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## ABSTRACT

The problems facing many churches concern their future. Can churches continue to provide ministry to the communities with their present facilities? If church membership continues to decline, would the churches be able to maintain and support their existing facilities? If decline continued, would the churches be able to provide parsonages and salaries for their pastors? Without adequate parking facilities, can churches expect to attract and accommodate many visitors?

These and other problems have challenged the wisdom of the leadership of Calvary and Tower United Methodist Churches. Under the leadership of Rev. Ben Hahn and a Joint Study Committee comprised of members from each congregation, a comprehensive study was conducted to determine each congregation's future. The study was based upon the following hypothesis: "that two administratively yoked churches with numerical decline, located in declining areas can come to a decision about their future when the decision-making process is rooted in scripture and collaboratively led with appropriate insight from churches, literature, and the leader's group shared vision and purpose."

Chapter one of this dissertation establishes the nature and scope of the project-dissertation. Under the guidance of my faculty advisor, Dr. George Hunter, a project/dissertation prospectus was submitted for his review

and subsequent approval.

Chapter two considers the nature and mission of the Church. The leader's group sought to gain a clear understanding of the concept of Church as to its nature and mission within the community it serves.

Chapter three considers the various literature as it relates to church growth, management, and leadership styles. The leader's group felt adequate resources were available to inform their decision-making process concerning their future. Literature from the field of church growth, management, and leadership styles for church growth were considered to gain insights into possible church growth options.

Chapter four delineates the insights gained from the survey questionnaire. The survey was designed to gain information from other churches who had gone through the decision-making process of merger or merger with subsequent relocation.

Chapter five is a evaluation of the project. This chapter contains the following; 1). The recommendation of the Joint Study Committee; 2). The evaluation of the Survey Instrument Questionnaire; 3). The evaluation of the decision-making and planning process; 4). The effective mission of the congregation; 5). The evaluation of the Joint Study Committee; 6). Personal insights gained for the contextual project; 7). The conclusion.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE:  
IS CHURCH MERGER OR MERGER WITH RELOCATION A VIABLE OPTION?

BY

BENJAMIN H. HAHN

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

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1990

Approved by

Department

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*March 27, 1990*

## AUTHORIZATION

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## DEDICATION

To Brenda, a "special" gift from God who has stood beside me as a loving wife, help-mate in ministry, and dear friend. Your inspiration, encouragement, and motivation lifted me during the duration of this project. Your gentle spirit comforted me during the times of frustration, discouragement, and irritation of multiple chapter revisions. I love you with all my heart!

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understanding in those areas.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1. Nature and Scope of the Project-Dissertation . . . . .	1
The Problem Considered . . . . .	1
The Bellevue, Kentucky, Area . . . . .	2
The Religious Culture of Bellevue, Kentucky. . . . .	4
The Socioeconomic History of Bellevue, Kentucky . . . . .	5
History of the Calvary United Methodist Church . . . . .	7
Present History of the Calvary United Methodist Church . . . . .	8
The Dayton, Kentucky, Area . . . . .	9
The Religious Culture of Dayton, Kentucky. . . . .	12
The Socioeconomic History of Dayton, Kentucky . . . . .	15
History of the Tower United Methodist Church . . . . .	16
Present History of the Tower United Methodist Church . . . . .	18
Proposed Methodology . . . . .	19
Foundation or Design Stage . . . . .	19
Design-Planning Stage . . . . .	19

Survey . . . . .	19
Interviews . . . . .	19
Biblical Research . . . . .	20
Historical Research . . . . .	20
Literature Research . . . . .	20
Future Options . . . . .	21
Merger . . . . .	21
Merger with Relocation . . . . .	21
Remaining a Two-point Charge . . . . .	21
Returning To a Single-point Charge . . . . .	21
New Insights Gleaned . . . . .	22
<b>2. Nature and Mission of the Church . . . . .</b>	<b>23</b>
A Biblical Understanding of the Church . . . . .	23
The Nature of the Church . . . . .	23
The Mission of the Church . . . . .	30
Implications for the Churches . . . . .	36
Relationship of Church Buildings to the Mission of the Church . . . . .	42
Conclusion . . . . .	46
<b>3. Insights from the Literature of Church Growth, Management, and Leadership . . . . .</b>	<b>50</b>
Leadership Style for Church Growth . . . . .	50
Church Growth Principles . . . . .	59
Church Growth in the New Testament . . . . .	61
Why Churches do not Grow . . . . .	64
Characteristics of Growing Churches . . . . .	68

Church Growth Options for	
Calvary and Tower Churches . . . . .	74
Merger of Each Congregation into	
One Congregation. . . . .	74
Merging of Each Congregation into	
One Congregation with Relocation. . .	79
Both Congregations Remaining as a	
Two-point Charge. . . . .	83
Both Congregations Returning to a	
Single-point Charge . . . . .	85
New Insights Gleaned . . . . .	88
Conclusion . . . . .	90
4. Insights Gained from the Survey Instrument /	
Questionnaire . . . . .	91
Design Stage . . . . .	91
Identification and Description	
of Churches Surveyed . . . . .	92
Survey-Questionnaire Results . . . . .	94
Insights Gained	
Personal Interviews . . . . .	95
Survey Questionnaire . . . . .	96
Conclusion . . . . .	100
5. Evaluation of the Project . . . . .	101
Recommendation of the	
Joint Study Committee. . . . .	101
Survey Instrument / Questionnaire . . . . .	102

Decision-making and Planning Process . . . .	104
Effective Mission of the Congregation . . .	106
Joint Study Committee . . . . .	107
Comprehensive Study . . . . .	108
Group Participation . . . . .	108
Communication . . . . .	109
Decision-Making Process . . . . .	110
Personal Insights Gained . . . . .	110
Conclusion . . . . .	112

## Appendixes

A. A Resolution to Study Merger and Relocation . . . . .	114
B. Map of Northern Kentucky Highlighting Bellevue, Kentucky . . . . .	119
C. Calvary United Methodist Church Membership Trends . . . . .	121
D. Calvary United Methodist Church Average Worship Attendance . . . . .	123
E. Map of Northern Kentucky Highlighting Dayton, Kentucky . . . . .	125
F. Tower United Methodist Church Membership Trends . . . . .	127
G. Tower United Methodist Church Average Worship Attendance . . . . .	129
H. A Resolution to Merge and Relocate. . . . .	131

I. Survey-Questionnaire Results . . . . .	134
Bibliography . . . . .	145

## CHAPTER 1

### Nature and Scope of the Project-Dissertation

The following study took place in the context of two local churches: Calvary United Methodist Church, Bellevue, Kentucky, and Tower United Methodist Church, Dayton, Kentucky. This study was based upon the following hypothesis: "that two administratively yoked churches, with numerical decline, located in declining areas, can come to a decision about their future when the decision making process is rooted in scripture and collaboratively led with appropriate insight from churches, literature, and the leader group's shared vision and purpose."

#### The Problem Considered

The problem facing both churches concerned their future. Could both churches continue to provide ministry to the communities while continuing to use their present facilities? If membership continued to decline, would the churches be able to maintain and support their existing facilities? If decline continued, would the churches be able to provide parsonages and salaries for their pastors? Without adequate parking facilities, could either church expect to accommodate many visitors?

The Calvary and Tower Churches decided to take a serious look at their existing problems and potential ministry for the future. At separate charge conferences in

December, 1987, both churches affirmed coming under the leadership of one pastor to study the options designated by the charge conferences (Appendix A). Both church conferences selected representatives to serve on a Joint Study Committee and directed the project's focus as follows:<sup>1</sup> 1). To study the possibility of merging one congregation into the other existing congregation. 2). To study the possibility of merging both congregations with subsequent relocation to a new location. 3). To study the possibility of both churches remaining as a two-point charge. 4). To study the possibility of each church returning to a single-point charge. 5). To allow for the Joint Study Committee to make additional recommendations to both congregations.

Because of the abundance of resource materials in church growth and leadership both churches felt there was adequate theory base to draw upon to inform their decision-making process.

### The Bellevue,

#### Kentucky, Area

The city of Bellevue, Kentucky, was founded in 1870. The city was originally part of the vast landholdings of the James Taylor family of Caroline County, Virginia. Located in Campbell County in the Northern Kentucky area, Bellevue

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<sup>1</sup> Description and evaluation of the Joint Study Committee may be found in chapter five of this dissertation.



is nestled amidst other pocket-cities. The Ohio River forms the northern border. To the west, south, and east are other cities that prevent further expansion unless residential homes are torn down and apartment or condominium units are built (Appendix B). Adjacent municipalities include Newport, Fort Thomas, Woodlawn, and Dayton, Kentucky.

No new industry has developed in the Bellevue area, because the city lacks land for expansion. Many companies have moved out of the area into the surrounding communities where land and facilities are available.

The majority of working people travel out of the Bellevue area for employment. With Cincinnati, Ohio, just five minutes away, many people commute across the river to work. Other people drive south to the Florence, Kentucky, area where many companies have relocated. Except for the local school system, a small factory, a few banks, and local businesses, the majority of local jobs tend to be low income, minimum salary, or part-time.

This challenge of a declining population that Bellevue faces is not unlike that of many other urban communities. Aside from the suburban exodus, other factors affecting population are a reduction of federal assistance and a loss of business activity. City officials are seeking ways to forestall and possibly reverse these trends by strong efforts to bring in new riverfront development to enhance

the city's overall viability.<sup>2</sup>

### The Religious Culture

#### of Bellevue, Kentucky

During its first half-century, Bellevue was a diverse community with multiple income levels. Citizens of German and Irish descent constituted its two largest ethnic groups, and as in most of urban Northern Kentucky, the German Catholic influence predominated.<sup>3</sup> The Roman Catholic population in Campbell County, Kentucky, is forty-eight percent.<sup>4</sup> Today it is estimated that the city of Bellevue is between seventy to eighty percent Roman Catholic.<sup>5</sup> However, these figures are misleading because they include people who are nominal Catholic or undisciplined persons who are Catholic in name only.

The first church founded in the city was Herz Jesu Kirche (Sacred Heart), organized in 1872 by German Catholics weary of commuting to St. Stephen's Parish in Newport, Kentucky. Today, because of its architectural and historical significance, Sacred Heart Church is listed in

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<sup>2</sup> Mayes, Sudderth, and Etheredge, Inc., City of Bellevue, Kentucky, Comprehensive Plan, December, 1987, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Glenmary Research Center, Atlanta Churches and Church Membership in the United States, (Atlanta, Georgia: Glenmary Research Center, 1982), 122.

<sup>5</sup> Information provided to the Bellevue-Dayton Ministerial Association by the Catholic Diocese of Covington, Kentucky, October, 1984.

the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>6</sup>

Seventeen years after the construction of Sacred Heart Church, a building permit was issued to the "English Speaking Catholic Church" of St. Anthony, frequented by Irish Catholics.<sup>7</sup> Other German congregations in the city included the St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church organized in 1887 (now the St. John's United Church of Christ) and the First German Evangelical Lutheran Church formed in 1890 (now the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church).

Today, the Bellevue community continues with its rich heritage of historic churches. Besides the two large Catholic Churches, the community of Bellevue has five protestant denominations: Baptist, Christian, Lutheran, Methodist, and United Church of Christ. These churches serve the estimated twenty to thirty percent protestant population of the Bellevue community with each one seeking to reach unchurched people.

### The Socioeconomic History of Bellevue, Kentucky

The City of Bellevue experienced rapid population growth from its incorporation in 1884. The population grew from 1,460 in 1880 to 9,336 in 1960. The population then declined over the next three decades. Since 1960, the population has declined to a projected low of 7,294 in

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<sup>6</sup> Mayes, Sudderth, and Etheredge, Inc., 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

1990.<sup>8</sup> Several conditions and trends explain the decline in population since 1960.

