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**Factors of Survivability of Church Plants in the Tarrant,
Collin, North Texas, and Denton Baptist Associations**

Aaron James Meraz, Sr.

When I planted Bridgeway Baptist Church, McKinney, Texas, in October 2005, my association put me in contact with two recently deceased church plants to get some of their materials to use in our church. I talked with the two pastors and asked them why their churches died, hoping I could avoid their destiny. Though both churches made it past their fourth birthday, the pastors said that they needed more time to give to the church, a team member, and more financial support. I began looking into the survivability of church plants and, thanks to my church planting colloquium, was able to conduct a small study on the factors of survivability in church plants. This article will give results of this study conducted concerning the factors of survivability of church plants in the North Central Texas area.

Previous Research on Survivability of Church Plants

A study was conducted from September 2005 to January 2006 by NAMB concerning the health and survivability of church plants across several evangelical denominations. Of the many selected for the sample, 500 responded to the study. The study focused on churches planted between the years of 2000 and 2005, thus receiving information from churches that were newly birthed to four years in age. The study reported that 99 percent of church plants survived by the first year, 92 percent survived by the second year, 81 percent by the third year, and 68 percent by the fourth year. The significant factors of survivability in these churches were if the church planters had their expectations met; if the church planters conducted leadership development among the members; if the church planters met with a peer group; and if the church planters instituted a stewardship

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plan.¹

After reading Stetzer and Connor's report and talking with state and association leaders, some questions arose in my mind concerning the way survivability percentages are being determined. Survivability percentages are being determined by how many plants persist during funding from NAMB, the state convention, or the association. Additionally, recently planted churches are included in the survivability percentages. Therefore, if a study is conducted in 2006 and a church that was planted in 2004 or 2005 was still alive, the plant was considered as part of the survivability percentage. An association representative and a state convention representative told me their survivability percentages were 85 percent, respectively. When asked if this percentage included those churches that were recently planted, both answered in the affirmative. In my view, the percentage of survivability of church plants should not include those that have been planted within the last two to three years. Neither should the percentage of survivability of church plants be defined by if the plants were still alive during the funding period of the state convention or association. These two variables do not reflect an accurate measure of survivability.

From this reasoning, I determined to answer two questions in my study. First, what is the percentage of church plants that survive after five years? Second, the factors of survivability given in Stetzer and Connor's report did not show much discrepancy between church plants that practiced these factors and those that did not; therefore, what are factors of survivability after five years?

Study Methodology

My study was a phenomenological study of the factors of survivability of church plants started between January 2000 and March 2003 in the Collin, Denton, Tarrant, and North Texas Baptist Associations, which are located in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. The study was conducted by my wife, my friend, and me in three phases. The first phase was the collection of the sample churches. I personally went to each association and collected annuals and reports of the church planting ministries of the associations. It was found that these four associations assisted in planting 73 new churches within the study time frame. In the second phase, my Spanish-speaking friend, Johnny Encizo, and I tried to contact all 73 churches and were able to conduct personal and phone interviews with pastors or representatives of 22 church plants. The pastors of the dead (from here on called "Departed") church plants were more difficult to find, but

we located and surveyed nine. It must be noted that the time to conduct this study was limited since this article is in fulfillment of an assignment for my Ph.D. colloquium in church planting. The survey questionnaire is presented in Appendix 1. In the third phase, my wife, Rebecca, and I put the data from the questionnaire into SPSS to run the statistical analysis of the survey data.

Results of the Study

These four associations assisted in planting a total of 73 churches in the study time frame. Only 34 (47%) of these churches still existed by October 2007, which was the last reporting each association gave except the North Texas Baptist Association, whose last reporting to me was March 2008.² Although the number of surviving church plants may seem low, it must be remembered that attempts were made to contact all 73 church plants with contact being made to 27 and only 22 responding to the survey. Of the 22 representatives who were surveyed, thirteen represented church plants that are still alive (from here on called "Survivors") and nine represented church plants that are departed. Only two representatives surveyed were not the senior pastor of the church plant. The average age of the senior pastors was 46.5, meaning that the average senior pastor was in his late 30s or early 40s when he started the church. The Survivors' average age was 49.5 while the Departed's average age was 44.

Most (55%) of the senior pastors were part-time when the church was planted. It was significant that 77 percent of the pastors of the Departed were part time while only 33 percent of the pastors of the Survivors were part time (See Appendix 2). Almost half (45.5%) of the senior pastors were the only staff member when the church was planted. Of those who had a second paid staff member, the usual staff member was a part-time worship leader. Among the Survivors who had a second staff member, however, 75 percent reported the staff member was full-time (See Appendix 2). Amazingly, 25 percent of the Survivors who had a third staff member reported that the staff member was full time. The Departed reported no second or third staff members who were full-time.

The Survivors ranged in present average attendance from 5 to 1100, the median being 85. The Departed had high average attendances that ranged from 20 to 148, the median being 60. Average age range and meeting place was typical of most church plants. When asked about the average age range of the membership, most (73%) reported the average age range of 31 to 40. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the Survivors and one Departed had

a permanent meeting place. Almost half (46%) of the Survivors were meeting in another church's building while the Departed met in a school, business, or another church. None of the Survivors met in a school. Only one of the church plants surveyed met in a home and it was a Survivor.

