguably one of the leading authors on visioning and strategic planning in Christianity in the late 20th Century, seems to echo the sentiment of the 1980s business literature by saying,

It is important to recognize that every leadership team within a ministry needs a single leader. Today's emphasis on co-leadership, especially in the church where it is known as lay elder rule, attempts to be biblical but most likely is an overreaction to leadership by a single tyrant or despot, or in some cases to weak or unskilled professional leadership. . . It is imperative that there be a single leader, or on a ministry team, a leader of leaders. (Malphurs, 1999, p. 44)

According to Malphurs (1999), the visionary leader is the vision cultivator who “develops the organizations unique vision,” the vision communicator who is the “primary vision caster,” and the vision clarifier who “serves to rethink and further refine the dream.”

Implications

At face value, the concepts espoused by Malphurs sound almost like a carbon copy of the CEO model of visioning that was widespread in the 1980s business arena. Unfortunately, as the top-down model was implemented in both for profit and non-profit organizations, deficiencies would eventually become apparent. Such deficiencies must be noted and rectified to fully utilize the mission statement to its maximum potential. We will now turn to what appears to be a major shift in the leadership literature involving *collaboration* and mission statements since 1990.

A Shift in Leadership Concepts Since 1990

Literature from the 1990s onward appears to shift towards an emphasis on teams and the assignment of roles to “team members” that “were formerly reserved for managers” (Manz & Simz, cited in Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 4). Furthermore, as the 1980s ended, the concept of “empowerment connections” to others begins to be emphasized (cited in Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 5). What follows is a brief survey from the 1990s onward.

The Rise of Collaboration and Team Leadership

We will begin with Chrislip and Larson, who in 1994 wrote that we needed a “new vision of leadership” because leaders who are “most effective in addressing public issues are not necessarily the ones who know the most about the issues. Rather, they are the ones who have the credibility to get the right people together to create visions” (1994, p. xx). They go on to define *collaboration* as, “a mutually beneficial relationship between two or more parties who work toward common goals by sharing responsibility, authority, and accountability” (p. 5). Furthermore, the purpose of *collaboration* is to “create a shared vision and joint strategies to address concerns that go beyond the purview of any particular party” (p. 5). Problems in the business world are cited which brought about a “revolution in U.S. management that led toward more participative and collaborative organizations” (p. 6).

Fields experiencing a similar “revolution” to adapt to changing environments were education, family and children services, healthcare and civic institutions (Chrislip & Larson, 1994, pp. 7-14). Overall, the basic premise is that “if you bring the appropriate people together in constructive ways with good information, they will create authentic

visions and strategies for addressing the shared concerns of the organization or community” (p. 14).

An Attempt to Emphasize Teams in the Non-Profit Sector

The conceptual framework for the utilization of teams and *collaboration* was not limited to the fields noted by Chrislip and Larson. One of the outflows of the shift in business literature was a re-emergence of the value of teams in the Church. Barna stated in 2001 that leadership “works best when it is provided by teams of gifted leaders serving together in pursuit of a clear and compelling vision,” though he seems to emphasize that a leader should “articulate a clear picture of what you are seeking to achieve” and how we can lead people there (2001, p. 39). More specifically, it is the job of the senior pastor to “identify and articulate” the corporate vision “for the congregation” by listening “to God” and discerning “what He has in mind for the church” (p. 52). Then a “leadership team,” which includes the senior pastor, makes “sure that the vision is known, understood, owned, and pursued by the congregation” (p. 53). As a result of this top-down vision casting, the “component ministries will identify its own vision statement for its area of focus and will pursue its vision by developing goals, strategies, and tactics designed to facilitate the ministry” (p. 53). Throughout the process the component ministry teams communicate with the “corporate leadership” to “facilitate the achievement of the church’s macro-level vision” (p. 53).

While an emphasis on teams is provided and it is emphasized by Barna (2001) that “Jesus was training teams of leaders, not potential members of the Future CEO Club” (p. 53), he in practice installs the Senior pastor as a sort of CEO, arguably with some

tasks relinquished to teams with leeway for them to accomplish their own micro-vision. Such a practice attempts to blend “business-oriented skill with sensitivity to the prompting of the Holy Spirit (p. 53).” However, though Barna appears to be mindful of the business world practices that he had been familiar with at the time of his writing, the business world appears to progress further than this one Christian leader suggests.

Collaborative Understanding Advances in the Business Sector

The *Harvard Business Review* (2002) noted as early as 1999, that managers must “foster an atmosphere of open dialogue” and that they should not “dictate that people do things that don’t make sense” (p. 34). After all, “the best ideas don’t always come from the leaders in an organization” (p. 34). The book goes on to identify when an organization needs a make-over and asserts that at some point in a process a leader and their team should “recruit everyone in the battle and get every single person focused on the same goals” (p. 131). One tool is to foster open dialogue amongst members of the organization and by openness they mean “that the outcome is not predetermined. There’s an honest search for alternatives and new discoveries” as can be evidenced by the question, “What are we missing?” (p. 150). This work concludes by providing an outline of “dialogue killers” and a process that fosters openness in an organization to promote change (pp. 160-164). Though it should be noted that the process that is outlined has a very dialogical nature, it is also heavily influenced by the “corporate priorities” and expectations of the CEO (p. 163).

Importance of Practicing Dialogue in an Organization

Just a short time after the *Harvard Business Review* publication, Susan Scott (2002) stated “Conversations are the work of a leader and the workhorses of an organization. While no single conversation is guaranteed to change the trajectory of a career, a company, a relationship or a life—any single conversation can” (p. xix). She goes on to emphasize that the role of a leader is to “have conversations that interrogate reality, provoke learning, tackle tough challenges and enrich relationships” (Scott, 2002, p. xix). She asserts that conversations are necessary because, “every single person in the company, including the entry-level file clerk, owns a piece of the truth about what color the company is” because “no one can be in all places at all times” including the CEO (p. 22).

Yes, fierce conversations are necessary and dialogue is an important part of an organization’s culture, but what about developing a vision or purpose? When it comes to developing a vision in an organization a leader cannot “impose” on the group their vision (Scott, 2002, p. 57), but a vision must be “shared.” Specifically, she believes that the “best kind of vision statement is written during a four-hour fierce conversation with as many employees as possible (and a few customers)” and she goes on to point out that it answers four important questions: Why are we here? What is our ideal relationship with one another? What is our ideal relationship with our customers? What contribution do we wish to make to the global community? (pp. 58-59). Last, she believes that all “root decisions,” or major decisions that affect the whole group, must be made “with input from many people” (p.119).

These are decisions that, if poorly made and implemented, could cause major harm to the organization” (Scott, 2002, p. 119). The vision or future of an organization would be one of those major decisions and so should involve as many as possible providing input. A similar skill of dialogue and listening can also be found in the non-profit sector as Peter Scazzero espouses. Scazzero (2003) points to the need to “teach people, intentionally, how to listen” (p. 182). He says that as a leader, “he learned to not spout off advice until I had incarnated on some level” (p. 182). By incarnated, he means “reflective listening” (p. 182). Both of these sources from the early 2000s show a shift in organizational emphasis and practice. However, the next three sources mark what appears to be a hinge point in the business world.

Shared Leadership

In 2003, Pearce and Conger compiled a seminal work on what they dubbed, “Shared Leadership” (Pearce & Conger, 2003). This work summarized historically the important contributions and shifts in leadership literature since the 1800s and into the 1900s pointing out that “the notion that leaders and their subordinates might mutually influence one another was largely unthinkable at that time” (p. 5). They note the concept of goal setting as “participative”, though still heavily influenced by upper management, as early as the 1950s and highlight such concepts as “empowerment,” “shared cognition,” and “connective leadership” (pp. 12-13). Overall, they found that “shared leadership” was a “more useful predictor of change management team effectiveness than the leadership of the appointed leader” (pp. 13-14).

Pearce and Conger (2003) noted that one tool to be utilized to foster an atmosphere of participation is “reflective dialogue,” which has as its by-product that

“individual participants begin to share the leadership task of creating the conditions in which learning and understanding can take place” and organizations must first gain this level of communication or “shared leadership cannot occur” (pp. 37-38). They define dialogue as “a type of learning conversation that requires a mix of advocacy and inquiry” and can “result in the co-creation of new knowledge” (cited in Heifetz, 1994; Draft, 2001, etc., on p. 35).

Overall, other than citing various methodologies that help develop an environment of shared leadership, they define shared leadership as “a group process by which leadership is distributed among, and stems from, team members” (cited in Pearce & Sims, 2000, p. 105). One strongpoint of this book is the clarification of the tasks of the “top leader” who at times should not share leadership, and for our study it is important to note that this includes formulating the vision, and empowerment must not be “open-ended or unlimited” (Locke, cited in Pearce & Conger, 2003, pp. 277-280). Hence, an emphasis on distributing leadership by the positional leader is evident along with a caveat that there are times not to share.

Sources From 2004 to 2015 Stressing the Importance of Collaboration

What follows is a series of sources from 2004 and onward which documents a growing prevalence for the usage of the term “collaboration.” Out of these sources some attempts at a working definition for the concept of *collaboration* emerge and from this definition deficiencies in prior processes can be noted.

The Wisdom of the Crowds

Surowiecki (2005) notes that one of the key lessons of the concept, *Wisdom of the Crowds*, is that “we don’t always know where good information is. That’s why in general, it’s smarter to cast as wide a net as possible, rather than wasting time figuring out who should be in the group and who should not” (p. 276). Surowiecki believes that “you could say it’s as if we’ve been programmed to be collectively smart” and that a large group is necessary for a “more reliable judgment” and “looking for the one man who will have the answers to an organization’s problem, is a waste of time” (p. 34). Continuing with this train of thought, he says, “if a group is so unintelligent that it will flounder without the right expert, it’s not clear why the group would be intelligent enough to recognize an expert when it found him” (Surowiecki, 2005, p. 35).

Later, examples of *collaboration* are cited and he emphasizes that in some situations this ends up “multiplying their [solutions] speed and effectiveness” (Surowiecki, p. 159). So, what is the leader’s role? In short, to be a facilitator of sorts who has a “clear agenda” and takes “an active role in making sure that everyone gets a chance to speak” (p. 182). Though Surowiecki notes the implosion of the hierarchical model of the 1970s and 1980s has had its advantages (p. 207), there is still a lot more work to do to really tap the wisdom of the groups in an organization and is “cautiously hopeful” that “traditional notions of power and leadership should begin to pale” (p. 282). The wisdom of the crowds’ concept appears to become more realized by many organizations as the following sources will show.

The Use of Collaboration in Resolving Conflict

Deutsch et al. (2006) assert various principles in the resolution of conflict. From the basic premise that “listening” is foundational to taking a nonnegotiable situation and turning it into a negotiable one (p. 2), to moving from a “competitive” to a “cooperative” approach to resolving conflict (p. 23), the individuals involved in a situation can manage to foster “cooperation” in a situation by learning from each other (p. 32). They even boldly assert that when one is narrow minded they can exhibit stupidity which to the authors means “to stand aloof from those who think differently from us” (p. 73). Overall, it is not in finding the correct solution to a problem, but “rather in the attention and thought processes it induces” (p. 79). They go on to spend a whole chapter on the issue of trust (Deutsch et al., 2006, pp. 94-113), and conclude that if one wishes to manage any “relationship” they must “create trust and manage distrust effectively. These processes are most critical when trust is broken and needs to be repaired” (p. 113). Once trust is established, then many positive outcomes can result.

Coleman spends time on the concepts of power and conflict defining “power generally as the ability to make things happen or to bring about desired outcomes” (as cited in Deutsch et al., 2006, p. 123). He asserts that bottom-up “power is the result of changes at the local level (such as changes in individual attitudes or behaviors) that can have a substantial emergent effect on systems but that tend to take the longest amount of time to emerge” (p. 124). This model has less “command and control” strategies, takes more time but has the potential to provide substantial results.

After many other concepts are defined and analyzed, Deutsch and Coleman provide guidelines to develop creative approaches to conflict. One of these is the need to

engage in *collaboration* rather than just individual work (Deutsch et al., pp. 404-405). Individual work is necessary and can be productive if cooperation is not forthcoming, but one can “generalize by stating that collaborative (as compared to individual) problem solving—when the collaboration is effectively cooperative—usually provides more resources, more diversity in ideas, and more social support for the work involved in creative problem solving” (p. 405). Furthermore, collaborative work is apt to be more creative “if there is effective cooperation and collaborators have more resources available to them than are available to an individual” (p. 405). If *collaboration* produces more creativity once trust and cooperation are established in groups, could it also be useful in creatively reviewing or re-thinking the direction of an organization?

Arguably, one of the most intractable situations in the modern socio-political realm is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Yet, authors have noted that both a top-down and “grassroots” approach to solving the conflict is necessary so that this currently “intractable conflict is addressed” at all levels (Dessel & Ali, 2012, pp. 123-124). Specifically, they believe the utilization of “intergroup dialogue” could be one component of a process to help bring about peaceful intergroup relations (p. 124).

Intergroup dialogue is defined as “a facilitated group experience that is designed to provide a safe place for participants” to address pertinent issues (p. 124). Notice the emphasis on facilitation. This method involves “facilitated, structured, and sustained face-to-face meetings between two social identity groups in conflict, whereby the participants are encouraged to engage in active listening, share their experiences, learn about the perspective of others, and reflect on their own views with regard to complicated

topics” (p. 124). As a result of participation in intergroup dialogue, the participants can often form a “commitment to and engagement in social change actions” (p. 124).

After such a structured dialogical approach ends, participants “express the need for more time with one another. While bridges are being built, sustainable and continuous work after the dialogue is needed, and continuous engagement with the ‘other’ might be a possible route for change and peace” (Dessel & Ali, 2012, p. 134). Later, Yazbak-Abu Ahmad, Dessel, Mishkin, Ali, and Omar (2015) proposed that it may be beneficial, though difficult, to “intentionally engage participants in dialogue who share similar values and goals” (Yazbak-Abu Ahmad et al., 2015, p. 252). Such a dialogical process, as intergroup dialogue espouses, would be good a good tool to keep in mind if one is attempting to work with a conflicted group/organization and could be utilized prior to a corporate focus on the direction of the group.

Using Scientific Principles to Establish an Articulated Purpose

Avery and Gaede (2007) emphasize five principles that are adapted from science to view a congregation’s mission and leadership. They include: openness to new information, complexity, diversity, interrelatedness and process—the combination of these five produces an environment where trust prevails (pp. 11-14). Though each of these are important to the process of developing a congregation’s mission statement, some key insights stand out for the purposes of our study. Specifically, that a congregation’s “identity” is “found not in statements articulated by a congregation’s leaders and members, but in the everyday patterns of life that make each congregation unique” (p. 28). They go on to note that not having an articulated purpose is worse than incongruences between what we say and do because “most congregations do not even

have an articulated identity and are not aware of this fact [that they are not doing what they espouse]” (p. 28).

They note that a process can be developed to get “input from the entire community” with a statement being drafted but “before long, that statement was gathering dust in a file cabinet” (pp. 28-29). Though the authors point out the need to recognize the complexity of an organization they go on to state that as “difficult as it might be for a congregation to clearly articulate its identity, the task is essential to a faith community’s well-being. Systems require a clear identity for stability” which in turn helps us “function in the world” (Avery & Gaede, 2007, p. 29). So, how is identity to be articulated? This begins with “freely flowing information” that enables the congregation as a whole to become “more intelligent” (p. 30). Out of considering this information throughout the organization, the group gains intelligence and develops a “clear sense of purpose” (p. 40), then they use their purpose “to interpret information – to determine what their work is and how to do it” and the new information in turn “reinforces themselves—to become more than who they really are” (p. 40).

Also, change in an organization involves a lot of time and “requires a web of relationships with strong interconnections” (Avery & Gaede, 2007, p. 55). The leader’s role in the process of helping the organization is to “lead within the web of influence rather than through a chain of command” (p. 55). The need to depart from the chain of command model is necessary because of the interrelatedness of the individuals in the organization and the diversity that is represented by those individuals who “embrace diversity in order to fulfill a more variegated mission” (p. 117). This results in a process that is adventuresome and works against “homeostasis,” one that is “as important as

things” (pp. 136-137). Furthermore, the positional leader (clergy) must be willing to “invite the whole congregation to imagine how a congregation might faithfully live out its identity and vocation” (p. 146).

Three understandings of leadership are typically at work in such a dialogical model: (a) leaders are key figures on a team rather than soloists, (b) leaders and followers are in a reciprocal relationship that empowers followers, and (c) authority is shared and distributed throughout the organization” (Banks & Ledbetter, 2004, p. 53 cited in Avery & Gaede, 2007, p. 146). In such a model, the pastor functions as a “leader among leaders” as leadership and meaning can come from anyone in the congregation and effectively the pastor functions as one who is “designated by the community to pay attention to the vitality of the [dialogical] system” (Avery & Gaede, 2007, p. 149). Such a concept of no more “lone ranger” leaders appears to have become widespread enough since the time of Avery and Gaede that even John Maxwell emphasized similar concepts (Maxwell, 2008, pp. 4, 18). Though it should be noted that Maxwell seems to still have a heavy emphasis on the positional leader while Avery and Gaede favor leadership surfacing from anyone in the congregation as a real impetus for change or helping the congregation adapt to a changing environment.

Adaptive Leadership

The concepts expressed by Avery and Gaede (2007) and the need for churches to adapt to the environments they find themselves in today, similarly was highlighted in the business field with the work entitled *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* (2009). Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) posit that since September 11, 2001 (also known as 9/11) challenges posed to the business field brought to light “unresolved dilemmas of old

ways and in part they are new” (p. 2). Such problems that arose, arguably years before 9/11, are “not amenable to authoritative expertise. . . These are what we call adaptive challenges, gaps generated by bold aspirations amid challenging realities. For these the world needs to build new ways of being and responding” (p. 2). They contend that the world needs “distributed leadership because the solutions to our collective challenges must come from many places” (p. 3). With the need for distributed leadership, they define adaptive leadership as “the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive” and their emphasis is on organizations thriving as a result of quickly adapting to changes (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 14).

An adaptive leader will “engage people in distinguishing what is essential to preserve from their organization’s heritage from what is expendable” and such leaders seek to lead with an “experimental mindset” that enables them to “improvise as they go” (p. 15). The outflow of such leadership would be the development of a “culture that values diverse views and relies less on central planning and the genius of the few at the top, where the odds of adaptive success go down” and more on “distributive and collective intelligence” (p. 16).

Many skills of the adaptive leader are noted in this book such as taking time to observe what is really going on in an organization by becoming a “balcony person” who observes how the group interacts or makes decisions (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 33), and some tools to evaluate a mission’s effectiveness (p. 56), etc. However, the main take away for the purposes of this study is to realize that an organization with “a high capacity to adapt” involves people who “share responsibility for the larger organization’s future in addition to their identification with specific roles or functions,” which leads departments

to view issues facing the entire organization as effecting them as well (p. 103). Adaptive organizations have adaptive leaders who possess an “orientating purpose” that serves to remind them and others the “reasons you are seeking to lead change” (p. 221). Though Heifetz et al. assert that abstract purpose statements must meet with reality within the organization or else it “provide[s] guidance for evaluating strategies but not for figuring out how best to implement those strategies” (p. 224). Hence, an organization or leader may have a mission statement but must also recognize the changing purposes or else they will be so “caught up in their mission that they forget to notice what is happening to themselves in the process” (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 232).

Overall, though a leader must have an over-arching purpose that guides them, an organization’s capacity to “orchestrate multiple interpretations of an organizational challenge is more likely to produce innovative insights than relying solely on one person’s viewpoint” (p. 123). One could contend that if it is helpful in facing the day to day challenges of organizations to have many involved in solving challenges, then why not utilize a similar methodology when articulating the purpose of an organization?

Relational Leadership and the Teaming Church

At least three sources that are pertinent to the progression of collaborative concepts emerged during the years 2011-2012. The works include the books *The Relational Leader* (McIntosh, 2011), *Developing Relational Leadership* (Hornstrup, Jensen, Johansen, Loehr-Petersen, & Madsen, 2012) and *The Teaming Church* (Crosby, 2012). Each one will be considered in turn beginning with McIntosh:

McIntosh, coming from the viewpoint of working within non-profit organizations, begins by stating the relational leader must engage in five activities (observing, listening,

analyzing, testing, and enacting (McIntosh, 2011, p. 3). However, these activities must spring from placing “people at the center” of a leader’s thinking (p. 4). This thinking of the people within the organization appears to have a goal: that “the people remain enthused and dedicated” to the purpose that the leader/manager promotes and maintains (p. 6). Shared activities regarding the purpose of an organization included “fidelity” to the purpose and “appreciation” for accomplishing the purpose so that there can be “buy in” throughout the organization (McIntosh, 2011, p. 6). While McIntosh points out the need for relational leadership, he contends that relational leadership, as he defines it, “is not common” (p. 7).

Regarding the “vision” McIntosh believes that when vendors or employees know that they are appreciated and their “value is recognized” they will respond the relational leader’s vision for the organization (2011, p. 16). The leaders’ role is to foster a type of “atmosphere” that is relational and one in which they are “able to count on maximum cooperation in pursuit of the vision for the organization” that they espouse (p. 16).

Though this book has many concepts emphasizing the need for relational elements in pursuing the vision an organization has, it appears that the author is still functioning in a top-down model of vision casting that was noted as apparent in the 1970s and 1980s. A vision is something you as a relational leader “protect and promote,” and relationally “assess the organizational environment” and “make shifts if needed” (McIntosh, 2011, p. 122). Overall, it is the role of the relational leader to “continually check the environment that you are creating” (p. 124). While some of the concepts of this book could be used to foster a collaborative environment, the over-emphasis on the

leaders' role in setting the direction of the organization while trying to get token "buy-in" does not appear to follow the logical conclusions of the principles espoused.

A second source to consider in this section is Hornstrup et al. and the book, *Developing Relational Leadership* (2012). After pointing out the need to understand communication and the context in which it takes place (pp. 1-40), Hornstrup and others point out the need for leaders to "focus on the context in order to note how a given message or action is connected to (affected by and how it is affecting) the larger organizational context; this is a key part of being able to collaborate and coordinate our actions" (Hornstrup et al., 2012, p. 40). Furthermore, they see an important "element of relational leadership" as the ability to "coordinate meanings and actions through language among the many stakeholders and participants who make up the system" (p. 44).

As the book progresses, it highlights different kinds of teams that can develop within an organization and their corresponding tasks (Hornstrup et al., 2012, pp. 180-191). For the purview of this project, what is most interesting is the chapter on Values and Vision (pp. 119-212). In this chapter, the authors point to the challenge of having a vision which corresponds with actions (pp. 119-120). They assert that through a process of dialogue and the "active participation of the people involved, visions have been processed and linked to the worldview of the individual participants. The visions have become tangible and clear, whereas in relation to the people who have not had the opportunity to participate in the discussions, "the words are still ex-formation" (p. 195). An ex-formation experience would seem to be precluded or at least hindered if more active participation were to take place.

Overall, if the idea “is all people in the organization are supposed to be able to connect to the visions to their own positions and job, it is a precondition that everyone also has the opportunity to discuss and process values and visions” (Hornstrup et al., 2012, p. 196). If everyone is involved in the process, then the “ex-formation” becomes “information” and is connected to “the everyday life in the organization” (p. 196).

Regarding how to pursue the creation of connections between the “words of the vision statement and the daily life within an organization” two approaches are suggested on page 197 followed by some examples on pages 198-212:

1. You can choose to involve all or many of the employees in the actual process of formulating visions. The advantages of doing so are that one can establish a broad sense of ownership of the visions and a much greater probability that the vision reports will not just collect dust on shelves.

2. You can also give the employees the opportunity to relate to and process the visions that already have been formulated. In doing so, the visions become present in the employee’s own practice.

After giving examples of how such possible approaches can be implemented, the author concludes by stating, while referencing an example of drafting the values statement of an organization, that the involvement of “all the employees of the organization had a great effect especially on the communication and cooperation culture” (Hornstrup et al., 2012, p. 211) and that such a process can be utilized throughout the “entire organization” (p. 212). Overall, a process of involvement appears to be a contributing factor in the development of a communication and cooperation culture.

The book, *The Teaming Church: Ministry in the Age of Collaboration* by Robert C. Crosby, was also published in 2012; at face value appears to give credence to the concept of *collaboration*, but really is focusing on the skills to build teams in a church. Crosby begins with the concept of drawing “circles of honor” rather than hierarchies (pp. 12-13), and then he notes that the “Trinity is a perfect circle of honor: a true teaming environment, the ultimate One” (p. 13). Ultimately, Jesus’ own example serves as a model of how to build teams and for the need to “remind the team of how valuable and important they are to one another, to the church, to the leadership and, most of all, to God himself and to his high purpose on earth” (p. 14). The main principle of the teaming church is, “To become a great team your group must have a deeply challenging goal, a creatively empowering leader, and a collaborative, biblically honoring community” (Crosby, 2012, p. 16). The team must show character which represents the “right kind of people and practices on the team,” have a carrot or challenge that the team faces or is called to take on which is bigger than “any one individual and absolutely compelling” (p. 16). Also, there must be a coach who leads the group or a truly “teaming leader” that helps set the culture of the group so that it is a community or “culture in which teams can continue to grow and develop—a teaming context” (p. 16).

In regards to goal-setting and pursuing a vision, there are some specific examples of how to guide a team to set goals/the agenda for a meeting (Crosby, 2012, p. 59), but overall the book seemed to focus on random concepts that might fall in the arena of *collaboration* or might not. For instance, chapter 4 is on the concept of the carrot or motivation but does not offer any concrete examples of who sets the compelling vision or goals for the group (pp. 64-72). The closest that Crosby comes to anything specific is to

suggest the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for a team, church, or individual (p. 69) and then goes on to emphasize the leader's role in turning groups into teams (pp. 81-91). This book provides a plethora of helpful concepts if a church wishes to utilize teams, but does not yield much in the realm of *collaboration* on a corporate scale.

Shifting to Collaboration

Three works follow that attempt to do more than give passing treatment to the concept of *collaboration*. It is in this section that some key concepts and practices clearly emerge and a significant modification, if not a departure, from the typical top-down model of organizational leadership strategies to establish a corporate purpose is presented.

Relational Leading and Dialogical Collaboration

Hersted and Gergen (2013) in the book, *Relational Leading: Practices for Dialogically Based Collaboration* contend that the foundation of true *collaboration* is communication (p. 9). Not just the acts of communicating clearly and actively listening by a sole leader, “this is a linear view of communication,” but “communication is a process of mutually molding meaning—a process of continuous coordination” (p. 9). They further assert, “Traditional processes of education are built around content as opposed to process, that is, communicating pre-formed knowledge as opposed to inviting one into the process of creating knowledge” (p. 10). They continue by positing some fundamental concepts necessary to develop an environment of *collaboration*: that the future of an organization is based on dialogue (p. 15), that meaning is created “together”

(p. 39), leadership should bring “cohesion” (p. 74), that there are times for “soft” and “hard” agendas (pp. 75-76) and that when a leader wants to resolve a problem, they should tap into “all complexities” (p. 78).

One of the most difficult issues an organization can face is the need for change and the realization that an organization is not a “machine” but a “living thing” can help this process (Hersted & Gergen, 2013, p. 97). An organization’s “flourishing depends on our coordinating actions together, from moment to moment. Dialogue is the pivotal process” (Ibid). What is the leader’s role? The leader can “facilitate and enrich dialogical processes by creating frames for communication. . . Through this kind of dialogue the members of the organization can co-create a new vision, new goals and new ways of confronting new challenges” (Hersted & Gergen, 2013, p. 114). In short, the leader fosters an environment where dialogue, “all forms of communicative interchange, or more practically, conversation of any kind—verbal and otherwise” can take place regarding the future direction of an organization (p. 36).

Harvard Business Review and Collaboration

Another source, and arguably a seminal work, regarding the concept of *collaboration* is *HBR’s 10 Must Reads: Collaboration* (2013). The book begins the first chapter with the question, “Are you a collaborative leader?” (p. 1) and cites a business example where top management fostered open dialogue that served as a “catalyst for the creation of a more open and empowered culture of the company” (p. 2). The chapter goes on to document the need for new tools for the fast-paced business environment employees, managers and CEO’s face today and their need to play “global connector” by getting outside of their organizations to engage with new ideas, individuals and situations

(p. 4). Overall, *collaboration* involves everyone in an organization but the leader sets the tone. Hence, the concept emerges: “collaborate at the top first” (p. 9.). However, contrary to what many think, *collaboration* involves both knowing when to “show a strong hand” and when to loosen “control without losing control” (p. 12). While this chapter does a good job defining collaborative leadership as “the capacity to engage people and groups outside one’s formal control and inspire them to work toward common goals—despite differences in convictions, cultural values, and operating norms,” it does not at this juncture define *collaboration* itself.

Chapter 2 goes on to bolster the concept of *collaboration* beginning with the leader by citing the concepts of social intelligence and the biology of leadership. Social intelligence is defined as “a set of interpersonal competencies built on specific neural circuits (and related endocrine systems) that inspire others to be effective” (Ibarra & Henson, 2013, p. 16). Research is cited to emphasize that the leader leads effectively by “developing a genuine interest in and talent for fostering positive feelings in the people whose cooperation and support” they need (p. 16). This genuine interest exhibits itself in social intelligence behaviors such as setting an “easygoing tone” or evidencing empathy (p. 17). The chapter goes on to ask the question, “Are you a socially intelligent leader?” and provides a chart listing the seven social intelligence qualities their research and that of the Hay Group surmise that collaborative leaders need: empathy, attunement, organizational awareness, influence, developing others, inspiration, and teamwork. Their goal of including these seven areas, with corresponding questions, may be an attempt to influence the leader to engage in a process of self-reflection to see whether or not they possess such characteristics.

As the book progresses to chapters 3 and 4, the concept of *collaboration* transitions to an emphasis on the leader's influence on teams and enterprises. Community building in chapter 3 emphasizes the leader as a visionary who inspires the people with a "vision of change," convinces them that their fellow collaborators are "vital to the effort and equal to the challenge," and one who functions in a capacity of a facilitator who limits one party from benefiting too much from the other when collaborating (Ibarra & Henson, 2013, p. 32). The author cites *collaboration* as a by-product of leaders who have three skillsets: are passionately curious, modestly confident and mildly obsessed with the mission of the organization (p. 39). Whereas Abele, in chapter 3, focuses on building a team, the authors of chapter 4 go on to apply *collaboration* to a larger community. They found that collaborative "communities encourage people to continually apply their unique talents to group projects—and to become motivated by a collective mission" though they do not tell how to develop a collective mission (Ibarra & Henson, 2013, p. 46). Success in the organization is linked to four organizational efforts: (a) defining and building a shared purpose, (b) cultivating an ethic of contribution, (c) developing processes that enable people to work together in flexible but disciplined projects, and (d) creating an infrastructure in which *collaboration* is valued and rewarded (p. 46). Examples are given from different organizations, but the main concept is the same: the companies that succeed now will be those that build a "strong collaborative community" and the leader facilitates this environment (p. 57).