With the end of the baby boom in the sixties families have had fewer children, couples have waited longer to get married and the number of elderly persons has increased. These factors have led to a decline in the size of the average household. In 1960, the average number of persons per household for Kentucky was 3.47. In 1980, it was 2.82.<sup>9</sup>

Families often prefer larger lots, additional green-space, and the luxury of homes with attached garages. The majority of homes in Bellevue have small lots with no garage facilities; thus people park on the streets. Bellevue has been limited in its ability to offset the population shifts as people move to the suburbs to purchase homes with the advantages already noted. The inability of this land locked city to expand will always be a deterrent to the growth of Bellevue.

The Bellevue community is predominantly blue collar. The majority of residents work in surrounding businesses and factories. The community has a large segment of retired persons living on fixed incomes. Also, the community has a large number of low income residences that are subsidized by various welfare programs. Although the welfare programs provide housing, the residents are usually transient, leading to a large turnover rate in rental property.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 19.

## History of the Calvary

### United Methodist Church

Calvary United Methodist Church, Bellevue, Kentucky, has a proud history grounded in faith, prayer, and hard work. The church began in 1873 as a small Sunday School class, planted in the Bellevue community by a sister congregation: Tower United Methodist Church, Dayton, Kentucky. This small class became the nucleus for a local congregation. Through prayer, hard work, and a vision for the future, this Sunday School class became the local congregation of Calvary Methodist Church.

In the year 1879, a new church was built and dedicated to the Lord. It continued to grow, and a new sanctuary was added to the present facility in 1909. From that time, the church still continued to grow with many families coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. From the turn of the century through the early fifties the church went through a period of golden years when it was full and there were children running through the building. During this time the church membership grew to more than three hundred members.<sup>10</sup>

As the church grew, the emphasis shifted from the pioneering spirit to a homesteader spirit. Ministry emphasis shifted from outreach to maintaining the existing congregation, now large enough to provide financial support

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<sup>10</sup> "Statistical Tables of The United Methodist Church," Kentucky Conference Journal Journal years 1934-50.

for its budget and ministries. The emphasis on winning new people to Christ through outreach ministries became secondary.

Through the late 1940's and early 1950's the church was at its peak, but a major transition was taking place within the community. The children who had grown up in the community and church were moving away from the city of Bellevue to the suburbs and rural areas. Many became active in the local churches in their new communities. Also, a number of the young people growing up in the church married Catholic spouses. They consequently joined the Catholic Church because of its strict stance on church membership and marriage.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the 1960's, 1970's, and early 1980's the congregation's average worship attendance gradually declined from the mid nineties to approximately fifty (Appendix D). During this same period of time church membership declined from over 300 to a low of approximately 220 (Appendix C).

#### Present History of the

#### Calvary United Methodist Church

A new pastor was appointed to Calvary United Methodist

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<sup>11</sup> In the Bellevue and Dayton Communities, the Catholic Church requires both persons to be Catholic or else the marriage is not valid nor sanctioned by the Catholic Church. Many couples are remarried by the Priest when coming into the Catholic Church because the marriage was performed by a Protestant Minister. For further information on Catholic teaching concerning matrimony, Monika K. Hellwig, Understanding Catholicism (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 136-57.

Church in June, 1984. After his appointment, the church experienced moderate growth with the church averaging in the mid-nineties in worship attendance (Appendix D). The church increased its budget from \$28,000 a year to \$58,000 a year. Sunday School attendance doubled with new classes being added in the children's, youth, and adult departments. Since 1984, the church remodeled the sanctuary, added air conditioning, remodeled two nursery rooms, built a new handicap ramp, remodeled one of the two fellowship halls, and put a new roof on the church. Through the upgrading of facilities, outreach ministries, and an active laity, the church went forward in its mission and purpose.

However, even though the church grew, new problems arose to challenge the wisdom of the leadership. The church plateaued in its average worship attendance growth.<sup>12</sup> Available parking was now exhausted. The church's parking lot holds only 20 cars, and on street parking was usually prevented by the neighborhood's residents. People often saw no available parking and drove away.

#### The Dayton, Kentucky, Area

The city of Dayton, Kentucky, was founded in 1867 by the joining of two smaller towns, Jamestown and Brooklyn, Kentucky. Jamestown was incorporated by the General Assembly of Kentucky and was approved by Governor William

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<sup>12</sup> "Statistical Tables of the United Methodist Church", Kentucky Conference Journal Journal Year 1988.

Owsley on March 1, 1848.<sup>13</sup> Brooklyn received its charter in 1849 from the State Legislature. Governor John J. Crittenden approved the act February 27, 1849.<sup>14</sup> City records indicate that "for nearly two decades the two towns of Jamestown and Brooklyn became more and more one unit."<sup>15</sup> An Act to consolidate the Towns of Jamestown and Brooklyn was passed and the city of Dayton, Kentucky, was approved on March 9, 1867 by Thomas E. Bramlette, Governor, Commonwealth of Kentucky.<sup>16</sup>

Like Bellevue, the city of Dayton is located in Campbell County in the Northern Kentucky area and is also nestled in the midst of other pocket-cities. The Ohio River forms its northern border. To the west, south, and east are other cities that prevent any further expansion (Appendix E). Adjacent municipalities include Bellevue and Fort Thomas.

Being a river town, the city of Dayton prospered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The population grew to a high of more than nine thousand people.<sup>17</sup>

If we go back fifty years and take a look at

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<sup>13</sup> Dayton Centennial Committee, Centennial, September 1949, 5. Souvenir book compiled by the City of Dayton, Kentucky, for its one-hundred year celebration.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>17</sup> Dayton Comprehensive Plan.



Dayton, we would find that Dayton was a vital city in the Northern Kentucky area. It had everything a city needed to be self supporting, such as industry, a good school system, a good central business district, the only hospital in Campbell County, access to the railroad system, public transportation and housing that was in good condition. The era is often referred to as the good old days.<sup>18</sup>

Mayor Lynn also indicated that;

The devastating flood of 1937 changed the complexity of the city of Dayton, Kentucky. With subsequent massive floods in 1945, 1948, and 1964 the city was unable to sustain the damage. As a result of the floods, the city lost it's industry, Speers Hospital, and the value of the property declined. By 1973 and 1974, the total property valuation in Dayton, Kentucky, had dropped to twenty million dollars.<sup>19</sup>

The city of Dayton lost its major industrial force as companies moved out of the city. Factories such as Wadsworth Watch Case Company and The George Wiedemann Brewing Company were dominant employers in the Dayton community until they moved, leaving Dayton with an area that was greatly devalued and opening the door to low income and transient people.

Because of the loss of major industry, the majority of Dayton residents travel out of the city to find employment elsewhere. Many are employed in Cincinnati, Ohio, or in the

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<sup>18</sup> Mayor Lynn, "Lecture on The City of Dayton, Kentucky" (Bellevue-Dayton Ministerial Association, March 21, 1989; Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Bellevue, Kentucky).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

industrial area of Florence, Kentucky. Dayton has a few places of employment such as the local school system, banks, small local businesses, and a few grocery stores. Other than the few full-time jobs available, the majority of jobs are low income or part-time.

Just like Bellevue, Kentucky, the City of Dayton has also faced the challenge of a declining population because of suburban exodus, reduction of federal assistance, and the loss of business activity. City officials are also seeking ways to forestall and even reverse the trends that have crippled the city. Under the guidance of Mayor Lynn, the City Council has launched strong efforts to bring in new development to enhance the city's overall viability. New projects such as Chateau Ridge Apartments, a flood levee, a city garage, a municipal park, the high school, Speers Court Retirement Center, Jamestown Village Housing Project, Hasco Inter-national, O'Fallon's Landing Restaurant, and Waterfront Marina have all helped to rehabilitate the city's stability.<sup>20</sup>

#### The Religious Culture of Dayton, Kentucky

The city of Dayton, Kentucky, is also part of the predominantly Roman Catholic Northern Kentucky area. Its population has been estimated to be between sixty-five to

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

seventy percent Roman Catholic.<sup>21</sup> These figures are also questionable because of the uncertainty of nominal Catholics or undisciplined persons who are Catholic in name only.

The Catholic Faith had its early beginning as two Jesuit priests traveling with the French explorer La Salle passed through what is now Dayton, Kentucky, on their way to Louisville, Kentucky. While en route to Louisville, "they met a group of Miami and Iroquois Indians who had been on a hunting expedition into the interior of Kentucky and were on their way home to the land north of the Ohio River."<sup>22</sup> During this encounter with the Indians the two Jesuit priests "endeavored to teach the Indians something of the Christian Religion."<sup>23</sup> As the expansion of the West continued, "years later when American pioneers entered this area they found, to their surprise, that many of the Indians had a faint knowledge of the teachings of Christianity."<sup>24</sup> Although it cannot be verified, "it is presumed the teachings were handed down from those initial Indians who had contacted La Salle's party in 1669-70 and had been

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<sup>21</sup> This information was provided to the Bellevue-Dayton Ministerial Association by the Catholic Diocese of Covington, Kentucky, on October, 1984.

<sup>22</sup> Dayton Centennial Committee, 4.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

instructed by the two Jesuit priests."<sup>25</sup>

In the early days of Catholicism in Dayton, there were but forty Catholic families. These families attended Holy Mass at Corpus Christi Church, Newport, Kentucky, or across the Ohio River in Cincinnati at St. Francis De Sales Church. Because of the inconvenience of travel, the early Catholic pioneers saw the need to establish a Catholic Church in the city of Dayton. In 1849 the work began and in 1852 the dream came true as St. Bernard Catholic Church and school were built in what was then Jamestown, Kentucky. Today, the church is the largest church in the Dayton community.

Protestant Christianity had its beginning around the years 1849 and 1850. Baptist and Methodists seem to have been the Protestant pioneers in the Jamestown and Brooklyn communities. Other Protestant churches formed local congregations amidst the predominantly Catholic territory to meet the spiritual needs of the Protestant people who were emigrating to these rapidly growing communities. These Protestant churches serve the estimated thirty to thirty-five percent Protestant population in the Dayton community.

Today, the city of Dayton has two Catholic Churches, St. Bernard and St. John's Anglican Catholic Church, and a sprinkling of Protestant denominations consisting of Baptist, Church of Christ, Church of God, Presbyterian, Methodist, and United Pentecostal.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

The Socioeconomic History  
of Dayton, Kentucky

From its beginning, Dayton's population grew dramatically. From the two communities of Jamestown and Brooklyn, a solid financial and economic foundation was provided for the newly incorporated city of Dayton. Being a river town, Dayton attracted many new people seeking fame and fortune. Early industry provided stable employment to its residents. However, this condition did not continue. The devastating floods literally swept away a city's future. The devaluation of the property, loss of industries leaving because of the floods, and heavy migration of Appalachian people to a community whose property was almost worthless contributed to the deterioration of the Dayton community.<sup>26</sup> The decline in the city's potential to attract new construction and industry resulted in many families moving to the surrounding suburbs to seek nicer homes, larger lots, quieter neighborhoods, and other places of employment. By 1960 the population of Dayton continued to decrease. From 1960 to 1980 the population dropped from more than 9,050 to less than 6,979.<sup>27</sup> City leaders project this trend will reverse and the population will start to grow; they project a population growth of 7,600 by the year 1990.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Lynn, "Lecture on The City of Dayton."

<sup>27</sup> City of Dayton Comprehensive Plan, 12.

<sup>28</sup> Lynn, "Lecture on The City of Dayton."

The net result of the city's misfortunes is disheartening. The community has a large segment of retired persons living on a fixed income. The majority of residents who work are blue collar and are forced to find their employment in surrounding areas. The city also has a large segment of low income residents that are subsidized by various welfare programs.

Since 1974, Mayor Lynn and members of the City Council have taken great strides in reversing the city's misfortune. New construction and development previously mentioned has provided a stable economy and tax base for the city.<sup>29</sup> The reversal of Dayton's misfortunes will take time but the city is working hard to restore itself to the good old days.