The type of church government practiced and the style of worship were typical of modern church plants. Half (50%) of the church plants surveyed were pastor-led while 31 percent were congregational. The differences between the Survivors and Departed were not significant. Over half (55%) practiced a contemporary style of worship while 23 percent were blended. A significant difference between the Survivors and the Departed emerged in this area. Sixty-two percent (62%) of Survivors practiced contemporary worship compared to 44 percent of the Departed.

Composites. From the information above a composite sketch may be drawn. The Survivors' senior pastor was in his early forties and was paid full-time when the church began. He had at least one other staff member and the second staff member was full-time as well. The church draws 85 people who are between the ages of 31 and 40 and meets in another church. They practice a pastor-led model of government and have contemporary worship.

The Departed's senior pastor was in his late thirties and was paid part-time when the church began. He had at least one other staff member who was paid part-time. The church drew 60 people between the ages of 31 and 40 and met in a school, business, or another church. They practiced a pastor-led model of government and had a blended worship service.

Baptisms

Baptisms per year revealed a significant find.³ Among all churches surveyed, the average baptisms in the first year were 12. The second year the average was 16. The third year the average was 15. The fourth and fifth years, however, the average dropped to nine (9) in both years (see Appendix 2). The Survivors baptized many more per year than the Departed. The Survivors baptized 16, 19, 19, 11, and 10, respectively, in years one thru five. The Departed baptized 6, 10, 8, 5, and 4, respectively, in years one thru five. Baptisms significantly plunged after the third year in both the Survivors and the Departed. Although I cannot say for sure why this happens, I suspect that evangelism is not given the priority it was in the first three years due to financial, leadership, or facility struggles.

Only Survivors were surveyed as to what percentage of their

baptisms they felt they had kept (see Appendix 2). The only one who reported 100 percent retention was the Survivor who has an average attendance of five (5). I was amazed, however, at the perceived retention percentages the Survivors reported. Most reported retaining at least 61 percent or more of their new converts. If these reports are accurate, the Survivors are retaining a very high percentage of their new converts.

Evangelistic Efforts

The participants were surveyed as to what type of evangelistic efforts they conducted, then were asked to rate the effectiveness of each effort on a Likert scale. They were asked what evangelistic efforts they conducted in the beginning years and, if they were a Survivor, what evangelistic efforts they are currently conducting. The findings were very interesting.

The Beginning Years. Among all churches, the most mentioned evangelistic effort in the first two years was personal evangelism by the church plant team and personal evangelism by the members, each receiving 68 percent of the responses. The rating of effectiveness on these was “barely acceptable.”⁴ It was significant that the Departed rated personal evangelism of the church plant team significantly higher than personal evangelism from church members. Survivors rated these two the same. The second most mentioned evangelistic effort was community service programs, receiving ten responses. Again, the cumulative rating of effectiveness was “barely acceptable.”

Responses that received the highest ratings were “other,”⁵ “weekly evangelistic preaching,” “weekly expository preaching,” “weekly youth programs,” “weekly children’s programs,” and “mass mailers.” All of these received “good” ratings. The largest difference between Survivors and Departed was in the ratings each gave to weekly children’s programs and weekly youth programs. The Survivors rated children’s and youth programs as “very good” while the Departed rated them “barely acceptable.” The only other significant difference was over “home Bible study.” The Departed rated the effectiveness of home Bible studies “good” while the Survivors rated them “barely acceptable.”

Responses that received the lowest ratings were “door to door visits,” “community service programs,” and “personal evangelism from church members.” Both Survivors and Departed felt that door to door visits did not bring in many prospects, although it did inflate their prospect list. Nine out of thirteen of the Survivors reported conducting community service programs, rating its effectiveness “barely acceptable.”

Current Evangelistic Efforts. When Survivors were asked what evangelistic efforts they are conducting now, the most mentioned responses were “personal evangelism of church plant team” and “personal evangelism from church members.” The rating for “personal evangelism of church plant team” did not change from what they rated in the beginning. The rating for “personal evangelism from church members” was significantly higher than what they rated under “in the beginning.” The second most mentioned responses were “weekly children’s programs,” “community service programs,” “weekly evangelistic preaching, and “weekly expository preaching.”

The Survivors gave “weekly children’s programs,” “weekly youth programs,” “youth or children’s camps,” “VBS,” and “weekly expository preaching” the highest ratings. All of these received “good” or “very good” ratings. The lowest ratings were given to “door to door visits,” “home Bible studies,” and “community service programs.” All of these received a “poor” rating.

Composites. Once again, composites could be drawn from these results. The Survivors baptized an average of 18 people per year the first three years, but went down to 11 baptisms the fourth and fifth years. They have kept at least 61 percent of their baptisms. The partnership of personal evangelism by the church plant team and members coupled with weekly children and youth programs have been their most effective evangelistic efforts from the beginning to today. Weekly evangelistic and expository preaching has been effective for them as well.