Chapters 5 and 6 highlight two concepts that may be familiar to some who are acquainted with *collaboration* literature: silo-busting and harnessing informal networks. In chapter 5, Gulati emphasizes four sets of activities that could be called the 4 Cs

necessary for silo busting: coordination across boundaries, cooperation that is customer focused, capability to deliver customer focused solutions and connection to partners in an endeavor. These four activities are highlighted three times in the chapter and seem to be organized around a single purpose: collaborating to focus on the customer (e.g., see Gulati, 2013, p. 62). Of course, the catalyst for these four activities is upper management who, once again, sets the tone for their organization, but the hope is that top management will foster an atmosphere that will result in uniting “resources to focus directly on customer needs” and thus bust the silos in the process (Ibarra & Henson, 2013, p. 78).

In chapter 6, the main concept is, not to appear too simplistic, to harness the interpersonal efforts of employees to bust silos and connect for the benefit of the organization. The chapter emphasizes the need to allow networking amongst employees but also to develop “formal management structures” to harness the fruit of such interaction (Ibarra & Henson, 2013, p. 79). The authors of this article contend that “communities work best if they have clear accountability and management oversight” and that effective “communities tackle real problems for senior management” (p. 81). They highlight four principles to govern such communities: (a) focus on issues important to the organization, (b) establish community goals and deliverables, (c) provide real governance, and (d) set high management expectations (pp. 82-85). Though one may see the value of structure, they might be left pondering: Why does management need to harness the productivity of informal networks? The answer is, according to the authors, that it will generate the betterment of the whole organization which benefits employees involved in the process.

The big picture of chapters 7 through 9 is that they appear to be highlighting helping and hindering forces to *collaboration*. Perhaps this was intentional by the *Harvard Business Review* staff after considering the various concepts already noted, but nonetheless it causes the reader to pause to consider some aspects of reality that can affect *collaboration*. First, chapter 7 outlines how working through conflict is necessary in order to have effective *collaboration*. The authors contend that one cannot “improve *collaboration* until you’ve addressed the issue of conflict” (Ibarra & Henson, 2013, p. 92). Six strategies are offered to manage conflict, case studies are cited and the conclusion is similar to the introduction: conflict “can be valuable to a company that knows how to manage it” (p. 111). Chapter 8 switches gears and focuses on a potential helping tool for *collaboration*: utilizing emergent social software platforms (ESSPs).

Specifically, the author shares how he coined the term “Enterprise 2.0 to highlight the fact that smart companies are embracing Web 2.0 technologies, as well as the underlying approach to *collaboration* and creation of content” (Ibarra & Henson, 2013, p. 113). He gives a “breakdown” of what he means by the term (p. 116) and lists six benefits a company can yield by utilizing ESSPs. This chapter also attempts to dispel five myths associated with Enterprise 2.0. In addition to chapters 7 and 8, chapter 9 shares one more possible hindering force to *collaboration*: attempting *collaboration* when it would be more beneficial not to. The author shares how there are costs associated with *collaboration* that must be considered in a fast-paced business world. He also tells of how one must calculate the return, opportunity cost and the *collaboration* cost to an organization before deciding to devote large amounts of time to *collaboration*. Overall, leaders are counseled to never “forget that the goal of collaboration is not collaboration

but, rather, business results that would be impossible without it” (p. 131). Since it is a business endeavor, time, which *collaboration* takes, is of the essence and it sometimes is better to be decisive instead of collaborative.

The last chapter was probably the most clarifying of the whole book. Before collaborating the “collaborative architecture” of an organization must be considered (Ibarra & Henson, 2013, p. 137). The authors list four main modes of *collaboration* with corresponding examples plus a handy chart for quick reference (p. 141). They also cite Apple as an example of a company that used more than one mode in a given company situation or decision (p. 149). The basic concept is that “companies can use a combination of collaboration modes simultaneously to support their strategies” (p. 149). This is helpful because each organization is different and contextualizing *collaboration* is important for its successful implementation.

Overall, this book provides food for thought to the business field, but also lends itself to the non-profit sector. Volunteer organizations can learn a lot from the principles of involving members of the organization in the establishment of goals, listening to those “below” the ministry leader and the various helping or hindering forces presented in this volume. However, to truly understand the concept of *collaboration* philosophically, one will have to consider another source for no definition of the term was found in this source.

Collaboration Begins With You

Ken Blanchard, Parisi-Carew, and Ripley provide a very helpful resource in the book *Collaboration Begins With You: Be a Silo Buster* (2015). This book, though narrative in style, emphasizes in one of the clearest ways, principles of collaborative leadership. It begins with a workplace story where everyone was “protecting their own

interests” which resulted in the development of a product that provided profit for a department but not the whole company (p. 10). The Vice President in the story begins to evaluate the process the company went through in producing the product and ends up doing some real heart searching. It is at this time in the story line that a business coach presents herself. This coach guides the main character to discover principles of *collaboration* that he can apply at his company. Many concepts emerge, but from the beginning the main lesson is, “we had to focus on everything from our vision and values to how individuals at every level could feel they were making a real contribution” (p. 11). The book goes on to define *collaboration* as the “environment that promotes communication, learning, maximum contribution, and innovation—which, of course, all lead to healthy profits” (pp. 15-16). Such an environment does begin with leaders, but not necessarily the top leaders in an organization—though *collaboration* would permeate an organization faster if the support of upper management was present (Blanchard et al., 2015, p. 17).

The beginning of *collaboration* is with each individual in an organization—it begins with the individual (p. 17)! For when one’s heart is right, “you want to bring out the best in others. Tap into the wealth of knowledge all around you. Utilize different opinions and perspectives . . . the more diverse the perspectives in the room, the better” (Blanchard et al., 2015, p. 18). Furthermore, when it comes to promotion, the idea is put forth that, “because collaboration begins with each individual, the only people who should be promoted to leadership positions are those who allow others to contribute” (p. 26). For it is by considering the ideas of “everyone, you will not only deepen the

collective mindset of collaboration within the company, but also drive out silos and increase productivity”

(p. 26).

As a result of fostering an open, listening environment, conflict may naturally result. However, the key to handling conflict “is to make sure people understand it’s okay to have an opposing view; however, it’s important that the conflict doesn’t become personal. If it does, that’s when the leader needs to step in, stop the exchange, and get people back on track” (Blanchard et al., 2015, p. 27). From this statement, it seems clear that the positional leader does have a role to play in the continuing process of *collaboration*: a *facilitator* who fosters an atmosphere of safety. This is why the authors go on to stress that “people need to feel safe to be who they are—to speak up when they have an idea, or to speak out when they feel something isn’t right. They also need to trust that they won’t be punished if something goes wrong” (p. 32). The need for a safe environment in order to foster innovation was also noted in a study by Shanker, Bhanugopan, van der Heijden, and Ferrell (2017, p. 74) who stated that members of an organization need “to feel safe in groups and at work so that they will not be reluctant to derive *and* share new ideas.”

At this juncture, one may easily point to the value of *collaboration* when dealing with company problems or evaluating failures, but what about in developing a corporate purpose or vision? Though it is acknowledged that it is the leader’s “responsibility to set the vision and direction. It’s important that others contribute to crafting the vision, but it’s up to the leader to make sure it’s set in stone” (Blanchard et al., 2015, p. 48). Furthermore, a “clear purpose unites everyone around a common objective, values guide

behavior, and goals provoke action – but only when the entire organization has a chance to contribute” (p. 49). What does the participation of the entire organization look like?

Well, the rest of the book shows a narrative account of what it could look like:

1. Input from various department leaders in a round table type format (p. 51).
2. Together revisit the corporate purpose statement and brainstorm ways to draft a contextualized one that aligns with the corporate statement (p. 53).
3. Together define values that are in line with the purpose statement (p. 53).
4. Together set goals which will focus everyone’s behavior (p. 59).
5. Identify any obstacles to the accomplishment of the purpose/goals (pp. 68-69).
6. Continue the practice of open communication in order to continue an atmosphere of *collaboration* (p. 82).

Overall, the leader must foster an environment where a team can UNITE: Utilize differences; Nurture safety and trust; Involve others in crafting a clear purpose, values, and goals; Talk openly; and Empower themselves and others (Blanchard et al., 2015, pp. 138-140). Such a united team can produce an environment where people “at every level” feel “empowered to contribute in a variety of ways, including brainstorming sessions” on a variety of topics (p. 132). It seems clear at this juncture that *collaboration* to establish a purpose and goals in an organization is important. However, some deficiencies in mission statement processes must also be noted.

Resulting Deficiencies in Previous Mission Statement Practices

Though several literature sources point to the value of collaborating to develop a purpose for an organization, other sources point out deficiencies in the manner in which

the statements are generated. There are many deficiencies noted, but for the sake of this research the deficiencies will be limited to four in number. Specifically, the oft-cited deficiencies are: First, the top-down development of mission statements with executives soliciting little or no input from members of the organization outside of management will be considered. Second, the high density of language in the mission statement document. Third, the lack of readability of many mission statements will be highlighted. Fourth, the inability of some organizations to clearly differentiate between mission, vision and values is cited. Last, these deficiencies will point to major shift in literature in the leadership field that denotes a more collaborative approach is necessary.

Lack of Participation

We begin with the lack of participation outside of the top management. It has already been noted that participation is needed for any lasting change to take place within an organization. Cahill and Sedrak (2012) point to the need to adapt healthcare leadership theories to take into consideration the entrance of the Millennials to the workplace. Specifically, “research says that millennials demand constant feedback and interpret silence as negative. In contrast, older employees prefer to just do their jobs and are content to receive little feedback” (Cahill & Sedrak, 2012). With the generations shifting, so does the process for developing mission statements.

Whereas in the past it would be perfectly acceptable for the pastor or business leader to develop and cast the vision with the rest preferring to “just do their jobs” (Cahill & Sedrak, 2012), the next generation is more participatory and therefore sees deficiencies in the previous methods because of the lack of participation from those not in upper

management. Also, as was already noted in the shift in literature since the 1990s, the top-down mode of leadership that was prevalent is in major need of revision.

The lack of participation is underscored by Mullane (2003), who does a masterful job of summarizing the history of the mission statement field since 1980, lists the pros and cons of using a mission statement, and then cites research projects in 1994 and 1997 that document dissatisfaction with the process of developing a statement (p. 448). He goes on to make an enlightening summary of where our focus should be:

The literature indicates that creating and using a mission statement can foster a shared value system, a focus on common objectives, teamwork, behavioral guidelines, and emotional commitment to the company. . . The literature also suggests that a proper process must be used to develop a useful mission statement rather than one that simply decorates an office wall. (p. 449).

Mullane continues by acknowledging that the process will vary from “firm to firm,” but there should be a process where “top management” is committed along with organization members “being involved to produce a mission that will evoke positive emotional response” (p. 449). The article concludes by citing two examples of processes that highlight the value of involving both top management and organization members. Mullane is not stating a revolutionary idea, years earlier Lucas (1998) stated, “Input also must come from—*especially from*—our people.” Truly, lack of participation is a deficiency that needs to be alleviated because what appears to be a full-blown paradigm shift in the literature is underway (as noted above), and part of this paradigm shift is the involvement of many in a process.

Mission Statement Density

While lack of participation may be one deficiency, a second deficiency is the density of the wording of the statement itself. In a 2011 study, Cady, Wheeler, DeWolf,

and Brodke analyzed data collected by Jeffrey Adams which involved “approximately 300 American corporations” and provided a “good cross-section of heterogeneous companies from dozens of industries” (Cady et al., 2011, p. 69). They found that on “average; nearly 12 different concepts were discussed per [mission] statement and 18 different concepts per company. There were many, many instances of organizations packing up to 20 strategic and descriptive words and concepts into a very short statement” (p. 75).

The main problem with using such “high density” statements is that there were no attempts to explain what such concepts meant even though the company felt it was important to include them in the statement. In the opinion of Cady and others (2011), the concepts may not have been “important enough to explain what it meant or how it would be applied practically” (p. 76). Therefore, when going through the effort to draft a statement, a group should try to keep the wording of that statement accessible to the majority of the members of the organization by carefully wording it.

Readability of Mission Statements

A third deficiency is the readability of the mission statement. This is a kindred concept to that of the *high density* idea in the previous objection, but Sattari, Pitt, and Caruana (2011) take this deficiency a step further. In a content analysis from “a random sample of 100 firms in the *Fortune 500* annual rankings” appropriate scores were “employed to investigate the readability of the mission statements” (Sattari et al., 2011, p. 282). In addition to this analysis, the article goes on to cite literature noting the “importance of readability in mission statements” and the process for the development of a mission statement that encompasses “readability as an important component” (p. 283).

Sattari et al. point to the need to do a content analysis of mission statements. Their findings are revealing.

The content analysis was based upon looking at the number of words and sentences in each mission statement. To aid them in this endeavor the researchers used “the MS Word spelling and grammar function that includes both the Flesch Reading Ease Score and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Score” (Sattari et al., 2011, p. 286). The findings indicate that the Flesch Reading Ease score for all firms in the sample was 27.8. What does this mean? The article states that they were looking at a 100-point index in which the higher the score is the more readable the statement is. They believe “that most organisations that make use of this score would aim for a minimum score of 60, it is clear that the mission statements of the firms in our sample are abysmally low” (p. 287).

Sattari et al. (2011), conclude their study by saying “that on average, the mission statements are not that readable, and that in the case of many of them, the mission statements assume the readings skills of a university graduate” (p. 290). In other words, the statement bypasses a huge segment of the organization whose reading level is not of the university level. Furthermore, “[e]ven where the target audience is sophisticated, a less readable mission statement will not interest them and motivate them” (Satari et al., 2011, p. 290).

If readability was isolated to just a few firms, then such a deficiency would not need to be noted. However, in a recent “text mining” study by Alshameri, Greene, and Srivastava (2012) the “mission and vision statements of 772 companies in the context of globalization, innovation and strategy” were profiled, and the terms used in such statements appeared cumbersome (Alshameri et al., 2012, p. 237). The conclusion drawn

was that future studies could reveal a very real problem: the readability of a mission statement may be a factor in whether or not members of the organization are motivated to accomplish that mission (p. 237). The use of text-mining is still a recent development, but for now it appears to validate the conclusions of Sattari et al., and others that many mission statements are not only dense, but also that they are not being understood by the average person in the organization who reads them.

Readability is important because Bartkuss, Glassman, and McAfee (2000) noted years ago that the mission statement is primarily a communication tool and can be used to communicate “product and market objectives to stakeholders.” Since it is a communication tool, it must be written in a way that is readable. Bartkuss et al. concluded that the best mission statements “simply define the company’s business and suggest a future goal.” If the purposes of mission statements are to state a reason for existence or a future goal, as Bartkuss and others suggest, then readability is of utmost importance to the stakeholders and the general member of the organization because it is they who need to have buy-in when it comes to the reason for existence and future goals. In a more recent article by the same aforementioned authors, they noted when mission statements “include phrases that refer to what many may view as the fundamental rules of business have a significant positive relationship with financial performance: be concerned with your employees, be responsible to the society in which you do business, and emphasize and communicate your value system” (Bartkuss et al., 2006, p. 93). Churches would do well to carefully draft mission statements that are readable and which include the three elements mentioned in these two articles.

Not Distinguishing Between Mission, Vision, and Values

The fourth deficiency considered is that there is often confusion or an inability to distinguish between the mission, vision and values statements. Azaddin Salem Khalif, argues for the need to distinguish the mission statement by saying, “The mission statement is usually depicted as the starting point in the strategic planning process. . . . Research shows its increasing popularity as a strategic planning tool (Bart, 2001; Bartkuss et al., 2000). Yet, the claim of a “real value of the mission statement is rarely substantiated and established” (Azaddin, 2011, p. 25).

Furthermore, the paper argues that mission statements lack the three items: function, focus and form (Azaddin, 2011). What may be the cause of this lack? Azaddin states it is “the apparent lack of agreement of what the mission statement is and whether and how it is different from vision, values, strategic intent, philosophy, and other relevant concepts used by business leaders to strategically manage their organizations.” His stated goal is to define the mission statement, present its function and qualities of effective mission statements, “discuss the impact of mission statements on performance,” and end with conclusions and recommendations (p. 26).

This article does a good job of conducting a literature review and serves to point out that amongst such literature, there is a need for further clarification of the role of the mission statement (Azaddin, 2011, pp. 27-32). After citing numerous sources, Azaddin concludes by saying:

Some of these statements, however, show the overlap between mission and vision by putting them in one statement . . . or an overlap between mission, vision, and values. . . . Other organizations have separately included mission, vision, and/or values in one document. (p. 32)

Clearly then, if such a challenge exists in the business world, who many in the non-profit realm have modeled their process after, then it is a deficiency that must be considered by religious organizations. A process must be developed to clearly differentiate between mission, vision, and values.

Implications

Four deficiencies have been considered that it would be well for businesses and non-profit organizations, including churches, to be aware of. Churches must be careful in adopting wholesale the concepts in the business world or they may experience the deficiencies that have been highlighted. In particular, a local congregation's mission statement process must consider more stakeholders than just the pastor and board (upper management), must consider carefully the wording of the mission statement in order to have it be memorable by many and must generate a readable document that clearly distinguishes between mission, vision, and values. If these deficiencies are met, then empirical evidence suggests there is great value in having a mission statement and it could help the overall organizational development of the church. We now turn to empirical evidence that validates the use of mission statements as a motivational tool.

Empirical Evidence for the Value of Mission Statements

As one reads about the pros and cons involved with developing mission statements, some questions emerge. Is there any value in continuing the practice of mission statement formulation? Does the use of mission statements and dialogue in an organization help overall group performance? Many generalized statements about the usefulness of mission statements abound, but empirical evidence appears to have been a

recent development. Alavi and Karami (2009) aptly describe this sentiment by saying that “[a] major shortcoming of the literature on mission statements is that very little is known empirically about the actual effectiveness and overall usefulness, and the relationship of mission statements to performance” (p. 555).

An Assertion of Consensus in Literature

Nevertheless, Alavi and Karami (2009) argue there is an overwhelming consensus in the literature that the development and management of business mission statements is “fundamental for the performance of any business” (p. 556). They believe that long accepted generalizations must be validated with empirical evidence, and so they conducted an “empirical survey of small and medium-sized enterprises located in science parks in the UK” with a postal questionnaire being the main data collecting instrument—which used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze the data (p. 555).

The findings of the research are indicative of not only the value of the mission statement, but also of the participatory *process* by which they should be generated (Alavi & Karami, 2009, pp. 560-561). There are four conclusions from the research: First, a significant and positive correlation was found between firm performance and the presence of a written mission statement. Second, the managers believed that a mission statement is necessary for promoting a sense of shared expectations among administration and all employees. A third conclusion is that organizational performance is significantly associated with the degree of non-managerial employees’ involvement in the process of mission statement development. Last, in developing a mission statement it is important to make sure “employees as well as CEOs/business owner managers are involved” (p. 560).

Apparently, as can be seen by Alavi and Karami's research, the process of developing a mission statement is important and hinges on the willingness of the leader to create an environment where both management and stakeholders provide input. Pearce and David wrote similarly years earlier noting that there is not direct empirical evidence for the use of mission statements but it is not unreasonable to conclude that there is an "integral role of mission statements in linking strategic planning with corporate performance" (Pearce & David, 1987, p. 113). Such concepts were already noted by Blanchard (2015) and earlier in the literature review in regards to business organizations, but what about the use of mission statements by churches?

Use of Mission Statements by Churches

While empirical evidence for the use of mission statements by businesses is ample, such evidence concerning the effective use of mission statements in churches is lacking. Some advocate that the origin of the mission statement as a tool has theological roots (Vizeu & Matitz, 2013), and while this may be the case, most of the empirical evidence for the use of mission statements appears to be coming from the business sector. Churches and other non-profits either have not questioned the use of the mission statement, are not using mission statements, or lack the resources to conduct similar research in the non-profit sector.

The closest likeness to empirical evidence that measuring personal and corporate visioning appears to be Natural Church Development (NCD). The author of this research, Christian Schwarz, endeavors to have churches think holistically when assessing church growth by taking a survey, followed by conversations about the results, developing a process to address the lowest score for their congregation, and then repeating the survey

on an annual basis (Schwarz, 1996). The survey assesses eight quality characteristics, with one of them being “empowering leadership” where a pastor is somewhat more of a relationship person and “partner-ship-oriented than their colleagues in declining churches” (p. 22).

A Participatory Process Used in Churches

How effective is it to have a participatory process to address strengths and weaknesses in a church? The answer is found in a follow-up book, where Schwarz computed the numerical growth of churches that participated in 31 months of Natural Church Development and found that “the average growth rate of all participating churches had increased by 51%” and the percentage of “transfer growth decreased, while the percentage of conversion growth increased” (Schwarz, 2005, p. 12). So, while empirical evidence may be lacking in the religious realm that specifically addresses the use of a mission statement, it can be shown that a participatory process assessing church health, with one of the factors focusing on participatory leadership, is beneficial to a congregation.

Implications

With empirical evidence and the value of having a mission statement bolstered, we now turn to methods that can be employed by a leader to develop a process that includes most members of an organization in the formation of such a statement.

Summary of Two Effective Mission Statement Processes

Literature and empirical evidence point to the need for a collaborative process in developing the mission statement that involves both the leader and members of an

organization. Therefore, to measure the effectiveness of a process one should take into consideration whether or not the process alleviates the aforementioned deficiencies and is participatory. Also, a balance is needed in an organization's culture in order to create an atmosphere of *collaboration*. After all, a leader cannot be totally passive.

A Balance Needed

Latham, in his seminal work on motivation entitled "Work Motivation" shows that a balance between "authoritarianism" and a need for "independence" varied based upon the individuals within an organization with some employees being "highly productive under participatory leaders" and others having high productivity with "a highly directive style of supervision" (Latham, 2012, p. 112). Latham's observation is clear: one must consider a balance between participation of stakeholders and some exercise of strong leadership to help direct the organization. This is also stated in another way by Ibarra and Hansen (2013) as "loosening control while not losing control" (p. 12). As a result, some supervision is necessary and the collaborative leader must have "clear authority" in order to create a collaborative environment (p. 11). In other words, there must be a creative agent in the sometimes chaotic process of *collaboration*.

Criteria in Evaluating Mission Statement Processes

Adding the need for dialogue and Latham's comments on participative decision making to our list of criteria, we begin to have a litmus test to evaluate each of the processes we will consider. Here are some key questions to ask in order to evaluate each process:

1. Does the process create a safe environment where all in an organization feel they can give input (Dessel & Ali, 2012, p. 124)?
2. Is the process participatory, extracting the wisdom of the entire group (Surowiecki, 2005)?
3. Does the process have a strong leadership component where management/the pastor give direction and help the group become committed to a specific “high goal” (Latham, 2012, p. 114)?
4. Does the process involve the main appointed leader (CEO/Pastor), department leaders, and the general members of the organization (Blanchard 2015)?
5. Does the process have the participation of all members of the organization in drafting the mission/vision statements and goals (Blanchard 2015)?
6. Does the process have specific action steps that a broad base of members in the organization can join together to accomplish?
7. Does the process and mission statement itself avoid the deficiencies cited earlier?

With these seven questions in mind, we will evaluate two church-related processes that seem to answer most of these questions in the affirmative. One will be from a Seventh-day Adventist and the other from a Catholic context.

A Seventh-day Adventist Approach

As one evaluates books on the process of developing a shared missional focus, it often appears that a synthesis is needed. The two books that seemed to provide a clear process that is both participatory and involves key steps by leadership were from different faith traditions but very pertinent to the project context. The first was of

Seventh-day Adventist origin and found in a book by Russell Burrill, entitled *Waking the Dead* (2004). Burrill's premise is that when a church needs revitalization it "must go back to the beginning and start from scratch with a new dream or vision" (2004, p. 49).

He goes on to lay out a process that I summarize in list form:

1. With the group begin asking four questions to "re-create the dream" (p. 49).

- a. Why are we here? After members have shared some of their views "on why the Church is here, it is helpful to ask them to support their understanding with Scripture" (p. 50).

- b. Where will our present course take us? This helps them see a need to change.

- c. Is this where we want to go?

- d. In order to fulfill our destiny as a church, what must be changed?

"[C]hange must bring about the fulfillment of our mission. The mission consciousness is what must drive the change process" (p. 51).

2. Have the leaders write a short paragraph describing the church as they see it in five years, if it lived up to God's ideal for it (Burrill, 2004, p. 52). Have these leaders read their statements and look for areas of commonality.

3. From these areas of agreement you can now build your vision of the church by creating a vision that is formed "collectively" (p. 52).

4. Next, you formulate five year goals to reach the vision. You should start with the vision and work backwards from year five asking "where should you be in four years, three years, two years, and one year?" (pp. 52-53).

5. List what needs to be done to attain the goal for each year and have an assigned date for completion for each of these action steps along with who is responsible for that step (p. 53).

6. Once the church leadership has developed the vision, and a plan for reaching their goals, the hard work is done. Now the vision needs to find wider acceptance in the whole church. Burrill states that “during this stage many sermons on the mission of the church should be preached, helping the church regain a sense of mission direction” (p. 53).

7. After the vision has been cast in the sermons, then introduce the “vision that the leadership has so carefully developed” (p. 53).

8. Last, evaluate and discard anything that is not in harmony with the vision while developing new “programs” that are in harmony with the vision (p. 53).

Burrill appears to have made a concerted effort to foster a collaborative approach to establishing the vision and missional direction of the church, but appears to be using elements of the pre-1990s top-down approach to establishing an organization’s purpose cited earlier. However, if a church were to follow this process, then at least four of the seven deficiencies mentioned above are not answered in the affirmative (1, 5, 6, and 7). With such deficiencies, a question emerges: Is there a process that could start with the members of the church, and then from that input the leaders could guide the church to develop their mission/vision statements?

A Catholic Approach

Years before Burril’s book, a collaborative process was developed. The process was utilized and fostered in the Catholic Church and came as a result of Vatican II where

local churches were encouraged to establish an articulated local mission statement that complimented the worldwide statement. The book begins with an understanding of *collaboration* and the mission of the laity (Cooper, 1993, pp. 6-20) and then goes on to share a process that appears to be heavily influenced by the concepts of *collaboration* that were highlighted previously in this chapter. This process is summarized in list form:

1. Prepare the congregation for *collaboration* through communion with God (Cooper, 1993, pp. 27-46)

2. The pastor and leadership team attend courses on pastoral leadership where six two hour sessions are presented on group leadership dynamics and the Vatican II document. These sessions are given by a trained theologian and a human development specialist (p. 74).

3. The pastoral council organizes the entire parish into “home-based groups averaging ten participants” (p. 74).

4. All participants receive a letter that outlines the process of developing a mission statement, invites each parishoner to participate in four two hour sessions and offers the partipants a Vatican II document to use in the group meetings (Cooper, 1993, p. 74).

5. Each small group engages in reading one of the Vatican II documents, discussing its “contribution to the mission of the universal church” and then articulates a “draft proposal of the parish mission statement,” which is communicated back to the pastoral team (p. 74). Each group is lead by trained and experienced facilitators.

6. The pastoral team then is “responsible for collating the proposals for the parish missions statement and identifying the specific categories contained in the Vatican II

documents. This composite picture gathered from the groups forms the rough draft of the mission statement” (p. 75).

7. The entire congregation is invited to participate in a parish wide evaluation of the mission statement through bulletin announcements, letters to all parishioners and the leaders of the “home-based groups” (p. 75).

8. The entire parish refines, amends, and approves “the parish mission statement by coming together at a parish assembly” which has a prayer session, outline of the meeting, discernment process that created the draft, and then the “consequences of ratifying the parish mission statement” (p. 75). *Collaboration* is entered into and the mission statement final draft approved. The pastor “concludes deliberations by thanking the entire assembly for their collaboration” and ends the meeting with prayer (p. 75).

9. Celebration of the statement begins when the mission statement is displayed in the church the following week after its adoption (Cooper, 1993, p. 76). This is followed by all ministries beginning to evaluate their programs based upon the mission statement, a liturgy celebration is planned for one month later, the pastoral team coordinates communicating the statement to all members along with faith building materials.

10. The pastoral team begins to develop a spiritual growth plan (Bible readings, communion events, etc.) to help point to the spiritual focus of the statement (p. 79). This includes a spiritual formation week six months after the statement is adopted (pp. 79-81).

11. The parish schedules a review of the mission statement for five to seven years after its adoption (pp. 87-93).

12. The strategic planning process occurs after the mission statement process and is “designed for all engaged in ministry. . .[and] promotes communion” (p. 92).

Implications

After considering the deficiencies in mission statement processes and the need for more collaborative methods to be developed, it becomes clear that a synthesis of the approaches of Burrill's and Cooper's books would be a great value to any church that wishes to engage in a collaborative methodology to establish a corporate mission focus. With such a process, many deficiencies would be alleviated and the statement could serve to enhance organizational performance.

Summary of Literary Findings

The above works, though they do not represent an exhaustive view of related theory, do provide a literary foundation for *collaboration* to establish a missional focus. These works are limited to the issues pertaining to a broad overview of history, a transition in the leadership literature to a more collaborative style of leading, some often noted deficiencies, ways to alleviate those deficiencies in order that the full value of the statement may be realized, and the need for a synthesis of two approaches for current ministry contexts. It is the goal of chapter 4 to develop and implement a collaborative, biblical approach that takes the findings of both the theological reflection and this literature review into account while at the same time synthesizing the two methodologies cited here.

CHAPTER 4

A COLLABORATIVE INTERVENTION PLAN

Introduction

The project context, a theology of *collaboration* to develop a missional focus and literature which emphasized the need for a collaborative process to develop the purpose/mission of an organization were considered in previous chapters. One of the main deficiencies noted in Chapter 3 was a lack of participation or input from “employees” or stakeholders (Cahill & Sedrak, 2012, etc.). While other deficiencies were also noted, the process outlined below attempts to have as its primary function the remediation of this deficiency while being mindful of other aforementioned pitfalls in the process. Furthermore, in Chapter 3 two processes that exhibited principles of *collaboration* in their attempts to direct churches in a missional focus were considered. The content of this chapter outlines what the project at the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church entailed as it utilized a synthesis of these principles.

Specifically, the pastor needed to utilize both listening and directive tools in his role as a *facilitator* to foster a collaborative atmosphere. Various tools were used to create such an atmosphere with several desired outcomes. The desired outcomes of this project were three in number: (a) Improvement in quantitative data measurements in giving, membership and baptisms, (b) improvement in the qualitative measurements as evidenced by an increase in Church Health Assessment scores, and (c) the drafting of

mission and vision statements along with a tentative five-year plan. This last outcome was the overarching goal for the whole project. Most of the elements of the implementation plan had a dialogical and collaborative emphasis instead of the pastor being the sole visionary. There were exceptions to this rule where some pastoral direction was utilized (Latham, 2012, p. 114), but such areas primarily focused on the selection of content to foster a collaborative environment.

The project methodology and implementation involved five elements. First, an atmosphere of dialogue with God and each other was fostered by the pastor. There are several tools that the pastor utilized to create this atmosphere, including the intentional selection of content for the sermonic calendar, board meeting devotions, times of corporate prayer, a personal devotions emphasis, and the conducting of a Church Health Assessment (CHA) at the beginning of the project. Second, *collaboration* was used to establish mission and vision statements through the use of a number of sessions that were intentionally designed to involve all the members who wished to participate. Third, the pastor facilitated, with input from local church leaders and the general membership, ways to keep the missional focus progressing in the congregation. The fourth area considered was methods to keep the congregation in continual *collaboration* with God by a planned annual emphasis on personal devotions and corporate prayer. Last, a second CHA was conducted by March of 2016 to measure if the congregation's self-perception had changed any since the beginning of the project.