### History of the Tower

#### United Methodist Church

Tower United Methodist Church, Dayton, Kentucky, began in 1850 as Joseph Link brought his family to Dayton, Kentucky, then called Jamestown. Mr. Link, having strong Methodist convictions, was anxious to establish a Methodist Church in the community where he lived. Mr. and Mrs. Link opened their home to the people of Methodist inclination and held Class Meetings.<sup>30</sup> In the year 1853 the Methodist Bishop of Cincinnati sent Rev. Joseph Blackburn to organize a Methodist Church in Jamestown. This Methodist church was

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<sup>29</sup> Lynn, "Lecture on The City of Dayton."

<sup>30</sup> Dayton Centennial Committee, 22.

established in Mr. Link's home.<sup>31</sup>

In 1855 the first building was built. The building remained until 1915 when the present building was erected and dedicated. The church was named Tower Chapel after Rev. P.F. Tower, who was pastor in 1855 at the building of the church.

Like Calvary, the Tower Church had its golden years. During its early years people filled the small building to overflowing. The church continued to grow and so did the people's vision. In the year 1873, the Tower Church dreamed of planting Methodism in Bellevue, and established a Sunday School class in that community. Their dream came to fuller fruition in 1879, when a church was built in Bellevue. Calvary Methodist Church in Bellevue, Kentucky, stands today as an expression of the earlier vision of the Tower Church in Dayton, Kentucky.

However, the golden years did not last. The deterioration of the city of Dayton left its mark on the community, and on the churches. Tower Church was no exception. With the flooding, industry left, property devalued, people moved to the suburbs and the membership of Tower Church was affected. The golden years were followed by declining years (Appendix F). Throughout the fifties, sixties, seventies, and mid-eighties the worship attendance steadily declined from the mid fifties to approximately

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

thirty-five (Appendix G).

### Present History of the Tower

#### United Methodist Church

A new pastor was appointed to Tower United Methodist Church in January of 1988 for a dual purpose: 1). To lead both churches, Tower and Calvary, in a study concerning future ministry possibilities. 2). To bring stability to the Tower congregation following the predecessor's abrupt departure. Following his appointment in January, the congregation has experienced moderate growth. The people have responded to his leadership and are working through the wounds incurred by the unexpected pastoral change.

In 1988, the average worship attendance increased from the low thirties to forty. Sunday school attendance increased, with a new young adult class being added. The overall morale of the church changed dramatically with the people becoming excited about the potential ministry possibilities. The members began asking others to come to church because of the new sense of excitement in the congregation. The leaders began to capture a vision for outreach and the possibility of the church growing numerically.

However, even though the church experienced moderate growth, the leaders were faced with additional problems. Available parking was depleted. Rooms for new Sunday school classes were exhausted. Possible expansion of the existing



facility was not feasible because of surrounding houses.

### The Proposed Methodology

The proposed methodology includes the following components.

#### Foundation or Design Stage

Following refinements of the project's research methodology, and clearance with the project's faculty advisor, Dr. George Hunter of Asbury Theological Seminary, the study proceeded as follows:

#### The Design-Planning Stage

Survey: The Joint Study Committee developed a survey instrument-questionnaire and field tested it for distribution to churches that once experienced a decision-making process of merger or merger with relocation. Surveys were then collected and interpreted. Data gained from the survey research was used to aid the Calvary and Tower congregations in the decision-making process concerning their future church growth options.<sup>32</sup>

Interviews: Rev. Ben Hahn interviewed each pastor whose church had gone through the above mentioned decision-making process. His purpose in the interview was to secure the pastor's cooperation in conducting, distributing and returning the survey to the Joint Study Committee.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Further information on the "Survey-Questionnaire" may be found in chapters four and five of this dissertation.

<sup>33</sup> Further information on the interview process may be found in chapters four and five of this dissertation.

Biblical Research: An inductive Bible study was conducted to understand the nature and mission of the church. The study helped clarify the relationship of a church's buildings to the nature and mission of the church. Data from this study was presented to the Joint Study Committee and each congregation.<sup>34</sup>

Historical Research: Research by the Joint Study Committee focused upon demographics, population trends, population projections for the future, and the economic factors that affect each community. The Committee also conducted a twenty-four year study charting the trends in membership, worship attendance, professions of faith, Sunday School membership, and Sunday School attendance. The Committee evaluated the information gleaned in light of its decision-making responsibility. The same information was presented to each congregation for its decision-making process.

Literature Research: Selected literature in church growth was utilized to provide each congregation with proven insights for planning for their future.

Also, literature from management and leadership was utilized to provide both the Joint Study Committee and each congregation with the necessary understanding of leadership

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<sup>34</sup> Further information concerning the nature and mission of the church may be found in chapter two of this dissertation.

styles that enhance church growth.<sup>35</sup>

### Future Options

The future options would include, but would not be limited to, the following ministry possibilities:

Merger: The study determined the feasibility of merging both congregations into one existing facility for the purpose of strengthening the ministry potential to each community.

Merger with Relocation: The study determined the feasibility of merging both congregations with subsequent relocation and the building of a new church facility. The new facility would meet the needs of the existing merged congregations and provide ample land and facilities for future growth and expansion.

Remaining a Two-point Charge: The study determined the feasibility of remaining a two-point charge. It also determined the necessary changes for each congregation regarding pastoral leadership, outreach ministries, and laity training for the necessary ministries to each communities.

Returning to a Single-point Charge: The study determined the feasibility of each church returning to a single-point charge with each church receiving a full-time conference appointment.

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<sup>35</sup> An expanded list of available resources in the area of church growth and leadership relating to church growth may be found in bibliography.

New Insights Gleaned: New ministry possibilities gleaned during the comprehensive study were reported to each congregation by the Joint Study Committee for their subsequent consideration.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Furthur information concerning new insights gleaned may be found in chapter three of this dissertation.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE NATURE AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH

#### A Biblical Understanding of the Church

The desire of the Committee to study the nature and mission of the church emerged during the early stages of the Committee's development. The following study represents the Committee's findings and was presented to each congregation.

The purpose of this study was not to establish a time frame during which the word church came into existence. The study's purpose was to help the Committee come to a foundational / biblical understanding of the church and its mission and purpose. This study attempted to help each member of the Committee, as well as each congregation, to bring into focus the concept of church as "a community which is constantly interpreting its life within its ongoing relationship with God."<sup>1</sup>

#### The Nature of the Church

"The chief end of God in the creation of man was to have a people of whom He could say: I am theirs, and they are mine. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."<sup>2</sup> In the Old Testament scriptures, "the concept of

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<sup>1</sup> James N. Poling & Donald E. Miller, Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Alan M. Stibbs, God's Church (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1959), 7.

Israel as God's chosen community persists throughout."<sup>3</sup> In these sacred pages, the foundations of the church are established as God called various persons to be His people.

The concept of Israel as God's chosen community can be traced through the Old Testament to show how its historical roots began with Abraham (Gen. 12). In his life one sees the Church of God visibly set up by the covenant God made with him.<sup>4</sup> The history of salvation begins with God's call to him and through his descendants.<sup>5</sup> "Far from being simply the story of an individual and his exploits, the Abraham narratives are significant because they tell of a people's beginnings."<sup>6</sup> Abraham went forth as the Lord had spoken to him and "in responding, Israel became God's chosen community."<sup>7</sup>

God promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. He revealed to Abraham that through his wife Sarah a son would be born and that His covenant would abide with him (Gen. 15). Thus the historical foundation of God's chosen community began taking shape in the person of Abraham

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<sup>3</sup> Alvin J. Lindgren, Foundations for Purposeful Church Administration (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), 39.

<sup>4</sup> D. Douglas Bannerman, The Scripture Doctrine of the Church (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), 43.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel J. Harrington, God's People in Christ (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>7</sup> Lindgren, 39.

and his descendants.<sup>8</sup>

God's covenant continued through Abraham's descendants. God's anointing and blessing were placed upon Isaac. He, like Abraham, went forth and by faith trusted in God.<sup>9</sup> God met Isaac and the continuation of His chosen community was now placed upon him (Gen. 26).

From Isaac the covenant was continued to Jacob (Gen 32). Little by little God's revelation of Himself was being unfolded. God spoke to Jacob at Bethel and sealed the covenant with him by changing his name to Israel (Gen. 35).

From Israel, the responsibility for the preservation of the nation fell upon Joseph. God revealed to Joseph in a series of dreams that he would be the leader of God's nation. However, Joseph's brothers were infuriated by such an idea and sold him into slavery. Nevertheless, God's covenant continued with Joseph. He knew God's plan and believed that God had brought him to Egypt to preserve a remnant of God's chosen community (Gen. 45:7). Joseph knew God was setting the stage for a great deliverance.<sup>10</sup>

The covenant was perpetuated as God progressively

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<sup>8</sup> Russell Philip Shedd, Man in Community (London: Epworth Press, 1958), 5.

<sup>9</sup> Stibbs, 17-18.

<sup>10</sup> H. J. Kraus, The People of God in the Old Testament (New York: Associated Press, 1958), 19.

revealed Himself.<sup>11</sup> Through leaders such as Moses and Joshua, God preserved His chosen community as ratification of His faithfulness to the covenant He had established with Abraham. Whenever Israel wandered away from God's teachings, He would raise up Judges to deliver Israel from its bondage to other nations and call them back to a life of faith and obedience (Judges 3-21). Also, God raised up prophets to guide and reprove Israel during its times of apostasy.<sup>12</sup> Prophets like Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel and others were called by God to proclaim His Word, reprove Israel's sinfulness, and guide them to a life of holiness before the Lord.

God allowed the establishment of a kingship in Israel and established an everlasting covenant with King David (I Samuel 16). Even though David and successive kings vacillated in their allegiance to God, God was preserving His chosen community. As one considers the concept of a chosen community, the concept of the nature of the church becomes a little clearer. The church, as viewed in the Old Testament, was a community of persons called out from the pagan world to live a life of faith and obedience to God.<sup>13</sup> These persons, beginning with Abraham and continuing with

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<sup>11</sup> Howard A. Hanke, Christ and the Church in the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957), 57-58.

<sup>12</sup> Kraus, 35-43.

<sup>13</sup> Hanke, 108-109.



his descendants, were in God's view the church.<sup>14</sup> The persons whom God called and set apart were "a community of persons, to whom and through whom God's love is revealed."<sup>15</sup>

The Old Testament principle of the church being God's chosen community is also found in the New Testament. Israel had rejected her identity as a people set apart for mission to other peoples. Therefore, God raised up a new people constituted by faith in Jesus Christ. Believers in Jesus Christ were now the community of faith or the church. Alvin J. Lindgren rightly states,

The importance of the church as a community is as basic to the New Testament concept of the church as to the Old Testament. From the outset the Christian church was a community of those who had experienced the presence of the risen Christ. From the very first, to be a Christian meant to belong to a community...Surely the New Testament accounts are clear that no one thought it possible to be a Christian "by himself", but only in relation to the fellowship of his brethren.<sup>16</sup>

The New Testament is rich in its portrayal of the church as God's chosen community.<sup>17</sup> The church as the Body of Christ is the most comprehensive and significant concept

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<sup>14</sup> Gerhard Kittle ed., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, Vol 3, 1965, Ninth Printing 1982), 501-536. For additional insight refer to The Analytical Greek Lexicon (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), 124-125.

<sup>15</sup> Lindgrin, 42.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>17</sup> Earnest F. Scott, The Nature of the Early Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941), 1.

of New Testament teaching.<sup>18</sup> The Apostle Paul captured this great insight as he wrote to the churches at Corinth and Ephesus.

In I Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul declares that the church is the Body of Christ.<sup>19</sup> This body is comprised of believers from around the world with Jesus Christ as head of the body.<sup>20</sup> Paul declares to the Corinthians, "for even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ" (I Cor. 12:12).

Paul indicates to the church at Corinth that Jesus Christ is first and foremost the head of the Church. "God's revelation of Himself and His love through Christ became the means through which the Old Testament concept of the church was fulfilled."<sup>21</sup>

Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus also indicates Christ as head of the Church. The imagery Paul uses parallels that of a home in which he states,

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to

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<sup>18</sup> Lindgren, 38.