The Departed baptized an average of 8 people per year the first three years, but went down to 4 or 5 baptisms the last two years of existence. Personal evangelism by the church plant team, weekly evangelistic and expository preaching, and home Bible studies were their most effective methods.

Discipleship

The participants were asked what type of discipleship efforts they used in the beginning; then asked to rate the effectiveness of each on the same Likert scale used in our evangelism questions. The Survivors were asked what type of discipleship efforts they are currently using and to rate the effectiveness as well. All were asked what type of prayer support they conducted in the beginning and the Survivors were asked what they are doing now. Again, these results are fascinating.

The Beginning Years. The most mentioned discipleship efforts conducted in the beginning among all participants were Sunday School and home Bible studies. Sunday School was given a lower rating than home Bible studies, which was given the high-

est cumulative rating. Both Survivors and Departed gave home Bible studies a rating of "very good." The Departed gave Sunday School a higher rating than the Survivors did. The second most mentioned discipleship effort conducted in the beginning was one-on-one mentoring, which was rated "good." Both Survivors and Departed gave this effort a "good" rating. The lowest mentioned effort was "providing daily devotions."

The lowest ratings were given to "weekly leadership development" and "expository preaching," each receiving a rating of "barely acceptable." The Survivors rated "weekly leadership development" lower than the Departed rated it. The Survivors rated "expository preaching" much higher than the Departed rated it.

Current Discipleship Efforts. What discipleship efforts are the Survivors doing now? Again, the most mentioned were Sunday School and home Bible studies. The ratings on these, however, were significantly different from "in the beginning." Sunday School was rated "barely acceptable" while home Bible studies retained the rating of "very good." "One-on-one mentoring" went down in rating while "weekly leadership development" went up slightly.

Prayer

Weekly prayer meetings were by far the most mentioned response in the area of prayer. Interestingly, more Departed churches had a weekly prayer meeting in the beginning than Survivors. The Departed also mentioned the leadership team praying two times as much as the Survivors. Some Survivors designated a prayer room in their facilities while no Departed did. Survivors were more likely to use methods like all night prayer meetings or prayer chains.

Weekly prayer meetings actually increased among Survivors as time passed. They also became more innovative in their prayer efforts. Prayer walking, email prayer chains, and small group prayer meetings are more common today in the Survivors.

Composites. Concerning discipleship and prayer, a composite sketch of the Survivors would be that, in the beginning years, the Survivors used home Bible studies, Sunday School, and one-on-one mentoring, with the most effective being home Bible studies. To promote prayer, they used prayer chains, all night prayer meetings and a designated prayer room. Today, their most effective discipleship effort is home Bible studies, yet they continue to do Sunday School and one-on-one mentoring. Their prayer efforts have become more innovative and widening.

The Departed also used Sunday School, home Bible studies, and one-on-one mentoring in the beginning years, but Sunday School was the most effective. Their prayer efforts were centered upon a weekly prayer meeting and leadership team praying together. They were not very innovative in their prayer efforts.

Money

I was very surprised that 41 percent of the church plants surveyed did not receiving funding from either the state convention or the association (see Appendix 2). Of the Departed, 55 percent were not funded while 31 percent of the Survivors were not funded. When asked why, various reasons were given, but the most common reason was, "I did not meet their standards." When I probed further, it seems that a certain amount of core members were needed before funding was granted (sometimes as many as 30 people!); or the planter was not planting the type of church the state convention or association wanted to fund.

Of those who received funding from the state convention, most believed the funding was "good" or "very good." All of the Departed who received funding believed the funding was "good" or "very good." The Survivors were mixed, however, as 44 percent believed it was "very poor" or "barely acceptable" while 56 percent believed it was "good" or "very good."

Most who received funding received it for two or three years while 12 percent of the Survivors received funding for four or more years. None of the Departed who received funding received it for more than three years. When asked about struggles endured, lack of convention funding was mentioned by 36 percent of the participants. Half (50%) of those who mentioned it rated the damage incurred to their church by the lack of convention funding were "much" to "a great deal." All who mentioned this response were Survivors.

The associations did not fare as well (see Appendix 2). The most common response among all participants was "barely acceptable." Among the Survivors, however, 33 percent rated it "good" or "very good." Again, most who received funding received it for two or three years.

I was also surprised how few received funding from the mother church, secondary sponsor church, or private donations. The mother churches funded only 37 percent of the church plants. Their funding lasted between one and four years. Secondary sponsor churches funded only 18 percent of the church plants. Their funding lasted at least three years. Private donations from outside the church funded only 23 percent of the church plants. Their funding lasted at least two years.

Struggles

When asked about struggles, 59 percent of the respondents mentioned financial struggles, the most mentioned struggle. Of the Departed, 55 percent reported this struggle while 62 percent of the Survivors reported this struggle. When asked to rate the damage incurred to the church because of financial struggles, the cumulative rating was “a great deal.”⁶ The Survivors actually rated financial struggles higher than the Departed.

The second most mentioned struggle was “not enough time to give to the church” with 45 percent of respondents mentioning this struggle. When asked to rate the damage incurred to the church because the pastor did not have enough time to give to the church, the cumulative rating was “much.” The Departed rated this struggle higher than the Survivors.