Fostering an Atmosphere of Dialogue

Maxwell (2007) states that to “grow the organization, grow the leader” (p. 9). When the pastor begins an emphasis, this element could easily be overlooked with the

busyness of bringing together all of the details but the personal devotions of the leader should form the starting point for any revitalization effort. Another voice that emphasizes the need for pastors to have a strong spiritual connection is Joe Kidder. Commenting on growing and declining Seventh-day Adventist churches, Kidder (2011) states that of the factors that contributed to growth none “was more important than faith-based optimism” (p. 31). Faith-based optimism is a winning attitude of the leader that is “based on faith and trust in God” (p. 31). What can a leader do to foster faith-based optimism? Kidder believes that a personal knowledge of God’s Word is necessary because a leader with faith-based optimism decides “to interpret events in light of God’s promises and activities in the world” (p. 31). In other words, a leader believes that God can work just as powerfully today as He did in antiquity and this belief is born out of personal spiritual disciplines.

Years before Maxwell or Kidder wrote their leadership works, Ellen White had specific thoughts on this matter to share with Seventh-day Adventist ministers. She told pastors to guard “jealously your hours for prayer and self-examination,” and to set apart “some portion of each day for a study of the Scriptures and communion with God” (White, 1910, para. 14). Such a practice is also in line with what was discovered in the theological reflection chapter where unity with Christ was emphasized. Therefore, the first component of encouraging dialogue with God and each other is for the leader to practice spiritual disciplines in their own life.

A Plan for Personal Devotions

Specifically, in the project context the pastor planned their schedule to allow more time for prayer, study, and self-examination. Chapter 2 emphasized that the provision for

collaboration was Jesus' death on the cross, so a collaborative process should develop out of devotions that reflect on this sacrifice. Last, during some of these times of devotion the pastor asked God to guide them in the writing of the *Vision Quest* dialogue sessions in light of what they had learned from the principles gleaned from Chapters 2 and 3. Session guides, referred to in more detail later, were developed and revised as a result of this strong emphasis on personal time with God. Also, the practice of listening to God enable the minister to listen to His people and be attentive to God's voice speaking through them.

Fostering Dialogue With Key Leaders and the Congregation

An important group to intentionally involve in dialogue was the elders and ministry leaders. This began with the elders by having regular elder's meetings and periodic meals together. This may seem elementary and standard practice for most pastors. However, this had not occurred in the recent past at this ministry context and the re-establishment of this practice communicated to the elders that their input was vitally important to the overall direction of the Church. Topics covered at these meetings were partially determined by the needs of the elders. Other topics were be missional in nature. Some missional content included considering the future of the church by using the four questions to "re-create the dream" mentioned in Chapter 3 (Burrill, 2004, p. 49). These questions were also posited to the church board.

Dialogue With the Church Board

Dialogue with members of the church board began by presenting the need for a missional focus, asking them Burrill's four questions, requesting them to approve the

DMin Project and using devotionals at the beginning of each meeting that focused on our mission. A resource was the 2011 devotional book by Dwight Nelson entitled, *The Chosen*. This devotional book has many concise topics that are missional in nature. The utilization of this book for a missional emphasis began in April 2014 (see Appendix A for a list of the devotionals that were chosen). This devotional took place, as is customary in most Adventist churches, before the business items on the agenda and was followed by opening prayer. Though including the elders and church board at the outset of the project is standard practice, it cannot be overlooked. Including these two groups of leaders was an attempt to evidence one of the criteria for an effective mission statement process that was outlined in Chapter 3: The process must involve the main appointed leader (CEO/Pastor), department leaders, and the general members of the organization. The involvement of leaders at the outset also begins to foster a safe environment where all feel they can give input (Dessell & Ali, 2012, p. 124).

Sermonic Calendar

Meanwhile, a sermonic calendar was developed to emphasize “oneness” which subtly promoted dialogue with each other and with God. Some may refer to this as casting the vision (Burrill, 2004, p. 53). However, I see it as modeling what it looks like when personal dialogue with God overflows into the pulpit. This calendar served as a journal of sorts to consult when considering future sermonic content. Also, this document was utilized as a communication tool for bulletin and website content. Elders periodically received information from this document when they were encouraged to preach a series of sermons with me. Chapter 3 outlined criteria for an effective mission statement process and included the query, “Does the process have a strong leadership component” that

helps the group become committed to a specific “high goal” (Latham, 2012, p. 114)? I believe the selection of content to foster an environment of dialogue and answered this question in the positive.

Church Health Assessment

The sermonic calendar led to a plan to promote and implement a church health assessment that was designed by the Church Growth Department of the Northern California Conference (n.d.). This assessment was made available online in an anonymous fashion in the hopes that it would reveal the self-perception of the Anderson Church at the first *Vision Quest* session. Bulletin announcements, e-mail, the church website, and a weekly newsletter was utilized to inform congregants how to access this tool. Also, some form of access was provided at the church office for members who did not have internet access readily available. The goal was to have 50 respondents to this assessment by August 2014. The results of the evaluation were presented to the congregation during the *Vision Quest* sessions that began September 20, 2014. Such a tool helped answer the question that was posed in Chapter 3: Is the process participatory, extracting the wisdom of the entire group? (Surowiecki, 2005). This question as answered in part by utilizing the assessment tool, but was further answered by the *Vision Quest* sessions.

10 Days of Prayer

Once the congregational assessment was completed, the next tool that was used to foster an atmosphere of dialogue with God was 10 of prayer prior to the *Vision Quest* sessions. The materials were from the General Conference website

www.tendaysofprayer.org. Specifically, the guides from a previous year (2012) were utilized due to their emphasis on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The goal of this corporate prayer time was to foster unity amongst believers and corporate dialogue with God for His leading for the future of our church. This put into practice a concept from the theological reflection chapter, where we learned that Jesus has all authority and His disciples must *corporately* come to Him to receive that power (Matt 28:20). Practically, the 10 days of prayer were from September 9-19, 2014, and ended the day before the *Vision Quest* sessions begin. The leader's guides that were available on the website were used along with a teleconference line so that members that were unable to make it to the prayer meeting at the church joined by phone each morning.

Collaboration to Establish Mission and Vision Statements

While the 10 days of prayer were being planned, the various communication outlets of the church contained announcements regarding the *Vision Quest* sessions. Avenues to included were the church website, church e-mail list, Facebook page, bulletin inserts, a weekly newsletter, monthly emphasis during board/elders' meetings, announcements from the pulpit and two letters to the membership. These letters included: (a) 10 Days of Prayer materials, and (b) *Vision Quest* rationale and schedule (see Appendix B for both of these items). Additionally, visits to homebound as well as the non-attending members took place in order that the initiative included these often forgotten participants of the church. The elders, deacons, and deaconesses conducted these visits in conjunction with the pastor.

Also, the elders were intentionally involved during the *Vision Quest* sessions.

Specifically, they were asked to lead the congregation during times of prayer. Overall, the goal of these communication mediums was not to just promote the sessions, but to model the value of dialogue and inclusiveness leading up to the sessions. Just as was noted in Chapter 3, one of the main criteria in evaluating a mission statement process was to reflect on whether or not it involves as many people in the organization as possible (Dessell & Ali, 2012). The purpose of intentionally using the aforementioned communication mediums was to request the participation of as many members as possible.

Conducting the *Vision Quest* Sessions

After the general promotion of the *Vision Quest* sessions, all members were invited to attend the four meetings held September 20 to October 11, 2014. The goal of inviting the entire membership was to get as many of the members of the organization involved in the process so that they can help draft the missional document. This answered the question posed in Chapter 3: Does the process have the participation of all members of the organization in drafting the mission/vision statements and goals? Specifically, members were encouraged to attend each meeting or, in the event they are unable to attend, to pray during the time each meeting occurs for the Lord to lead us as a people to consider our biblical mission (see the section in Chapter 2 entitled, “Establishment of the New Testament Church Through Collaboration”). The sessions themselves utilized multimedia, small groups, and a format that helped each session accomplish its particular objective(s). The sessions took place in the sanctuary on Sabbath afternoons with the order of service being similar each time. The order of service included: a welcome by the pastor; singing of a theme song (“Be Thou My Vision”); group prayer time to seek God’s

guidance; a session overview and presentation by the Pastor; prayer from an elder for the Holy Spirit to guide our discussion groups; dividing into groups of six or less for breakout sessions with a facilitator guiding these groups through a discussion guide; last, a closing time of prayer by the pastor for God to reveal to us anything we should include or revisit at the next meeting.

Regarding the preliminary list of topics for each session, they were: (a) Biblical Foundations for Mission (drafting the mission statement), (b) Our Church and Its Context (visioning), (c) Ministry Milestones (the beginning of a strategic plan), (d) Keeping the Vision before Us (implementation suggestions for Church Board follow-up). In addition to guides for these sessions, there were “ballots” or feedback forms to be used at selected times to tally the overall sentiment of the group. The tentative content of each session is outlined below.

Vision Quest Session One: Biblical Foundations for Mission

After the welcome and theme song, members were asked to break up into groups of two or three for prayer. This was in line with the discovery in Chapter 2 that visioning is a “communal” process and not just the sole result of a single visionary (Zscheile, 2007, p. 59). This prayer time modeled the belief that God can and will speak through the whole Body—not just the pastor. After the time of prayer, the pastor made a presentation showing the life cycle of churches, trends of the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church along with the Church Health Assessment results and asked the question, “Where will our current course take us?” (Burrill, 2004, p. 50). Members were given time to respond to this question before the pastor moved on to the next section of the presentation. This time

of discussion was followed by a definition of “mission” and an explanation of what would happen in the group sessions. The pastor then invited an elder to the front and asked him or her to pray for God to guide the congregation before it began the group discussion session.

After this prayer for guidance, group guide number one was distributed. The groups were given 45 minutes to work through the guide before reconvening the main meeting. The purpose of breaking the larger group into smaller groups was to solicit as much input as possible and to utilize a similar method that was referred to in Chapter 3 (Cooper, 1993, pp. 6-20). Facilitators at each group guided members through the lesson and a secretary was appointed to report to the main group what their group drafted for a mission statement. This first session guide includes a format that was similar to each of the sessions: they were asked to consider Bible texts and Ellen White statements, consider the definition of “mission,” look at sample mission statements, draft their own statement, and synthesize it with commonalities of other group members. The small group facilitator led the group through the discussion guide while the secretary wrote down the initial draft of the group’s mission statement in order to report it to the main group.

Once reports were shared by the facilitators, the pastor then explained to the group what the next step in the process was and encouraged them that if they had any suggestions or changes to the statements they drafted, then they could submit them during the week. Session one then concluded with a closing prayer.

During the week the pastor gathered any other submissions made by members and typed them, along with the mission statements that were drafted by the groups during the

first session, onto a ballot. The ballot was then printed for the next session along with the guide for session two. An announcement was placed in the Sabbath bulletin encouraging all members to come and participate in the second session. This invitation was emphasized during the announcement period on the day of the session. Another avenue of invitation was e-mail. An e-mail was sent to the church e-mail list and church board during the week to encourage them to submit mission statement ideas. Additionally, board members were provided with some extra reading before the second *Vision Quest* session so they could effectively help permeate concepts of the article by Russel Burrill entitled, “Can Dying Churches be Resuscitated?” (2002). Additionally, the pastor recruited a member to tally the ballots during the second session. Last, the whole congregation received, via e-mail and printed form, the weekly newsletter that emphasized our “Mission Focus” by giving a brief report of what happened during the first *Vision Quest* session.

Vision Quest Session Two: Identifying Our Ministry Context and Vision

The second session on September 27, 2014, began in a similar fashion as the first that occurred the week before. The congregation sang the theme song and then divided into small groups for prayer. After this time of prayer, a mission statement ballot was distributed. This document contained all the mission statements that were drafted during the previous session or that were submitted during the week. The session participants were informed that the information attained from the ballots may be used for the DMin Project, were asked to rank the statements from one to five with one being their first choice and so on. Last, before the ballots were passed out the pastor reviewed with the

congregation some criteria to evaluate an effective mission statement: it needs to be specific, geographic in scope, and does not have dense wording. The reduction of dense wording was important to emphasize for it, arguably, helped alleviate one of the deficiencies in the drafting of mission statements that was noted in Chapter 3 (Sattari et al., 2011, p. 286). Participants were informed that the results would be tallied during a video clip and they had at least ten minutes to complete their ballots. Once the ballots were completed, they were given to the church member who agreed to tally them and the presentation began for session two.

The content for session two primarily focused on the need for visioning. The group was challenged to consider what God would reveal to them regarding the manner they should go about reaching their community—carrying out the mission. Vision was defined from dictionary and leadership sources (Malphurs, 1999) and the rationale for imagining a hopeful future given: that our health assessment shows areas we can improve upon and one of them is missional focus. Some Natural Church Development concepts were shared such as the “minimum factor” (Schwarz, 1996) along with demographics about the City of Anderson and data from needs assessment surveys filled out by community leaders. The purpose of sharing this preliminary data from the community was to help the group imagine specific needs in the community that they might meet as they accomplished their mission. These initial community surveys were the result of the ministry context paper that was assigned for completion during the DMin program. Following the presentation of demographics were the questions: (a) What could the fulfillment of God’s mission do to change the needs in our area? (b) What is God going to do about these needs through us as we accomplish His mission here?

After the questions were posed, the definition of vision was reiterated and one story of a church that saw a need in the community and met it was shared (available online at <https://vimeo.com/20094079>). This video was played while the final tally of the mission statement ballots was being completed. Once the video was over, the mission statement was typed into a slide and shown on the screen prior to breaking into groups for the session of the day.

An elder was invited to come to the front to ask God to guide our groups. Group guides were passed out and groups were given 45 minutes to work on the handout. Specifically, this guide had Scriptures to reference; Ellen White quotes to read on how she saw the work of God moving forward, the definition of vision; sample vision statements; space to draft a vision statement, and a synthesis space to write the statement the small group wishes to submit. Some of the facilitators read their groups' statement to the main group and the secretary submitted it to the pastor. The pastor then asked the group for permission to synthesize these drafts into one common statement that encompassed most of what had been shared. This is similar to the methodology Cooper suggested for the Catholic Church that was referenced in Chapter 3 (Cooper, 1993, p. 75). The emphasis was to ask permission from the main group to conduct this synthesis.

At the conclusion of the session the congregation was again invited to submit vision statement ideas to the pastor during the week. Also, during the week the members received a weekly newsletter that stated, "Our mission statement was voted and a lot of great ideas for how to accomplish it were shared. The next step is to revise the Vision Statement and list possible steps to accomplish it." The newsletter went on to provide the dates for the final two sessions (October 4 and 11) and invited all to participate. Last, a

prayer breakfast was promoted in this newsletter for October 12 to serve as a climax to the *Vision Quest* process. This prayer breakfast emphasized the need to have ongoing corporate dialogue with God for the accomplishment of the mission. This special time of prayer was promoted in the bulletin, on the website, and during the announcement period during the worship service.

Vision Quest Session Three: Milestones and the Beginning of a Strategic Plan

Session three, in all practicality, served as the beginning framework of what became a strategic plan for the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church. This session will have similar components of the previous sessions: theme song and prayer in groups to seek God's direction, etc. Following these now familiar segments a "ballot" of sorts was passed out. However, this time the ballot was the compiled and synthesized Vision Statement. The main group was informed that the statement was crafted by synthesizing the documents submitted by each individual and all the groups at the previous session along with additional ideas that were submitted during the week. They were then asked to proofread this document on their own and to write any suggestions on their copy of the paper in order to submit them to the pastor so he could type a revised draft. Ten minutes were given for this section of the session.

After the aforementioned parts, there was a brief presentation on the need to have God's guidance for carrying out the mission/vision statements. Emphasis was placed on the need for a balance in planning: to avoid the extremes of planning too much or not enough. The pastor pointed out his role in the future direction of the church: helping the church plan the work and providing resources to assist them in carrying out such plans.

Once the presentation was completed, the mission and vision statements were reviewed. After this review, an elder was asked to come to the front to invite God to guide the session time. Discussion guides were passed out for the groups to consider needs of the area and to rank the top ten needs that they would like to plan to minister to in the next five years. Specifically, the session guide focused on the question, “What can we do to carry out the mission to these people?” Following this question was a list of specific needs in our community that were attained from demographics and the ministry context paper that was developed at the beginning of 2014. The guide had space for them to list the top ten ways they wanted to try to meet those needs in the next five years. There was then a follow-up question, “Which two are you most passionate about accomplishing?”

Group facilitators, after giving adequate time for the group to fill in their sections privately, solicited feedback from group members by inviting them to share with the rest of the small group. While a person shared, the session form had space for group members to write down what was being shared. The group facilitator then helped the group synthesize the ideas into their top ten ways to meet the needs of the community. Facilitators shared the results of this summary with the larger group and the secretaries submitted the session sheets to the pastor.

Once the group session time was completed, the pastor outlined in a couple of presentation slides the next steps that would be taken. First, the group could continue to research ways to reach the community and submit ideas to the pastor until Wednesday of the next week. These ideas would be added to the ones already submitted and be drafted into a “ballot” which would be passed out at the next session. Next, the group would be

told that once the ballot was completed, that the pastor would organize the items into a five-year plan and the church board would be tasked with implementing the finalized list—possibly by including two items every year in the ministry calendar. Along with the implementation plan would be yearly prayer events, celebration Sabbaths, and an evangelistic reaping series. Last, the group was given a preview of the next week’s topic and the pastor had closing prayer.

Session Four: Revising the Mission/Vision Document and Vision Casting

Preparation for session four began by sending an e-mail reminder and solicitation of ideas for ministry milestones to the members that missed session three. This was sent by Sunday, October 5. Board members were given a final opportunity to shape the wording of the vision statement and to submit ideas for the ministry milestones ballot that will be handed out October 11. The reason for limiting feedback on the vision statement to the board was for the leadership to use the final session as a time to communicate their ideas to the larger body before they were referred back to the church board for implementation. In essence, this was to promote an opportunity for board members to have their ideas heard and critiqued by the larger body—a form of dialogue. In addition to the weekly newsletter and bulletin announcement to inform the members of the last session, along with where we were heading after the sessions ended, there was an elder’s meeting scheduled to further consider the direction of the church from the viewpoint of these key spiritual leaders. All of the suggestions that were gleaned from the members, board, and elders regarding ways to accomplish the mission/vision statements were compiled into a ballot for the final session on October 11.

During the final session there were once again familiar elements to the previous sessions: theme song, time of group prayer, ballot, presentation, group time, etc. However, this time the ballot featured a ranking system of the top ten ministry milestones. *Vision Quest* participants were asked to rank the items listed on the sheet from one to ten with one being the item of first importance in their opinion and so on. The ballots were collected and the group was told that the results would be revealed at the “Unveiling” worship service on November 1. The “Unveiling” service was similar to the spiritual emphasis after the posting of the mission statement that Cooper referred to (see Chapter 3).

The presentation following the ballot time focused on methods that other organizations have used to promote their newly crafted mission and vision statements. Such concepts included sample logos, website redesign ideas, bookmarks from the Northern California Conference, the possibility of a mission statement song, and other ideas that were gleaned from other churches with mission statements. Next, the presentation encouraged each person to continue the prayer focus that was begun during their personal devotions; promoted the concept of ongoing corporate prayer events, and conveyed the need to have celebration Sabbaths periodically to keep the vision before the congregation.

The meeting continued with a time of prayer by one of the elders and then group guide number four was distributed. This guide fostered the notion of maintaining unity by personal union with Christ and then went on to ask several questions. First, the groups were asked, “What do you believe are some ways that we can remind ourselves of our mission/vision?” Second, “What are some ways that we can use our bulletin, website,

visuals, as constant reminders of the mission/vision?” The third question was more personal in nature, “Do you have any abilities that you could use to help us with these ideas?” The group facilitators were then asked to guide the group to synthesize these ideas into a ranked list of their top ten concepts. The compiled list was given to the pastor along with the completed forms that members wish to submit separately. The main group was then addressed by the pastor one more time.

In the final address of the larger group, the pastor listed what the next steps would be. These included:

1. The mission/vision document would be finalized.
2. The pastor and board would synthesize the ideas submitted into a five-year plan.
3. The board would begin plotting these ideas on a yearly Ministry Calendar.
4. Ways of promoting the mission/vision document would begin.
5. The ministry calendar for the coming year and the mission/vision document would be presented to the congregation on Sabbath, November 1.
6. In January 2015, there would be a celebration Sabbath to share what the congregation has accomplished and where they were going.
7. There would be periodic celebration Sabbaths.
8. January/February 2016, there would be a second Church Health Assessment.
9. In the Spring of 2016 a values statement process would be considered.
10. The pastor would promote the mission/vision document in various ways as the Spirit led.

The Unveiling

Leading up to the Sabbath where the mission/vision documents were introduced

to the congregation, November 1, there was a board meeting to approve the documents and any promotional avenues to continue nurturing the mission of the church. Specifically, at the October board meeting, consideration was given to the ministry milestones and the need for the board to draft a church calendar by January of 2015. Included in this calendar was events from the various departments, times of prayer, fellowship opportunities, and outreach. The board, which includes the elders, was tasked with continuing to foster an atmosphere of dialogue and *collaboration*. One should note at this juncture of the process, that there were at times similarities to what Burrill suggested and differences (Burrill, 2004, pp. 49-53). For the *Vision Quest* process started out with a larger group, then reverted back to the smaller group to implement the concepts. Whereas Burrill starts with a smaller group and then that becomes what is shared with the larger group.

The unveiling Sabbath on November 1, 2014, missional songs were featured, a sermon that emphasized what was accomplished during the *Vision Quest* sessions was presented, and an unveiling of the mission/vision document occurred. In principle, this was soliciting congregational input like Cooper suggested in the Catholic model (Cooper, 1993, p. 75). However, since the whole congregation had been invited to participate in the corporate *Vision Quest* sessions, this served as a reiteration rather than just an approval of the statements.

On this Sabbath, the members received the mission/vision statements in two ways. First, they received a bookmark with the mission statement on the front and the vision statement on the back. Second, the bulletin had a picture of the second coming of Jesus on the front with the mission statement typed on it. In addition to receiving the

mission statement in these two ways, a mission statement song was developed. The goal of this Sabbath was similar to what Cooper mentioned in Chapter 3: displaying the mission statement soon after its adoption (Cooper, 1993, p. 76). At the conclusion of the service, the congregation was asked to support the mission of God in their area by prayerfully considering their involvement in the coming years.

Continuing Congregational Dialogue and Collaboration

The pastoral role in the continuation of the missional focus was to find ways to promote the mission statement, vision statement, and ministry milestones. This took place through the intentional planning of missional sermons, encouraging dialogue at small group meetings, putting a “missional focus” section on the monthly board agenda and in each newsletter, incorporating times of testimonies, and highlighting ministries during the worship service.

Publication of Mission Statements

Regarding continuing to communicate the mission/vision statement documents, this began by printing the mission statement on every newsletter and bulletin. Furthermore, the mission statement was as a signature on all pastoral e-mails and it was posted prominently on the church website. Last, the vision statement was also placed on the website. The printing of the vision statement was more periodic in nature with the main emphasis being on the mission statement. Additionally, members were encouraged to lend their creative energies by sharing their thoughts about ways to keep recalling the mission statement. This included a mission statement song, having the kids encourage the

adults to memorize the statement, and a periodic mission focus at the announcement time during the worship service.

Annual Ministry Calendar

Another role of the pastor, in addition to helping foster the atmosphere of dialogue and promoting the mission statement, was to lead the church board to incorporate ministry milestones into an annual calendar. Cooper stressed in Chapter 3 that the strategic planning process was to involve as many as possible so that it “promotes communion” (p. 92). At Anderson, this began with the board considering the big picture of where their church was heading by drafting five-year goals. These goals were based upon the results of the milestones “ballot” that was completed during *Vision Quest* session four. Goals were listed on a five-year timeline with the larger goals at year five with smaller steps leading up to them (Burrill, 2004, pp. 52-53). The first year in the five-year plan was drafted by January of 2015 with subsequent years repeating this process each Fall. Specifically, a calendar was drafted by September of each year and finalized by November.

The November deadline was important because this gives time for an official vote to take place at a board meeting in December and ministries could then commence their events by January. A PREPP evaluation form was developed by the pastor and utilized to help each department plan for the following year (see Appendix A). This part of the follow-up process is important because it evaluated and discards anything that is not in harmony with the missional focus while developing new “programs” that are “in harmony with the vision” (Burrill, 2004, p. 53).

PREPP stands for prayer, review, evaluate, plan, and pray. The plan section was

the most formative in helping accomplish the mission for it asked the ministry, “In what ways does your ministry help fulfill our corporate mission?” The final draft of the mission statement was included with a blank for them to write in their answers. These PREPP ministry forms were given to each department leader with the option of meeting with the pastor or an elder. Also, attached to this form were calendar and budget forms. The reason for linking mission to the budget was to emphasize that the Finance Committee would more readily recommend funding ministries if they were deemed as helping to fulfill the corporate mission. Such a goal was similar to what was referred to in Chapter 3 where ministries should begin to evaluate their programs based upon what they are doing to accomplish the mission statement of the Church (Cooper, 1993, p. 76).

Following this time of planning was an annual 10 days of prayer event using the General Conference resources at www.tendaysofprayer.org. Once the 10 days of prayer were completed each year, there was a special prayer Sabbath and copies of the annual calendar that has been developed from the PREPP forms were distributed. The budgets and calendars were reviewed by the committee for funding purposes, with the budget being included in the church budget and the events being compiled by the pastor to present to the Church as the next year’s ministry calendar.

Corporate Prayer Events

All members were encouraged to participate in 10 days of prayer each January. In Chapter 3 Cooper mentioned the need for the pastoral team to develop a spiritual growth plan to help point to the spiritual focus of the statement (Cooper, 1993, p. 79). This included a spiritual formation week six months after the statement was adopted (pp. 79-81). Though we did not do a spiritual formation week, we did engage in 10 days of

prayer. The materials were printed and on display in the foyer for easy access. Also, an attempt was made again by the elders, deaconesses and deacons to place the materials with the home bound or non-attending members. This was facilitated by having a visitation Sabbath. There was also an annual prayer service in January to culminate the 10 days of prayer focus. This was on the first available Sabbath after the conclusion of the 10 days of prayer. Additionally, times of prayer took place before the Spring or Fall evangelistic series.

Elder Involvement

The involvement of the elders was crucial to the ongoing culture of dialogue with God and each other that was developed. Elders were asked to help distribute materials, participate during the prayer sessions and the prayer service or other special prayer events. Involvement of these key leaders was an adaptation of the principles espoused by Burrill and Cooper in Chapter 3. One specific event that the elders were asked to take a leadership role in was the prayer breakfast. Initially, this event served as a climax to the *Vision Quest* sessions and a reminder for the need for constant prayer. With this in mind, the elders were asked to host this annual prayer event in the Spring of each year to lead up to an evangelistic series. If no evangelistic series was planned, then this event would serve to provide another opportunity for united prayer and fellowship. Prayer services would have different themes each year, but the elders would be asked to compliment the sermonic calendar content for that quarter whenever they preached.

Continuation of the Sermonic Calendar

Another area that the pastor utilized to foster continued dialogue with God was the sermonic calendar. Burrill pointed to the importance of getting a wider acceptance of

the vision statement once it was developed (2004, p. 53). He also mentioned that after the leadership team drafts the statement, the pastor should engage in preaching missional sermons (p. 53). In Chapter 3 we noted that “during this stage many sermons on the mission of the church should be preached, helping the church regain a sense of mission direction” (p. 53). Though there was already wider acceptance than the church board because of the *Vision Quest* sessions, Burrill does mention a vital component to vision casting—the influence of the leader.

The pastor endeavored to design sermons for the first quarter of each year that encouraged the congregation to stay connected to each other and Jesus. These sermons began after the 10 days of prayer focus and ended with the last worship service in March. Coupled with these sermons was the design of personal devotional guides or Bible reading plans that provided a meaningful way for members to have additional missional content. Last, mid-week Bible study times and small groups had material that encouraged discipleship and mission.

Departmental Recognition

Elders also helped the pastor provide ongoing encouragement to each department as the departments carried out their annual plans. This took place during the worship service on at least the first worship service of each month. Specifically, the pastor contacted a department leader and sent them a list of questions that would be asked when they were invited to the front. After the questions were asked, in order to help the congregation know more about the ministry, the pastor invited the elders to come to the front to have prayer for that ministry. The elders laid hands on the departmental leader and prayed for God to bless the upcoming events along with the leader. The pastor then

thanked the leader for sharing and encouraged the congregation that getting involved in a ministry is a good way to help accomplish our mission statement.

Conducting a Second Church Health Assessment

Last, the pastor facilitated a second church health assessment by March 2016. All members were once again invited to participate with the goal of having as many respondents for the second survey as responded to the first one. The results were compiled and plans were made to present them on a celebration Sabbath scheduled for the Fall of 2016. In addition to sharing the results during the worship service, they were shared via the newsletter, website, e-mail and other mediums. As a result of corporate prayer events, involvement of the elders, the sermonic calendar, departmental recognition and the use of a second church health assessment, dialogue continued to be fostered along with the missional focus. The outflow of dialogue was willingness to work together with God and each other—*collaboration*.

Conclusion

In this chapter, five elements of the project methodology and implementation were considered. First, fostering an atmosphere of dialogue with God and each other was considered that would utilize the tools of the sermonic calendar, board meeting devotions, times of corporate prayer, an emphasis on personal devotions, a church health assessment, and regular meetings with elders. Second, the process of dialogue would transition to *collaboration* with a number of visioning sessions where all members would be invited to participate in the formation of mission and vision statements. The third area considered was the need for the pastor to facilitate, with input and help from local church

leaders, ways to keep the collaborative culture going in the congregation and promote the new missional focus. The fourth area that was considered was possible ways to encourage continued personal devotions, times of corporate prayer, involvement of the elders, the use of the sermonic calendar, recognition of ministry departments, and utilizing a second church health assessment to keep the congregation in continual *collaboration* with God. The outcome of these methods is documented in more detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT NARRATIVE AND RESULTS

Introduction

The previous chapter endeavored to outline the project implementation plan in great detail. This chapter will serve to narrate what the implementation of the project entailed along with documenting quantitative and qualitative data changes.

Specifically, the project narrative will include a report on the five elements mentioned in chapter four which in practice became four phases of the project. Also, included in this narrative will be the results of the two surveys that were administered, and the improvement in quantitative data measurements (tithe, mission giving, membership, attendance, and number of ministries launched). After the narrative report, a summary will conclude the chapter.

Phase 1: Experiencing and Casting Principles of Collaboration

Prior to the project implementation, I began to revisit several areas of spiritual discipline in my own life in preparation for encouraging the congregation to join me in their own re-commitment and possible renewal in this area. This was based upon the belief that in order to encourage the congregation to collaborate together, that they first needed to spend time in personal dialogue with God (which was one of the elements highlighted in Chapter 2). The following elements emerged during this phase.

A Plan for Personal Devotions

Specifically, I amended my daily schedule to allow more time for prayer, study, and self-examination after transferring to the Anderson Church in March of 2014. Timewise, this usually entailed 30 to 60 minutes twice per day where I spent time praising, studying, and listening to God speak through His Word. Additionally, throughout the day, in the office or when driving, I would listen to or call to mind the Bible passages I had been studying. Also, I sometimes found myself pausing in the parking lot of the church to pray through a situation.

Springing from my personal devotions was a desire to prayer walk. This took place on daily walks near where I live, but would also take place at the church. I remember times when I would sit in the church sanctuary and pray for congregants or walk the halls asking for God to lead each department, Sabbath School class, and the future direction of the Church.