<sup>19</sup> William Robinson, The Biblical Doctrine of the Church (St. Louis, Missouri: Bethany Press, 1948), 99.

<sup>20</sup> Howard A. Snyder, The Radical Wesley (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1980), 73.

<sup>21</sup> Robinson, 103.

be to their husbands in everything (Eph. 5:22-24).

Paul indicates to the Ephesian church that Jesus Christ is the founder and head of the Christian church and the church's "nature was determined by his life, gospel, death, and resurrection which the church is called to proclaim."<sup>22</sup>

In the New Testament other metaphors are used to clarify the concept of God's chosen community. John records Jesus saying, "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:). Again the emphasis is upon God's calling of a chosen community. His revelation is communicated through His Son, Jesus Christ, as the divine initiator of the New Testament church. As its head, Jesus Christ gave meaning and expression to the church. The community finds its life and expression in God through Jesus Christ and apart from Him there is no church, no power for ministry, or spiritual fruit in ministry.<sup>23</sup>

"In Jesus' life, death, and resurrection we see the true meaning of prophet, priest, and king."<sup>24</sup> From the beginning to the end, Jesus' ministry was a continuation of God's revelation and the preserving of His chosen community.

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<sup>22</sup> Lindgren, 46.

<sup>23</sup> Robinson, 86.

<sup>24</sup> James D. Smart, The Rebirth of Ministry: A Study of the Biblical Character of the Church's Ministry (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 43.

From the calling of Abraham to live a life of faith and obedience to God, to the calling of Jesus Christ to make us fishers of men (Matt. 4:19), God's creation is being redeemed and restored to God's original intention as His chosen community.<sup>25</sup>

The nature of the church is then a chosen people whom God has called apart. Whether an Old Testament person (Hab. 2:4), or a New Testament person (Rom. 1:17), the righteous person before God will live by his/her faith. The church, God's chosen community, is the "people who have committed their lives by faith to God through Christ and who witness to the work of Christ among the communities of mankind."<sup>26</sup> The essence of the church is derived from God the Father through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. "The church is called to be God's community as a sign of the future redemption of all creation."<sup>27</sup>

#### The Mission of the Church

The Committee had mixed feelings what the mission of the church should be. The older members leaned toward preserving a building, while others were not sure what was meant by the mission. Several Committee members felt they had an understanding; others proceeded to gain a clearer perspective on the subject.

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<sup>25</sup> Stibbs, 13-15.

<sup>26</sup> Hanke, 109.

<sup>27</sup> Poling, 12.

Just as the Old and New Testament scriptures were utilized to discover the foundation principles for the nature of the church, so, also, the Old and New Testament scriptures were utilized to gain a biblical understanding of the mission of the church. As the Committee began looking at the Scriptures the following questions surfaced: What was God's purpose in calling Abraham? What was the purpose of this covenant? What would be the implications of this covenant for future generations? Such questions lead one toward the mission of the church. From the very outset, the mission of the church as God's chosen community was to be both an object of God's love and a channel through which His love would be revealed to the world.<sup>28</sup>

The revelation of God's love to His people had been focused upon the people of Israel. One might consider this choice to be unfair to other peoples unless one understands God's purpose in selecting the people of Israel and their responsibility in fulfilling God's mission. "Israel was not called to a place of special privilege, as her prophets constantly reminded her. Rather, Israel was called for a special responsibility."<sup>29</sup> In the book of Exodus God's intent for choosing Israel is given.

Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the

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<sup>28</sup> Lindgren, 42.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 40.

earth is mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:5-6a)

As God's chosen community, Israel's responsibility was twofold. First, Israel's choice in responding to God's covenant wishes required all her obedience in keeping the covenant.<sup>30</sup> Second, "God's choice was for a purpose; Israel is to be a kingdom of priests through whom God's love for all the earth is to be made known".<sup>31</sup> Israel's mission was to join with God to make known His love and reconciliation to all the peoples of the earth.<sup>32</sup> Through the offices of prophet, priest, and king, and through the people as a community of faith, God's revelation to a lost world was set in motion. His own personal disclosure was revealed through a nation of people who responded to His calling and lived in obedience to His covenant.

To see what the mission of the New Testament Church should be, one must, "trace out the line that runs from the Old Testament ministry through the ministry of Jesus and directly forward through the ministry of the Apostles and so across the centuries to us."<sup>33</sup>

Just as the Old Testament community of faith found its life and expression in God and joined with Him in carrying

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>32</sup> Donald A. McGavran, Understanding Church Growth (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), 24-30.

<sup>33</sup> Smart, 20.

out His eternal purpose, so also the New Testament community of faith finds its life and expression in God's son, Jesus Christ.

The mission of the New Testament church begins in the person of Jesus Christ. Through His life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus Christ personified what the mission of the church was to be.<sup>34</sup> James D. Smart states,

with Jesus began the invasion of the life of our humanity by God, and the first stage of that invasion, what we might call the beach-head of that invasion, was God's total possession of the existence of Jesus himself. The ministry of Jesus was therefore rooted and grounded in the joy of His own fulfillment in God. It was the oneness of his own humanity with God that gave His ministry from the beginning the character of reconciliation.<sup>35</sup>

Smart adds that, "The ministry of Jesus Christ with its prophetic anticipation and its apostolic continuation, is before all else the ministry of the spoken and written word."<sup>36</sup> Jesus Christ's ministry was that of proclaiming the message of His heavenly Father to the lost sheep of Israel and then to a lost world.<sup>37</sup> "His person is the concealed center of all His teaching and preaching. His ministry is

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<sup>34</sup> Harrington, 54.

<sup>35</sup> Smart, 23.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>37</sup> McGavran, 43.

the concrete expression of His person."<sup>38</sup> His mission "was the restoration of men to their true life in God. Man, cut apart from God, was a poor, broken, and unhappy creature."<sup>39</sup> This mission, the reconciliation of God's creation, was personified in the life of Jesus Christ as He revealed it to the disciples in the role of a servant.<sup>40</sup> Jesus' own words indicate the model of His ministry as He states, "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). Jesus' life was the complete revelation of God's love to mankind. Jesus' mission was to reconcile all people to Himself through the life of a servant.<sup>41</sup>

The disciples and followers of Jesus joined with Him in faith and obedience in proclaiming the love of God to Israel and to the Gentiles. Gradually, the disciples perceived the shape their ministry would take. Words like, "the first shall be last and the last shall be first," echoed in their minds as they joined with Jesus Christ in active ministry (Matt. 19). The disciples became servants of God because of their love for Him and what He revealed to them concerning the Kingdom of God. Their mission was to proclaim the Good

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<sup>38</sup> Smart, 21.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>40</sup> Howard A. Snyder, Liberating the Church: The Ecology of Church and Kingdom (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1983), 132-133.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 137.



News of the Kingdom of God.

To Jesus, the disciples were more than mere servants, they were His friends (John 15:15). Everything the Father revealed to Him was revealed to His disciples. Out of the relationship between the disciples and Jesus came the believers' love for God and the willingness to serve Him with all their heart.

Through such apostles as Peter, James, and John, the mission of the church continued. They joined the Holy Spirit to take the Good News to a lost world. Many others responded in faith and joined in the mission of the early church in spreading the message. Such faithful witnesses extended the ministry of Jesus Christ in reaching people.

The church in every age is called to extend the ministry of Christ. Lindgren states, "If the church is to be an extension of the ministry of Christ, and not simply to proclaim in words that Christ came to minister, then the church must recognize that it exists to serve."<sup>42</sup>

As one considers God's purpose in calling a chosen people and the mission of His chosen people, one can glean that the primary concept of the church's mission is for "...His Church to grow, that His lost children are found."<sup>43</sup> Through Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of God's mission was

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<sup>42</sup> Lindgren, 51.

<sup>43</sup> George G. Hunter III, To Spread the Power (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 21.

made known. Thomas C. Oden states,

Christian ministry from the outset has been conceived as a continuation of Christ's own ministry...By both teaching and example, Jesus left the church a highly suggestive, if not explicitly developed, conception of ministry. He himself personally addressed and called individuals into discipleship, patiently taught and nurtured them towards apostolicity despite their resistance and misconceptions, and then sent them out with the promise of his continuing presence.<sup>44</sup>

Therefore, the mission of the church is to join with the ongoing ministry that God started in the Old Testament, revealed fully in Jesus Christ, and empowered with the giving of the Holy Spirit.<sup>45</sup> If the church's ministry "cannot be clearly established as a continuation of Jesus' own intention and practice, it loses its central theological premise."<sup>46</sup>

### Implications for the Churches

From studying the nature of the church, the Committee asked, "Do the Calvary and Tower United Methodist Churches represent a true picture of the nature of the church?" If the nature of the church is people who respond by faith, trust God for their salvation, and commit their lives to Him in obedience, service, and outreach, then the Calvary and

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<sup>44</sup> Thomas C. Oden, Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1983), 59-60.

<sup>45</sup> George G. Hunter III ed., Focus on Evangelism (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1978), 15.

<sup>46</sup> Oden, 60.

Tower congregations represented the true nature of the church. In both congregations, people had responded to God's call upon their lives and, by faith, had pledged their lives to Him. In essence, the two congregations represented God's chosen community to distinct communities of people who were separated from the love of God. These two congregations represented the people of God in their communities.

Committee members varied in how they saw the mission being expressed. They agreed that the mission of the church is to join God in reconciling people to Himself, and that each congregation represents the people of God who join with Him in the on-going ministry of reconciliation. However, Committee members varied in their perceptions of the role of the buildings in accomplishing the mission. The leader suggested that the Committee reflect on their understanding of the nature and mission of the church and to come back to the next meeting prepared to discuss their differences.

At the next scheduled meeting, the Committee immediately encountered its first obstacle in clarifying the two churches' mission. The chairperson presented an outline to guide the Committee through its mission. The outline suggested a mission related discussion of ministries, programs, and the physical facilities of both congregations. No sooner had the meeting started than one person on the Committee interrupted the leader with the following comment,

What we need to do is forget about the idea of merger or relocation. We need to get the Tower United Methodist Church back upon its feet. Merger or relocation is not the answer. I have thought about this since our last meeting and I think I have the solution to the whole problem.

The gentleman went on to say,

What we need to do is print up flyers with the message that the communities of Bellevue and Dayton need to read the Bible. We can have the church names printed on the bottom of the flyers so that the church will be identified to the community it serves. If we can just get the people to start reading the Bible, the Tower Church and the Calvary Church will grow and our problems will be solved.

Even though this gentleman had interrupted the meeting, neither the leader, nor the Committee, wanted to indicate that they were not interested in his solution.<sup>47</sup> The leader tried to bring the meeting back on track to the prepared outline. However, it was evident that several other members of the Committee shared this gentleman's same feelings. The focus of their thinking was not to clarify one's perception of the mission of the church. These persons were concerned about whether two congregations were going to merge or relocate. However, other members of the Committee came prepared to share their feelings and perceptions about the mission of the church. As these individuals shared or attempted to share their perceptions, this gentleman kept interrupting the group and would refer back to his position

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<sup>47</sup> Richard LeTourneau, Management Plus: The Spiritual Dimension in Leadership (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1973), 91-94.

on forgetting the study and just get people started reading their Bibles. After almost two hours, the group became totally frustrated and the leader closed the meeting with prayer. He asked each member to come back to the next meeting prepared to discuss the designated area of study.

At the next scheduled meeting the leader opened the discussion with a moment of prayer. After the prayer was given, he started the discussion with a summary of our study in regard to the nature and mission of the church. The same gentleman started to side-track the discussion again. He indicated that the Committee needed to forget its study and get Tower United Methodist back upon its feet. The leader knew there was tension among the members of the Committee. After the previous meeting, some of the Tower members had approached the leader with the following comment,

We appreciate the gentleman's comments. However, it seems the Calvary people feel they are in this just to help us and that they don't need any help. We feel they are in a similar situation as we are. We feel that together we can work to solve the problem and come up with the best solution.