Interestingly, the Survivors mentioned “conflict in leadership team,” “location,” “lack of funding from convention,” and “lack of funding from association” significantly more than the Departed. The Survivors rated the damage incurred to the church because of these factors as “somewhat,” except for “lack of funding from association.” “Lack of funding from association” was rated as “much.”

Composites. Composites of the Survivors and Departed emerge again. The Survivors were funded well by the state convention, association, mother church, and other outside sources for three years or more. Their main struggles have been financial mixed with conflict in the leadership team, finding a good location, and lack of funding from the convention and association.

The Departed for the most part did not receive funding from the state convention and association. They struggled financially. Their main struggle, however, was that they did not have enough time to give to the church.

The Departed

I was very surprised at how many of the Departed died after the third year (see Appendix 2). Fifty-five (55%) percent died in the fourth year or beyond. When asked what led to the death of the church, 44 percent of the Departed mentioned both “financial struggles” and “not enough time to give to the church.” When asked to rate the damage incurred, “not enough time to give to the church” rated higher than “financial struggles.” Another issue was brought to the forefront under the answer “other.” Core group development issues were mentioned by 44 percent of the Departed.

When asked what the “final straw” was in the death of the church, the answers varied so much that there was no consensus.

The pastor leaving and not enough growth received more than one response. Every other response was unique to the situation of the church plant.

Study Conclusions

Drawing from this research, what are the factors of survivability of these church plants? *The first factor of survivability is adequate funding from the state convention, association, and sponsor churches.* This factor affected so many other factors which will be discussed later. The two largest churches that participated in the study were given substantial financial backing. One pastor was given his first six months salary by his mother church, \$2500 per month for three years by the state convention, \$500 per month for three years by the association, and \$1000 per month for three years by secondary sponsor churches. The other pastor was given \$300,000 by his mother church, \$2000 per month for two years by the state convention, \$500 per month for three years by the association, and much more in private donations. Both of these men planted with one or two more staff members by their side. Not all Survivors received this amount of funding, but compared to the Departed, most of whom received nothing, the Survivors were given much more funding.

Adequate funding affects so many other factors. First, it affects whether a pastor can give adequate time to the church. Second, it affects whether a pastor can have a second staff member. Third, it affects whether the church plant can do adequate ministry.

At the end of each interview, I would ask the pastors what they learned and what insight they could give to other church planters. Over half responded with something about adequate funding. One of the Departed said, "Be willing to do it all for nothing." Another of the Departed said, "You need strong leadership. You need a good core group. You need good funding all the way." A Survivor said, "Know your calling and hope the funding doesn't run out." Another Survivor said, "We need to scrap the modern way of doing things. We need teams and we need to fully finance them."

The second factor of survivability is team planting. Most of the Survivors had at least one other full-time staff member to help with the plant. Most of the Departed's pastors were part-time, therefore, their second staff person was part-time. The advice of the pastor of the largest church in our study was, "Don't do it alone. Go with a team." One of the Departed said, "You need to start with a bigger core group than just your family. You need longer terms of financial resources as well."

The third factor of survivability is giving enough time to the church. The Departed wanted to give more time to the church, but they also had to make a living. The Survivors were financially able to give more time to the church, thus the church benefited and grew.

The fourth factor of survivability is meeting in another church. Many of the Survivors met inside another church while the Departed met in schools or businesses. Meeting inside another church seemed to have helped in the kingdom focus of the planter and church.

The fifth factor of survivability is contemporary worship. Many of the Departed tried to do a blended worship style, as if trying to hold on to traditional songs. The Survivors were completely committed to contemporary worship and had someone to lead it.

The sixth factor of survivability is the culture of evangelism. Although the pastors of the Departed did personal evangelism, it was clear their members were not doing very much. The pastors of the Survivors had help in doing personal evangelism from their members. One Survivor said, "You must know people and immerse yourself in culture to win them." One of the Departed said, "You must be aggressive in looking outside the doors of the church and reaching people." Weekly evangelistic preaching and weekly expository preaching aid in the evangelistic efforts as well.

The seventh factor of survivability is children's and youth programs. Many of the Survivors did children's ministry above youth ministry. One Survivor pastor mentioned they did nothing but children's activities for the first year. Another Survivor pastor mentioned they offered children's enrichment programs from the beginning.

The eighth factor of survivability is utilizing home Bible studies for discipleship. The Survivors kept using home Bible studies even when they moved into a permanent location. The Departed seemed to have placed a larger emphasis on traditional Sunday School.

The ninth factor of survivability is using innovative prayer methods. I was amazed at how many Survivors did not use weekly prayer meetings in the beginning. They prayed in other ways like all night prayer meetings, email prayer chains, and prayer rooms. The Departed seemed to hold to a traditional weekly prayer meeting.

The tenth factor of survivability is that the fourth year is the "make or break" year, not the third. Many convention models see the third year as the milestone. They push the church to average about 140 people in attendance by the third year. This study found that

most of the Departed died in the fourth year and beyond.