After the 2015 intensive entitled, *Spiritual and Theological Foundations for Ministry*, I began reflecting on Scripture by returning to the spiritual disciplines method I had used years earlier—journaling. Content included sections from the Gospels, especially the closing scenes of Christ’s ministry and His resurrection. Out of this developed a format that was similar to what was promoted in class: Time to praise/compliment God, reflect on Scripture, asking Him how the passage intersected with my life, and what His invitation was for me.

As a result of this time of spiritual disciplines, I began to deal with personal and corporate issues more calmly because I was trusting that Jesus was in control. Concurrent with this renewed spiritual emphasis was a period of time from April 2014 to the summer

of 2014, where I asked God to guide me to develop the content for the *Vision Quest* dialogue sessions. Specifically, I asked Him to guide me in light of what I had been learning both from my personal study and the DMin coursework. Overall, the practice of listening to God enabled me to more effectively listen to His people, and be attentive to His voice speaking through them as I began the process of dialogue concerning the future direction of the Church.

Fostering Dialogue With Key Leaders and the Congregation

As important as my times of personal devotion were, I also began interacting with key leaders. Two important groups that I began building rapport with were the elders and the church board—though there is some overlap with the church board since the elders are board members. The support of both groups would prove to be crucial in any attempt to develop a missional focus.

Dialogue With the Elders

The first group of leaders that I intentionally tried to build rapport with were the local elders. After voicing this desire to a deaconess, she decided to arrange a quarterly luncheon. Little did I know the extravagance she would go to by providing a meal with crystal goblets, fine china, and linen table cloths! In addition to this quarterly meal together in 2014, we began having monthly elders' meetings. The first monthly meeting was held in March 2014.

Initially, we addressed issues that they felt were important. One issue that they saw as of most importance was the need to have cohesion in the Church. This was voiced prior to the beginning stages of the project, but became clearer as I listened to the elders.

They felt there was a lot of activity happening, but nothing tying all of it together. I mentioned the project that I had been considering as a potential help to that problem and eventually outlined it to them. The elders were supportive and so the project was recommended to the church board for approval with their support.

Dialogue With the Church Board

Dialogue with the church board began by presenting the need for a missional focus—fostered by asking Burrill’s four questions (Burrill, 2004). The answers given to these questions by board members evidenced a need to have some form of corporate focus on the future direction of the Church. Most agreed that we needed to do something differently or the Church faced a dire future. As a result of this sentiment, at the April 14, 2014, board meeting I requested, with the support of the elders, that they approve the DMin project. The project proposal was provided in advance for their review and approved unanimously. Concurrent with this was the utilization of devotionals at the beginning of each meeting that focused on mission. Specifically, I chose the 2011 devotional book by Dwight Nelson entitled, *The Chosen* (2011). The utilization of this book for a missional emphasis began in April 2014 (see Appendix A for a list of the devotionals that were chosen). This devotional time took place before the business items on the agenda and was followed by opening prayer.

Sermonic Calendar

Concurrent with the dialogue with the church leadership at Anderson was the development and utilization of a sermonic calendar (see Appendix A). Such a calendar was developed to emphasize “oneness” and subtly promoted dialogue with each other as

we planned the weekly service. Also, this document was utilized, as planned, to be a communication tool for bulletin and website content. However, an unforeseen element developed from the utilization of this tool: the sermonic calendar provided thematic cohesion for the song leaders and those telling the children's story. Since the bulletin secretary had the song selections months in advance of the service, more planning took place and the themes were fostered by more than just the pastor.

Another unforeseen element was the involvement of children during the worship service and the sermon. Children were able to practice the Scripture reading ahead of time because the secretary had the schedule, and a special sermon note sheet was drafted to help them follow along during the sermon. I even had a PowerPoint slide, called Faithful Bible Investigators that provided an answer for one of the questions on their sheet. As planned, the elders periodically received information from the sermon planner document when they helped with a series or filled in during an absence. I believe the selection of sermonic content fostered an environment of transparency and cohesion at the Church.

Other Elements and the First Church Health Assessment

The sermonic calendar and several other communication tools lead up to the first Church Health Assessment (CHA). One of the tools utilized to eventually promote the CHA was a weekly newsletter that started in April 2014. From its inception this newsletter contained missional content and endeavored to highlight key events at the Church (see anderson.adventistfaith.org and click on the "Newsletter" tab for samples from this time). Concurrent with the newsletter was a shift in topics at the weekly prayer-

meeting using various types of formats (see www.revivalandreformation.org and click on the “Prayer” tab for samples of some of the formats that were used). With an atmosphere of dialogue being fostered, and several components of spirituality in place, it was now time to focus on the CHA.

Means for promoting the CHA included bulletin announcements, e-mail, the church website, Facebook, and the weekly newsletter months prior to the assessment period of August to September 2014. This assessment was made available online in an anonymous fashion via a webpage on the Church website. Located on the webpage for the assessment was a button on the informed consent form that would be clicked on prior to the survey being made available. Also, members were encouraged to utilize public Internet options available to them such as their home, library, or other access possibilities. However, those with limited Internet availability access at home utilized the Church Wi-Fi and shared their personal electronic tablets with others.

The goal of 50 respondents was reached with this initial survey. The results were not revealed to the congregation until the first *Vision Quest* session in order to provide an added incentive for them to attend in order to find out the results. Initial computations showed several areas that needed improvement. Specifically, four areas were selected for their obvious missional nature and the initial results were tallied based on a raw score. This raw score was simply the addition of all the scores (ranked 1 to 5 with 1 being a low score and 5 being a high score) for that one category. Specifically, a 1 score meant a congregant “strongly disagreed” with the question as it related to the congregation, a 2 meant “disagree,” 3 was “neither agree or disagree,” 4 meant “agree,” and a score of 5 was “agree.” An average was then calculated by taking the raw score and dividing it by

the total number of participants as Table 1 shows. The larger number, over 100 is the total scores for the question added together, the number in parenthesis is the simple average:

Table 1

Initial CHA Scores for Mission-Related Survey Statements

N	Members Understand Mission	Our Church Talks about Its Mission	Ministries Focus on Achieving the Mission	Members Want to Prepare Others for the Second Coming
58	166 (2.9)	142 (2.4)	175 (3.0)	187 (3.2)

As can be seen from the initial CHA, the categories of missional focus were average to below average with members either disagreeing or being non-committal in their responses to questions of this nature. It was clear from this first data set, though qualitative in nature, the initial impressions of the necessity of the project were correct because members did not understand the mission or vision of their church. Also, at this juncture in the process, it was apparent that continuing with the intervention was appropriate.

10 Days of Prayer

Once the CHA was completed, the next tool that was used to foster an atmosphere of dialogue with God was 10 days of prayer prior to the *Vision Quest* sessions. Like the assessment promotion, this spiritual focus was emphasized in the bulletin, Church newsletter, during announcements, via e-mail, and Facebook. However, in addition to

these usual mediums, a Church letter was drafted and sent to all the members (attending and non-attending) that could not receive it via an e-mail attachment (see Appendix B).

The materials used for the 10 days of prayer were from the General Conference website www.tendaysofprayer.org. Specifically, the guides from 2012 were utilized due to their emphasis on unity and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Practically, the 10 days of prayer went from September 9-19, 2014, and ended the day before the first *Vision Quest* session began. The leader's guides that were available on the website were used along with a teleconference line that was promoted to the members (see Appendix B, "Vision Quest Insert"). Additionally, elders, deacons, deaconesses, and the pastor took materials to non-attending and home-bound members. Over one hundred copies were printed and distributed to members. The prayer group had on average six individuals in the room and four on the phone line each day. However, this does not account for the number of members participating during their personal or family devotional times.

The material for the 10 days of prayer culminated during Sabbath morning, September 20, where we had a prayer group at the Church followed by Sabbath School and a worship service that focused on prayer. During the announcements prior to the worship service, the *Vision Quest* session, that was to take place that afternoon, was emphasized along with encouragement to the congregation for spending time in prayer prior to this important session. The sermon was entitled, "Advent Prayer" and emphasized the need to prayerfully consider how God would lead in the future. A prayer sheet was provided for all who wished to continue praying after the 10 days of prayer (see Appendix F, "Advent Prayer Sheet").

Phase 2: Preparation for and Conducting the Vision Quest Sessions

Pre-Work Immediately Before the Sessions

While the 10 days of prayer were being planned and implemented, the various communication outlets contained announcements regarding the *Vision Quest* sessions. Avenues included were the church website, church e-mail list, Facebook page, bulletin inserts, the weekly newsletter, monthly emphasis during board/elders' meetings, announcements from the pulpit, and two letters to the membership. In addition to the letter already mentioned (see Appendix B, "Letter Prior to Ten Days of Prayer"), there were two other letters distributed to the membership: (a) *Vision Quest* rationale and schedule (see Appendix B), and (b) *Ten Days of Prayer* cover letter given with the prayer materials (Appendix B). Also, the elders were asked to be intentionally involved during the *Vision Quest* sessions by leading the congregation during times of prayer. Overall, the goal of these communication mediums was not to just promote the sessions, but to model the value of dialogue and inclusiveness leading up to the sessions.

Conducting the *Vision Quest* Sessions

On September 20, 2014, after the 10 days of prayer, the worship service that focused on prayer and the fellowship meal, the first *Vision Quest* session took place at 2:00 p.m. The session venue was the church sanctuary with the following order of service:

Welcome by the Pastor

Theme Song (Be Thou My Vision)

Season of Prayer to Seek God's Guidance (Group Prayer)

Session Overview and Presentation by the Pastor

Elder-Led Prayer: For the Holy Spirit's Guidance

Group Discussion with a Facilitator

Closing Remarks/Prayer by the Pastor

The overview of the first session and supplemental material used during this session is highlighted below, along with a report from each of the subsequent sessions.

Session One: Biblical Foundations for Mission

After the welcome and theme song, members were asked to break up into groups of two or three for prayer. This prayer time was focused on asking for God's guidance and a suggested prayer was included on the presenter's slide: "Lord, send the Holy Spirit to guide our session. That we can see clearly Your mission, and that we can be cooperative with this process so that You can lead us individually and corporately."

After the time of prayer, which lasted about ten minutes, I made a presentation showing the life cycle of churches, trends of the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church, along with the Church Health Assessment results. Trends included membership, attendance, baptisms, and offerings. Also, the CHA results were shown to the congregants to allow them to see areas of weakness that had average scores of three or below. Scores of three or below represented either that they neither agreed or disagreed about an item and its relevance to their congregation or they disagreed—potentially even strongly disagreeing. With this simple barometer in mind, an ideal total score for a category would be 232 points averaging to an individual score of four out of five. Figure 1 shows none of the areas specifically involving missional focus were close to this score.

After presenting these results and other health scores, a series of questions was

asked, such as: Where will our current course take us? (Burrill, 2004, p. 50), If nothing changes, where will we be in five or ten years if the Lord does not come? Is this where we want to be? Why must we change? Members were given time to respond to these questions before I gave them encouragement that a change could take place by refocusing



Figure 1. Total point scores for mission-related survey statements.

and “rebirthing” the dream of what God could do through us (Burrill, 2004). I pointed out their strongest score was prayer, followed by a brief discussion of our current and future course. This time of discussion was followed by a definition of “mission,” and then a brief sharing of some of the most recent research in the field available at that time.

Specifically, Vizeu and Matitz (2013) were cited to show that the business term, “mission statement” was borrowed from Christianity in order to invoke “the sacred” for the purpose of an organization’s existence (p. 191). Another source was then cited that pointed to the value of mission statements, and that they have been empirically proven to

help the overall performance of an organization (Alavi & Karami, 2009, p. 561).

However, it was emphasized that the development of a statement should involve both leaders and members of organization. This was followed by restating what the content of a mission statement was along with providing some biblical references. Following this brief time of instruction an explanation of what would happen in the group sessions was outlined. An elder was then invited to the front and asked to pray for God to guide the congregation before it began the group discussion session.

After this prayer for guidance, group guide number one was distributed (see Appendix E for all the *Vision Quest* guides). The groups were given 45 minutes to work through the guide before the main meeting would be reconvened. The purpose of breaking the larger group into smaller groups of six or less was to solicit as much input as possible and to utilize a similar method that was referred to in Chapter 3 (Cooper, 1993, pp. 6-20). Facilitators at each group were asked to guide members through the lesson and a secretary was to be appointed to report to the main group what their group drafted for a mission statement.

This first session guide included a format that would be similar for each of the sessions: they were asked to consider Bible texts and Ellen White statements, the definition of “mission,” look at sample mission statements, draft their own statement, and synthesize it with commonalities of other group members. After the facilitator led the group through the discussion guide, the secretary wrote down the initial draft of the group’s mission statement in order to aid the facilitator in reporting it to the main group.

Once reports were shared by the facilitators, I then explained to the group what the next step in our process was and encourage them that if they had any suggestions or

changes to the statements they drafted, then they could submit them to me during the week. They were invited to do so via letter, phone, or e-mail. I also offered to include any mission statement that an individual submitted for consideration on next week's "ballot." I had closing prayer and thanked everyone for coming. We had over fifty members present for this first session and ten groups submitted their statements.

During the week other submissions made by members were gathered, along with the mission statements that were drafted by the groups during the first session. These were drafted into a "ballot" (see Appendix E, "Mission Statement Ballot"). In total, there were 16 statements that were drafted and included on the insert—which was printed front and back on a half-sheet. In addition to gathering any suggested statements and preparing the ballot, the guide for session two was also printed (see Appendix E). Another activity during the week that was undertaken was an announcement placed in the Sabbath bulletin encouraging all members to come and participate in the second session. This invitation was emphasized during the announcement period on the day of the session. Another avenue of invitation was e-mail. An e-mail was sent to the Church e-mail list and during the week to encourage them to submit mission statement ideas. Last, the session was announced via Facebook along with other announcements prior to the session.

Additionally, board members were provided some extra reading before the second *Vision Quest* session so they could effectively help permeate concepts of the article by Russel Burrill (2002) entitled, "Can Dying Churches be Resuscitated?"; yet another detail that needed to be cared for was to make sure to recruit a member to tally the ballots during the second session. Last, the whole congregation received via e-mail and printed

form the weekly newsletter that emphasized our “Mission Focus” by giving a brief report of what happened during the first *Vision Quest* session (see Appendix B, “Weekly Newsletter Content”).

Session Two: Identifying Our Ministry Context and Vision

The second session occurred on September 27, 2014, at 2:00 p.m. and began with a similar format as the first meeting. The congregation sang the theme song and then divided into small groups for prayer. After this time of prayer, a mission statement ballot was distributed. The session participants were informed that the overall conclusion attained from the ballots may be used for the DMin project, and were asked to rank the statements from one to five with one being their first choice and five being their last choice. Last, before the ballots were passed out, some criteria to evaluate an effective mission statement was reviewed. Specifically, they were told that a mission statement needed to be specific, geographic in scope, and not have dense wording. Participants were informed that the results would be tallied during a video clip and they had at least ten minutes to complete their ballots. Once the ballots were completed, they were given to the church member who agreed to tally them and the presentation began for session two.

The content for session two focused primarily on the need for visioning and began with an exercise of looking closely at a picture of an owl that was camouflaged to the point where many were unable to see it. The congregation was then shown a close-up picture and it was explained that we sometimes need to take a closer look at a situation to see what is not always apparent at first glance. This was then likened to the idea of looking more closely at our community and how we engage it. Vision was defined from

dictionary and leadership sources (Malphurs, 1999), and we settled on a working definition for vision as, “Believing God knows the future, we seek to know and envision our part in that future.” The rationale for imagining a hopeful future was given: that our health assessment showed areas we can improve upon and one of them was community involvement. A graph was shared with the congregation and the lowest score of community involvement was highlighted (see graph in Appendix D).

Along with this graph, the *Natural Church Development* concept of the “minimum factor” was shared (Schwarz, 1996). This concept was correlated with their lowest score: community involvement. After pointing out the need to address this minimum factor by envisioning how God wanted us to reach our city, the following questions were posited: What would you do if you had unlimited resources, personnel, youthful vigor, and more? What would our Church look like if God’s mission/purpose for it was accomplished? What would your community look like if God’s ideal plan for it was accomplished?

Upon posing these questions and getting some feedback, demographics for the City of Anderson were then shared along with data from needs assessment surveys filled out by community leaders (see Appendix C, “Community Assessment Survey”). The purpose of sharing this preliminary data from the community was to help the group imagine specific needs in the community that might be met as they endeavored to accomplish their mission. At a later stage a community assessment committee with a survey team would endeavor to receive input from more members of the community, but this initial survey served to help the members hear from those outside of the church. After pointing out the needs of the community that were apparent, the idea of vision was

reiterated as being us, “prayerfully seeking to know and envision our part in fulfilling His plan” for our area. A clarification question was then asked, “What is the clear and challenging picture of our ministry” (Malphurs, 1999)? And after posing this question, I had to clarify what it meant: “What do you see as a clear, but challenging picture of what our ministry would look like in the future if God worked mightily here?”

After this last question was restated, and some feedback generated, background information about a story of a church that saw a need in the community and met it was provided (available online at <https://vimeo.com/20094079>). This video was played while the final tally of the mission statement ballots was completed. Once the video was over, the mission statement was typed into a slide and displayed on the screen prior to the congregation being broken up into groups. The mission statement with the highest score was, “Declaring to each individual their eternal value in Jesus and preparing them for His soon-return!” Upon revealing the results and the statement, an elder was invited to pray for God’s guidance before beginning the second group guide.

After the elder’s prayer, group guides were passed out, instructions on the format of the groups provided and forty-five minutes was given to work on the handout. This second guide included Scriptures, Ellen White quotes to read on how she saw the work of God moving forward, the definition of vision, sample vision statements, space to draft a vision statement, and a place to write the statement the small group wished to submit.

Time did not permit every facilitator to read each statement to the main group, but the secretary for the respective groups did submit a report at the conclusion of the meeting. As the small groups were concluded and participants came back to the main group, I asked for permission to synthesize the drafted statements into one common

statement that encompassed most of what had been shared. I had originally planned to provide a ballot with all the statements listed, but found as they were being handed in that they were more cumbersome than the mission statements, and I heard many commonalities from some of the facilitators who did have time to read them. The participants agreed to allow for a synthesis to occur.

At the conclusion of the session, the congregation was invited to submit vision statement ideas during the week. Also, the congregation was told that during the week they would receive a newsletter that would state what had occurred and provide information about what was to happen next. I had the closing prayer and thanked everyone once again for coming.

During the week, a newsletter was once again sent out via e-mail but included the following statement, “Our mission statement was voted and a lot of great ideas for how to accomplish it were shared. The next step is to revise the Vision Statement and list possible steps to accomplish it.” The newsletter provided the dates for the final two sessions (October 4 and 11) and invited all to participate. Also, included in the newsletter was the prayer breakfast scheduled for October 12, which was to serve as a climax to the *Vision Quest* process. Additionally, this special time of prayer, along with the remaining *Vision Quest* sessions, was promoted through the aforementioned mediums like the previous sessions.

Vision Quest Session Three: Milestones and the Beginning of a Strategic Plan

The third session, which took place on October 4, had similar components of the previous sessions: theme song and prayer in groups to seek God’s direction (though this

time it was for Him to reveal His plans for carrying out the mission/vision). Following these now familiar segments a vision statement draft, based upon what had been submitted at the last session and any additional ideas that were submitted during the week, was handed out (see Appendix E, “Vision Statement Draft”). The main group was informed that the statement was crafted by synthesizing the documents submitted by each individual and all the groups at the previous session along with additional ideas that were submitted during the week. Congregants were asked to proofread this document on their own and to write any suggestions on their copy of the paper in order to submit them to the pastor so he could type a revised draft. Ten minutes was given for this section of the session, though some took longer and others did not hand in the sheet until later in the week.

Following the initial proofing of the vision statement document, there was a brief presentation on the need to have God’s guidance for carrying out the mission/vision statements. Emphasis was placed on the need for a balance that would avoid the extremes of too much planning or not enough. Such a balance was highlighted using Scriptures, and the pastor’s role in facilitating such a plan was pointed out: the pastor’s job was to help the church plan the work, provide resources to assist them in carrying out those plans, and help, where possible, to accomplish the work.

Once the presentation was completed, the mission and vision statements were reviewed. After this review, an elder was asked to come to the front to invite God to guide the group session time. Discussion guides were then passed out for the group to consider the needs of the community and to rank what they felt were the top ten (see Appendix E). These top ten would be items that they would like to plan to minister to in

the next five years. Specifically, the session guide focused on the question, “What can we do to carry out the mission to these people?” Following this question was a list of specific needs in our community that were attained from demographics and the ministry context paper that was developed at the beginning of 2014. The guide provided space for them to list the top ten ways they wanted to meet those needs in the next five years. There was then a follow-up question, “Which two are you most passionate about accomplishing?”

Facilitators, after they gave adequate time for the group to fill in their sections privately, then solicited feedback from members by inviting them to share with the rest of the small group. Space was provided on the form for group members to write down what was being shared. The group facilitator then helped the group synthesize the ideas into a list of ten needs of the community to focus on meeting. Facilitators did not have enough time to share the results of this summary with the larger group because the excitement level was very high during this session, and some began sharing plans of how to accomplish the milestones rather than prioritizing them. However, the secretaries, and sometimes a facilitator, did submit the session sheets at the conclusion of their time together.

Once the group session time was finished, the next steps that would be taken were outlined. First, the group was invited to continue to research ways to reach the community and submit those ideas to the pastor by Wednesday of the next week. They were told that any additional ideas would be added to the ones already submitted and would be included on a “ballot” which would be passed out at the next session. Next, the group was told that the items on next week’s ballot would be organized into a five-year

plan and the church board would be tasked with implementing that plan. Additionally, they were told that the five-year plan would include yearly prayer events, celebration Sabbaths, invitations for them to assist in accomplishing the plan, and an evangelistic reaping series. Last, the group was given a preview of the next week's topic, and the meeting ended with closing prayer.

Session Four: Revising the Mission/Vision Document and Vision Casting

Preparation for session four began by sending an e-mail reminder and a solicitation of ideas for ministry milestones to the church board members that missed session three. This was sent via e-mail by Sunday, October 5. The purpose of this targeted e-mail was to give board members an opportunity to submit ideas for the ministry milestones ballot that would be handed out October 11. The reason the e-mail was limited to the board was to allow the leadership to have their ideas heard and critiqued by the larger body—a form of dialogue. Mostly the leadership affirmed what was written with some suggestions in wording being provided.

In addition to the weekly newsletter and bulletin announcement to inform the members of the last session, an elder's meeting which had been planned to further consider the direction of the church was cancelled. This was due to receiving sufficient feedback from the elders during the sessions to not warrant having a meeting. All of the suggestions that were gleaned from the members, board, and elders regarding ways to accomplish the mission/vision statements were compiled into a ballot for the final session on October 11 (see Appendix E, "Ministry Milestones Ballot").

During the final session there were familiar elements present at previous sessions:

a theme song, time of group prayer, ballot, presentation, group time, etc. However, this time *Vision Quest* participants were asked to rank the items listed on the ballot from one to ten with one being the item of first importance in their opinion and so on. The ballots were collected and the congregation was told that the results would be revealed at our “Unveiling” worship service on November 1.

The presentation following the ballot time focused on methods that other organizations had used to promote their newly crafted mission and vision statements. Such concepts included sample logos, website redesign ideas, bookmarks from the Northern California Conference (see <http://www.nccsda.com/article/134/about-us/more/strategic-plan-2012-2016/materials>), the possibility of a mission statement song, utilization of a banner, and other ideas that were gleaned from other churches with mission statements. Next, the presentation encouraged each person to continue the prayer focus that was begun during their personal devotions, promoted the concept of ongoing corporate prayer events, and conveyed the need to have celebration Sabbaths periodically to keep the vision before the congregation.

The meeting continued with a time of prayer by one of the elders and then group guide number four was distributed (see Appendix E). This guide fostered the notion of maintaining unity by personal union with Christ and then went on to ask several questions. The facilitator was asked to guide the group to synthesize the answers to these questions and any ideas into a ranked list of their top ten ways to keep the vision before us. The compiled list was given to the pastor along with the completed forms that members wished to submit separately. The main group was addressed one more time.

In the final address of the larger group, the next steps were listed: (a) the

mission/vision document would be finalized; (b) the pastor and board would synthesize the ideas submitted into a 5-year plan; (c) the board would begin plotting these ideas on a yearly ministry calendar; (d) ways of promoting the mission/vision document would begin; (e) the ministry calendar for the coming year and the mission/vision document would be presented to the congregation on Sabbath, November 1; (f) in January 2015 there would be a celebration Sabbath to share where we have been, and where we are going; (g) there would be periodic celebration Sabbaths as the five-year plan unfolded; (h) in January/February 2016, there would be a second Church Health Assessment; (i) in the Spring of 2016 a values statement process could be considered, and (j) it was emphasized that the pastor and elders would promote the mission/vision document in various ways as the Spirit led. After this final address prayer concluded the meeting.

The Unveiling

Leading up to the “Unveiling” Sabbath scheduled for November 1, there was a board meeting on October 13, 2014, to approve the mission/vision documents and any methods to promote the mission of the church. At the October board meeting, consideration was given to the ministry milestones and the need for the board to draft a Church Calendar by January of 2015. This “missional focus” agenda item was placed towards the beginning of the agenda after the devotional, prayer and reports. As the idea of fostering the mission of the church was focused on, it was agreed to spend time each month drafting the five-year plan until it was completed. Also, the purchase of a mission statement banner was approved. This banner was placed above the baptistery, which is in a prominent place at the front of the Church. Last, it was concluded that it would be good

to place the mission statement in a prominent place on the church's website and in all of its publications.

The Unveiling Sabbath on November 1, 2014, featured missional songs, a sermon that emphasized what was accomplished during the *Vision Quest* sessions and an unveiling of the mission/vision document.

On this Sabbath, the members received the mission/vision statements in two ways. First, they received a bookmark with the mission statement on the front and the vision statement on the back. Second, the bulletin included a picture of the second coming of Jesus on the front with the mission statement overlaying it. In addition to receiving the mission statement in these two ways, a mission statement song was developed—an adaptation of the song “We Have this Hope.” Later, a more original mission statement song was developed, but the modified hymn sufficed for the unveiling Sabbath while the song was being drafted (see Elliot, 2015). At the conclusion of the service, the congregation was asked to signify by standing in support of our renewed focus on the mission of God in our area. The whole congregation stood as we sang the closing song.

Phase 3: Revision and Implementation of the Mission/Vision Document

Publication of the Mission and Vision Statements

Regarding continuing to communicate the mission/vision statement documents, this began by printing the mission statement on every newsletter and bulletin.

Furthermore, the church staff (pastor and secretary) included the mission statement as a signature on all of their e-mails and it was posted prominently on the home page of the

church website. Both statements were also placed on the church website's (About Us, 2016).

Additionally, members were encouraged to lend their creative energies by sharing their thoughts about ways we could keep recalling the mission statement. What developed was a mission statement song, having the kids encourage the adults to memorize the statement by telling and repeating the statement with them, and a periodic mission focus at the announcement time during the worship service. The ministry "InFocus" time that took place during the announcements would ideally occur on a monthly basis, usually on the first Sabbath of the month.

Annual Ministry Calendar

At Anderson, the annual ministry calendar process began by having the board consider the big picture of where their Church was heading and drafting their five-year goals. These goals were based upon the results of the milestones "ballot" that was completed during *Vision Quest* session four. Goals were developed into a possible, and tentative, timeline that would be subject to change. At the November and December, 2014 board meetings it was voiced that we should survey our community more regarding their needs prior to finalizing our five-year plan. A compromise of sorts was reached by voting to accept the draft but amend it as more needs of the community become known.

The initial draft can be seen as a living document because of the desire to constantly stay in touch with the community and adjust ministries when a need becomes apparent (see Appendix A, "Initial Draft of the Five-Year Plan"). Also, the process of developing a ministry calendar was begun in an attempt to list all the major events of the Church. This calendar was drafted by November of 2014 and approved by December (see

Appendix A, “2014/2015 Church Calendar”). Ministries were able to begin in January of 2015 with the understanding that the needs of the community would be brought to the board when they became available. Though as time progressed towards January, some changes were made and a revised calendar of main events was communicated via a church letter to all the members—both attending and non-attending (see Appendix B, “2014 Christmas Letter”).

Corporate Prayer Events

All members were encouraged to participate in 10 days of prayer in January 2015. Many announcements took place prior to this time of spiritual emphasis and the materials were printed and on display in the foyer for easy access. Also, an attempt was made, again by the elders and deacons, to place the materials in the hands of the home bound or non-attending members. This was facilitated by having a visitation Sabbath in order to visit these members on January 3, 2015. Once again, materials were mailed to those who were unable be contacted via personal visit. The visitation Sabbath was followed by a prayer breakfast on Sunday, January 4, 2015. The elders and one of our ministry leaders organized this special time of prayer. Last, we had a prayer service on January 17, 2015, to culminate the 10 days of prayer focus and eight weeks of prayer starting in July, 2015, to lead up to the Revelation’s HOPE series scheduled for the Fall.

Elder Involvement

The involvement of the elders was crucial to the ongoing culture of dialogue that was developed during this project. Elders assisted in many ways including: helping distribute materials, participating during the *Vision Quest* sessions, the prayer service,

and other special prayer events. Suffice it to say, the project and the implementation of the goals that were established during the project would not have had been the same without the influence of these important spiritual leaders. Last, elders assisted with the Landmarks of Prophecy series from October 21 to November 22, 2014 and the eight weeks of prayer leading up the Fall series in 2015. Besides helping with various aspects of the meetings, the elders were actively involved in the visitation program that accompanied each series. At the conclusion of both of these series, we saw the ascension of new members coupled with a tangible excitement among the members because they felt we were accomplishing the mission of our church.

Continuation of the Sermonic Calendar

Another area that continued after the project was the sermonic calendar. In addition to drafting a calendar for each year, sermons for the first quarter of each year contained content to encourage the congregation to stay connected to each other and Jesus. These sermons began after the 10 days of prayer focus and ended with the last worship service in March. Coupled with these sermons was the design of personal devotional guides or Bible reading plans that provided a meaningful way for members to have additional missional content (see Appendix F, “Staying Connected Guide 2015”). This devotional guide was made into an insert, printed on cardstock and placed in the bulletin during the sermon series.

After the DMin class on *Spiritual and Theological Foundations for Ministry* in 2015, I developed another guide for 2016 (see Appendix F, “Staying Connected Guide 2016”). Last, mid-week Bible study times began to focus on discipleship leading up to, and especially after, Elder Del Dunavant emphasized this concept the weekend of April

11, 2015 (see Appendix A, “2015/2016 Church Calendar”). Small group discussion guides developed by Don and Ruth James were utilized for the format of this group (see <http://www.nadei.org/transaction.php?category=31>). As a result of the emphasis on small groups, four new groups were launched that met at various locations. One of which I developed a schedule form for in order to facilitate member involvement and leadership (see Appendix A).