Before the discussion progressed any further the leader stopped the meeting and spent the remainder of the meeting going over the responsibilities of the Committee. He reminded them of the designated areas of study that the two Charge Conferences had commissioned the Committee to review, study, and provide a written report to the District Superintendent and charge conferences at the end of the

year. The leader asked them to take seriously their commitment to the Committee, local church, and charge conferences in fulfilling the task that were assigned. The leader adjourned the meeting with prayer after scheduling the next meeting.

At the next meeting the leader opened the meeting with prayer. He then proceeded to establish a new set of ground rules for the Committee's meetings. The leader stated that the Committee was going to fulfill its tasks as assigned. If anyone brought up concerns or suggestions not related to the present topic of discussion, he/she would be asked to reserve his/her comments until that area of discussion was being studied or until a more appropriate time for the Committee's review.

Although the perceptions on the mission of the church varied, the Committee began to focus upon the areas of ministry where they perceived the mission of the church was carried out. The Committee agreed that both churches had the basic structures of worship, Sunday school, and youth ministry as its major emphases for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Through these areas of ministry the churches were ministering to its existing members. The Committee concurred that the majority of ministry was centered on internal maintenance rather than outreach. If the two congregations were to fulfill their mission in the great commission, new outreach ministries would have to be

created, based on the perceived needs of the community. The members of the Committee were asked to consider the following question, "What new ministries would the Committee like to see the church involved in?"<sup>48</sup> All the members agreed it would take new outreach programs and ministries to fulfill the total mission of the church. Through these ministries both local churches would simply be joining with God in redeeming people to Himself. The churches would be reaching out beyond the local church walls and touching the community with the gospel.

The Committee's decision to extend the ministries of the church beyond the local church building touched a crucial, critical, and emotional area. The Committee agreed that ministries needed to be created to reach the unchurched people. No matter what the cost, people needed to be trained and deployed into active ministry which would touch and change people's lives with the message of God's love and redemption. However, to think about merger or merger with relocation so that these needed ministries could be developed was out of the question for some of the members of the Committee. Even though, all of the representatives from the Tower United Methodist Church and a few representatives from the Calvary United Methodist Church could visualize the potential for growth and the perceived

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<sup>48</sup> Responses from the Joint Study Committee were compiled at a later date and incorporated in the study found in chapter three of this dissertation.

need of facilities to handle the growth, there were still a few representatives from Calvary Church totally against any idea of merger or merger with relocation.

The Committee discussed at length the issue of church buildings and how they relate to the nature and mission of the church and agreed to search the scriptures for greater insight.

### Relationship of Church Buildings to the Mission of the Church

From the onset of Abraham's call, God chose various places to meet His people. He appeared to Abraham in Haran (Gen. 12), Bethel (Gen. 13), by the oaks of Marme (Gen 18), and in the land of Canaan (Gen. 23). God met Abraham at his physical location and established His covenant with Abraham and his descendants. God continued to meet His people in their own locations. God appeared to Isaac in the land of Gerar (Gen. 26). God also met Jacob at Mahanaim, Shechem, Bethel, and Beersheba (Gen. 32-35, 46). God's presence was extended to Joseph in Egypt as God gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer (Gen 39). God came to His people and revealed Himself and His will to them at their many dwelling places.

God met Moses on Mount Horeb while pasturing his flock in the wilderness (Ex. 3), and called him apart for special service.

From the onset of God's calling of individuals, He met



people at various locations. It was not until the exodus from Egypt that God began instructing the people to build a meeting place for Him (Ex. 24-30). Moses built the tabernacle, where now the people would go and meet the living God of Israel.<sup>49</sup>

The tabernacle tradition increased in importance as the people secured the promise land. In time, King Solomon built a permanent temple in the city of Jerusalem, which became Israel's center of worship. Thrice a year the people would travel to Jerusalem, to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, The Feast of Harvest, and The Feast of Ingathering that God had established with Moses in the wilderness (Ex. 23). To Jerusalem's temple the people would come to worship God and offer sacrifices for their sins.

During the Babylonian captivity, "synagogues" were built for scriptural instruction and prayer but not for sacrifice.<sup>50</sup> Since the captivity prevented the people's return to Jerusalem for sacrificial worship, the Israelites erected synagogues as places of worship. However, the benevolent King Artaxerxes, allowed the people in exile to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple (Neh. 2-6).

During the life of Jesus, the Jewish people worshiped

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<sup>49</sup> Snyder, Wine Skins: Church Structure in a Technological Age (Downers Grove, Illinois:Inter-Varsity Press, 1975), 59.

<sup>50</sup> John D. Davis, Davis Dictionary of the Bible 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972), 792.

at this restored temple in Jerusalem. After Jesus' death and resurrection, many believers were banned from entering the temple and synagogues unless they renounced their belief in Jesus Christ as the Messiah. The ban stimulated many Christians to unite in separate localities as Christian Communities. "As followers of Jesus arose in many different cities, the plural churches began to be employed, the Christian community in each separate locality being considered a church."<sup>51</sup> As the communities of faith continued to grow, so did the necessity of larger meeting places. Where once a person's home was sufficient to meet, now it was too small because of the number of people who were becoming Christians. This condition created the necessity of having more house churches and the building of larger meeting places. However, the terminology "church is nowhere unequivocally used in the New Testament for the building in which any particular Christian community met."<sup>52</sup> The church is the community of believers that exist without any visible gathering place. The New Testament church existed because men and women became believers in Jesus Christ, not because believers erected and met in a building.

The nation of Israel struggled with its allegiance to God. As one reads through the Old Testament, one notices the people of God shifting their attachment from faith and

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<sup>51</sup> Davis, 146.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

trust in God to faith and trust in a physical object. The Prophet Jeremiah warned the people of God's impending judgment (Jer. 1-25). The people's hearts had turned from God and were serving the false gods of the land. The people maintained the sacrificial system, ritual, and order of the temple services, believing that the covenant God had made with David would always remain intact even if they were disobedient (I Chr. 17). Somehow, some way, the people of Israel allowed their faith and trust to shift so that they had more faith and trust in the temple of God rather than in the God of the temple.

Another example of Israel's faith and trust shifting from God to a physical object is found in I Samuel 4. Instead of depending upon God Himself, the people trusted the physical presence of the Ark of the Covenant to lead them to victory in battle. This great misunderstanding resulted in the people of Israel being defeated in battle.

In his letter to the church at Rome, The Apostle Paul addresses the Romans concerning the subject of worshiping the created rather than the Creator. He indicates that "professing to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man, of birds, of four-footed animals, and of crawling creatures" (Rom. 1:22-23).

So the experiences of both the Jews and Greeks, as recorded in Scripture, reveal the all-too-human tendency to

transfer one's faith from God to a physical object. In our age, people who root their faith and trust in physical buildings, stained glass windows, pipe organs, and other objects are vulnerable to having their faith uprooted when physical objects must be replaced.

When the Committee discussed the relationship of the existing buildings to the mission of the church it was divided in its perception of the buildings and their relationship to the mission of the church. The majority of the committee, six of ten, viewed the buildings as a tool for accomplishing the mission of the church. They agreed that the buildings should provide the necessary facilities for the local church to meet the needs of the community; if the buildings are not adequate for needed ministries, then remodeling or construction of new buildings is necessary.

The other four members of the Committee felt the buildings were sacred. They would not consider the possibility of leaving them because of the pipe organ, stained glass windows, the long-standing tradition of the buildings, and the hard work that the members of both congregations had given to building the existing structures. To these four, leaving one or both churches and merging or relocating was unthinkable.

### Conclusion

The Committee came away from this phase of the study with mixed emotions. It had achieved a sharper focus on the

nature and mission of the church. The whole Committee perceived the need for new outreach ministries beyond the traditional structure of Sunday morning and evening worship, Sunday school, youth groups, and Wednesday evening Bible study, and they viewed the possibilities and potential for the two communities with optimism. However, sadness accompanied the conclusion of the Committee's work because of the Committee's split in the importance they assigned to their present facilities. Everyone anticipated that these strong emotions would surface again as the Committee started the study phase on merger, and merger with relocation.

Perceiving the emotional ties that members of the Committee had to the existing buildings, the leader asked each person to commit themselves to an even greater amount of prayer as the study of options continued.

## CHAPTER 3

### Insights from the Literature of Church Growth, Management, and Leadership

The Committee leader perceived a need to examine leadership theory as it relates to church growth. As pastor of both congregations, the leader knew his job would exceed normal pastoral duties; he would maintain the existing ministries while leading two churches in studying their present ministry and future possibilities.

From the earlier study of the nature and mission of the church, the leader knew this next phase of the study would stretch him as a pastor and a leader. Leading two churches with long histories, old buildings, sentimental attachments, aging memberships, and entrenched locations that hindered further expansion induced both excitement and fear. What type of leadership would now be required? What changes would his leadership style have to experience? Was he the right leader, or did the two churches need someone else? With such concerns, the leader launched the Committee into the next stage of study. The leader and Committee needed to understand the various leadership styles which would promote the best climate for church growth.

#### Leadership Style

##### for Church Growth

A lay person said, "Pastor, I don't care how gifted the people are, unless we have a pastor who is willing to lead

us, the church will not prosper and grow." This attitude of the laity seems to prevail throughout the church. People desire transforming leadership.<sup>1</sup> Many Christians desire to use their God-given talents but often are hindered by their pastor's mal-appropriate style. People have gifts, graces, and abilities that go untapped, because of pastors who do not understand their leadership role within the local church.<sup>2</sup> "Leadership is an enormous responsibility that cannot be irresponsibly placed in the hands of people who do not put the church first in their lives."<sup>3</sup>

When a person is ordained and placed in a pastoral role over a local congregation, he/she is automatically placed in a position to lead. Regardless of whether the pastor wants to be in this position, he/she is thrust into the position by virtue of his/her office. How the pastor perceives himself/herself in ministry will often determine what style of leadership he/she will display.

Joe R. Stacker in his article "The Pastor As Leader" identifies five different leadership styles.<sup>4</sup>

1). The martyr complains about what his/her

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies (New York: Warner Books, 1982), 81-86.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>3</sup> Robert H. Schuller, Your Church Has Real Possibilities (Glendale, California: Regal Books, 1974), 53.

<sup>4</sup> Joe R. Stacker, "The Pastor as Leader," Church Administration, 5 February 1987: 16-17.

congregation has done to him/her, and manipulates every situation to inflict pain upon himself/herself to win sympathy from the people. No substantial church growth occurs because the pastor is too obsessed with perceiving every action by the congregation as a self-inflicted wound because the congregation is not responding to his/her ministry.

2). The joker enjoys himself/herself and seeks to promote an atmosphere in which everyone will be comfortable. The agenda for the pastor and the people becomes having a good time-to the neglect of serious commitment, real discipleship, spiritual growth, and outreach and mission. The leader equates being successful with the people feeling good about themselves and liking the pastor.

3). The hermit is always busy, but can never be found when needed. Nevertheless, pastoral reports portray this leader as heavily overworked.

4). The dictator is not willing to listen to the comments or ideas of others. This leader knows the job he/she wants done, knows all the answers, and gives people orders to carry out.

5). The player-coach is "willing to lead and learn at the same time. He/she is a fellow pilgrim who walks through the process of life and lives with his/her congregation."<sup>5</sup>

C. Peter Wagner would define this type of leader as an

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



equipping leader-pastor. He states,

An equipper is a leader who actively sets goals for a congregation according to the will of God, obtains goal ownership from his people, and sees that each church member is properly motivated and equipped to do his or her part in accomplishing the goals.<sup>6</sup>

Douglas McGregor's classic study gives enduring insight into leadership styles. He holds that a person's assumptions about people determine how one treats people. McGregor characterizes two sets of assumptions as "Theory X" and "Theory Y". A Theory X leader assumes that the average human being dislikes work and will avoid it at all possible cost.<sup>7</sup> People have to be manipulated, controlled, coerced, and forced to work. The average person wants to be directed and told what to do. People do not desire to work hard, achieve greater levels of accomplishments, or contribute meaningful information to the overall progress of the operation.