A Word about Passion

I was truly amazed at the Departed. The Departed did not complain much, as one can see from the views above on funding. They were still passionate about church planting and many wanted to plant again. Many saw the death of their church as part of God's sovereign plan. They also were pleased with the lives that were touched through their church plant. I did not detect a difference in passion between the Survivors and the Departed. The Departed were just as passionate about souls as the Survivors, they just did not have the time to give to the church like they desired. All of the Departed are still in the ministry somehow.

Implications for Further Study

I believe a study on the factors of survivability of church plants needs to be broadened to include a larger amount of participants, possibly in multiple states. I am planning on conducting this study in the near future. At least three other implications may be derived for future study. First, what are the methods being used by Survivors to spur their members to personal evangelism? Second, what methods are being used by the Survivors in children's ministry? Third, how does a church plant maintain the connection to home Bible studies while continuing to meet in a building?

Conclusion

C. Peter Wagner began his book, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, with a bold assertion, "The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches."⁷ Wagner's assertion has proved correct according to later studies. A study published in *Mission USA* asserted that new churches baptized 13 people for every 100 members compared to established churches who baptized only 3 people for every 100 members.⁸ Bold initiatives have been established as a partial result of this research, especially in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The North American Mission Board (NAMB) stated in its 2007 annual report to the SBC that they have set a goal of helping SBC churches plant 7500 new churches in all people groups by 2010.⁹ Such bold initiatives should have significant strategies in place in order to maximize effectiveness. This study shows that a major factor of survivability is adequate funding from the conventions, associations, and mother churches is needed for maximum effectiveness. Adequate funding affects whether a

planter plants with a team; whether the team has enough time to give to the plant; and whether the plant will have enough money to run effective children and youth ministries. Meeting in another church, creating a culture of evangelism and utilizing home Bible studies, innovative prayer methods, and contemporary worship are applicable in any church planting situation. May we be good stewards in planting God's churches.

Writer

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APPENDIX 1

Church Plant Survivability Survey

1. Name: _____
2. Location: _____
 1. Tarrant
 2. Collin
 3. Denton
 4. Dallas
3. Year started: _____
 1. 2000
 2. 2001
 3. 2002
 4. 2003 (Jan.-Mar.)
4. Present attendance: _____
 1. 1-25
 2. 26-50
 3. 51-75
 4. 76-100
 5. 101-150
 6. >150
5. Average age of member:
 1. 20-30
 2. 31-40
 3. 41-50
 4. 51-60
 5. >60
6. How many paid staff members:

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5 or >
7. Type of meeting place:
 1. Permanent
 2. Non-permanent
 - a. School
 - b. Business
 - c. Community facility
 - d. Other church
 - e. Home
 - f. Strip Mall
 - g. Other
8. From which entities did you receive funding? On a scale of 1-5 (Very Poor, Poor, Barely Acceptable, Good, Very Good) rate the adequacy of the funding.
 1. NAMB _____
 2. State convention _____
 3. Association _____
 4. Mother church _____
 5. Secondary sponsor churches _____
 6. Private donations _____
 7. None of the above
 8. Others _____
9. How long did funding last?
 1. NAMB
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4 or >
 2. State
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4 or >
 3. Association
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4 or >
 4. Mother church
 - a. 1
 - b. 2

-
- c. 3
 - d. 4 or >
 - 5. Secondary sponsor church
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4 or >
 - 6. Private donations
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4 or >
 - 10. What percentage of your budget came from the total of the entities listed above?
 - 1. Year 1
 - a. <25%
 - b. 26-50%
 - c. 51-75%
 - d. >75%
 - e. Do not know
 - 2. Year 2
 - a. <25%
 - b. 26-50%
 - c. 51-75%
 - d. >75%
 - e. Do not know
 - 3. Year 3
 - a. <25%
 - b. 26-50%
 - c. 51-75%
 - d. >75%
 - e. Do not know
 - 4. Year 4
 - a. <25%
 - b. 26-50%
 - c. 51-75%
 - d. >75%
 - e. Do not know
 - 5. Year 5
 - a. <25%
 - b. 26-50%
 - c. 51-75%
 - d. >75%
 - e. Do not know
 - 11. In the beginning, how many paid staff members did the

- church have?
1. 0
 2. 1
 3. 2
 4. 3
 5. > 4
12. Was pay considered full-time for the staff members?
1. Lead Pastor _____
 2. Second Staff Member _____
 3. Third Staff Member _____
 4. Fourth Staff Member _____
13. What model of church government do you practice?
1. Pastor-led
 2. Elder-led
 3. Congregational
 4. Other
14. What worship style do you practice?
1. Traditional
 2. Blended
 3. Contemporary
 4. Ethnic
 5. Other
15. How many baptisms did you have in each year?
1. Year 1 _____
 2. Year 2 _____
 3. Year 3 _____
 4. Year 4 _____
 5. Year 5 _____
16. What evangelistic efforts did you use in the beginning and please rate the effectiveness of each on a scale of 1 to 5 (Very Poor, Poor, Barely Acceptable, Good, Very Good)
1. Door to Door Visits _____
 2. Block Party _____
 3. Weekly Children's Programs _____
 4. Weekly Youth Programs _____
 5. Youth or Children's Camps _____
 6. VBS _____
 7. College Bible Study _____
 8. Home Bible Study _____
 9. Community Service Programs _____
 10. Mass Mailers _____
 11. Weekly Evangelistic Preaching from Pulpit _____
 12. Weekly Expository Preaching from Pulpit _____
 13. Personal Evangelism of Church Plant Team _____