Departmental Recognition

Elders also helped the pastor provide ongoing encouragement to each department as the departments carried out their annual plans. Some of this took place by having elders interact with and provide guidance on various committees. Also, I endeavored to have recognition moments during the worship service on at least the first worship service of each month. However, as can be seen by the sermonic calendar, this was not always the case due to other areas of emphasis. Prior to the service, I contacted a department leader and sent them a list of questions that they would be asked when they were invited to the front. After the questions were asked, I invited the elders to come to the front to have prayer for that ministry. The elders prayed for the departmental leaders, which sometimes included laying hands on them, and prayed for God to bless the upcoming events along with the leaders. I then thanked the ministry leader for sharing and encouraged the congregation to find ways to be involved in a ministry (for a list of when these Sabbaths took place in 2015, see Appendix A).

Phase 4: Conducting a Second Church Health Assessment and Corporate Alignment

The Second Church Health Assessment

All members were once again invited to participate in a Church Health Assessment with the goal of having at least 50 respondents. The survey period was longer than the first assessment, but only yielded 47 completed surveys. The results were compiled and plans were made to present them on a celebration Sabbath scheduled for the Fall of 2016. What follows is a comparison of the survey results.

Survey Results Comparison

The second CHA was conducted from February to March 2016 and had 47 respondents. Though this number was lower than the initial survey, which had 58, the same methodology was employed to find the average scores for each category. The pastor believed the members came to better understand what was the mission and vision of their church - as is evidenced by the results of the second survey. Specifically, table 2 shows a marked improvement in the areas of missional focus because the average scores improved by over one point in three out of the four areas and the fourth area by almost a point:

Table 2

Post-Project CHA Scores for Mission-Related Survey Statements

Year of Survey	Members Understand Mission	Talk of Mission	Ministries Focus on Achieving Mission	Members Want to Prepare Others for the 2nd Coming
2014	166 (2.8 avg.)	142 (2.4)	175 (3.0)	187 (3.2)
2016	213 (4.34)	183 (3.7)	209 (4.3)	192 (3.9)

Ministry Alignment

At the time of this writing, many ministries have been launched as a result of the renewed emphasis on mission. Some of them were the results of the initial *Vision Quest* sessions (a YouTube channel, feeding of the homeless, youth ministry, and a yearly mission trip) others resulted from the community assessment process that was conducted (such as a coat ministry for homeless, family ministries, and community service projects to the community). With leaders and members emphasizing the mission of our Church, the process of alignment in most of our outreach projects was begun. This can be evidenced by different departments communicating with each other and exchanging flyers to hand out at each other's events, calendar coordination, sharing of volunteers, etc.

Last, each ministry was required to submit, starting in 2015, a PREPP and budget form prior to receiving funds. PREPP stands for Pray, Review, Evaluate, Plan, and Pray and is coupled with a budget form that is submitted annually (see Appendix A). As of this writing the PREPP form has been willingly filled out by all of the ministries at Anderson. One ministry that had not consistently filled out the form ceased receiving funding for a time, wondered why and an explanation was given. After explaining that we want all of our ministries to consider how they are fostering the mission of the church, the department leader filled out the form.

Improvement in Quantitative Data

Quantitative data improvements were documented for three areas. First, giving trends including tithe, missions, and church budget were noted. Second, membership and

baptism gains were experienced. Finally, the number of ministries launched as a result of this project was considered.

Giving Trends

First, trends in giving that include tithe, missions, and church budget (Fig. 2)

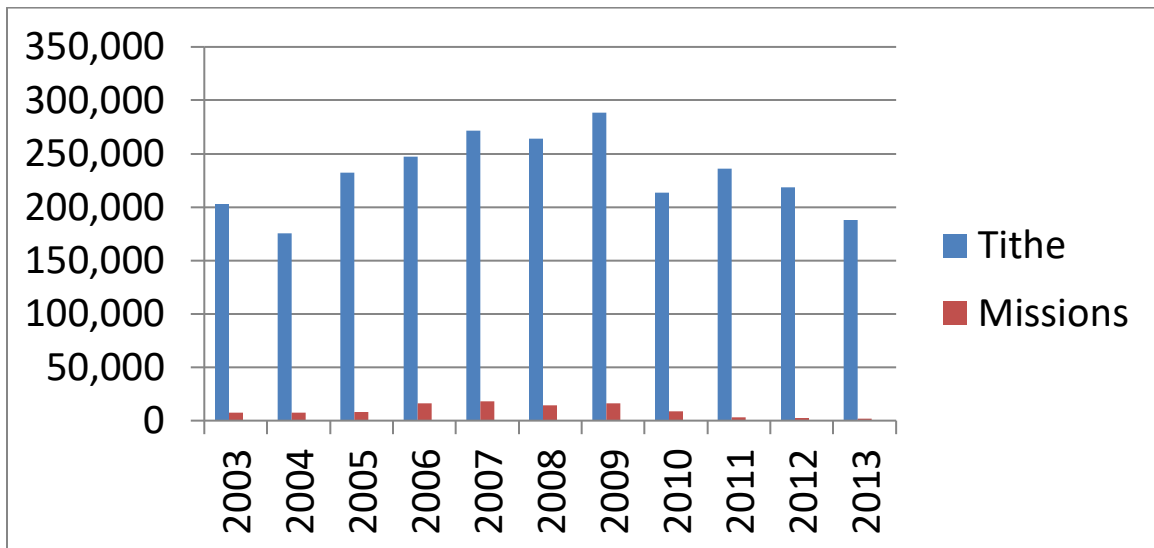


Figure 2. Tithe and mission giving pre-project.

are considered in this section. It shows that there have been some ups and downs in giving during the recent history of this Church and prior to the project:

Though there were, arguably, rises in offerings before 2014 and 2015, both saw an overall increase from what had been experienced immediately prior to the project. Specifically, tithe saw an increase from \$187,722.65 in 2013 to \$225,973.51 in 2014 and \$234,442.11 in 2015. In 2016, the tithe went back down to \$224,990.32, but was still above the 2013 level. This upward trend reversed a downward trajectory that began in

2011. Second, missions giving increased from \$1,867.10 in 2013 to \$6,525.14 in 2014 and \$5,172.62 by the end of 2015. Though 2016 saw mission giving drop to \$4,417.11 but this amount was still twice the giving that was witnessed in 2013. Overall, the downward trend in mission giving was ended—though it did not restore it to over \$8,000 per year levels that were experienced prior to 2011 and does not evaluate per capita giving or account for inflation. Figure 3 shows both of these trends during and post-project but has 2003-2004 deleted to make room for the new data:

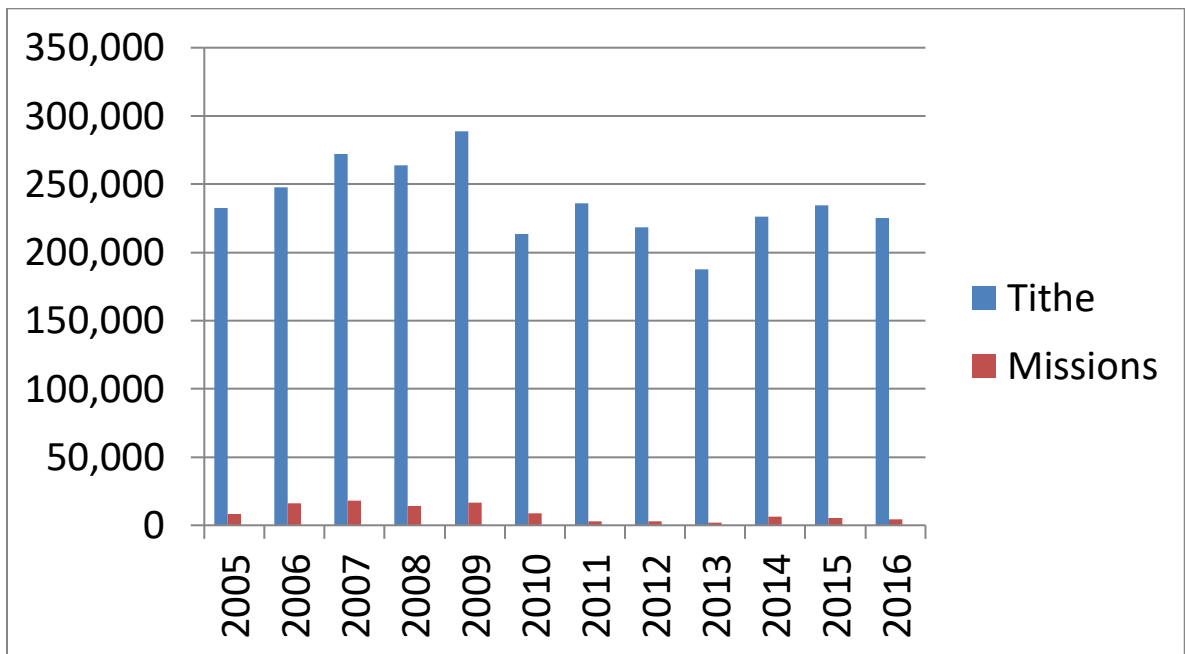


Figure 3. Tithe and mission giving post-project.

Other factors besides the project implementation will be considered in Chapter 6 but the church seems to have recovered from a downward trajectory. A more detailed

chart (Fig. 4) shows the mission offering increase more clearly, but also shows a downward trend beginning again towards the end of this project. Various factors could be considered or a precautionary note of correlating the giving trends directly to this project should be heeded. Perhaps mission giving went up due to the new tenure of a pastor or an emphasis on the idea of “mission” as the project began and when the project continued a more accurate understanding of “mission” was realized. More research needs to be done and similar projects evidencing an increase in missions giving need to be analyzed before absolute conclusions can be drawn. Figure 4 shows the rise and fall of mission giving with the possibility that these figures may plateau—only time will tell.

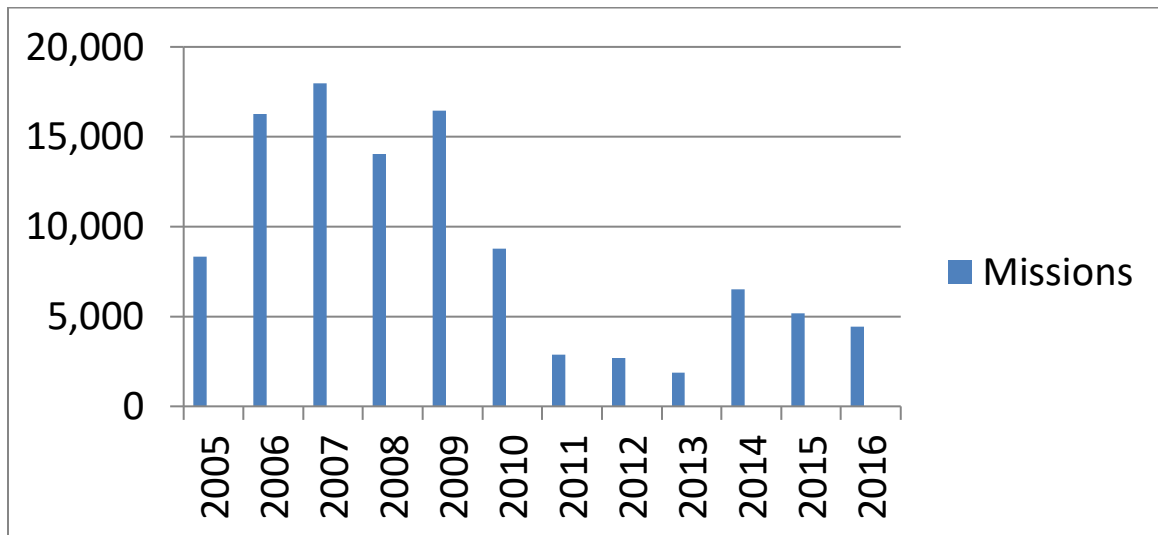


Figure 4. Mission giving data.

Coupled with the tithe and missions giving was the fiscal stability that was experienced in the area of local church budget giving. Though exact figures are not cited here, it was noted in treasurer reports that the local church budget went from an unclear

status (meaning they seemed to have a minus each year but did not know why) to an increase of over \$5,000 in 2014 and a moderate surplus in 2015.

Membership Trends

Prior to this project, membership and attendance appeared to be in a plateaued and declining condition respectively. Also, the number of baptisms was nil with no baptisms being recorded from 2011 to 2013 (see the graph listing Membership/Attendance/Baptisms from 2003-2013 in Appendix D). The data shows the trends prior to the project and one obvious trend is the decline in baptisms and attendance while membership remained somewhat steady.

Correlations to documented incidents prior to 2011 are vague at best, but anecdotal evidence suggested that there were some internal conflicts and the deaths of key leaders. At any rate, during the time of this project, membership increased from 287 in 2014 to 306 in 2015 and dropped back down to 295 in 2016. The membership of 306 is significant, because it represents a level that had not been experienced since prior to 2011. Also, the number of accessions reversed the downward trend that began in 2011. In fact, the trend of no baptisms for two of the previous three years was effectively reversed during the time of this project with a total of sixteen accessions and two rebaptisms in 2015 alone. Once again, these are observations associated with the time-frame of this project, which need to be analyzed for other possible correlations.

Figure 5 shows these increases; however, it should be noted that the graph begins in 2007, which is the first year that archive data was available for all three areas, and attendance figures were incomplete for 2014, but what was available has been averaged (see Appendix D for attendance data by year). Last, the downward trend in attendance

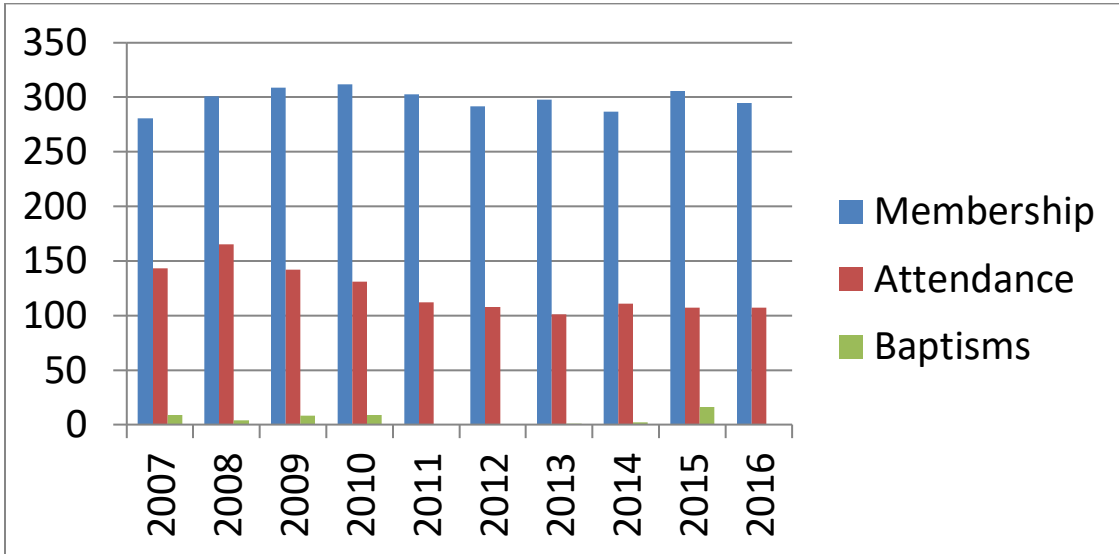


Figure 5. Membership, attendance, and baptism data post-project.

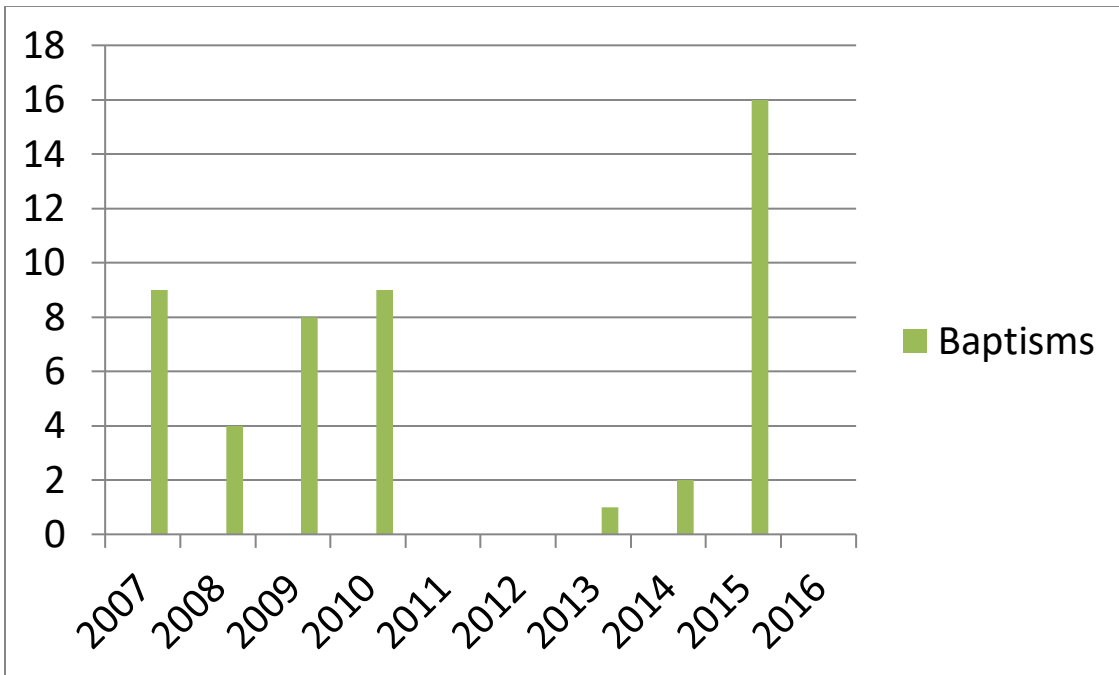


Figure 6. Baptism trends.

was reversed in 2014 and has remained stable in 2015 and 2016 respectively. Attendance increases and baptism trends can be seen in figures 5 and 6. Though it should be noted that baptism data for 2016 was not available:

Ministries Launched

Prior to the start of the project, Health ministry had no nominated positions or active schedule of services, Youth ministry was limited to an Earliteen Sabbath School class with occasional outings and the only regularly occurring ministries at the Church were a Community Service food and clothing distribution event that happened weekly, and monthly socials. There were also periodic seminars offered to the community by the pastor, but these were non-prophecy seminars on the life of Paul and similar genre. Sporadic would be the operative word for outreach endeavors.

As a result of this project, several ministries were generated to offer at least monthly health events at the Church, a NEWSTART Health Expo, GLOWING literature ministry, outreach among the young people as they distributed flyers door-to-door, the launching of monthly youth programs and outings, an organized fellowship meal schedule, some outreach by the Spanish ministry and eventually a children's ministry focus. You can see the 2015/2016 Church Calendar for a listing of ministry offerings during the year this project concluded (see Appendix A, "2015/2016 Church Calendar"). It should be noted that several ministries were functioning prior to the project implementation, but the project helped tie together many of the ministries to one common goal: to promote the mission that the Church had come together and prayerfully outlined.

Conclusion

This project narrative included a report on the four phases of this project, the accomplishment of the main outcome of this project (the drafting of a mission/vision document and five-year goals), the results of the two surveys that were administered and the improvement in quantitative data measurements (tithe, mission giving, membership, attendance, and ministries launched). Also, the project documented the increase in Church Health Assessment (CHA) scores of the Church and encouraged cohesion in the carrying out of the ministries of the Church by utilizing strategic planning tools. Due to the rise in CHA scores, the pastor believed the members came to a better understanding of what was the mission and vision of their church. However, though organizational improvement has been noted, there are areas to consider regarding improving the project implementation. Such areas and topics for future consideration will be outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

PROJECT EVALUATION AND LEARNINGS

Summary of the Project

This project sought as its main goal the development of a mission/vision document and five year goals. This goal was accomplished through the implementation of this project. A secondary goal, as evidenced by the improvement of the CHA scores, was a more positive self-perception of the congregation. The collaborative method to re-establish a missional focus which contributed to these improvements took place in four phases: (a) experiencing and casting principles of *collaboration*, (b) preparing for and conducting the *Vision Quest* sessions, (c) revision and implementation of the mission/vision document, and (d) conducting the second Church Health Assessment (CHA) and corporate alignment. During the course of these phases, sermons that focused on the need to seek God to guide the future of the Church, prayer guides, board devotionals, the conducting of a health assessment, four *Vision Quest* sessions which developed mission and vision statements, the qualitative data from the two Health Assessments, along with the researcher's own notes and observations, were included in the study. Quantitative data collected prior to the project from the Northern California Conference and church archives were also incorporated.

Description of the Evaluation

What follows is a description of how data from the intervention (Chapter 5) was evaluated and interpreted, along with a report of the resulting conclusions and outcomes.

Evaluation Method

This project employed both quantitative and qualitative data for its research design. The main goal of the project was, arguably, objective in nature and was accomplished: the congregation developed a mission/vision document and five year goals using a collaborative method. Quantitative measurements included giving, membership, and ascension data that was documented before and after the project. Such data was illustrated using graphs presented in Chapter 5. Also employed were elements of a qualitative case study research design with written and transcribed data being evaluated using a process of content analysis. This involved organizing and reflecting on data as it emerged throughout the months-long project process, comparing it with my own observations and notes, and then conducting a close analysis of the final data.

Specifically, the comparison of two CHAs involved arbitrarily choosing a reasonable goal of what a healthy church might score when rating themselves from 1 to 5. I chose scores of four or more as ideal because such scores reflect that the respondents have some form of agreement that the statement in question aptly describes their congregation. The CHA scores were also totaled and averaged due to the different number of respondents for each survey—it used a simple average technique. The project itself was organized in outline form prior to its commencing. Periodically during the project notes were taken and served as a chronological narrative. As the project ended, phases seemed apparent in the notes and were highlighted in Chapters 4 and 5. In a way

they were superimposed onto the outline after reflection and interpretation.

Interpretation of Data (Chapter 5)

A close analysis of the data revealed several themes woven throughout the four project phases. Data collected during the vision casting phase included personal reflections during devotions, some of which were used to develop sermonic content, input from key leaders, the subjective data from the first CHA and quantitative data from the Northern California Conference on giving and membership trends. This phase effectively provided the groundwork for the succeeding phases. As members engaged with phase one of the project, there was a sense of hope expressed by the elders, board members, and some of the general membership that the Lord would lead us in the future. However, the first CHA scores were pretty low even with a hope that the future would yield something different than what the Church had previously experienced. It should be noted that no names were written on any of the documents members submitted during the phases of this project.

Phase two yielded the bulk of the data for this project, including the overarching goal of drafting a mission/vision document, was objective in nature though there were elements that were subjective in nature. Data gleaned from the preparation and conducting of the *Vision Quest* sessions were: mission statement worksheets in session one and verbal feedback from the audience and some e-mails during the week. During session two, data included the mission statement ballots and the vision statement worksheets. Data during session three included the suggestions congregants shared on improving the written vision statement and ideas written down on their ministry milestone worksheet. Session four saw the collection of data in the form of ministry

milestone ballots, written ideas of how to continue casting the vision on the worksheet for session four and verbal suggestions from the board on the drafted Mission/Vision document as well as vision casting elements they wished to have implemented immediately.

Phases three and four combined had less data than phase two and so will be reported together here. During phase three data was provided by department heads in the form of dates and events they wished to have included in the Church calendar. This information was compiled and a tentative calendar was drafted each year of the project by December. Phase four continued this beginning step to corporate alignment by conducting the second CHA, collecting PREPP forms from departmental leaders in 2015 and 2016 and acquiring quantitative data from the Northern California Conference archive. Comparison of the data in phase four to that of phase one was reported in Chapter 5, but short improvements were noted along with anecdotal evidence in the form of members' and visitor comments that the church "had changed".

Conclusions Drawn From the Data (Chapter 5)

For this local church, based on their survey and verbal responses, the project experience and its structured intervention did have perceived spiritual and professional value. It appears that many improvements can take place in a congregation both quantitatively and qualitatively if a missional focus is regained corporately by facilitating a process to develop, draft, and implement a mission/vision document in a collaborative way. This was evidenced by the increases in the CHA scores, the improvement in giving, baptisms, number of ministries, etc. noted in Chapter 5. However, the scope of this project does not include the years of follow-up necessary to keep this initial improvement

going and the correlations could be partially explained by the timing of the initiative: They had a new pastor and were open to refocusing their church on mission. Though this could somewhat be correlated to the results and could be the subject of further study, it appears valid that a pastor in a new setting can help a church regain their missional focus in a collaborative way. The new tenure may have been a critical point or not, but should be considered if similar projects are implemented using this model.

Outcomes of the Intervention

This project involved three specific outcomes that were accomplished. First, quantitative results were noted in Chapter 5 and the Church saw improvement in the areas of giving, attendance, and baptisms. Second, while quantitative results can be noted, the bulk of the improvement noted in this study was qualitative with the improvement of the CHA scores from the beginning and the end of the project. And while a qualitative approach does not objectively measure results, the insights gained from this study are promising enough to commend the further exploration of a collaborative-based approach to re-establishing a missional focus. The data suggests that the collaborative approach taken in this intervention, along with the facilitator role of the pastor as a locus for pastoral attention and can improve a church's self-perception as was evidenced in the score improvements of the CHA: however, other methodologies might also yield similar results in different contexts with a more collaborative approach working well for the Anderson church.

A third improvement, and the overarching goal of this project, was the corporate drafting and the corresponding publishing of the mission/vision document and five-year goals. As one of the clear problems expressed in Chapter 1, this was effectively remedied

through this process. However, as with the drafting of any missional document, the promotion and intentional utilization of this document for the future planning of the Church must take place for the intervention to be lasting.

Summary of Other Conclusions

In addition to the improvements noted above and conclusions reached from the intervention data (Chapter 5), a brief summary of the theological, theoretical, and methodological conclusions reached in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 will yield principles that will be the foundation of the overall overarching conclusions.

Theological Conclusions—Chapter 2

A study of the relational elements present in the Old Testament was undertaken in Chapter 2 in order to show the ideal environment when considering the mission or purpose of God for an organization was one of *collaboration*. Specifically, a theology of *collaboration* to develop a missional focused included four areas. First, a reflection on the example of *collaboration* in the Godhead in relationship to the creation of humanity and subsequent events in the Old Testament noted the ideal spiritual atmosphere is first personal and the fruit of that relationship evidences itself in the corresponding human relationships. This was evidenced in the relationship Adam and Eve had before the Fall, in God's interactions with humanity after the Fall and later in the Israelite economy. Some emphasis was noted in Scripture on the importance of the Sabbath and marriage as safeguards to *collaboration*. Second, the incarnation of these principles leading up to and in the life of Jesus was considered in order to show continuity between the God of the Old and New Testaments. Third, the continuation of *collaboration* in the praxis of the first century Church was documented. These first three areas focused on the concept of

oneness and how it is fostered. The fourth area considered was the writings of Ellen White on the collaborative nature of God, especially in the plan of salvation, and the need for the pastor to help the members plan the work of the church which evidences collaborative principles embedded in Adventist history. Chapter 2 also served as a contrast to some of the models currently employed in the denomination that appear to be “command and control” (Ibarra & Hansen, 2013, p. 11), and from it I concluded that there is spiritual reason we need to foster a collaborative environment in the Church: that God employed this methodology in both a pre-fall and post-fall environment, and so should members of the Church since we are made in His image.

Literature Review Conclusions—Chapter 3

A review of literature related to *collaboration*, in general, and non-profit *collaboration*, in particular, was also conducted. This literature, encompassing a wide range of disciplines, theoretical perspectives, and practices, was organized chronologically in order to point to a shift in the business world towards the concepts of *collaboration* and shared leadership. The shift that the business world is experiencing appears to be somewhat absent from Church literature in general, and definitely absent from Adventist literature in particular. Also, the business world has noted many deficiencies in mission statement processes that have been utilized in the non-profit world may show a lack of continuing education in this field. Adventism is not immune from this problem as is evidenced by our profession to be a “representative” system (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2015, pp. 26-27) while continuing to utilize many business practices in vision casting that are “command and control” (Ibarra & Hansen, 2013, p. 11) in its large gatherings and such practices inevitably trickle down to the local

church. This was evidenced when a comparison of an Adventist and Catholic approach to vision casting were made and the conclusion was drawn that a synthesis of approaches would be necessary in order to implement a truly collaborative approach instead of a command and control or consensus model. Such a model would need to be participatory, avoid the many deficiencies that were noted, and yield a document that stakeholders felt included in and would hopefully unite to accomplish.

Methodological Conclusions—Chapter 4

I have at times in the past conducted visioning projects with elders, church boards and other key leaders of other local congregations: however, as a result of the principles gleaned from theological reflection and the literature review, I began to believe a wider audience would be needed in some of the initial stages of the project (especially phases one and two). As a result, the methodology outlined in Chapter 4 was initially drafted in outline form and later fleshed out. In particular, five elements were developed for the project methodology and implementation. First, fostering an atmosphere of dialogue with God and each other utilizing the tools of the sermonic calendar, board meeting devotions, times of corporate prayer, an emphasis on personal devotions, a church health assessment, and regular meetings with elders was planned. Second, this led plans to develop dialogical visioning sessions where all members would be invited to participate in the formation of mission and vision statements. The third area considered was the need for the pastor to facilitate, with input and help from local church leaders, ways to keep the collaborative culture going in the congregation and promote the new missional focus. The fourth area was possible ways to encourage continued personal devotions, times of corporate prayer, involvement of the elders, the use of the sermonic calendar, recognition

of ministry departments, and utilizing a second church health assessment to keep the congregation in continual *collaboration* with God. From this implementation plan it became apparent that the overarching goal of producing a mission/vision document and five year goals would be straightforward compared to the secondary outcomes which would be qualitative in nature with some emphasis on quantitative improvement. Last, phases of the project would not become apparent until after the months-long process was complete and these were noted in Chapter 5.

Overarching Conclusions

Combining the conclusions noted above (from Chapters 2, 3, and 4) with the conclusions in this chapter that were drawn from the interpretation of data (Chapter 5), it is now possible to make three overarching conclusions from the project as a whole.

First, there are spiritual and theoretical reasons for utilizing *collaboration* in organizations. While one can note the secular nature of the term “collaboration,” one also has to see that in a way, much like the term mission (Vizeu & Matitz, 2013), this concept has been coined by the business world but its essence originates in Scripture. In fact, the very nature of God seems to be collaborative and involves many elements of the concepts that are most recently being highlighted in literature. Keeping in mind the divine origins of the wisdom that is being utilized by the business world, the Church can choose to go to the Source Himself and use the terms to contemporize the ancient findings of Scripture.

As a leader discovers that their organizational culture has veered from the ideals of Scripture, they can re-adjust and discard outdated practices that originated in the business world and in their place keep timeless principles in mind. For congregants who experienced a collaborative environment in this project, new insights were gained for the

future of their organization that they potentially never would have learned had a command-control model of vision casting been implemented. This model is in fact Adventist in a sense that it is representative in principle and points to a need to deconstruct practices and models that do not benefit to the kind of church structure we espouse. However, I believe that if a collaborative model is utilized, then many of the issues facing the Seventh-day Adventist Church could potentially be alleviated and God's purpose unshrouded. Such an endeavor beyond the local church would require a quest for something different and yet timeless—a vision from God.