The Theory Y leader assumes that work is as natural to people as play.<sup>8</sup> People desire to work hard, achieve, feel competent, and contribute to the organization's mission. This leader believes people are willing to make significant commitments to the overall objectives of the organization,

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<sup>6</sup> C. Peter Wagner, Leading Your Church to Growth. (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1984), 79.

<sup>7</sup> Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), 33-43.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 45-57.

and many have ideas worth considering and creativity worth tapping.

Rensis Lickert, building on McGregor's pioneering distinction, identified four different leadership styles.<sup>9</sup>

1). The exploitation-authoritative leader has "very little" confidence and trust in subordinates. The leader "seldom" gets ideas and opinions of subordinates in solving job problems. Subordinate's attitudes are usually hostile and counter to organization's goals because of the downward flow of communication, decision-making process, and goal setting. This leader style promotes little motivation on subordinate's part to implement organization's goals because such decisions were made at the top and are perceived as orders to be followed.

2). The benevolent-authoritative leader has "some" confidence and trust in subordinates, such as a master has to a servant. The leader "sometimes" gets ideas and opinions of subordinates in solving job problems. Subordinate's attitudes are sometimes hostile and counter to organization's goals while at other times they are favorable to the organization's goals and support the behavior necessary to achieve them. This leader style promotes relatively little motivation on subordinate's part to implement the organization's goals because they are

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<sup>9</sup> Rensis Lickert The Human Organization: Its Management and Value (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967) 14-21.

occasionally consulted but never involved in the decision-making process. Organization's goals are perceived as orders handed down from above.

3). The consultative leader has "quite" a bit of confidence and trust in subordinates but still wishes to keep control of the decision-making process. The leader "usually" gets ideas and opinions from subordinates and tries to make constructive use of them. Subordinate's attitudes are usually favorable towards organization's goals and support the behavior necessary to achieve them. This leader style promotes some motivation on subordinate's part to implement organization's goals. However, subordinates still perceive goals as orders and at times may display covert resistance.

4). The participative leader has a "great" amount of confidence and trust in subordinates. The leader "always" gets ideas and opinions from subordinates and always tries to make constructive use of them. Subordinate attitudes are strongly favorable and provide powerful stimulation to behavior implementing organization's goals. This leader style promotes substantial motivation on subordinate's part to implement organization's goals because of subordinate's involvement in the decision-making process. Subordinates perceive organization's goals as a group process rather than orders handed down from the top.

Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus give insight to Theory Y

leadership in their book Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge as they quote Werner Erhard saying,

...There is this place in people, where they are aligned, where they don't need to be told what to do; they more or less sort out for themselves what needs to be done and where they can work in harmony with other people, not as a function of a bunch of agreements or contracts, but out of a sense of harmony...It's something akin to what you see on a sailboat in a crew working together when one of the lines break. Very few, if any, orders are given and nobody waits for the other guy and nobody gets in the other guy's way-there's something about sailors in which there is an alignment, a kind of coming from the whole and nobody needs to give orders.<sup>10</sup>

W. Warner Burke defines leadership as the exercise of power. He further states that "recent evidence supports a normative position on this use of power - a participator approach."<sup>11</sup> The leader accumulates power by giving it away. When the leader allows his/her subordinates to use their own creative thinking, abilities, and knowledge, the subordinates return their respect, allegiance, and power to the leader as being earned and deserved.

Lyle Schaller has probably consulted with more pastors and churches than any one. From his vast experiences, Schaller perceives six central characteristics of effective leaders.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge (New York: Harper And Row, Publishers, 1985), 216.

<sup>11</sup> W. Warner Burke, Organizational Development: Principles and Practices (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), 150.

<sup>12</sup> Lyle E. Schaller, Getting Things Done: Concepts and Skills for Leaders (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986), 146-150.

1). The effective leader must accept his/her role as a leader. Good leaders are drawn from among persons who are willing to lead.

2).The effective leader is willing to influence the beliefs and behavior patterns of others.

3).The effective leader is one that does not lead in isolation.

4).The effective leader uses his/her power. As noted above, the leader realizes that the way power is gained is by giving it away to his/her people. The people then return the power to the leader by giving him/her their respect, allegiance, and cooperation in their various responsibilities.

5). Effective leaders have the characteristic of having a vision, or at least some sense of the direction they want to go.

6). Effective leadership is constantly being evaluated. Every leader is aware that he/she is being evaluated by his/her followers.

Robert Schuller states,

Leadership is the key to church growth...If the church is really to succeed in its mission of witnessing effectively to the unchurched world in the twenty-first century, we must<sup>13</sup> develop dynamic, aggressive and inspiring leaders.

His pastoral leadership is characteristic of a Theory Y

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<sup>13</sup> Robert H. Schuller, Your Church has a Fantastic Future (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1986), 132.

leader. People have abilities, wisdom, capable of creative thinking, and can be trained to be dynamic, aggressive, and inspiring leaders.

Kennon L. Callahan also states,

Leaders are those who effectively lead...It is the pastor who concentrates on major objectives and major decisions having to do with the congregation's strategic priorities that will make it possible for that congregation to develop strong leadership resources.<sup>14</sup>

Callahan believes every leader must have available to him/her, "people with complimentary strengths: supportive, analytical, discerning, and relational."<sup>15</sup> The pastor-leader must utilize his/her people's many assets to accomplish the organization's overall objectives.

J. Oswald Sanders states,

The overriding need of the church, if it is to discharge its obligations to the rising question, is for a leadership that is authoritative, spiritual, and sacrificial. Authoritative, because people love to be led by one who knows where he is going and who inspires confidence...Spiritual, because a leadership that is unspiritual...will result only in sterility and moral and spiritual bankruptcy...Sacrificial, because modeled on the life of the One who gave Himself as a sacrifice for the whole world...The real qualities of leadership are to be found in those who are willing to suffer for the sake of objectives great enough to demand their wholehearted obedience."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Kennon L. Callahan, Twelve Keys to an Effective Church (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1983), 41-45.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, Spiritual Leadership (Chicago: Moody Press, 1967), 19-20.

Even though Sanders does not categorize this type of leadership as Theory Y, he uses Jesus as the model for effective leadership. Jesus believed in people and utilized their capabilities in the Kingdom's work. He trained, commissioned, and deployed His followers in accomplishing God's eternal purposes. He rejoiced with them in their accomplishments and rebuked them constructively to help make each of them a better person. This leader style reflects Theory Y.

A number of distinct leadership styles have Theory X roots. Theory X leaders include the martyr, joker, hermit, dictator, exploitation-authoritative, and benevolent-authoritative. This leadership style devalues the person as one who has nothing to contribute to the overall organization. The person must be controlled, coerced, and has nothing significant to offer the organization.

Other leadership styles that have Theory Y roots include the consultative, participator, and player-coach. This leader style believes people can make significant contributions to the organization. People have abilities, wisdom, knowledge, and want to work hard at accomplishing the organization's overall goals and objectives.

As one considers various leadership styles, it is very important to ask, "What distinguishes effective leaders from ineffective leaders and effective organizations from

ineffective organizations?"<sup>17</sup> The seemingly obvious answer would be, "the type of leadership style of the organization's leader." One might also ask, "which theory of leadership, X or Y, represent leaders of effective organizations?" It seem obvious that Theory Y leaders constitute the majority of effective leaders. This type of leadership, "empowers others to translate intention into reality and sustain it."<sup>18</sup> The leader utilizes his/her people's many assets in accomplishing the goals and objectives of the organization.<sup>19</sup> The effective leader creates the dream with his/her people and uses their abilities, wisdom, and knowledge in the area of their expertise. The leader helps his/her people to visualize the dream, motivates and equips them to bring the dream to fruition, and then celebrates with them the completion of the task.

If this leadership style is the most effective in the secular world, would this same style enable a local church to move from ineffectiveness to effectiveness? The answer to this question is an emphatic yes!

From the literature on leadership styles, the implications for becoming an effective leader become quite

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<sup>17</sup> Bennis and Nanus, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>19</sup> Gordon L. Lippitt, Organizational Renewal: Achieving Viability in a Changing World (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), 83-84.



evident.

1). The pastor must be willing to accept the role of a leader. Even though being a leader might be foreign to him/her, the pastor must be willing to learn how to become an effective leader and deploy the principles of effective leadership. One must always remember that leaders are made and not born.<sup>20</sup>

2). The pastor must be willing to cultivate and deploy the qualities of a Theory Y leader. This type of leadership will depend upon the strengths, weaknesses, wisdom, knowledge, prejudices, opposition, and abilities of his/her people as valid assets to the overall organizational structure.

3). The pastor must always believe in his/her people, believing they can and will rise to the challenge of life-changing mission to the community they serve.

4). The pastor must be a leader who "is constantly thinking, constantly praying, constantly reaching out and constantly surrendering himself to the Holy Spirit of Christ."<sup>21</sup>

Leadership for church growth lies with the pastor. It is his/her responsibility to lead, equip, and motivate the people of God in the fulfilling of the great commission.

#### Church Growth Principles

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<sup>20</sup> Bennis and Nanus, 221-226.

<sup>21</sup> Schuller, Your Church has a Fantastic Future, 142.

Abundant church growth literature helped inform the Calvary and Tower decision-making process. Each church desired to move forward in church growth and committed itself to study various church growth principles. The Committee reviewed the literature, evaluated the church growth options, and made a formal recommendation to each congregation on January 15, 1989, for their approval or rejection.

Awed by the extent of resource material available, the charge conferences narrowed the focus of the Committee's study to inform the several options facing the churches:

- 1). To consider the merging of each congregation into one congregation;
- 2). To consider merging each congregation into one congregation with subsequent relocation;
- 3). To consider both congregations remaining as a two-point charge under the same pastoral leadership;
- 4). To consider each congregation's returning to a one-point charge with separate pastoral leadership for each congregation;
- 5). To consider any new insights gleaned from church growth literature by the Committee.

The previous study on the nature and mission of the church discovered it is God's desire for the church to grow. Through a chosen people He revealed to all creation His desire to reconcile mankind to Himself. The Church joins with God in His eternal mission to actively seek undisciplined persons and help them come to true life in Jesus Christ.

Knowing this, the Committee began by asking the question, "Can the churches of Calvary and Tower grow?" The answer is

Of course it can...If the church is preaching the good news of God's power to needy people, it is concerned about church growth, it is thinking about church growth, if it is praying about church growth, if it enlists people in growth of the church, there is no reason why it shouldn't grow. You see, God wants His lost children found.<sup>22</sup>

### Church Growth in the New Testament

A careful reading of the New Testament reveals that church growth was a vital part of the early Church. Donald McGavran observes that,

Among other desires of God-in-Christ, He beyond question wills that persons be found - that is, be reconciled to himself. Most cordially admitting that God has other purposes, we should remember that we serve a God who finds persons...Our Lord did not rest content with feeding the hungry and healing the sick. He pressed on to give His life a ransom for many and to send out His followers to disciple all Nations.<sup>23</sup>

Jesus Christ set the standard for church growth when He states, "...I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overcome it" (Matt. 16:18). God through Jesus Christ was redeeming the world unto Himself. Jesus states, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick...for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matt. 9:12-13). The church would

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<sup>22</sup> Donald McGavran and Win Arn, How to Grow a Church (Glendale, California: Regal Books, 1973), 4.

<sup>23</sup> Donald A. McGavran, Understanding Church Growth (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), 24-25.

be built by repentant persons placing their faith, trust and obedience in Jesus Christ.

Jesus extended the responsibility of advancing the Kingdom of God as He called persons to join with Him in spreading the gospel message. He called disciples to follow Him and He would make them fishers of men (Matt 4:19). Twelve men were called, trained, and deployed into active ministry to meet the needs of the people (Matt. 10). Later, after His resurrection, He mandated them to go and make disciples of all the peoples (Matt. 28:18-20).