-
14. Personal Evangelism from Church Members _____
15. Other _____
17. What evangelistic efforts are you using now and please rate the effectiveness of each on a scale of 1 to 5 (Very Poor, Poor, Barely Acceptable, Good, Very Good)
1. Door to Door Visits _____
 2. Block Party _____
 3. Weekly Children's Programs _____
 4. Weekly Youth Programs _____
 5. Youth or Children's Camps _____
 6. VBS _____
 7. College Bible Study _____
 8. Home Bible Study _____
 9. Community Service Programs _____
 10. Mass Mailers _____
 11. Weekly Evangelistic Preaching from Pulpit _____
 12. Weekly Expository Preaching from Pulpit _____
 13. Personal Evangelism of Church Plant Team _____
 14. Personal Evangelism from Church Members _____
 15. Other _____
18. What type of discipleship efforts did you use in the beginning and please rate the effectiveness of each on a scale of 1 to 5 (Very Poor, Poor, Barely Acceptable, Good, Very Good)
1. Sunday School _____
 2. Home Bible Studies _____
 3. One on One Mentoring _____
 4. Musical development _____
 5. Weekly Leadership Development _____
 6. Providing daily devotions _____
 7. Expository Preaching _____
 8. Other _____
19. What type of discipleship efforts are you using now and please rate the effectiveness of each on a scale of 1 to 5 (Very Poor, Poor, Barely Acceptable, Good, Very Good)
1. Sunday School _____
 2. Home Bible Studies _____
 3. One on One Mentoring _____
 4. Musical development _____
 5. Weekly Leadership Development _____
 6. Providing daily devotions _____
 7. Expository Preaching _____
 8. Other _____
20. What type of prayer support did you conduct in the beginning?

1. Weekly prayer meetings
 2. Prayer room
 3. Email prayer
 4. Prayer Walking
 5. Prayer teams from Outside the Church
 6. Leadership Team Prayer
 7. Other
21. What type of prayer support are you conducting now?
1. Weekly prayer meetings
 2. Prayer room
 3. Email prayer
 4. Prayer Walking
 5. Prayer teams from Outside the Church
 6. Other
22. Of your baptisms, what percentage have you kept?
1. < 20%
 2. 21-40%
 3. 41-60%
 4. 61-80%
 5. 81-100%
23. What struggles have you endured and please rate the damage incurred because of each. (1 to 5; Very Little, Little, Somewhat, Much, A Great Deal)
1. Conflict in Leadership Team _____
 2. Conflict in Membership _____
 3. Moral failure of pastor _____
 4. Moral failure of member of team _____
 5. Financial struggles _____
 6. Staff member leaving _____
 7. Lack of funding from Convention _____
 8. Lack of funding from Association _____
 9. Lack of funding from Sponsor Churches _____
 10. Location _____
 11. Church Split _____
 12. Lack of vision _____
 13. Lack of leadership development _____
 14. Not enough time to give to church _____
 15. Other _____
24. Have you started another church and, if so, what year did you start it? _____
1. Year 1
 2. Year 2
 3. Year 3
 4. Year 4
 5. Year 5

The Following Section is for Those Churches that are Dead:

25. What year did the church die?
 1. Year 1
 2. Year 2
 3. Year 3
 4. Year 4
 5. Year 5
 6. Other
26. What led to the death of the church? Please rate the damage incurred from each (1 to 5; Very Little, Little, Somewhat, Much, A Great Deal)
 1. Conflict in Leadership Team _____
 2. Conflict in Membership _____
 3. Moral failure of pastor _____
 4. Moral failure of member of team _____
 5. Financial struggles _____
 6. Staff member leaving _____
 7. Lack of funding from Convention _____
 8. Lack of funding from Association _____
 9. Lack of funding from Sponsor Churches _____
 10. Location _____
 11. Lack of fulfillment of vision _____
 12. Lack of leadership development _____
 13. Not enough time to give to church _____
 14. Other _____
27. What was the "final straw" in the death of the church?
 1. Pastor left
 2. Staff member left
 3. Funding ran out
 4. Not enough growth
 5. Other

APPENDIX 2

Tables 1-7

Table 1. Was pay considered full-time for the lead pastor?