Second, the project implementation made it clear that there is a need to utilize *collaboration* in a variety of areas of congregational and organizational life. For if a congregation of one hundred people can come to agreement about the future direction of the Church, why not utilize this method in other undertakings? After all, the corporate sessions of prayer, seeking God's purpose for an organization, and outlining it in a published document are only just the beginning for a congregation that really wants to seek God's will in the plethora of situations they face. Like all organizations, churches need to continue to collaborate in order to encourage congregants to “continually apply their unique talents to group projects” (Adler, Hechscher, & Prusak, 2013, p. 45). This will enable the church to face rapidly changing environment around them and to truly put into practice what a Body does—communicates continually about almost everything. Also, it points to the continual need for the Body to seek the Head (Jesus) daily as the Lord's Prayer aptly describes us doing with the metaphor of asking for daily bread. In short, *collaboration* must be nourished continually to truly become a culture instead of a concept that ends up relegated as a relic of business literature. In my context, the

positional leader seems to be paramount to fostering a focus on *collaboration*, but it is possible that lay-driven methodologies would also succeed if encouragement was given by the pastor.

Last, it appears that survey results, as well as quantitative measurements, of a congregation can be improved through a spiritual process of seeking God's direction. This was evidenced in statements made by members about how much the church had changed, by the improvement in the qualitative data results from the two Church Health Assessments, and even the quantitative data changes in giving, membership, and baptisms. However, what was more apparent was the willingness of members to re-start ministries that had not been utilized for some time, to involve young people, to reach out to the community when they had not done so in a while. Overall, a project like this seems to encourage the morale of a congregation and at least give them a direction to pursue which in turn makes them feel better about what they are doing. This increase in morale and corresponding performance must be carefully nurtured to avoid burnout, but at this point I can conclude that if for some reason we lose sight of why we are doing what we are doing we can take principles from this project and apply them to the situation we are facing at that time.

Personal Transformation

One other way of assessing this project is to note the way it has impacted my life and ministry. I will limit myself to three ways that I have been influenced by this project. First, the preparation of my own heart during phase one of the project was crucial not only to the drafting and implementation of the project, but to my own spiritual well-being. As I began the DMin cohort in 2014 I had considered other vocations. I had tired

of an unnatural, business-like attitude regarding church work that left me feeling depleted emotionally and spiritually. During the course of the first phase of the project, I was able to re-focus on God and seek Him for guidance. I specifically asked Him for wisdom to lead this congregation because, while I had applied some of the principles of this project in other contexts before, this was my first time at a congregation above seventy in attendance. Revitalizing my dependence up on God was the greatest impact this project and the DMin program has had on my life. In short, the cohort and project have been regenerative to me.

Second, the careful, deliberate nature of this process has brought intentionality to my work. I have found other opportunities to use the format of Chapter 1 (Statement of the Problem, Task, etc.) to address other situations in the Church. One tool that I developed because of the concepts of *collaboration* taking deeper root in my mind is an “Openness Form.” This is a form that takes the traditional committee or board format and turns the meetings into a small group environment temporarily in order to get as much participation as possible. We have utilized this at Anderson when discussing a roofing project, women’s ordination, and property use proposals. Additionally, I have found myself trying regularly to send out as much information as possible prior to a board meeting in order to have members prayerfully prepare for the meeting and submit feedback prior to coming together should they so desire. Thus, the principles gleaned are able to be applied to a multitude of situations besides the ones dealt with in this project and have enabled me to see the possibility that some of the situations going on in the greater Adventist system may be the utilization of an old, command-control business model. Such a model appears obsolete in so many ways and appears to be heading

towards the realm of disdain by the next generation, necessitating elements of it to be discarded post-haste. At minimum, a willingness to listen to opposing viewpoints or differences of opinion may be helpful at many levels of the denomination.

Last, the process of research and writing has been both a disciplinary blessing, as well as an enlightenment of how much I still want to learn in the field of collaborative leadership. The discipline of writing a project document that one plans to defend has had its challenges, and yet has left me feeling like I have summited a mountain and am looking down on the path I have journeyed on. As I look back, many lessons come to mind. Lessons from Scripture, literature, and life continue to almost magnetically pull me in the direction of learning more and more. Yet there is only so much space in a project document that can be utilized. As ideas continue to emerge up until the last moment of this writing, I am left wondering what directions such intellectual undertakings will take me. It is humbling and energizing at the same time. Like summing a mountain and seeing the valley before me with another mountain beyond it with so many unknowns—I feel that I have only just begun a journey of learning. Some of the additional lessons I have learned will be highlighted in the next section while others will be the subjects of further study as I intend to be a life-long learner. Overall, the realization of having arrived at an understanding and yet being willing to study it further is a great blessing that came to me from this educational undertaking.

Recommendations

Recommendations for further action and research have arisen out of this limited intervention and project including the following:

1. While Chapter 2 briefly outlined a theology of *collaboration* from a survey of the Bible, several fuller dissertation-length treatments would be useful. I plan to research more fully the theology of *collaboration* in the Bible in the coming years and possibly to write articles with the principles gleaned from this biblical content. Also, I plan to write several articles and perhaps a book for general Adventist readers on topics of *collaboration*, based on insights I have gained from my study so far. Some will be theological in nature for a general Adventist audience, while others will be professional in nature for Church employees.

2. The literature review noted a scarcity of Christian in general, and Adventist in particular, scholarship in the area of collaborative leadership. I recommend at minimum the utilization of *Collaboration Begins with You* (Blanchard et al., 2015), *Shared Leadership* (Heifetz et al., 2009), the *Wisdom of the Crowds* (Surowiecki, 2005), and *Servant Leadership* (Bell et al., 2014) be included in church leadership courses for theology students in the undergraduate and graduate levels.

3. In order to promote collaborative concepts to a broader audience than this dissertation will probably reach, I intend to write book reviews on relevant literature from time to time and submit them to *Ministry* magazine as well as other Christian leadership publications.

4. The literature review also found no evidence of a comprehensive collaborative-based curriculum for use in Adventist churches. I intend to explore the development of a seven-session collaborative-based curriculum that can be used by pastors or church leaders to help their congregations discover God's purpose. This will include a facilitator's guide, participant booklets, and worksheets that can be reproduced

for various parts of the process. I will also consider developing a website to supplement this publication by posting relevant media, literature, and an invitation for other collaborative-thinking practitioners to share their helpful documents. Such a website can serve as a platform to offer my services for those who need pointers in this field of study.

5. Any project of this nature can serve as an invitation to others to produce their own case studies in order to provide additional insights. I recommend that any theological educators who have an interest in developing a more collaborative culture in this age of a shifting leadership paradigm conduct their own case studies and report their findings in articles, projects, and even dissertations as has been done in this paper.

6. As a result of my research into the concept of *collaboration* and the realization that such a concept and practice has been documented to be taking root in the millennial workforce, I intend to research the implications of this to Adventism and write articles alerting denominational leaders to what could be a looming systemic problem. Perhaps the issues we are facing as a church could be better handled with a collaborative, communicative environment rather than continuing the business-like model that seems at times to be yielding distrust and conflict on many issues.

7. This project has documented the beginning stages of a process to establish a missional focus at a local church. I intend to continue documenting the continuation of the journey that has begun at this church and to develop initiatives to keep the momentum going. This may include the utilization of the CHA results in such a way as to encourage the church to address some of their lowest scores, evaluation of the five-year goals at year five and possibly the writing of *Values Quest* session guides to review and outline what practices have taken root at Anderson. In essence I would be interested to see if the

values that could surface would reflect a change in the congregation into the kind of people that their vision statement envisioned.

8. Improving the *Vision Quest* process could include many items if the project were to be reduplicated in other contexts. The following are suggested:

a. More proofing of the mission statement document prior to its publication and training for facilitators instead allowing them to imply what you want them to do.

b. More use of social media interaction of ideas generated during the *Vision Quest* sessions, pending the members would actually be online to discuss the material.

c. Also, re-doing the *Vision Quest* guides for sessions 2 and 3. Session two was beginning to focus on needs in order to have them imagine what they should do and was prompting them to consider strategic planning items.

d. Another possible improvement would be to mail the *Vision Quest* guides with an explanation letter to non-attending and homebound members in advance of the actual sessions in order to share their input with the larger group.

e. Having more support personnel in place besides my secretary would have been helpful.

f. Train and provide survey attendants to help the elderly complete the Church Health Assessment (CHA) survey.

g. Educate the members on what some of the definitions mean prior to them taking the CHA survey or have a Church Growth consultant come from the Conference to do so.

h. Session 3 needed to be stressed as a prioritization session *not* a planning session since the planning of the items would be delegated to the church board. Also,

more time should have been given for Session Three or the content broken up into two sessions.

i. A clearer definition of vision would have been helpful - some got it mixed up with mission.

j. During session two and onward it would have been helpful to mix up the groups so that the same group did not continue to meet with the same people.

9. Finally, as a result of this project, I plan to continue reading as widely as possible in the area of collaborative leadership and attend any conferences or leadership events that I am able to in order to keep abreast on this field.

A Final Word

Why should collaborative leadership proficiencies be considered as an essential part of the pastor's skillset? Simply, because churches are organizations that claim to be established by God to impact our world—and it is an ever-changing world. In order to work together in such an ever-changing reality, we must exhibit the very characteristics God has exhibited: a willingness to communicate, work together, entrust tasks to others, and praise those who succeed as if we were succeeding. Also, in an ever-changing world, we must develop a methodology that seeks broader wisdom in order to intentionally plan new ways to reach the humanity with God's message. Last, if church leaders are truly serious about reaching the next generations, then their every-day practices must be evaluated and adapted to exhibit collaborative tendencies. Proficiency is not enough though. One must seek the Source of true *collaboration* to truly be a collaborative leader. Once *collaboration* is part of one's being, then the practices that come with this mindset can follow—though some intentionality may be required. Thus, my hope is that

collaborative leadership will become of such relevance to theological and pastoral formation that it permeates our very beings and exudes itself out to a world that has many longing to be involved in a holy purpose.

APPENDIX A

SCHEDULES, CALENDARS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE FORMS

1. WORSHIP SERVICE AND PRAYER MEETING PLANNER

Date / Sermon	OS/SR/CS	Children's story	Prayer Meeting topic
4/5/14 – Deeper Look	Os - #92 Father World SR: 2 Peter 1:16-20 CS – Minikus song	FBI	3/25, 4/1 and 4/8 Sanctuary prayer
4/12 – “1+1+1=?”	OS - #71: Come Thou Almighty King SR: John 17:1-3 CS - #73: Holy, Holy Holy	Gary Jones – Ladder Testimony	4/15 Sanctuary prayer
4/19 – Oneness in Creation *BADGE & gift Out of Chaos comes humanity, out of chaos comes the Church	OS - #71: Come, Thou Almighty King SR: Romans 1: 17-20 CS – #2: All Creatures of Our God and King	Newness of Life: my birth	4/22 Sanctuary prayer
4/26 – Evil: The Undoing of Oneness	OS - #2: All Creatures of Our God and King SR: Romans 5:11-15 CS - #340: Jesus Saves		4/29 Talbot #1
5/3 – The Promised Restorer	OS - #340: Jesus Saves SR: Galatians 4:1-7 CS - #162: Wondrous Love	Gospel in balloons	5/6 Talbot #2
5/10 – Monuments of Oneness	OS - #650: Our Father, by Whose Name SR: Hebrews 4:4-8 CS - #652: Love at Home	Sabbathkeeping in tough situations	5/13 Talbot #3
5/17 – Anger Ruling: The Undoing of Oneness	OS - #2: All Creatures of Our God and King SR: Ephesians 4:25-32 CS - #461: Be Still, My Soul	What to do with anger: Story of RVYCF Unit A Or thistle flower / thorns.	5/20 Talbot #4 Leader_____ City council 6pm 1887 Howard street
5/24 – One with God in Noah's Day *BADGE	OS - #461: Be Still, My Soul SR: Matthew 24:36-39 CS: #448 O, When Shall I See Jesus	Friendly squirrels and not so tame lions!	5/27 Talbot #5

5/31 – The Controversy with Oneness Continued	OS: #73 – Holy, Holy, Holy SR: 2 Peter 1:16-21 CS: #115 – O Come, O Come, Immanuel	FBI – TAG (time alone with God) with tent prop	6/3 Talbot #6
6/7 – The Elijah Message	OS: #115 – O Come, O Come, Immanuel SR: Isaiah 2:1-4 CS: #425 – Holy, Holy, Is What the Angels Sing	TAG part 2: prayer	6/10 Talbot #7
6/14 – Oneness in Us *BADGE	OS: # 12 – Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee SR: John 17:22-26 CS: #163 – At the Cross	Marriage Memories	6/17 Talbot #8
6/21 – Symbols of Oneness (communion).	OS: #348 – The Church Has One Foundation SR: John 14:1-6 CS: #350 – Blest Be the Tie That Binds	Africa part 1: Turbulence	6/24 – Talbot #9
6/28 – Radical Protection with Guest Speaker		Another member	7/1 – Talbot #10
7/5 – Elder Speaks		Another member	7/8 – Talbot #11
7/12 – Messiah’s Banquet Part 1: The Invitation	OS #286 – Wonderful Words of Life SR: Luke 13:22-29 CS #462 – Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!	Story of acceptance	Break
7/19 – Messiah’s Banquet Part 2: Invitations *BADGE	OS: #462 – Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine! SR: Revelation 22:16-17 CS:	“Jesus, save me from your followers”.	Break
7/26 – Guest Speaker		Guest	Break

8/2 Ebenezer	OS - #229 All Hail the Power of Jesus Name SR – Revelation 12:10-12 Title – Ebenezer CS: #334 – Come Thou Fount	Walla Walla, Washington: Mr. Schefner witnessing to people as they got on and off the railroad. Witness echoed down through time. . .to my Grandpa.	Break
8/9 – Gates of Hell	OS: #334- Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing SR: Ephesians 6:10-13 CS: #612 – Onward, Christian Soldiers	Christian Education focus: RAA	Mark study #1
8/16 – Guest Speaker from Conference		Guest speaker	Mark Study #2
8/23 – Baked Bread BADGE	OS: #623 – I Will Follow Thee SR – Matthew 5:10-12 CS: #312 – Near the Cross	Dropping Out of Class – story of perseverance	Mark Study #3
8/30 – Noomaphobia	OS: #73 – Holy, Holy, Holy SR: Psalm 133 CS: #334 – Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing	Story of Holy Spirit working: Couple in Broken Bow of Acts 2.	No study 9/2/14 =Community appointment
9/6 – Ecclesia	OS: #565 – For the Beauty of the Earth SR: 1 Corinthians 16:15-19 CS: #350 – Blest Be the Tie that Binds	FBI#3 agents bring a bag with 4 things the apostles did (see Don James Acts 2:42-47). You emphasize Item #1 PRAYER sheets	Mark #4
9/13 – Heaven Stands *Farewell to an elder before	OS: #530 – It Is Well With My Soul SR: Psalm 110	Item #2 – Bible, psalm 23 bookmark story.	Mark #5

opening song and then again during fellowship meal.	CS: #462 – Blessed Assurance		
9/20 – Advent Prayer /afternoon Session 1 BADGE – play dough	CS: #462 – Blessed Assurance SR: 1Timothy 2:1-6 CS: #478 – Sweet Hour of Prayer	Item #3 – Gift card, subway sandwich story w/GJ	Mark #6
9/27 – Unstoppable (communion) / session 2	OS: #612 – Onward Christian Soldiers! SR: Philippians 1:12-18 CS: #614 – Sound the Battle Cry	Item #4 – Church directory, fellowship story with DJ.	Mark #7
10/4 – Why I am a Seventh-day Adventist part 1	OS – #214 We Have This Hope SR – Daniel 8:13-14 CS - #212 ‘Tis Almost Time for the Lord to Come	Item #4 – Church directory, fellowship story with DJ.	Mark #8
10/11 – Why I am a Seventh-day Adventist part 2 *Tithes and offering bookmark	OS - #448 O, When Shall I See Jesus SR – Revelation 14:6-7 CS - #214 We Have This Hope	FBI #4 – GLOBE or Map to explain bookmark.	10/12 – Prayer Breakfast 10/14 – Mark #9
10/18 – The Family Friendly Church BADGE – Light Sticks	OS - \$650 Our Father, by Whose Name SR – Ephesians 3:14-19 CS - #652 Love at Home	Guest speaker	Mark #10
10/25 – Guest speaker:			Mark #11
11/1 – What a Difference a Day Makes (Unveiling)	OS – #547 Be Thou My Vision SR – Luke 24:45-51 CS - #214 We Have This Hope		Mark #12
11/8 – Elder from Conference		Guest Speaker / member	Mark #13
11/15 – Landmarks of Prophecy 10AM			

11/22 – Landmarks of Prophecy 10AM			
11/29 – The Unspeakable Gift	OS – #557 Come Ye Thankful People Come SR – Psalm 100 CS – Give Thanks (sing twice)	Thanksgiving in Nebraska	
12/6 – Breath of Heaven (with Inscription to the Unknown God)	Opening Song #143 – Silent Night Scripture: Luke 1:46- 56 Sermon Title: Breath of Heaven CS - #115 O Come, O Come, Immanuel	Amazon.com story	
12/13 – Secret Servant (communion)	<i>OS - #569 – Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior SR – Mark 10:35-44 Title: Secret Servant CS - #524 'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus</i>	Gifts in the Kansas Countryside	
12/20 – Light of the World birth of Christ program		None	
12/27 – Staying Connected #1 – Word of God Speak ***10 Days of prayer guides **Elder's TEAM	OS - #428 Sweet By and By SR: 2 Timothy 3:14- 17 Title: Word of God Speak CS – Give Me the Bible	Children select an adult to answer the question: How do you know God speaks to you today?	
1/3/2015 – Staying Connected #2 – Testimony of Jesus a. Christians need to connect with Jesus b. Connect with each other c. Connect to world (vision and 5 year goals)	OS- #___ Tell me the Story of Jesus SR – Luke 24:25-27 Title – Testimony of Jesus CS - #499 What a Friend we Have in Jesus	Christ at the park (Roseburg 1999)	Orientation

<p>**10 Days of prayer guides ***Youth Baptismal class ****Visits x4</p>			
<p>1/10 – Staying Connected #3 – A Thoughtful Hour</p> <p>*Devotional guides this week **Stewardship focus during announcements) ***NCC Leaders bookmark</p>	<p>OS - #499 What a Friend we Have in Jesus SR – Matthew 26:40-41 Title – A Thoughtful Hour CS - #478 Sweet Hour of Prayer</p>	<p>Fragrance of a Follower: Mary encouraged Jesus all the way to His death by pouring that perfume on His head. *Perfume / aftershave to put a dab on a spot they can smell</p>	<p>Orientation</p>
<p>1/17 – Prayer Service *Prayer Ministries (PM): Prayer Bookmark Other: _____ –</p>	<p>OS - #499 What a Friend we Have in Jesus SR – None Prayer Time: Omit from bulletin CS – Ron Elliot, “Jesus at Every Turn”</p>	<p>Children select an adult to: Give an example from the Old Testament that points us to Jesus.</p>	<p>Orientation</p>
<p>1/24 – Pathfinder Sabbath *Closing prayer = me with inviting leaders to front.</p>	<p>Check with Pathfinder Leader</p>	<p>Pathfinders</p>	<p>Orientation</p>
<p>1/31 – Staying Connected #4 – Eyewitness</p> <p>*Mark’s account = Peter’s Mark 14:66-72</p>	<p>OS - #108 Amazing Grace SR – 2 Peter 1:16-21 Title – Eyewitness CS – The Old Rugged Cross</p>	<p>Badge and Crown Crown part 1: Eternal Value Parable of the Kingdom part 1</p>	<p>Orientation</p>
<p>2/7 – Staying Connected #5 – Son of the Father *Luke’s Gospel</p>	<p>OS- #499 What a Friend we Have in Jesus SR: Luke 15:7 and 10 Title – Son of the Father</p>	<p>Crown part 2: Parable of the Kingdom part 2</p>	<p>Orientation/transitio n to group setting.</p>

<p>InFocus: a. Flea Market Ministry during announcements b. Groups for prayer during prayer time</p>	<p>CS - #163 At the Cross</p>		
<p>2/14 – Staying Connected #6 – Logos *True wisdom, content and contentment is of Christ!</p>	<p>OS - #499 What a Friend we Have in Jesus SR – John 1:14-16 Title – Logos CS – #The Church has One Foundation</p>	<p>Crown part 3: Parable of the Kingdom part 3 (Mary’s smelly offering)</p>	<p>Orientation</p>
<p>2/21- Staying Connected #7 – Desire of Ages</p>	<p>OS- Jesus at Every Turn (Ron Elliott) SR: Haggai 2:6-7 Title – Desire of Ages CS - #115 O Come, O Come, Immanuel</p>	<p>Crown part 4: Reciting the mission statement activity</p>	
<p>2/28 – Staying Connected #8 – Steps to Christ</p>	<p>OS- Jesus at Every Turn (Ron Elliott) SR: Luke 3:1-6 Title – Steps to Christ CS – We Have This Hope</p>	<p>Crown part 5: Call on an adult to say the mission statement</p>	
<p>3/7/15 @11am: Gazelle of Joppa (ordination of deacons and deaconesses) *InFocus: Elders/Deacons 7pm– Folk Mountain Gospel</p>	<p>OS SR Title – Gazelle of Joppa CS</p>		
<p>3/14 – Christ in the Old Testament #1 – YHWH *NCC Prayer retreat 13-15</p>	<p>OS: #1 – Praise to the Lord SR: Romans 1:16-20 Title – YHWH CS - #92 This is my Father’s World</p>		
<p>3/21- Christ in the Old Testament #2 – Cleansing</p>	<p>OS – #159 The Old Rugged Cross SR: Matthew 8:2-4</p>		

(Leper)	Title: Cleansing CS - #336 There is a Fountain		
3/28 – Thoughtful Hour (Whole worship service) *Agape Feast tonight with Gospel of John	See Thoughtful Hour sheet and DA	None	
4/4/14 –Guest Speaker			
4/11/15 – guest speaker Del Dunavant from Conference			
4/18 – In His Steps *Baptisms ORDER OF SERVICE CHANGES	OS - #108 Amazing Grace SR – John 3:3-8 Title: In His Steps After Sermon: *Baptismal Vows *Songs of Preparation: *Baptisms *Song of Consecration: Beautiful Way w/ parents *Songs of Commitment: Ron Elliot *Laying on of *Hands/Congratulatio ns *Closing Song: #____ We Have this Hope *Benediction: Pastor Murray Miller	None	
4/25 – Tale of Lost Love *Mission statement	OS: #198 – And Can It Be? SR: Revelation 2:1-5 Title: Tale of Lost Love CS: #190 – Jesus Loves Me	Mission statement badge	

5/2/14 – Plan of Salvation *InFocus: Community Services	OS: #158 – Were You There? SR: Revelation 13:8-9 Title: Plan of Salvation CS: #162 – Wondrous Love	God’s Omnitogethernes s part 1 – God’s plan for 2 cases	
5/9 – Spectator Sport	OS #334 – Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing SR: Ephesians 6:12 Title: Spectator Sport CS: #618 – Stand Up! Stand Up for Jesus!	God’s Omnitogethernes s part 2: God’s plan for Baobob Lodge	
5/16 – Conference Speaker	How to Introduce People to Jesus	Omnitogethernes s: Salvation Call in Bulawayo	
5/23 – The Bond of Peace *Eph. 4:1-6	OS – #469 Leaning on the Everlasting Arms SR: Psalm 29:7-11 Title: The Bond of Peace CS: #462 – Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!	God’s Omni-togetherness part 3: TAG at Griggs	
5/30 – Growing Up in Christ *Eph. 4:7-16	OS - #44 Morning Has Broken SR – 1 Corinthians 13:9-13 Title Growing up in Christ CS – We Have This Hope	God’s Omni-togetherness part 4: TAG at retreat center (planned 1 year ahead of time)	
6/6 – Following Jesus *Eph. 4:17-24 (refer to 25-32)	OS - #624 I Want Jesus to Walk With Me SR: Genesis 3:8-9 Title: Following Jesus CS – #623 I Will Follow Thee	Encouraging others to follow Jesus (Zimbabwe)	
6/13 – The Armor of God *Eph. 6 and Isaiah (Lord is our guard)	OS - #618 Stand Up! Stand Up for Jesus! SR – Psalm 35:1-3 Title – The Armor OF God	Encouraging others to follow Jesus – Sabbath and State of Dead in Zimbabwe	

	CS – #614 Sound the Battle Cry		
6/20 – The Body of Christ *Ephesians 5:25-33 (oneness in the home points to oneness with Christ)	OS - #350 Blest Be the Tie that Binds SR: Ephesians 5:23-27 Title CS – #65 God Be With You	None – during footwashing	
6/27 – Operation Desert Rain *(SS and Worship)	OS - #39: Lord, in the morning SR: Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 Title: Divine Appointments Closing Song - #367: Rescue the Perishing	Journal entry	
7/4 – Elder Speaks *Desert Rain begins		Volunteer	
7/11 – Steering the Ship (worst naval disaster in British History for opening story)	OS - #348 The Church Has One Foundation SR – Hebrews 2:9-13 Title: Steering the Ship CS – We Have This Hope	Divine Appointment #1 – Macy from East Texas	
7/18 – Victorious! (Ephesians 6/1 Samuel 17)	OS –#82 Before Jehovah’s Awful Throne SR – Hebrews 11:32-34 Title: Victorious! CS – #612 Onward, Christian Soldiers!	Africa: Final episode from elephants to baptisms to home.	
7/25 – Elder Speaks			
8/1 – Elder Speaks	The Beginning of the End		
8/8 – Under the Lord’s Banner (Joshua 1)	OS - #618 Stand Up! Stand Up for Jesus! SR – Isaiah 11:10-12 Title: Under the Lord’s Banner	Divine Appointment #2 – the Maid	

	CS #620 – On Jordan’s Stormy Banks		
8/15 – Scarlet Thread	OS –#163 At the Cross SR –Matthew 27:25- 28 Title: Scarlet Thread CS #154 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross	Divine Appointment #4 – the waitress	
8/22 – Getting Your Feet Wet	OS – #623 I Will Follow Thee SR – Psalm 132:1-9 Title: Getting Your Feet Wet CS #620 – On Jordan’s Stormy Banks	Divine Appointment #4 – Applebees manager	
8/29 – The Presence	OS - #632 Until Then SR – Joshua 5:13-15 Title: The Presence CS - #626 In a Little While We’re Going Home		
9/5 – Deliverance	OS - #626 In a Little While We’re Going Home SR – Joshua 6:25-27 Title: The Presence CS #620 – On Jordan’s Stormy Banks		
9/12 – Revelation’s Hope			
9/19 – Revelation’s Hope			
9/26 – Revelation’s Hope			
10/3– Revelation’s Hope			
10/10– Revelation’s Hope			

2. MISSIONAL DEVOTIONALS FOR BOARD MEETINGS

Month/Year of Meeting	Devotional Used	Emphasis
April, 2014	You're Still God's Chosen (p. 12).	God has a destiny for you individually and us as a congregation.
May, 2014	Chosen @ The Beginning (p. 13).	We must remember that God has a plan for us.
June, 2014	Destiny's Outstretched Hand (p. 14).	Each is to work in cooperation with Christ for the saving of souls. We must also work together as a congregation.
July, 2014	Why God Can't Sleep at Night (p. 28).	God knows our challenges
August, 2014	Another Friend (p. 38).	We need the Holy Spirit to guide us personally and corporately.
September, 2014	No Humbler God – 1 (p. 39).	The Holy Spirit is humble beyond belief and enables us to be like Him.
October, 2014	No Humbler God – 2 (p. 40).	We should spend time each day focusing on the Humble God that we want to be like.
November, 2014	The Great White Throne (p. 41).	We should begin bowing before the Humble God now, in order to bow before Him later.
December, 2014	"The Two Greatest Religious Movements of All History" (p. 44).	God has a faithful movement of destiny – we are part of it!
January, 2015	The Judgment of Adolf Hitler (p. 63).	No one is beyond reach or a lost cause – Jesus paid the price for ALL!
February, 2015	Will All Be Saved? (p. 64).	God has a desire to save all, but not all will be saved. We too must have this longing.
March, 2015	Prayer Closet (p. 73).	In uncertain times, we must spend time in secret prayer. As we do so individually, then when we come together corporately we can collectively hear the voice of God.

April, 2015	When Mercy Grew on Trees (p. 67).	At the family tree of Calvary is wide open to new additions – us and those around us!
May, 2015	How Much Time? (p. 74).	If we have not started a habit of making time daily with Jesus, then we need to program our schedules around this necessity.
June, 2015	High Concentrate Soul Food (p. 75).	We must spend time daily fixing our eyes upon Jesus if we are to become like Him!
July, 2015	The Gospel According to Abraham Lincoln (p. 65).	If we are spending time focusing on Jesus, then why not spend it focusing on what He did for us at Calvary?
August, 2015	From Smorgasborg to Single Dish (p. 76).	Take one story a day from the life of Jesus and focus on it. Reread it and grasp each scene of this amazing drama of the ages!
September, 2015	Writing to God (p. 78).	After reading a story from the Gospels, ask the question, “What does this story tell me about my Forever Friend?” and then write down your thoughts. The time becomes a two-way conversation and helps us keep our eyes on Jesus.
October, 2015	Forward on our Knees (p. 79).	As we conclude our time with God, may we assume the posture of being on our knees. Why not walk forward with God on our knees?
November, 2015	Petitions for Your Audience with the King (p. 80).	Praying to God in private brings no credit or applause, but it an abiding peace to our souls. The more earnest and steadfast our intercession the closer our union with Christ will be. The closer our union

		with Christ individually, the closer we will be corporately!
December, 2015	Turning a Curse into a Prayer! (p. 81).	May we keep praying for the blood of the lamb to be upon us and our children. May we pray for the blood of Jesus to cover every person on our prayer list.
January, 2016	The Blood (p. 82).	Satan was defeated by the crimson flow from our Savior – by the blood we overcome!

3. INITIAL DRAFT OF THE FIVE -YEAR PLAN

Declaring to each individual their eternal value in Jesus and preparing them for His soon-return!

Yearly we plan to: Foster oneness through a prayer service, 10 Days of Prayer, a Bible reading plan, sermons, yearly milestone Sabbaths, outreach and corporate service opportunities.

Year 1 we plan to: Identify the Needs of the Community

- Appoint members/officers to interact with the community and conduct a needs assessment. Appoint a member to attend City council and other community meetings.
- Develop a community garden to serve the needs of our church / community
- Have a church-wide mission trip to promote unity and team-building (within U.S.)
- Conduct a needs assessment of the Meadow Lane school for after-school programs/pre-school
- Develop an active Sabbath afternoon ministry team that will conduct surveys of our neighborhood, offer Bible studies, visit shut-ins, assess needs of elderly apartments & shut-ins.
- Conduct an exit interview of non-attending members to assess their needs & desire to return. Elders to develop a program to reclaim these members (Christmas cards)
- Conduct a VBS program
- Assess the need for a Spanish Literacy program (ESL) and implement the first steps
- Conduct a Prophecy Seminar and start an off-campus small group to follow-up the meetings.