God poured out His spirit upon the believers of the early church and empowered them to be His witnesses (Acts 2). After Pentecost, the early church demonstrated what church growth was all about. "The early church grew from 12...to 120...to 3000...to 5000...from addition to multiplication...to entire communities turning to the Lord."<sup>24</sup> The early church was committed to growth. The disciples of Jesus Christ took the gospel message and impregnated every aspect of life around them.

Elmer Towns states,

A survey of the book of Acts shows the natural commitment New Testament Christians had to evangelism. The Jerusalem church evangelized in the market place, in homes, in the synagogues, in jail, before rulers and kings, everywhere throughout the city. The high priest proved the extent of their witness when he said, 'You have filled Jerusalem with your teachings' (Acts 5:28,

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<sup>24</sup> Win Arn and Charles Arn, The Masters Plan for Making Disciples (Pasadena, California: Church Growth Press, 1982), 5.

NASB). As a result of their aggressive, bold saturation evangelism, 'all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number' (Acts 5:14, NASB). The church grew!<sup>25</sup>

The early church focused upon evangelism. Every aspect of the church's life was geared to reaching lost men and women with the gospel message. As communities of believers grew, so did the outreach of the church.

Michael Green states,

If public proclamation of various types and the private use of homes were crucial factors in the spread of the gospel, no less important was personal evangelism,<sup>26</sup> as one individual shared his faith with another.

The whole New Testament focuses upon the growth of the Kingdom of God. Proclaiming the word of God became a lifestyle, not just a "church program." Believers shared the good news with anyone who would listen. When the church begins to,

live as Jesus did, in His power and with His presence, seekers will be drawn to us. Evangelism will not be a dreaded task to be ticked off every Wednesday. Rather, sharing Jesus will become a true delight and evangelism will become a lifestyle.<sup>27</sup>

If churches today are sincere about their commitment to

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<sup>25</sup> Elmer L. Towns, John N. Vaughan and David J. Seifert, The Complete Book of Church Growth (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1981), 249.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Green, Evangelism in the Early Church (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), 223.

<sup>27</sup> Rebecca Manley Pippert, Out of the Salt Shaker and into the World (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1979), 102.

the great commission, then the potential for growth is present.<sup>28</sup> Church growth began in the heart of God, was revealed fully by Jesus Christ, was transferred to the early believers, and empowered by the giving of the Holy Spirit, all for the purpose of redeeming lost men and women to God.

### Why Churches Don't Grow

Lyle Schaller observes that some churches do not grow; even though many churches have the opportunity to grow, they do not.<sup>29</sup> Why, then, are churches not growing?

Donald McGavran declares that, "very few pastors know what genuine church growth looks like or have an accurate idea of where and when it has taken place. It is seldom measured or discussed."<sup>30</sup>

Many other causes of non-growth have been suggested.

1). The typical small church is not organized or structured to grow.<sup>31</sup> Its agenda is maintenance rather than outreach, causing a plateau or decline. Smallness creates the illusion that organization is unnecessary. Carl S. Dudley's definitive study of small churches observes that,

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<sup>28</sup> George W. Truett, A Quest for Souls (Salem, Oh.: Schmull Publishers, 1917), 57. Truett indicates the supreme ambition for every church and for every individual Christian should be to bring somebody to Christ.

<sup>29</sup> Lyle E. Schaller, Growing Plans: Strategies to Increase your Church's Membership (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 18.

<sup>30</sup> McGavran, Understanding Church Growth, 78.

<sup>31</sup> Schaller, Growing Plans, 18-20

"The small church is not an organization, it is a group."<sup>32</sup>  
 This assumption looks good on the surface, but leaves the church in the position of everything being everyone's business and therefore no one's responsibility. The informal organization militates against setting goals, making plans, and scheduling progress.

2). The small church is inward-oriented with all financial resources invested in survival.<sup>33</sup> Little goes on in the life of the church and the people are not challenged to create new outreach ministries. Their objectives becomes that of creating the softest pews, the most satisfying music, and utilizing programs that reach existing members or their children.

3). The age of the congregation may frustrate growth. Schaller observes that,

numerically growing churches come in disproportionately large numbers from congregations that have yet reached their fifteenth birthday, and in disproportionately small numbers from churches that have been in existence for several decades.<sup>34</sup>

4). The tenure of the pastor is also a factor in church growth. Schaller states,

while there is no evidence to prove that long pastorates produce numerical growth, it is rare to

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<sup>32</sup> Carl S. Dudley, Making the Small Church Effective (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981), 26.

<sup>33</sup> M. Wendell Belew, Churches and How They Grow (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), 24.

<sup>34</sup> Schaller, Growing Plans, 19.

find a congregation that has experienced and sustained a significant numerical growth without the benefit of a long pastorate.<sup>35</sup>

5). The small church displays a low level of corporate self-esteem. The feeling of low self-esteem generates a congregational attitude of not having enough strength, resources, or people to grow. "As one listens to the testimony of small-church leaders, lack of power, lack of ability to do what needs to be done emerges as the crying need."<sup>36</sup> The people are preoccupied with the small group they have become and obsessed with maintaining the building which has become something of a shrine to the saints of the past.

6). The local church places a very high value upon being a single cell church. It is comfortable with no strangers, and the church programs and social conditions are predictable and comfortable.<sup>37</sup> The local church is virtually separated from the community. Since it is a small group within the community, they tend to worship together and to let the community look on. The community is often unaware of what happens within the church. The attitude seems to be that the community does nothing for the church; therefore, the church should do nothing for the community!

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Douglas Alan Walrath ed. New Possibilities for Small Churches (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1983), 89-90.

<sup>37</sup> Wagner, Leading Your Church to Growth, 17.



7). One reason the local congregation does not grow is that "they do not engage in intentional evangelism."<sup>38</sup> There seems to be a lack of vision for the world beyond the local church. Small churches often believe that they are a mission field and the larger churches should help finance their needs.<sup>39</sup> They believe they can barely care for their own needs, and there is seldom a response to help spread the gospel or to care for the hungry, etc.

8). Even a congregation with an evangelism program will fail to grow if its evangelism programs, "are outmoded, or not indigenous to the culture of the target population."<sup>40</sup> Often the use of past methods have produced failure, and after many years of trying the congregation gives up.

9). "Reaching non-Christians is a low priority for most congregations."<sup>41</sup> The mandate of the great commission has grown cold in the life of the congregation. The church is aware of lost people in the community, but neglects to provide ministries to win them to Christ.

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<sup>38</sup> George G. Hunter III., The Contagious Congregation: Frontiers in Evangelism and Church Growth (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979), 20.

<sup>39</sup> Thirty-one churches in the Kentucky Conference receive equitable salary support for their pastor. These churches are not quite large enough to fully support a full-time pastor and look to the Conference for financial help. Information provided by Rev. Owen Dolin, Chairperson of Conference Equitable Salary Committee.

<sup>40</sup> Hunter, The Contagious Congregation, 20.

<sup>41</sup> Arn, The Master's Plan, 7.

10). "The biblical concept of lostness has disappeared from the conscience of most churches and most Christians."<sup>42</sup> Hearts have grown cold to the purposes of God, and never really consider that it is God's will that men and women be reconciled to Him.

11). Pastoral leadership is lacking. The leadership most often is untrained for effective equipping leadership. The pastor has been trained to be an enabler and, as a result, no growth is encountered in the local church.<sup>43</sup>

Many more possible reasons have been given in church growth literature. However, these eleven were seen to particularly be applicable to the Calvary and Tower congregations.

As one considers the many reasons why local churches do not grow, some common denominators stand out. Somehow, non-growing churches once turned from outreach ministries to maintenance oriented agendas which drives them to conserve financial resources, forget evangelism, and cut-back on needed outreach ministries.

#### Characteristics of Growing Churches

Just as a local church can create a posture of non-growth, so a local church can create a growth posture. Such churches take seriously God's mandate to make disciples, but their seriousness, by itself, does not ensure growth.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>43</sup> Wagner, Leading your Church to Growth, 79.

Several additional characteristics are typical of growing churches.

Peter Wagner's research discovered seven "vital signs" of a healthy church:<sup>44</sup> 1). A pastor who is a possibility thinker and whose dynamic leadership has been used to catalyze the entire church into action for growth; 2). A well-mobilized laity which has discovered, developed, and is using all the spiritual gifts for growth; 3). A church big enough to provide the range of services that meet the needs and expectations of its members; 4). The proper balance of the dynamic relationship between celebration, congregation, and cell; 5). A membership drawn primarily from one homogeneous unit; 6). Evangelistic methods that have proved to make disciples; 7). A church that has its priorities arranged in biblical order.

Lyle Schaller is another prolific writer in the area of church growth. He offers seven characteristics of growing churches:<sup>45</sup> 1). A church must have a strong emphasis on biblical preaching; 2). A church must have a strong emphasis on evangelism which finds its expression in lay persons who have a faith to share, concern for people outside the church, and a willingness to help others make a response to the challenge of the Christian gospel; 3). The

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 34-39.

<sup>45</sup> Lyle E. Schaller, "Seven Characteristics of Growing Churches," Church Administration, October 1975: 7-8.

church helps new people move from being a part of the membership circle to being part of the fellowship circle; 4). The church provides opportunities for people to express their commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior through the church; 5). A church that develops leadership from new converts and does not rely upon raising its own members; 6). The church, in addition to its traditional ministries, has one or more specialties in ministry. (These specialties may be excellence in music, day care center, bus ministry, or a hand-bell choir); 7). A minister who likes people, is concerned about and responsive to their spiritual needs, and is happy in pastoral work.

George Hunter's research discovered six strategic directions that many growing churches take:<sup>46</sup> 1). Churches grow as they identify and reach receptive people; 2). Churches grow as they reach out across the social networks of their credible believers, especially their newest Christians; 3). Churches grow as they multiply units of various kinds (classes, choirs, groups, congregations, et al.) as recruiting groups and ports of entry for new persons; 4). Churches grow as they minister to the felt needs of undisciplined people; 5). Churches grow as they develop culturally indigenous ministries for the people they intend to reach; 6). Churches grow from (prayerful)

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<sup>46</sup> George G. Hunter III, To Spread the Power: Church Growth in the Wesleyan Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 34-36.

planning for the future.

Kennon L. Callahan states that pastors-as-leaders, and not enablers, are what the church needs today.<sup>47</sup> Today's churches need pastors who will effectively lead their churches. He also adds that an effective church has implemented proven evangelism methods. He states,

when the congregation focuses intentionally on visitation with members, constituents, newcomers, and unchurched - as well as sharing visitation with persons who are hospitalized or homebound - that congregation has this foundational strength well in place.<sup>48</sup>

Also, Callahan states that outreach ministries meeting the needs of the community are absolutely essential. Effective churches in missional outreach identify human hurts and hopes with which they share their principal leadership and financial resources.<sup>49</sup> Callahan also stresses that effective churches spend time reviewing and evaluating the categories of worship, accessibility, visibility, parking, land and landscaping, adequate facilities, and solid financial resources.<sup>50</sup>

Robert Schuller attributes much of the success of his ministry to dynamic leadership. He declares that "there is no substitute for dynamic, aggressive, positive, inspiring

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<sup>47</sup> Callahan, 41.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., Refer to chapters three, eight, nine, ten and eleven for information concerning specific topics.

leadership...Great success is the result of great leadership."<sup>51</sup> Schuller believes that the other elements that make a great church can be described in the image of a human body. He believes the great church is one that has a circulatory system, skeleton, and a nervous system.<sup>52</sup>

The circulatory system was created by adding a staff person in the area of evangelism. This person's responsibility was "to recruit, train and motivate laymen and laywomen to be lay evangelists of the church."<sup>53</sup> Schuller's instructions to this staff person were

you know you are succeeding as long as people who have not been active members of any church are being won into lively membership of this church! You are, on the other hand, failing when the only people who join this church are Christians transferring from other churches.<sup>54</sup>

The skeleton was formed by adding a staff person in education. This person is responsible "to recruit, train, and motivate lay people to be teachers in the church."<sup>55</sup> This leadership not only provided immediate results in the local church's outreach ministry, but also resulted in the development of the Center for Advanced Lay Leadership where people from other churches could be trained and equipped for

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<sup>51</sup> Schuller, Your Church has a Fantastic Future, 131.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 146-153.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

active ministry.<sup>56</sup>

The nervous system was developed by adding a minister of family and parish life. This person cares for the daily needs and hurts of the members of its body and recruits and equips lay people for caring ministries.<sup>57</sup>

From this wide sampling of church growth theorists, one can see ten common denominators for effective and growing churches. 1). Typically, a growing church has a pastor that leads; 2). A growing church is committed to winning people and has a plan of evangelism to reach unchurched persons through the believers social networks; 3). A growing church has outreach ministries that meet the needs of the community it serves; 4). A growing church has a finely tuned assimilation program for incorporating new members into the life, ministry, and fellowship of the local church; 5). A growing church is willing to staff for growth. 6). A church that has a vision for growth will use its land and buildings to enhance future growth. 7). A church that is expanding numerically dreams about growth potential and has the faith to trust God for the resources. 8). A growing church sets missional goals and objectives and works hard to bring them to fruition. 9). A growing church sees people as an asset rather than a liability. The church believes in its people and their ability to

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

contribute to the overall operation of the organization. 10). A growing church is committed to providing multiple ministries that will reach people and help them become responsible disciples.