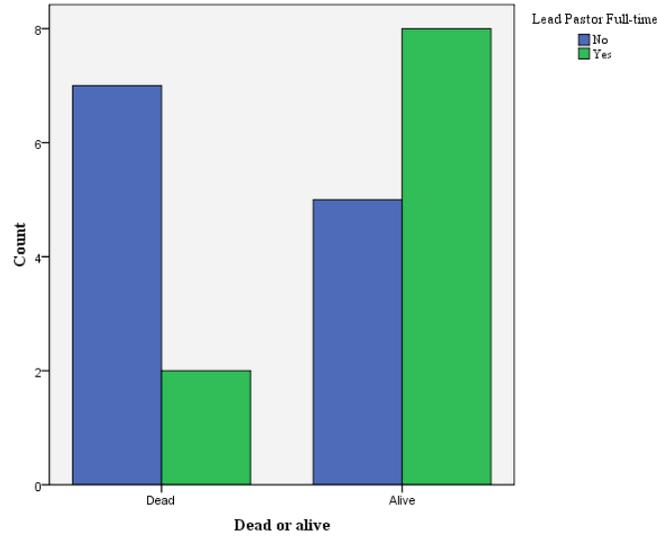


Table 2. Was pay considered full-time for the second staff member?

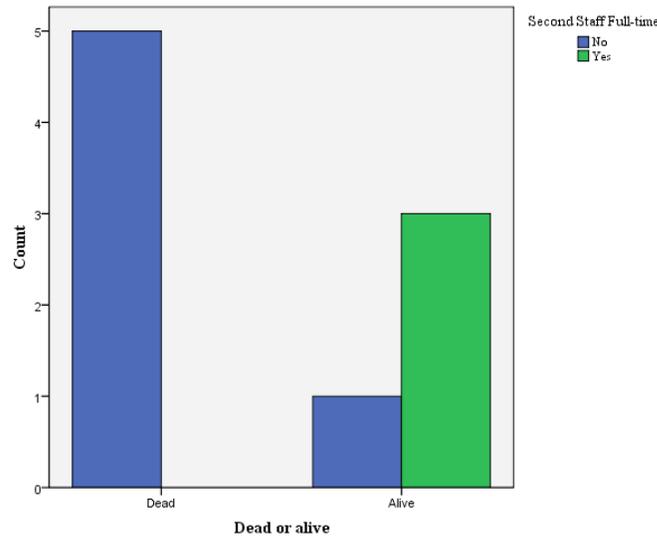


Table 3. How many baptisms did you have in each year? Average of all participants.

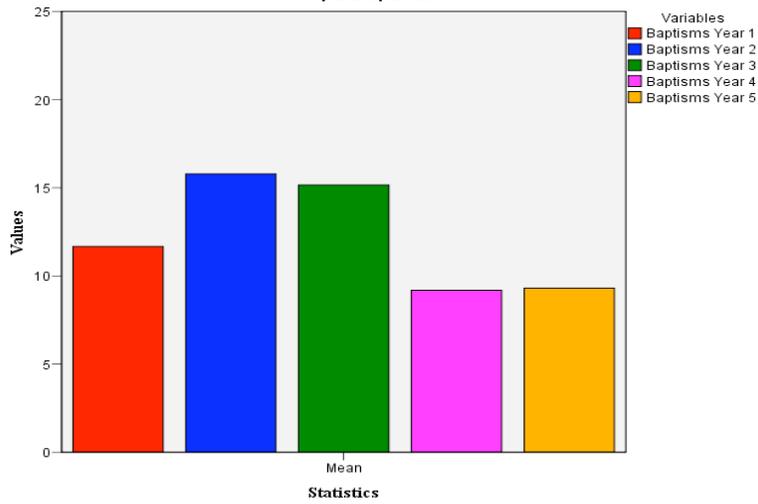


Table 4. What percentage of baptisms have you kept? Survivors only.

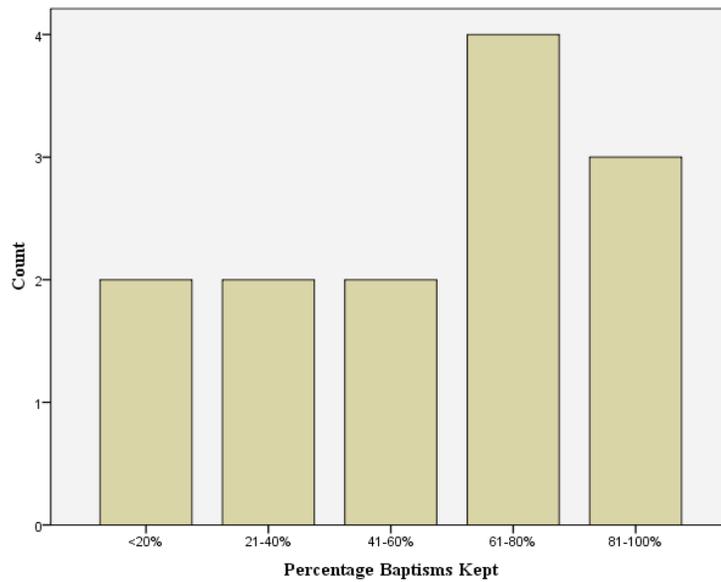


Table 5. From which entities did you receive funding? Rate the adequacy of the funding from the State Convention.