- Develop ministries based upon the Needs Assessment and adjust our year 2 & 3 goals to fit those needs
- Assign leaders to Pray, Review, Evaluate, Plan and Pray (PREPP) with each department to evaluate their progress thus far in facilitating the mission.
- Contact Chef Mark Anthony and arrange for a vegetarian cooking class / demo
- _____

Year 2 we plan to: Win Confidence by meeting needs

- Continue the community needs assessment process and develop at least 1 ministry project
- Continue the community garden and offer a community garden class with Shasta College or other teachers.
- Have a 2nd Mission Trip (within U.S.)
- Develop programs to meet needs of Meadow Lane school (if any surfaced)
- Continue Sabbath afternoon ministry
- Continue the Spanish Literacy focus and the next steps
- Conduct a Job Readiness Class
- Conduct a short series of meetings in Cottonwood & start a small group
- Develop a resource guide for homeless
- Assign leaders to Pray, Review, Evaluate, Plan and Pray (PREPP) with each department to evaluate their progress thus far in facilitating the mission.
- Equip 3 small group leaders and introduce “Orientation to Holistic Small Groups” to the congregation.
- Conduct a Health Assessment of our Church and begin addressing continued deficiencies
- _____

Year 3 we plan to: Invite many to follow Jesus

- Develop 1 ministry project to meet the needs of the community
- Offer another gardening class/demo
- Have a local mission trip to an area church to help with an evangelism series (in preparation for the Happy Valley series)
- Continue Meadow Lane ministry
- Continue Sabbath afternoon ministry
- Conduct a short series of meetings in Happy Valley and start a small group to follow-up those meetings
- Conduct a parenting class or marriage enrichment (Mad About Marriage w/Tuckers)
- Operation Desert Rain 8 weeks before meetings
- Invite an evangelist to come to Anderson for a reaping (possibly Jac Colon)
- Begin feasibility for ongoing after-school program/pre-school or Christian Education options here at Anderson.
- Assign leaders to Pray, Review, Evaluate, Plan and Pray (PREPP) with each department to evaluate their progress thus far in facilitating the mission.
- _____

Year 4 we plan to: Evaluate Progress and Re-assess needs of Community

- Appoint members/officers to interact with the community and review the needs assessment.
- Develop 1 ministry project to meet the needs of the community as a result of reviewing the needs.
- Begin assessing an area of South Redding to plant a small group
- Corporate mission trip (international)
- Assign leaders to Pray, Review, Evaluate, Plan and Pray (PREPP) with each department to evaluate their progress thus far in facilitating the mission.
- Begin brainstorming as a Board new ways to facilitate the mission of our church that we have not tried before.
- Have each small group evaluate the progress we have made on accomplishing our mission and suggest new ways to the Board.
- Prophecy seminar conducted by members in South Redding w/ small group established
- Consider offering a new on-site resource to homeless
- Other _____

Year 5 we plan to: Continue meeting needs and Celebrating what God has Done

- Appoint members/officers to interact with the community and review the needs assessment.
- Develop 1 ministry project to meet the needs of the community as a result of reviewing the needs assessment.
- Begin assessing an area of South Redding to plant a small group
- Corporate mission trip (within U.S.)
- Assign leaders to Pray, Review, Evaluate, Plan and Pray (PREPP) with each department to evaluate their progress thus far in facilitating the mission.
- Prophecy seminar conducted by members in South Redding
- Conduct *Values Quest* on Sabbath afternoons and in small groups to develop a description of what our current values. Re-evaluate our mission/vision statements.
- Develop another five-year plan
- Other _____

4. 2014/2015 CHURCH CALENDAR

Month	Events	Department
December		
8	6:00pm – Communion Rehearsal	Elders/Deacons
8	6:30pm – Elder’s TEAM	Elders
8	7:00 - Appoint Community Assessment Committee (CAC) &	Board
13	Council Attendee	Elders
20	Communion / Visit Shut-ins / cards to non-attending members	Social
27	11:00 am on: Christmas Play, caroling, and game/movie night	Elders
	Elder’s TEAM (visitation Sabbath prep)	Missions

	*Begin promoting & planning for Spring Mission trip. Dates _____ **Roof	
January	3 Visitation Sabbath – Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses, Visitation teams (prayer & devotional materials) 4 10:00 a.m. New Beginning Breakfast. Message: Brother’s Keeper 7-17 10 Days of Prayer (in homes and by phone at 7am). Leader: Addie Jackson 10 5:00 p.m. Game/Movie Night 15 7:00pm - Begin planning VBS: Appoint leaders 17 Prayer Service during sermon time 24 Pathfinder Sabbath 24 Elder’s TEAM Lunch *Community Garden meeting to plan for Spring **Promote Mission trip	Elders Social Prayer/ Elders Social Board Prayer/Elders Pathfinders Elders Garden Missions
February	3 Orientation to Holistic Small Groups (Tuesdays through April) 9 7:00pm - Appoint Meadow Lane Assessment members 14 5:00 p.m. Game/Movie Night 15 4:00 p.m. Peter Chu’s 28 Elder’s TEAM meeting 1:30pm	Pastor Board Social Social Elders
March	7 Folk Mountain Gospel 7:00pm 7 Afternoon Desert Rain Overview (Shingletown) 9 Board Meeting: CAC Update / Assign ESL Assessment group 11 Quarterly Finance Meeting @ 6pm 14 5:00 p.m. Game/Movie Night 15 5:00 p.m. You Got Talent? 23 6:30pm – Agape Feast /Visitation Sabbath prep (Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses) 28 1:30pm: Elder’s TEAM (Visitation Sabbath prep) 28 6:00pm – Agape Feast (w/footwashing / emblems = communion)	Pastor Pastor Board Finance. Social Social Elders/Deacons Elders Elders
April	5 9:00 a.m. Resurrection Morning 11 Del Dunavant (NCC Evangelism) speaks: Orientation to Small Groups 11 5:00 p.m. Game/Movie Night 20 7:00pm Board: CAC report and recommendation for 1 st Ministry _____; Assign PREPP Committee to evaluate current ministries (how do you fulfill mission?) 25 Visitation Sabbath: Elder, Deacons, Deaconesses, Visitation Teams (invite to Socials) *Community Garden begun by this month	Social Pastor Social Board Elders Garden
May	9 5:00 p.m. Movie Night 10 11:00 a.m. Mother’s Day Tea 11 7:00pm - Appoint Outreach Leadership Team to begin planning Sabbath Afternoons; VBS update 14-31 Unsealing Daniel’s MYSTERY (Shingletown) 16 Elder Jim Pedersen speaks (NCC President)	Social Social Board Pastor

23	1:30pm - Elder's TEAM meeting	Elders
31	11:00 a.m. Picnic in the Park	Social
June		
6	1:30pm - Begin planning non-attending member assessment	Elders
8	7:00pm – Meadow Lane, ESL & City Council Updates to	Board
10	Board	Finance
13	Quarterly Finance Meeting @ 6pm	Social
20	5:00 p.m. Movie Night	Elders
21	Communion	Social
27	10:00 a.m. Father's Day Breakfast	Pastor
	Operation Desert Rain Overview during Sabbath School & sermon	Board
	*Prepare to launch CAC item #1 _____	
July		
4	Operation Desert Rain begins (first 15 minutes of each Sabbath	SS Dept.
10-12	school & blessing list)	Social
13	Camping at Burney Falls	Board
18	7:00pm – Ministry Calendar #1 (general ideas and 10 Days of	Elders
23-August	Prayer)	Pastor
2	1:30pm - Elder's TEAM meeting	
	Redwood Area Camp meeting	
August		
8	5:00 p.m. Movie Night	Social
10-15	Vacation Bible School	VBS
17-26	10 Days of Prayer (2014 Prayer Sheets)	Prayer/Elders
17	7:00pm – Ministry Calendar #2 / PREPP & ESL reports to	Board
22	Board	Elders
23	Visitation Sabbath – halvesheets to non-attending inviting them	Social
29	to Revelation's HOPE	Elders
30	11:00 a.m. Day at the Lake	Social
	Revelation's Hope brochures door-to-door	
	10:00am Prayer Breakfast	
September		
5	Communion	Elders
5	Brochures to friends no later than this Sabbath	Elders
9	6:00pm - Quarterly Finance Meeting: begin budget	Finance
10	Day of Fasting	Elders
10	6:00pm - Revelation's Hope staff meeting	Elders
11	7:00pm - Revelation's Hope seminar (through October 11)	Elders
14	7:00pm – Ministry Calendar #3	Board
October		
11	Revelation's Hope ends	Elders
12	7:00pm – Finalize Ministry Calendar for 2016 / Evangelism	Board
13	budget to NCC	Pastor
14	6:00pm house group starts	Finance
18	6:00pm Finance Committee: continue budget	Social
24	Fall Festival at 3pm and Cook Off at 5 pm. Three Course Cook	Elders
31	Off	Social
	1:30pm – Elder's TEAM meeting	
	5:00pm Movie / Game night	
November		
7	Visitation Sabbath (invite non-attending to socials)	Elders

9	7:00pm – Begin planning 2 nd Mission trip / Elder’s Report	Board
11	(non-attending)	Finance
14	6pm Finance Committee: finish budget	Social
22	5:00 p.m. Game/Movie Night	Social
28	11:00 Giving Thanks Brunch	Elders
	1:30pm - Elder’s TEAM meeting (plan communion to shut-ins)	
December		
5	6:00pm – Agape Feast (Communion)	Elders
19	11:00 am on: Christmas Play, caroling, and game/movie night	Social
January	10 Days of Prayer: TBA	Elders/Pastor
September	Daniel’s MYSTERY to Cottonwood	Elders/Pastor

*This and subsequent calendar forms were adapted from document developed by M. Karen Legassie (Assistant Office Manager of the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church).

5. 2015/2016 CHURCH CALENDAR

Month	Events	Department
December		
5	6:00pm – Communion / Visitation Sabbath	Elders/Deacons
19	11:00 am on: Christmas Play	ALL
19	Sock Drive Ends / Caroling at Oak River Rehab 2:30pm	AY
25	Christmas Meal for the Homeless	AY
26	Speaker: Daniel Lui	Elders
January		
2	11:00am – <i>Angel Warfare</i> Mini-series begins	Pastor
	Depression Recovery group begins	Health Ministry
4	10 Days of Prayer	Elders/Pastor
6-16	4-5:30pm - AY Youth Meeting	AY
9	11:00am - Prayer Service / Celebration Sabbath	Elders/Pastor
16	NCC Women’s Retreat (Leoni Meadows)	NCC
22-23	11:00am - Religious Liberty Sabbath	Religious Lib.
23	AY Singspiration @ Oak River Rehab	AY
23	11:00am - Pathfinder Sabbath	Pathfinders
30		
February		
	*Conduct Health Assessment (all members are invited to participate see “health assessment tab on website: www.andersonadventist.com)	
6	11:00am – <i>Staying Connected</i> series begins / RAA Musical	Pastor / RAA
7	Sabbath	Health Ministry
13	Depression Recovery	Elders
13	Afternoon: Elders Meeting/Visitation of homebound with	AY
20	communion	Deaconess
16-18	4:00-5:30pm - AY Youth Meeting	Pastor/Elders
21	6:00-8:00pm – Agape Feast (communion with	Health Ministry
27	footwashing) CHANGED TO 20th	AY
	Pastor on retreat	
	Dinner with the Doctor: Heart Health	

	AY Singspiration @ Oak River Rehab	
March	<p>5 Elder's Meeting (after the fellowship meal)</p> <p>7 Depression Recovery</p> <p>8 11am – Quarterly Finance Committee Meeting</p> <p>11-13 Prayer Retreat (Leoni Meadows); Guest Speaker Jim Castillo; Pastor Gone</p> <p>12 Youth Meeting 4-5:30pm</p> <p>20 Spanish Evangelism Planning Meeting (after the fellowship meal)</p> <p>26 Dinner with the Doctor: Cancer Reinhold Gotke “Spending Time with Jesus”</p> <p>AY Singspiration @ Oak River Rehab</p> <p>*Begin Nominating Committee process: If you want to serve, see bulletin insert.</p>	<p>Elders</p> <p>Health Ministry</p> <p>Finance Comm.</p> <p>NCC Prayer</p> <p>AY</p> <p>Spanish Min.</p> <p>Health Ministry</p> <p>Worship</p> <p>AY</p> <p>Office</p>
April	<p>2 Elder's Meeting (after the fellowship meal prior to Glowing)</p> <p>2 2:30pm - <i>Glowing</i></p> <p>4 Depression Recovery</p> <p>4 Mark Blue Lecture series at Antioch SDA Church</p> <p>9 11am – Area Worship Service at RAA</p> <p>16 4:00-5:30pm – Youth Meeting</p> <p>17 Spanish Evangelism Planning Meeting (after the fellowship meal)</p> <p>19 Dinner with the Doctors: Asthma and Allergies</p> <p>23 7:00pm Folk Mountain Gospel (no study this evening)</p> <p>AY Singspiration @ Oak River Rehab</p> <p>10am - Prayer Breakfast</p>	<p>Elders</p> <p>AY</p> <p>Health Ministry</p> <p>NCC</p> <p>Redding Area</p> <p>AY</p> <p>Spanish Min.</p> <p>Health Ministry</p> <p>Board</p> <p>AY</p> <p>Elders</p>
May	<p>1 Health Fair (12 noon to 4pm)</p> <p>7 Elder's Meeting (after the fellowship meal)</p> <p>7 Mother's Day Distribution of Carnations @ Church and Community (11am and 2:30pm to the community)</p> <p>8-14 Week of Prayer</p> <p>12 7:00pm – Board meeting: Evangelism Prep (Spanish Ministry)</p> <p>14 Spanish Ministry Planning session (after the fellowship meal)</p> <p>21 Dinner with the Doctor: Physical Activity</p> <p>28 Speaker_____</p> <p>AY Singspiration @ Oak River Rehab</p>	<p>Health Ministry</p> <p>Elders</p> <p>AY</p> <p>AY</p> <p>Board</p> <p>Elders</p> <p>Elders</p> <p>AY</p>
June	<p>4 A Cry in the Night (Communion) and Visitation Sabbath (shut-ins / non-attend)</p> <p>9 7:15pm – Board Meeting: Spanish Evangelism Prep (cont.)</p> <p>14 Spanish Planning Meeting / 4:00-5:30pm – Youth Meeting</p> <p>18 11am – Finance Committee Quarterly Meeting</p> <p>19 Father's Day pen distribution (11am / 2:30pm)</p> <p>25 Dinner with the Doctors: Men's Health</p> <p>AY Singspirations @ Oak River Rehab</p>	<p>Elders</p> <p>Board</p> <p>Spanish/AY</p> <p>Finance Comm.</p> <p>AY</p> <p>Health Ministry</p> <p>AY</p>
July	<p>Guest speaker_____</p> <p>2 2:30pm - Glowing</p>	<p>Elders</p> <p>AY</p>

2	Elder's Meeting (after the fellowship meal)	Elders
9	Day at the Lake	ALL
10	7:15pm – Board meeting: Evangelism prep (finalize)	Board
14	Spanish Planning Session; 4-5:30pm Youth Meeting	AY
16	Dinner with the Doctor: Nutrition and Healthy Living	Health Ministry
17	Redwood Area Camp Meeting	NCC
21-30	11:00am – Guest speaker_____	Elders
23	11:00am – Guest speaker_____	Elders
30	2:30pm - AY Singspirations @ Oak River Rehab	AY
30	*If you are in need of a job description for a new ministry position, please contact your department head or the pastor.	
August		
6	Elder's Meeting (after the fellowship meal prior to	Elders
6	Glowing)	AY
11	2:30pm – Glowing	Board
12-14	7:15pm – Board Meeting (calendar prep 2017)	AY
13	Youth Weekend	Elders
16	11am Communion / Visitation Sabbath	Finance Comm.
20	11am – Finance Committee Quarterly Meeting	Spanish / AY
21	Spanish Planning Meeting / 2:30pm - AY Singspirations @	Health Ministry
28	Oak River Rehab	ALL
20-31	Dinner with the Doctors: Musculoskeletal Health	NCC
	Day at the Lake	
	PUC Ministerial Convention (Scottsdale, Arizona)	
September		
3	2:30pm – Glowing	AY
8-30	Spanish Series of Meetings (with follow-up Bible study	Spanish Ministry
10	starting October 4)	Elders
10	Elder's Meeting (after the fellowship meal)	AY
13	4:00-5:30pm – Youth Meeting	Board
18	7:00pm – Board Meeting (Tuesday)	Health Ministry
24	Dinner with the Doctor: Women's Health	AY
	2:30pm - AY Singspirations @ Oak River Rehab	Finance Comm.
	*PREPP forms will be provided to each department with due date of November 1.	

6. PREP FORM FOR DEPARTMENTAL ALIGNMENT

Department / Ministry _____
 Leaders _____

Pray: Ask for God's presence to guide you to evaluate your ministry

Review:

1. First time REPP: When was your ministry started? _____
2. What is the main goal of your ministry? _____
3. What has your ministry done in the past year? _____

Evaluate:

1. What do you feel is the most effective event or service offered by your ministry in the last year? _____

2. Are there areas you feel need to be improved? _____

Plan:

1. What do you have planned for the coming year? _____

2. What resources will you need to accomplish those plans? _____

3. If you had unlimited resources / personnel what would your ministry look like?

4. In what ways does your ministry help fulfill our corporate mission
(*Declaring to Each individual their eternal value in Jesus and preparing
them for His soon-return*)?

Pray: Guide (Thy kingdom come, thy will be done), Provide (daily bread,
power)

*Please submit this form and the Budget FORM to Pastor Miller by
November 1 of each year – thank you!*

(office use)

Date Received: _____

Budget Amount Approved: _____

Annual Calendar Approved: yes / no

7. OPENNESS FORM

- I. **Purpose:** to seek God in prayer, envision a desired future for our ministry,
and consider the kind of facility we will need to accomplish the vision that
exhibits openness to other ideas.
- II. **Process:** Divide into groups of 4-5, appoint a facilitator & note taker, spend
time in prayer and then complete the form below.
- III. Organizational items
 - A. Appoint Facilitator _____
 - B. Note taker _____

C. Facilitator – have the group members do the personal items below **on their own** for 10 minutes

IV. **Personal Prayer** asking: “Lord, what is your will considering this issue? Is there anything in my heart that would hinder ideas coming to me from You?” (3 minutes)

V. **Personal Review of Our Mission and Vision Statements** (2 minutes)

A. **Our Mission:** Declaring to each individual their eternal value in Jesus, and preparing them for His soon-return.

B. **Our Vision:** we plan to accomplish our Mission by:

1. Becoming acquainted with and identifying the needs of Anderson & surrounding communities.
2. Winning the confidence of the community by meeting the needs we become aware of through education, ministries and service.
3. Inviting many to follow Jesus through the use of house groups, public evangelism and ministries in the Anderson & surrounding areas.
4. This will result in us being known as a nurturing, welcoming congregation that brings together the generations in an environment where all feel they belong.

VI. **Personal Brainstorming** (5 minutes)

A. What uses can I think of for the back acreage and side lot that would help accomplish God’s mission / vision here at Anderson?

B. How would these options help meet the three needs identified in our surveys (homeless resources, job training/prep and resources for young families)?

C. Is there an option(s) that I do not want to consider due to past discussions? If so, why do I feel that way? [you do not have to share this with your group, just have this answer be between you and God].

Option that I feel negatively about:

Why I feel that way:

D. Do my feelings on this issue help or hinder the mission/vision that we have developed?

VII. **Group** Brainstorming & Option to Pursue

- A. Facilitator: Encourage the group to share ideas for uses of the church property that they wrote down above.
- B. Is there an idea that stands out to the group as a result of this sharing?

C. Which idea would the note taker share with the Board on behalf of the group as the best one (in your group's opinion) to pursue?

8. DISCIPLESHIP GROUP PLANNING FORM: SPRING/SUMMER 2015

Month/Date	Event	Group Volunteers
March 10	Acts Lesson 4 *Discuss when to invite friends to group	Host: Addie Welcome: Jessie Worship: Gene Word: Pastor World: Pastor Kids: Carole
March 17	Lesson # _____	Host: Karen Welcome: Worship: Word: World: Pastor Kids: Pastor
March 24	Lesson # _____	Host: Pastor Welcome: Worship: Word: World: Kids: Pastor
March 31 *Discuss Hell and Mr. Fudge	Lesson _____	Host: Welcome: Worship: Word: World: Kids:
April 7 *Pastor gone	Lesson _____	Host: Welcome: Worship: Word: World: Kids:
April 14	Hell and Mr. Fudge	Host: World: Assign next week's items and e-mail Pastor Miller the info
April 21	Lesson _____	Host: Welcome: Worship: Word: World: Pastor (invites) Kids:
April 28	Lesson _____	Host: Welcome:

*Plan spiritual meeting to invite friends to		Worship: Word: World: Pastor Kids:
May 5	Lesson_____	Host: Welcome: Worship: Word: World: Pastor Kids:
May 12	Most/Bridge Movie	Host: Snacks: Group game at end: Pastor
May 19	Lesson_____	Host: Welcome: Worship: Word: World: Pastor Kids:
May 26	Lesson_____	Host: Welcome: Worship: Word: World: Pastor Kids:
June 2-28	28 th = Agape Feast	Never Fail: by Hillsong for Victory in Jesus weekend
July/August	*Limited groups	*Socials/boating

APPENDIX B

LETTERS AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

1. CHURCH LETTER PRIOR TO 10 DAYS OF PRAYER

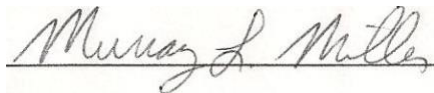


Dear Member,

The Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church® is embarking on a journey of prayer, discovery and planning for the future of our church. We so much want each member to be a part of this process, and so the purpose of this letter is to inform you of what we are doing along with how you can participate.

Our main goal for this Fall (September through October) is to seek the Lord in prayer, ask Him to guide us to understand His mission for our church and Vision for our future plans as a body of believers. This process is being called “Vision Quest” for the Bible says where there is no “vision” or “prophetic guidance” from the Lord, the people “perish” or “order” disappears (Proverbs 29:18). Here is our plan to seek the Lord:

- **September 9-19:** 10 Days of Prayer with materials provided in the foyer (or if you are unable to pick them up, the elders will bring them to your home). You can do these devotional guides at home on your own or participate by teleconference each morning at 7am by dialing 1-605-475-5900 and entering the access code 1789547 followed by the # button.
- **September 20 – October 11:** Vision Quest Sessions 1-4 each Sabbath afternoon at 2pm. All members are invited to attend or pray during this time for the Lord to lead us as a people to consider our Biblical Mission, see how the Lord has led us in the past, what our ministry context is today, and finally to prayerfully consider how He will lead us in the future.
- **November 1 @ the 11am service:** We will unveil our Mission / Vision document. Please plan how you can support each one of these events with your prayers and participation!



Pastor, Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church®

2. VISION QUEST INSERT

VISION QUEST 2014

Join together with fellow-believers in opportunities to experience true, Biblical oneness that leads to a renewed missional focus that can change our church, community and world! Together with Jesus!

September 9-19: 10 Days of prayer. Materials will be provided in the foyer. You can also join the Pastor and other members by phone each morning at 7am:

1. Dial 1-605-475-5900
2. Enter access code 178-9547

September 20: Vision Quest Session #1 after the fellowship meal in the sanctuary entitled "Biblical Foundations for Mission". Group topic: writing our mission statement.

September 27: Vision Quest Session #2 entitled "Our Church and Its Ministry Context". Group topic: Writing our Vision statement

October 4: Vision Quest Session #3 entitled "Ministry Milestones". Group topic: Writing possible 5 year goals and ways to promote them

October 11: Vision Quest Session #4 entitled "Keeping the Vision Before Us" with group topic: Ministry Ballot

VISION QUEST 2014

Join together with fellow-believers in opportunities to experience true, Biblical oneness that leads to a renewed missional focus that can change our church, community and world! Together with Jesus!

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September 27: Vision Quest Session #2 entitled "Our Church and Its Ministry Context". Group topic: Writing our Vision statement

October 4: Vision Quest Session #3 entitled "Ministry Milestones". Group topic: Writing possible 5 year goals and ways to promote them

October 11: Vision Quest Session #4 entitled "Keeping the Vision Before Us" with group topic: Ministry Ballot

3. 10 DAYS OF PRAYER COVER LETTER



Dear believer in Christ,

After Jesus ascended to heaven, His disciples had 10 days of prayer in the Upper Room before beginning their mission. They prayed, worshipped, were open to the infilling of the Holy Spirit and went forth with Christ’s mission with power afterwards (see Acts 1-2). It is our goal to do the same before we have our Vision Quest Sessions beginning September 20 – where we will be asking God to help us articulate our mission. Prayer is the first step and so daily devotional guides are provided along with opportunities for united prayer. Please note the schedule below and use it in conjunction with your guides. May the Lord bless, guide and be lifted up through our 10 days of prayer.

Pastor, Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church®

Date	Lesson	Location
September 9 (Tuesday)	Lesson 1: Earnest Intercession	Personal devotions in homes / prayer line at 7am
September 10 (Wednesday)	Lesson 2: Deeper Faith	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 7am
September 11 (Thursday)	Lesson 3: Heartfelt Repentance	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 7am
September 12 (Friday)	Lesson #4: Honest Confession	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 7am
September 13 (Sabbath)	Lesson #5: Loving Unity	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 9am (you will be on speaker phone with the church group)
September 14 (Sunday)	#6: Self Examination	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 7am
September 15 (Monday)	#7: Sacrificial Humility	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 7am
September 16 (Tuesday)	#8: Obedient Surrender	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 7am
September 17 (Wednesday)	#9: Joyful Thanksgiving	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 7am
September 18 (Thursday)	#10: Passionate Witness	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 7am
September 19 (Friday)	#11 – Prayer Line	Personal Devotions in Homes/prayer line at 7am

*Packets will be available at the Church and will be delivered to home-bound members.

*To access the teleconference line dial 1-605-475-5900 (long distance may apply) and enter code 1789547 followed by the # sign. You will be asked to state your name before beginning.

4. WEEKLY NEWSLETTER CONTENT AFTER VISION QUEST SESSION 1

Pastor's Greeting: Mission Focus

Dear Anderson Church Family,

Our first Sabbath afternoon session (Vision Quest) got off to a great start with a time of singing, prayer, study of God's Word and Ellen White quotations followed by a group session that has yielded well thought out statements of why we exist as a church. This is one of many prayerful steps to help us as Church gain a mission focus that keeps the work moving forward in Anderson, Cottonwood, South Redding and beyond.

If you are reading this and would like copies of each week's discussion guides, then please contact me (Pastor Miller). I would be happy to provide them and include your ideas in our Mission/Vision Document. As we progress to our second session this Sabbath afternoon, it would be well to review that a "mission" is. It is a statement of purpose and what our main goal as a church is. In Matthew 28 Jesus states a mission that is Biblical, geographic, life-changing and time-less. We too want to discover/re-discover God's timeless purpose for our ministry today!

Whereas a mission statement usually does not change often, though the wording can do so, the Vision (how we see the mission being accomplished here in our area) can constantly change and adapt to meet new conditions. In Evangelism page, Ellen White states: "New methods must be introduced. God's people must awake to the necessities of the time in which they are living. God has men whom He will call into His service,--men who will not carry forward the work in the lifeless way in which it has been carried forward in the past. . . ." {Ev 70.1}.

New methods, a new vision of what God CAN and WILL do here in our Church and community! That is a mission focus, that is a Vision! May the Lord reveal His vision to us, and may we be willing to receive it!!

Join us by praying for or participating in the Vision Quest sessions that continue each Sabbath afternoon through October 11.

Under announcements for Anderson:

Vision Quest 2014: Sabbath afternoons @ 2pm (Sept. 27 and October 4 & 11). We have generated a lot of great ideas regarding the wording of our mission statement and will "vote" on them this Sabbath, September 27. The next step is to consider what the mission would look like if it were accomplished here at Anderson: this is called a Vision Statement.

5. 2014 CHURCH LETTER

Dear friends and members of the Anderson Adventist Church,

It is hard to believe that 2014 is almost gone as I write this letter. Yet, I am looking forward to what God has in store for us individually and corporately in the coming year. Our church has begun a renewed focus on what Christ would have us to do in our area (our mission statement below summarizes this), but we are also in need of a reminder of the benefit of staying connected to Christ – Abiding with Him. A few years ago I wrote in my journal the following story and called it “Abide With Me”. I hope it brings you a blessing this time of year and encourages you to look forward to the coming year with Christ,

I was hurrying to wrap as many presents as possible. The conveyor belt behind me kept piling up and it seemed that we would never keep up. Such was the experience I had this past Sunday (12/12/10) at the Gift Wrap Department at Amazon.com. Our goal was to wrap as many gifts as possible to raise funds - it seemed like I would never get the hang of the rolls of paper in front of me or figure out which box the item was supposed to go in. Well, eventually I did get into a "groove" and together with my co-wrappers (members of the Thayer Seventh-day Adventist Church) the conveyor belt behind us began to empty. It was during one of those "slow" moments that I was able to read one of the gift tags that I was putting on the present in front of me. It simply said: **"Merry Christmas Daddy, I wish sooo much that I could be home for Christmas. I know how much you like these, so please remember me when you get them"**.

I continued wrapping, but that gift tag stuck in my mind. After all, the holidays seem to point out the need to be together with family. However, there are always those "seasons" when we, for whatever reason, are not able to be with family. Maybe it is because of distance, or because of our health, or because of grievances, or because they have passed away. Regardless of the reason, our hearts have a certain "ache". It is hard to describe, but this feeling comes from deep down inside and produces a longing. We want to hug, hold or just talk face to face with those we love.

As I ponder this longing, and experience it too (for my family was almost 2,000 miles away when this occurred), I cannot help but realize that this is part of an even greater reality: our relationship with God. Have you ever just wished that this old world was made brand new? That the heartache, pain, death and suffering were done away with? That there were no more sicknesses or chronic health issues that we or someone we love have had to face? If so, then you, in a sense, are saying what the gift tag said: **"I wish sooo much that I could be home"** and could add **"remember me** in my situation and help my heart's desire become reality". What happens until our hearts desire becomes a reality? Well, to use the words of a beloved hymn:

Abide with me- fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens- Lord, with me abide;

When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

In short, God abides with us during these times - in fact Jesus says He is with us ALWAYS (Matt. 28:20)! He is there during times of certainty and uncertainty. He is there during the "holidays" and every day of the year. He is there when you have that longing and ache. We experience this nearness when we decide to trust Him during these times. I hope that we each can learn to trust Him - even though our feelings at times say otherwise. Overall, may this time of year and the New Year find us saying, "I wish sooo much to be home with You Jesus, but until then please help, comfort and abide with me!"

May you have His abiding love encircle you as 2014 ends and a New Year begins! Below are some upcoming opportunities to stay connected to Christ and each other during the year.

- December 20 @ 11am – Christmas program during the worship service
- January 4 @ 10am – New Beginning breakfast
- January 7-17 – 10 Days of Prayer (pick up your copy in the foyer; for non-attending members they will be dropped off January 3 at your homes)
- January 17 @ 11am – Prayer Service during the sermon time
- January 24 @ 11am – Pathfinder's Sabbath
- February 15 @ 4pm – Valentines Social at Peter Chu's Restaurant
- March 7 @ 7pm – Folk Mountain Gospel in concert
- March 15 @ 5pm – You Got Talent? Talent show with all invited to participate.
- March 28 @ 6pm – Agape Feast (meal with footwashing beforehand)
- April 5 @ 9am – Resurrection Morning social
- April 11 @ 11am – Elder Del Dunavant guest speaks (NCC Evangelism)
- April – Community Garden Begins
- May 1-3 – Area Campout at Hat Creek
- May 10 @ 11am – Mother's Day Tea
- May 16 @ 11am – Elder Jim Pedersen speaks (NCC President)
- May 31 @ 11am – Picnic in the Park
- June 21 @ 10am – Father's Day Breakfast
- July 10-12 – Campout at Burney Falls
- July 21-August 2 – Redwood Area Camp meeting
- August 23 @ 11am – Day at the Lake
- August 30 @ 10am – Prayer Breakfast
- September 11 – October 11: Revelation's HOPE by Pastor Miller
- October 18 @ 3pm – Fall Festival with Chili Cook-off
- November 22 @ 11am – Giving Thanks Brunch
- December 5 @ 6pm – Agape Feast

- December 19 @ 11am – Christmas Program during the worship service

Please plan to prayerfully support, attend these dates if you can and invite others to attend with you. Inviting others to unite with Christ and His church is part of what it takes to accomplish our mission: Declaring to each individual their eternal value in Jesus and preparing them for His soon-return!