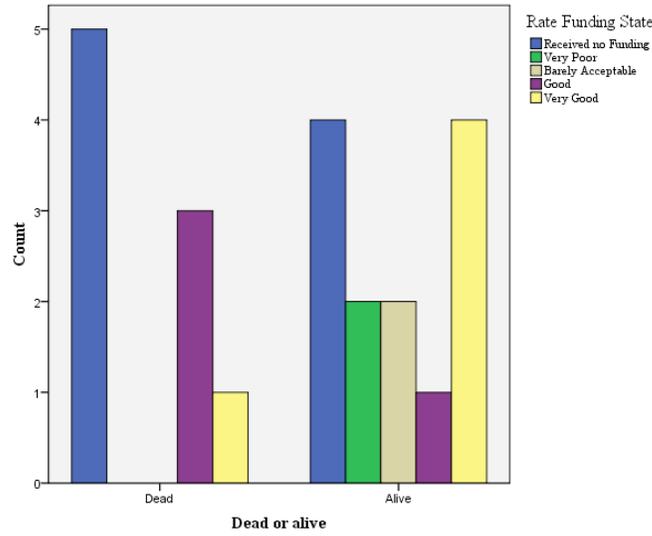


Table 6. From which entities did you receive funding? Rate the adequacy of the funding from the Association.

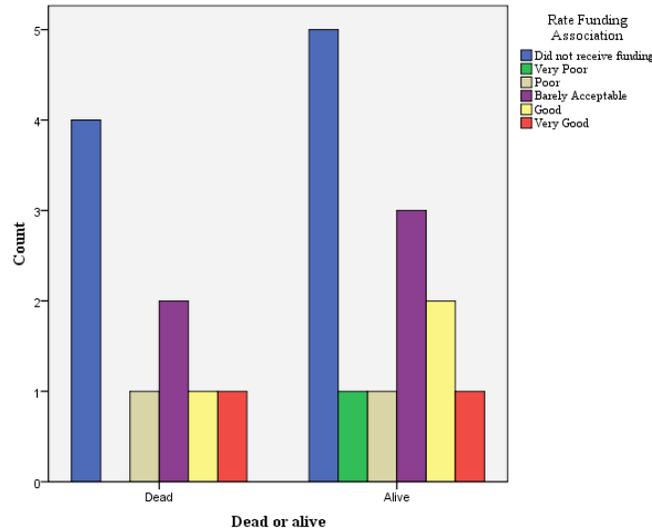
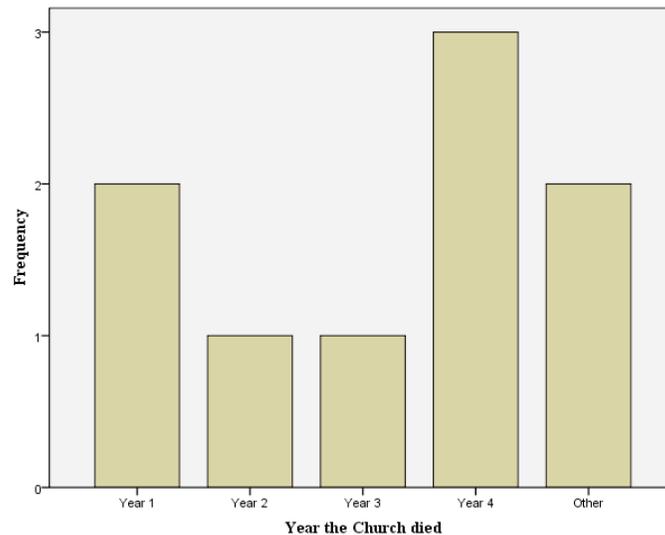


Table 7. What year did the church die? Departed only.



NOTES

1. Ed Stetzer and Phillip Connor, Church Plant Survivability and Health Study 2007 [on-line]; accessed 14 April 2008; available at http://www.namb.net/atf/cf/%7BCDA250E8-8866-4236-9A0C-C646DE153446%7D/RESEARCH_REPORT_SURVIVABILITY_HEALTH.PDF?tr=y&auid=2440992; Internet. All information in this paragraph.

2. We arrived at this number from the annuals provided to us from the associations. We diligently tried to find the pastors of these churches through various means, including talking with staff of the associations to verify whether these churches were dead or alive. Although 100% accuracy cannot be maintained, I am extremely confident that our numbers are correct.

3. It should be noted that these baptisms were reported by the person interviewed. The Annual Church Profile numbers may be different.

4. The scale we used was "Very Poor," "Poor," "Barely Acceptable," "Good," or "Very Good."

5. The "other" responses were topical preaching, website, sports evangelism, service evangelism, revival, and FAITH. All of these received "very good" ratings, except for revival and FAITH, which received "barely acceptable" ratings. The latter were reported by two of the Departed.

6. The scale for this question was "Very Little," "Little," "Somewhat," "Much," or "A Great Deal."

7. C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 11.

8. Charles Chaney, "New Churches and the Unsaved," *Mission USA* (January-February 1995), 12.

9. Annual of the 2007 Southern Baptist Convention [on-line]; accessed 14 April 2008; available at <http://www.sbc.net/redirect.asp?url=http%3A%2F%2Fsbcec%2Enet%2Fbor%2F2007%2Fdefault%2Easp>; Internet.