May we abide with Christ by staying connected with Him, each other and our world!

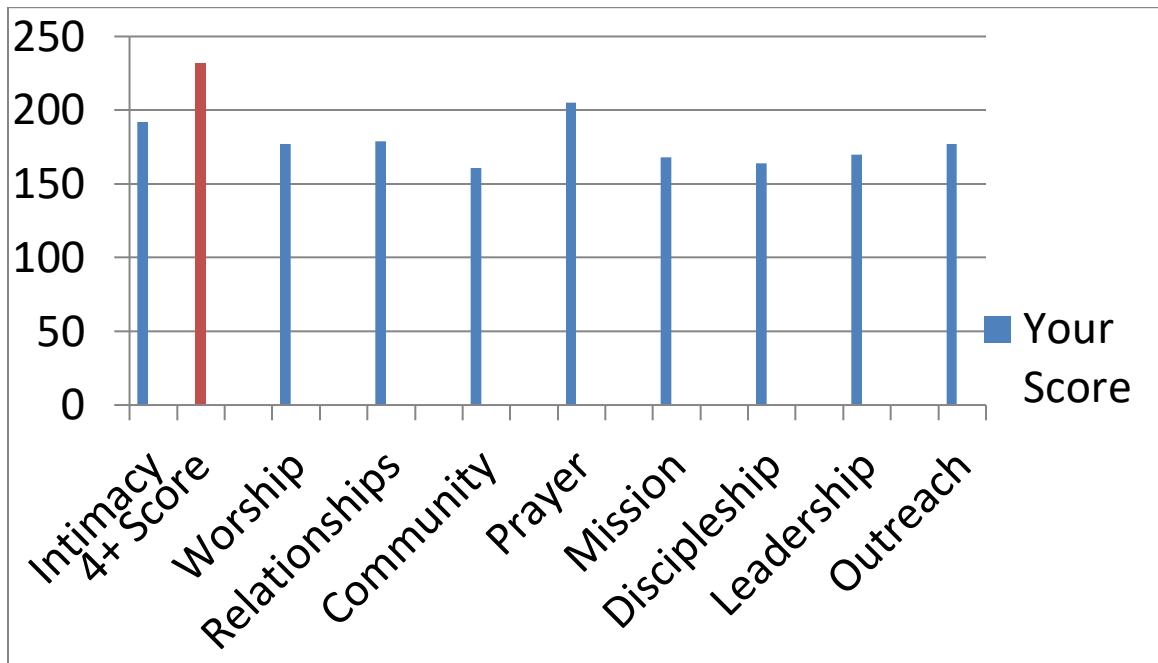
God bless,

Murray Miller

Pastor, Anderson Adventist Church
2769 Balls Ferry Road
530-364-2041 (Pastor)
530-365-3965 (Main office)
Website: anderson.adventistfaith.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/andersonadventist.church

APPENDIX C
CHURCH HEALTH ASSESSMENT SURVEY SCORES
AND COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT FORM

1. FIRST CHA SCORES WITH COMPARISON TO AN IDEAL SCORE



2. COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback to these questions. There are 5 questions that you can feel free to type your response to below in the spaces provided.

1. What are some of the important needs that you think it might be good for our Church to focus on?
Seniors, Youth, families, Homeless, disabled.
2. What could a church group do that would be really helpful in the needs you have listed?

Need	Suggestions to meet the need
Seniors and disabled	Visitation, someone to talk to, play games with, study the Bible with or just share. Maybe go to lunch with once in a while or run errands with or for.
Youth	Activities, community outreach, find out what others are doing and

	coordinate activities to reach out to the youth, maybe even start a graffiti eradication program. A good youth program would also be a plus. Perhaps working with Crossroads Bible Fellowship or the Teen Center would be a good place to start. Also, I believe Cornerstone church has a youth outreach program where they do various activities in the community.
Families	Organized Daycare programs would be helpful. Summer day camps or vacation Bible school programs for the kids are always good.
Homeless	Work with ACCA to help with food give away or get involved with the community garden. I'm not sure what solutions are available but there has to be something that has worked in other communities.
Community Outreach	Volunteers could help out at the Park with weeding at the Veterans Memorial or do litter clean-up working through the Parks & Recreation Department. Also, volunteering to help maintain the Veterans Walk of Honor may be something some would want to get involved in.

3. What are some resources that are available in the community that might be helpful in addressing some aspects of these needs?

Police Chief or the Recreation Department may have more insight into what is available.

4. Who are some influential leaders in the community that we should interview with the same questions?

City Councilmembers

Veterans Walk of Honor President, and other community involvement .

Shasta County Supervisor, Pastors and community leaders.

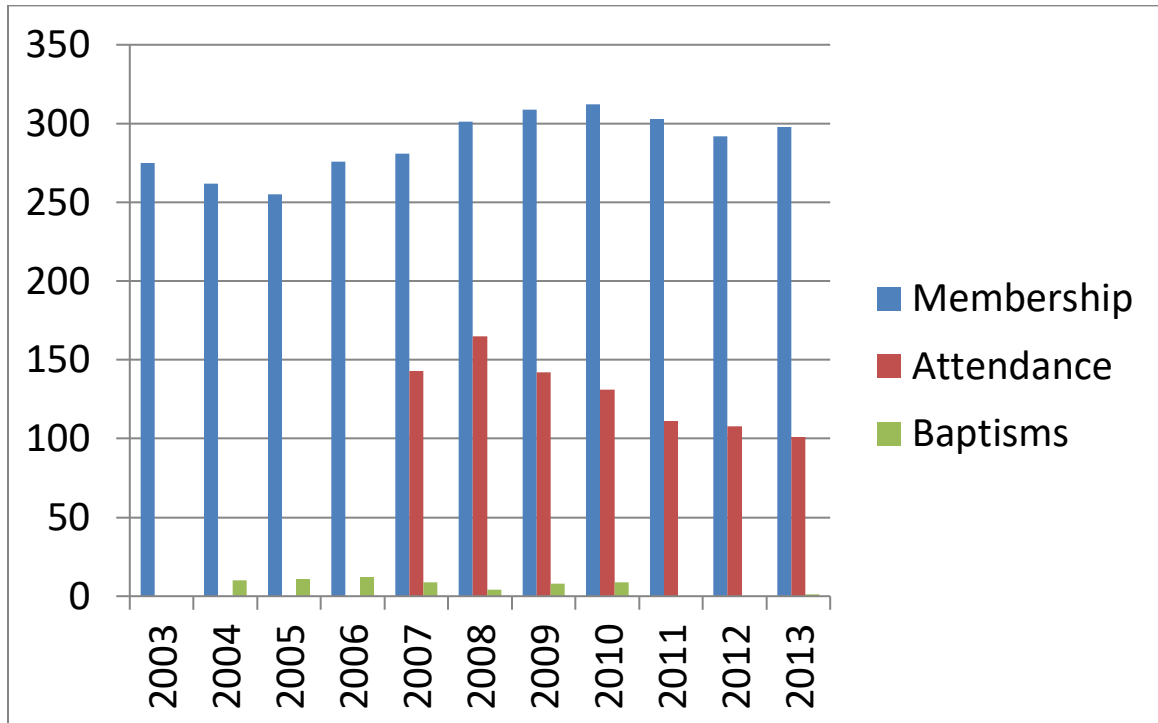
5. What is your impression of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's contribution to the community in the past? What activities are they known for from your perspective?

My only experience is a Bible program (Release Time) they use to put on for students from Meadow Lane school. The students could get parental permission to leave campus and be escorted to the church for the hour long program. My son loved it.

Thank you for your time and for your suggestions – it is much appreciated!!

APPENDIX D
GRAPHS AND RAW DATA

1. MEMBERSHIP, ATTENDANCE, BAPTISMS: PRE-PROJECT



2. ATTENDANCE TRENDS

2014

January/February/March 2014: Unknown

April: 140, 137, 132, 98

May: Unknown

June: Unknown

July: 102, 110, 115

August: 97, 89, 100, 98, 139

September: 139, 136, 90, 96

October: Unknown

November: 97, 108, 107, 112, 105

December: Unknown

Total Raw Numbers 2,347 / 21 Sabbaths

Simple average: 111

2015

January: 101, 123, 115, 116, 102

February: 104, 102, 111, 111

March: 90, 109, 106, 101

April: 112, 101, 157, 100
May: 102, 98, 105, 96, 104
June: 105, 88, 87, 106
July: 106, 99, 94, 87
August: 87, 77, 135, 126, 106
September:
October: 112, 135, 106
November: 118, 105, 123, 99
December: 109, 130, 135, 96
Total – 4,937 / 46 Sabbaths
Simple Average: 107

2016

January: 121, 115, 103, 99, 137
February: 182, 106, 94, 81
March: 92, 93, 105, 102
April: 94, 99, 101, 106, 135
May: 111, 111, 113, 97
June: 132, 77, 99, 91
July: 101, 93, 107, 90, 75
August: 95, 107, 87, 104
September: 102, 109, 95, 82
October: 86, 91, 126, 124, 89
November: 117, 119, 102, 100
December: 190, 190, 95, 113, 93
Total – 5,678 / 53 Sabbaths
Simple Average: 107 avg

APPENDIX E
VISION QUEST SESSION GUIDES

1. VISION QUEST SESSION GUIDE #1

1. Either read silently or take turns reading these Bible/EGW Texts

A. **Bible:** Genesis 3:9; Matt. 24:14; Matt. 28:19-20; Luke 4:18; Luke 15:4; Luke 19:10; John 9:4; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Cor. 9:19-23; Ephesians 3:9; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 14:6-7.

Write down thoughts here: _____

B. **Ellen White** excerpts on "mission"

"The Saviour's words, 'Ye are the light of the world,' point to the fact that He has committed to His followers a world-wide mission. . . He teaches us to look upon every needy soul as our neighbor and the world as our field. . . " (Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 42)

"Jesus continues: As you confess Me before men, so I will confess you before God and the holy angels. You are to be My witnesses upon earth, channels through which My grace can flow for the healing of the world" (Desire of Ages, 357).

"In almost every community there are large numbers who do not listen to the preaching of God's word or attend any religious service. If they are reached by the gospel, it must be carried to their homes. Often the relief of their physical needs is the only avenue by which they can be approached" (Ministry of Healing, 144).

"Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.'" (MH, 143).

*She also sees the value in "appointing meetings" along with health work and home Bible studies to share the truths we have in the Word of God (Early Writings 266-268).

2. Fill in the blanks writing down your thoughts after reading these items

3. Look again at the Mission statement definition: **Mission:** a noun from the "Latin missio, from mitto, to send. This denotes the idea of a

particular purpose to be accomplished by the person being sent *for* the one who sent them (*Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary of American English*).

4. Look at the Sample mission statements:

A. General Conference: "The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to make disciples of all people, communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of [Revelation 14:6-12](#), leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior and unite with His remnant Church, discipling them to serve Him as Lord and preparing them for His soon return".

B. Northern California Conference: "The Northern California Conference is a network of churches, schools and ministries dedicated to transforming people through the good news of Jesus Christ and preparing them for His soon return".

C. Hayfork Adventist Church: "To be God's instruments in making fully-committed followers of Jesus who are ready for His soon-return!"

5. In 1-2 sentences write down a mission statement in your own words that is Scriptural and tells what we are sent by God to do. Share ideas: _____

6. Write down what others share and combine into 1 Statement:

7. Statement the group chooses to submit: _____

8. Facilitator: you will read the statement to the congregation

9. Note-taker: you will make sure the pastor receives the statement

2. MISSION STATEMENT BALLOT

Anderson Vision Quest

(BALLOT #1: Biblical Foundations for Mission)

1. Pray – Asking God to Guide your Choices
2. Choose your top 5 statements ranking them 1-5 with 1 being the top choice and 5 being your last choice.

_____ Declaring to each individual their eternal value in Jesus and preparing them for His soon return!

_____ To proclaim the everlasting Gospel and prepare the world for His soon return!

_____ United in Christ to be instruments for caring and sharing.

_____ To be used by God to proclaim the Good News through our words and actions – recognizing that we may be the only Bible some people will ever read.

_____ To reach out to all people in our community, teaching them the everlasting gospel while accepting each person just as they are and nurturing them to become faithful followers of Christ.

_____ The Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church is a unified group of like-minded Christians dedicated to sharing the gospel with the Anderson community in order to prepare them for the Lord's soon-return.

_____ We are a Bible-based Church who seeks to unite in Christ and declare to the Anderson Community & world the truths of salvation and His soon-return.

(more over)

_____ The Anderson Adventist Church exists to live and share the love of Jesus with the people of our community and beyond.

_____ To identify the needs of the community, win their confidence by meeting those needs and inviting them to become faithful followers of Jesus.

_____ To develop a Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered, praying church that meets the needs of the community and invites them to become followers of Christ.

_____ People being empowered through a loving relationship with Jesus helping others discover wholeness in Him (College View Church, Lincoln NE)

_____ Sharing the love of Christ Jesus.

_____ Boldly teaching the world their eternal value in Jesus and how to follow Him until He returns.

_____ The Anderson Church is committed to the preaching of the everlasting gospel and meeting the needs of our community through fellowship and loving service.

_____ Taking the Good News to where people are in order to unite them to our Church.

_____ Sharing with the world their need of Jesus and His desire to save them.

3. Hand the "Ballot" to Pastor Miller When you are Finished

3. VISION QUEST SESSION GUIDE 2

1. Either read silently or take turns reading these Bible/EGW Texts

A. **Bible:** Proverbs 29:18; Isaiah 2; Matthew 4:16; Matthew 5:14; Matthew 9:35-38; John 4:34-42; Acts 2:40-47.

Write down thoughts here: _____

B. **Ellen White** excerpt on "vision"

"In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great Day of Pentecost. Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side, doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth.

The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God." - Testimonies, Volume 9, page 126.

2. Fill in the blanks writing down your thoughts after reading these items:

3. Look again at the Vision statement definition: **Vision:** pertaining to seeing or an imagined reality(Malphurs); believing God knows the future, we prayerfully seek to know and envision our part in the fulfillment of His plan for our community and world.

4. Look at the Sample vision statements:

A. General Conference: We pursue our mission under the guidance and through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit through:

Preaching. Accepting Christ's commission (Matthew 28:18-20), we proclaim to all the world, in these last days, the everlasting gospel of God's love, most fully revealed in His Son's life, ministry, atoning death, resurrection and high priestly ministry. Recognizing the Bible to be God's infallible revelation of His will, we present its full message, including the second advent of Christ and the continuing authority of His Ten Commandment law with its reminder of the Seventh-day Sabbath.

Teaching. Acknowledging that development of mind and character is essential to God's redemptive plan, we promote the growth of a mature understanding of and relationship to God, His Word and the created universe.

Healing. Affirming the Biblical principles of the wellbeing of the whole person, we make the preservation of health and healing of the sick a priority and through our ministry to the poor and oppressed, cooperate with the Creator in His compassionate work of restoration.

Discipling. Affirming the continued spiritual growth and development of all members, we nurture the newly converted, instruct them in righteous living, train them for effective witness and encourage their responsive obedience to God's will.

B. Northern California Conference (www.nccsda.com):

Our vision is to be among the most productive, effective and spiritually dynamic conferences in the North American Division by:

- Developing skilled, spiritual leaders
- Fostering healthy, growing churches and ministries
- Operating schools of excellence
- Caring for our communities

C. Hayfork Adventist Church: "To be known as a community of faith that experiences changed lives, shares our faith with others and are agents of change in the Hayfork area" (hayfork.adventistfaith.org).

5. In a paragraph write down a vision statement in your own words that is Scriptural and describes how you see the church's impact if we were to fulfill our mission in

Anderson: _____

_____ (write on back if needed)

6. Write down common elements & combine into one statement:

7. Statement the group chooses to submit:

_____ (over if needed)

8. Facilitator: you will read the statement to the congregation; Note-taker: you will make sure the pastor receives the statement

4. VISION STATEMENT DRAFT

As we unite together as a people of eternal value, and become a people [congregation] that welcomes all generations into our fellowship, we will not be content with keeping this love to ourselves. Those around us will notice a heaven-born love compelling us to share Christ with them. We will use Christ's method to declare to each person their eternal value and prepare them for His soon-return. Specifically, we see ourselves:

1. Becoming acquainted with and identifying the needs of the Anderson and surrounding communities
2. Winning the confidence of the community by meeting the needs we become aware of through education, ministries and service
3. Inviting many to follow Jesus through the use of house groups and ministries in the Anderson and surrounding areas

5. FINAL PUBLISHED VERSION

Our Mission: Declaring to each individual their eternal value in Jesus and preparing them for His soon-return!

Our Vision: We envision ourselves continually promoting oneness, prayer and the empowerment of leaders in our church so that we become people who embody our mission. Additionally, we see ourselves using Christ's method to declare to each person their eternal value in Jesus and to prepare them for His soon-return. Specifically, we plan to accomplish our Mission by:

1. Becoming acquainted with and identifying the needs of Anderson & surrounding communities.
2. Winning the confidence of the community by meeting the needs we become aware of through education, ministries and service.
3. Inviting many to follow Jesus through the use of house groups, public evangelism and ministries in the Anderson & surrounding areas.
4. This will result in us being known as a nurturing, welcoming congregation that brings together the generations in an environment where all feel they belong.

Source: <http://anderson23.adventistchurchconnect.org/article/2/about-our-church>

6. VISION QUEST SESSION 3 GUIDE

1. Either read silently or take turns reading these Bible/EGW Texts

A. **Bible:** Proverbs 29:18; Matthew 4:17-18; Luke 24:46-53; Acts 1; James 4:13-17.

Write down thoughts here: _____

B. **Ellen White** excerpts on “planning”

☐ “The best help that ministers can give the members of our churches is not sermonizing, but planning work for them. Give each one something to do for others. Help all to see that as receivers of the grace of Christ they are under obligation to work for Him. And let all be taught how to work. Especially should those who are newly come to the faith be educated to become laborers together with God”-- Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 82.

☐ “Time is short, and our forces must be organized to do a larger work. Laborers are needed who comprehend the greatness of the work and who will engage in it, not for the wages they receive, but from a realization of the nearness of the end. The time demands greater efficiency and deeper consecration. Oh, I am so full of this subject that I cry to God: ‘Raise up and send forth messengers filled with a sense of their responsibility, messengers in whose hearts self-idolatry, which lies at the foundation of all sin, has been crucified’” (9T 27).

2. Fill in the blanks writing down your thoughts after reading these items

3. Look again at the mission / vision statements

4. What are we (or can we) do to carry out our mission/vision to these people:

- Criminals / Police_____
- Educational needs_____
- Singles_____
- Households with children (60% under age 50)_____
- Those living below Poverty Level_____
- Elderly_____
- Commuters_____
- Drug abuse_____
- Hispanic ministry_____
- Single mothers / addressing teen pregnancy_____

5. List your top 10 Items that you would like to do in the next 5 years to meet the needs in your community:

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 2. |
| 3. | 4. |
| 5. | 6. |
| 7. | 8. |
| 9. | 10. |

*Which **two** are you most passionate about accomplishing?_____

6. Share Your Ideas with Your Group

7. Write down what others share to be combined into 1 List of 10 Items:

8. Top 10 Items to submit to the pastor: _____

9. **Facilitator:** you will read the statement to the congregation

10. **Note-taker:** you will make sure the pastor receives the statement

7. MINISTRY MILESTONES BALLOT

1. Pray – Asking God to Guide your Choices

2. Choose your top 10 w/1 being your first choice, etc.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciation ministry: police | <input type="checkbox"/> Jail Ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Date night for families |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio station for commuters | <input type="checkbox"/> Develop Acreage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Summer events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian pre-school | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources: teen mothers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resources: Drugs/Alcohol | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources: homeless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> After school program | <input type="checkbox"/> Shuttle service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting classes | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recovery seminar (drugs) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/Materials for Spanish | <input type="checkbox"/> Gift packs (jail) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job readiness classes | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking cessation | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Fun Day/VBS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Little Library (literacy) | <input type="checkbox"/> Prophecy Seminars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House-keeping (elderly) | <input type="checkbox"/> Wi-Fi w/ web ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car wash (police) | <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling for Families |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Skills for Single mothers | <input type="checkbox"/> Mission Trips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chef Mark Anthony Class | <input type="checkbox"/> Small groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sabbath Day of Ministry (baked goods to fire dept., etc; nursing home singing, visit shut-ins, GLOW lit, etc) | |

3. Hand the “Ballot” to Pastor Miller When You are Finished

8. VISION QUEST GROUP GUIDE 4

1. Either read silently or take turns reading these Bible/EGW Texts

A. **Bible:** 2 Chronicles 7:14; Proverbs 29:18; Acts 5; James 4;13-17.

Write down thoughts here: _____

B. **Ellen White** excerpts on “Keeping the Vision Before Us”

☐ “The cause of division and discord in families and in the church is separation from Christ. To come near to Christ is to come near to one another. The secret of true unity in the church and in the family is not diplomacy, not management, not a superhuman effort to overcome difficulties--though there will be much of this to do--but union with Christ” (Adventist Home, 179).

☐ “The life of a church depends on the interest which its members manifest in those outside the fold. Let the church of God remember that Christ gave Himself as a sacrifice to save a world from destruction. For our sake He became poor, that we through His poverty might come into possession of eternal riches. Shall those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of the truth become narrow in their plans? . . . encourage a spirit of gratitude for past mercies and blessings. Let them praise the Lord in unfeigned gratitude for the light of His Word, which shines upon their pathway, to be received into heart and mind, and reflected upon those in darkness (Signs of the Times, August 21, 1901).

2. Fill in the blanks writing down your thoughts after reading these items

3. Look again at the mission / vision statements

4. List ways that we can remind ourselves often of our mission/vision

5. What are some ways that we can use our bulletin, website, visuals, etc. to keep reminding ourselves of the mission/vision?

6. Do you have any abilities that you can use to help us with these ideas?

7. Share Your Ideas with Your Group

8. Write down what others share and combine into 1 List of 10 Items:

9. Submit ALL ideas to the pastor:

10. Facilitator: you will read some of the ideas to the congregation

11. Note-taker: you will make sure the pastor receives these ideas

APPENDIX F

SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS MATERIALS

1. ADVENT PRAYER SHEET

SHARING TOGETHER (10 Minutes)

Share a song, life experience or Scripture that has been meaningful to you.

PRAYING PERSONALLY (10 Minutes)

Pray for each other's prayer requests. Share openly knowing that ALL is confidential unless someone would do harm to themselves or others.

PRAYING LOCALLY (10 Minutes)

Pray through a portion of the Church directory, needs in your town (mayor, police & fire chief, those running the public schools, other Churches, homeless, single mothers, etc), and Church events in your congregation that are coming up.

AREA PRAYER (10 Minutes)

Pray for upcoming events that you know of in the area churches (Redding, Palo Cedro, Red Bluff, etc). Pray for the Pastors as they try to maintain unity and forward movement in the area. Pray for any needs or concerns of fellow-members or those who are not yet members throughout the area.

PRAYING STATEWIDE (10 Minutes)

Pray for any societal needs you know of from around the State. Pray for the governor, State officials, police officers, National Guard troops and any other ways that you want God to impact your State. Pray for upcoming events in the Conference that you know about or Churches outside of your district. Pray for your Conference President and office staff by name (Elder Jim Pedersen). Pray that the Holy Spirit will work mightily in their lives and use them to make decisions that will hasten Christ's return.

PRAYING NATIONALLY & INTERNATIONALLY (10 MINUTES)

Pray for events and issues facing the North American Division. Pray for the Hope Channel, 3ABN and other media ministries to work mightily for God. Pray for your Division President by name (Dan Jackson). Pray for the General Conference President by name (Ted Wilson). Select a division or continent and pray for it (Africa, Europe, etc). Pray for the persecuted Church around the world (visit www.persecution.com and request a prayer map). Pray for anyone experiencing genocide (www.savedarfur.org, etc). Pray for world leaders such as the President of the United States, Prime Minister of England, etc. Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on God's people so they can take the

gospel to the world. Pray for the 10/40 window where missionaries are endeavoring to bring the gospel in a hostile environment with little or no Christian presence. Pray for. . .

IF TIME PERMITS:

Take time to read a passage on Prayer (The Lord’s Prayer, etc), take a part of town around the Church or near where you meet and prayer walk simply asking God to “make yourself real to those living here” as you pass their home. If unable to walk, do a prayer drive where you drive by homes and ask God the prayer above.

THE ADVENT PRAYER:

“He who testifies these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly, Amen’. Yes, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. Amen” (Revelation 22:20-21).

2. 2015 DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

STAYING CONNECTED

Staying Focused on Christ

**The goal of this devotional plan is to focus on the closing teachings and scenes of Christ’s earthly ministry. Suggested format:*

1. Begin with a song about the cross, “At the Cross”, “The Old Rugged Cross”, etc.
2. Thank God for the sacrifice of Christ and ask to see what Christ has done for YOU.
3. Do the reading, taking notes in the spaces provided or on a notepad.
4. Close with singing again and a prayer of thanksgiving for what Christ has done.

Week / Day	Scripture Reading / Quote of Interest	Notes on this Reading (use a notepad for more space)
Week 1 day 1	Matthew 21-22	
2	Matthew 23-24	
3	Matthew 25-26	
4	Matthew 27-28	
5	Matthew 26:36 to 27:10	
6	Matthew 27:11-37	
7	Matthew 27:38-66 & 28:508	
Week 2 day 1	Mark 10	

2	Mark 11	
3	Mark 12	
4	Mark 13	
5	Mark 14	
6	Mark 15	
7	Mark 16	
Week 3 day 1	Luke 21	
Day 2	Luke 22	
Day 3	Luke 23:1-26	
Day 4	Luke 23:27-43	
Day 5	Luke 23:44-56	
Day 6	Luke 24:1-31	
Day 7	Luke 24:32-53	
Week 4 day 1	John 13	
Day 2	John 14-15	
Day 3	John 16-17	
Day 4	John 18	
Day 5	John 19	
Day 6	John 20	
Day 7	John 21	
Week 5 day 1	Desire of Ages (DA) Chapter 74 – Gethsemane	
Day 2	DA Chapter 75 – Annas & Court of Caiaphas	
Day 3	DA Ch. 76 – Judas	
Day 5	DA Ch. 77 – Pilate’s Judgment Hall	
Day 6	DA Ch. 78 – Calvary	
Day 7	DA Ch. 79 – It is Finished	
Week 6 Day 1	DA Ch. 80 – In Joseph’s Tomb	
Day 2	DA Ch. 81 – The Lord is risen	
Day 3	DA Ch. 82 – Why Weepest Thou?	
Day 4	DA Ch. 83 – The Walk to Emmaus	
Day 5	DA Ch. 84 – Peace Be Unto You	
Day 6	DA Ch. 85 – By the Sea	
Day 7	DA Ch. 86	

Week 8	First 7 chs of Steps to Christ (1 per day)	
Week 9	Steps to Christ chapters 8 to 13 (1 per day) and Rev. 21	
Week 10: Christ in OT		
Week 10: Day 1	Genesis 1 & John 1	
Day 2	Genesis 2 & John 2	
Day 3	Genesis 3 & John 3	
Day 4	Genesis 4 – LORD deals with our anger	
Day 5	Genesis 6:1-8: They eyes of the LORD Jesus have grace/favor/kindness in them even if He sees wickedness continually	
Day 6	Genesis 6:9-22	
Day 7	Genesis 7: LORD saves the world	
Week 11 Day 1	Genesis 8:20-9:17; compare to Rev. 4:3	
Day 2	Gen. 11:1-9 - Babel = babili, “Gateway to the gods”.	
Day 3	Gen. 12 – The LORD has a friend	
Day 4	Gen. 13 – The LORD promises	
Day 5	Gen. 14 – The LORD delivers	
Day 6	Gen. 15 – The LORD is my shield & reward	
Day 7	Gen. 16 – The LORD comforts & rebukes	
Week 12 Day 1	Gen. 17 – The LORD God appears	
Day 2	Gen. 18 – The LORD judges	
Day 3	Gen. 19 – The LORD delivers	
Day 4	Gen. 20 – Trust the LORD	
Day 5	Gen. 21 & Luke 1	
Day 6	Gen. 22	

Day 7	Gen. 24	
Week 13 Day 1	Gen. 25:20-34	
Day 2	Gen. 26: Promise to Isaac	
Day 3	Gen. 31:24-55	
Day 4	Gen. 32: The LORD wrestles	
Day 5	Gen.	

3. 2016 DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Staying Connected Devotional Guide

Praise: Begin time in your journal praising or complimenting God. Like compliments, praise is to ascribe “worth” to God. Not just thanking Him for what He has done (though this is important), but expressing gratefulness for WHO He is. Such compliments and appreciation are usually a part of deep relationships (more than between spouses = Ephesians 5:26-33). This involves at least two elements:

1. This takes time and stillness. It is talking and listening (Psalm 4:4; 46:10)
2. Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. The eye of faith will discern God very near, and the suppliant may obtain precious evidence of the divine love and care for him.—(*Gospel Workers*, 34, 35.)

Text: Write out the text word-for-word. Circle and underline parts that stand out to you. Draw pictures of what He brings to mind.

Questions: Write them one at a time in your journal and leave room to write under them what He says *through the text*.

1. Lord, what are you saying to me?
Ex: Psalm 91:1 - I AM your secret place. I am your shield and shelter.
2. What does this have to do with my life?
Ex: Today I will guide, direct and protect you.
3. Lord, what is your invitation?
Ex: Come to me. Spend time with me. . .

Sample Daily Outline

Praise:

Text:

Questions:

1. Lord, what are you saying to me? _____

2. What does this have to do with my life? _____

3. Lord, what is your invitation? _____

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VITA

Name: Murray L. Miller

Background: I was born in 1980 in Roseburg, OR and raised there. I have two older brothers, was baptized into the body of Christ, and became a Seventh-day Adventist at the age of 18 (1999). I attended the public school system up through my first year of college and then studied at Seventh-day Adventist colleges for my Bachelor's and Master's level programs.

Family: I am married to Marie Miller who is from Winston, OR. We have four children, Mitchell, Micah, Makayla and Michael (Matthew 11:25; Mark 10:13-16).

Education:

2014-Present Doctor of Ministry, Andrews University, MI, USA

2004-2007 Master in Divinity, Andrews University, MI, USA

2001-2004 Bachelors of Arts in Theology, Union College, NE, USA

Ordained:

2010- Ordained by the Kansas-Nebraska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and currently hold ministerial credentials from Northern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Experience:

2018- Pastor of the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church (Anderson, CA), and the Shasta Lake Bible Fellowship (Redding, CA)

2014-2018 Pastor of the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church (Anderson, CA)

2012-2014 District pastor of the Hayfork, Weaverville, and Whitmore Seventh-day Adventist Churches (CA)

2010-2012 District pastor of five churches in Southeast Kansas, USA

2006-2010 District pastor of four churches in Central Nebraska, USA