### Church Growth Options for

#### Calvary and Tower Churches

The Committee reviewed all the data concerning leadership for church growth and church growth principles, to lay a foundation for the next phase of study. It then established the priority by which each of the five areas of study would be completed. The following summarizes its findings.

### Merger of Each Congregation

#### into One Congregation

The purpose of considering the merger of Calvary and Tower congregations into one congregation was to determine whether such a merger would provide a greater base of ministry to the communities of Bellevue and Dayton, Kentucky.

The Committee started by asking the question, "Could the Calvary congregation merge into the Tower Congregation and use Tower's facilities?" To answer the question, it studied the physical facilities of the Tower congregation and considered the following factors.

Seating Capacity: The sanctuary and balcony of the Tower church building will hold 140 people. Lyle Schaller



states that once seating capacity reaches eighty percent of capacity, growth will plateau and the church will quit growing.<sup>58</sup> Based on this principle, the practical seating capacity of Tower church would be around 112 people ( $140 \times .80\% = 112$ ).

Education Facilities: With one session of Sunday school and utilizing the space of the sanctuary, balcony, nursery, and fellowship hall, only six rooms were available for Sunday school classes. It was determined that a merged church would need twelve rooms to handle the existing Sunday school classes.

Parking Facilities: Kennon Callahan states that a church needs one parking space for every one to two-and-one-half persons to be involved in the building.<sup>59</sup> The Committee's contingency thinking used the higher range of one parking space for every two-and-a-half people. It was determined that the Tower congregation needed eighteen parking spaces to handle its existing congregation ( $45 \div 2.5 = 18$ ) and fifty-six ( $140 \div 2.5 = 56$ ) to handle the merged congregations. Tower had no available off street parking.

The question was then reversed, "Could the Tower congregation merge into the Calvary congregation and use Calvary's facilities?" Once again, the solution was gained by looking at the physical facilities of the Calvary church.

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<sup>58</sup> Schaller, Getting Things Done, 26.

<sup>59</sup> Callahan, Twelve Keys to an Effective Church, 87.

Seating Capacity: The total seating capacity of the Calvary building was 200 people. Based on Schaller's eighty percent capacity seating, Calvary's seating capacity would be approximately 160 people ( $200 \times .80\% = 160$ ).

Educational Facilities: Based on one session of Sunday school, the need for twelve class rooms could be handled by the Calvary building. The facility would also allow for an additional three new classes to be started.

Parking Facilities: Callahan's formula was used to determine Calvary's parking needs. Calvary needed forty parking spaces to handle its existing needs ( $100 \div 2.5 = 40$ ) and fifty-six ( $140 \div 2.5 = 56$ ) to handle the merged congregations. Calvary's existing parking lot held only twenty cars leaving a need for thirty-six additional parking spaces. Residential homes around the church prevented expansion of the existing parking lot.

After considering the physical facilities of Tower Church the Committee concluded that the merger of Calvary into Tower was not physically feasible. It did conclude that it was possible to merge the Tower congregation into the Calvary congregation and use Calvary's facilities. However, it also wanted to take a closer look at the advantages of merging the two congregations and, also, at the potential problems to be considered if the two congregations were to merge.

Advantages: 1). In a merged church, pastoral

leadership could be more effectively utilized. The pastor's time could be invested in training and equipping laity rather than traveling back and forth conducting multiple services for each congregation. 2). The merged church would have a larger pool of laity to draw from for leadership positions and program ministries. 3). The merged church has the potential for being a stronger congregation in various ministry areas because of the increased number of people. 4). The merged church could become stronger in finances. One building and parsonage would now be maintained instead of multiple buildings and parsonages. 5). The merged church could have the potential of developing into a possibility thinking congregation, as opposed to a survival thinking one. Because of the added numbers and potential strength of a larger congregation, the people could envision growth rather than survival.

It was decided that before a merger could take place a number of potential problems must be addressed.

#### Problems to be Addressed:

1). The problem of bringing two congregations together. "Merger is the most difficult of all church organizational adjustments."<sup>60</sup> Careful attention must be given in the following areas; A). The new congregation must establish missional priorities. B). The merged

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<sup>60</sup> Douglas Alan Walrath, Leading Churches Through Change (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979 ), 33.

congregation must create a new identity so that the barrier of "ours" and "theirs" is broken down. C). The leaders must provide plenty of open sessions for ironing out differences, concerns, and anticipated problems. D). The new congregation must elect new officers so that each congregation has a sense of ownership and leadership representation in the decision making process. E). The merged congregation must continually reinforce the overall mission and purpose of the local church.

2). The merged congregation must address the problem of no additional parking at the Calvary facility. It was concluded that there had to be an agreement between the two congregations to utilize part of the assets from the sale of the Tower parsonage and church building to buy up residential property around the church and build a larger parking facility that would provide at least seventy-five parking spaces.

3). It was also decided that another part of the acquired assets from the sale of the Tower property should be spent to upgrade the Calvary facility. Because of the aging Calvary building, steps need to be taken to bring the facility up to present standards in the area of electrical wiring, safety requirements, handicapped facilities, and air conditioning.

4). The new congregation should immediately consider multiple worship services. If the merger resulted in

bringing together 140 people, the new congregation could grow only twenty more before it reached eighty percent of capacity. Unless each congregation agreed to multiple worship services, the new congregation would soon stagnate and plateau.

5). The new congregation must acquire additional pastoral staff.

The Committee decided that if these issues were addressed and resolved corporately, then a merger would be feasible. If the two congregations could not come to terms on these crucial issues, then merger would be out of the question.

#### Merging of Each Congregation into

##### One with Subsequent Relocation

The next study phase considered the feasibility of merging the two congregation with subsequent relocation. With the aforementioned study of merger in mind, a basic question was asked, "What would be the advantages of merging both congregations and relocating?" The Committee answered the question by looking at the following areas:

##### Strategic Location: Schuller states,

Logically, the first thing a businessman needs is a good road to his place of business...So, in putting the church within the heart of the community rather than on a well-traveled artery, the church is violating a fundamental principle of retailing - accessibility.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Schuller, Your Church Has a Fantastic Future, 246.

Calvary and Tower's buildings were each nestled within a residential neighborhood with low accessibility, limited or no parking facilities, and low visibility. A new church facility would provide the following assets:

1). Accessibility. The new location would not only provide ministry support to the communities of Bellevue and Dayton, but also open up the potential ministry areas of Newport, Woodlawn, Southgate, and Ft. Thomas, Kentucky.

2). High visibility. The location selected would be on a main traffic artery and would allow the continuous flow of traffic to see the new facility.

3). Surplus parking. The new location selected would have enough acreage to provide parking capabilities for at least 150 to 200 cars.

New Facilities: By relocating, the merged congregation could build a new facility that would meet its existing needs and provide for future growth and expansion. The Committee concluded that a new sanctuary with the seating capacity of 500 people and adequate educational facilities would be sufficient to handle the existing congregational needs and allow for anticipated growth.

Future Expansion: The new location would provide for future expansion as the congregation grew. It would have enough acreage (five to ten acres) to allow for additional parking spaces, expansion of the sanctuary and educational facilities, or the possibility of a multi-purpose family

life center if the perceived need of the community called for one.

Expanded Ministry Area: Each church had the perception that winning people beyond the border of the city limits was someone else's responsibility. A new church location could help create the awareness of potential growth. Instead of having a "this parish is our world" mentality, a new outlook of "the world is our parish" could be developed.<sup>62</sup>

Finances: The Committee studied each congregation's finances and resources, and came to the following conclusion: 1). The combined investments of both congregations drawing interest in the bank totaled \$100,000.00; 2). Independent appraisals on two of the three parsonages revealed a market value total of \$75,000.00; 3). Independent appraisals on both church buildings revealed a total market value of \$200,000.00. The Committee could therefore see combined total assets of approximately \$375,000.00.

The Committee then determined the projected cost for building a new church facility. It looked at Lawrenceburg United Methodist Church-Frankfort District, Christ United Methodist Church-Ashland District, and Christ United Methodist Church-Covington District which had all built facilities comparable to the type of new facility that the Committee considered necessary for relocation. In each of

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<sup>62</sup> Hunter, The Contagious Congregation, 146.

the three churches the total construction cost including land did not exceed \$700,000.00. This information revealed that the combined assets and value of the property of the Calvary and Tower congregations equaled fifty-four percent of the projected cost for building a new facility. The remaining \$325,000.00 could be financed at 8.75% over a twenty year period resulting in an approximate annual indebtedness of \$34,500.00.

Another question was asked, "Can the merged congregation afford this annual indebtedness of \$34,500.00 with its present financial resources?" The Committee came up with the following answer: 1). The regular giving income from the Calvary congregation would be used to maintain the current operating expenses for the new congregation; 2). The regular giving income from the Tower congregation, approximately \$17,000.00, would be used to help make monthly payments on the annual indebtedness; 3). The new congregation would seek Kentucky Conference approval to have its apportionments reduced to zero as though it was a new congregation. This would provide an additional \$15,000.00 a year to help make monthly payments on the yearly debt; 4). The combined income from the Tower congregation and the reduction of apportionments would provide approximately \$32,000.00 a year towards an annual indebtedness of approximately \$34,500.00.

After careful review of the advantages of merger with



relocation and the financial study, the Committee concluded that it was feasible to consider merger with relocation.

### Both Congregations Remaining

#### as a Two-point Charge

The next area of study that the Committee reviewed was the consideration of both congregations remaining a two-point charge. Before the two churches had agreed to become a two-point charge in January, 1988, neither church had been part of two-point charge. The Committee reviewed the two churches' present conditions, asking "is a two-point charge allowing each church to reach its potential in congregational life and ministry to the community?" The following areas were considered.

#### Advantages of Remaining a Two-point Charge: 1).

Neither congregation would have to work through the pain or grief of leaving its present facility; 2). Each church could remain the single-cell congregation it has been without being forced to realign its congregational structure; 3). Each congregation would have the security of a full-time Conference pastor; 4). Neither congregation would place itself under any large financial obligation other than its present operating budget.

#### Disadvantages of Remaining a Two-point Charge: 1).

Each church would retain the problem of inadequate parking facilities; 2). Each congregation would retain aging buildings needing renovation; 3). Each congregation would

retain restricted access buildings for handicapped and elderly persons; 4). Each congregation would retain the problem of a limited number of laity to serve in leadership positions and various areas of ministry; 5). Each congregation would retain the emerging problem of one congregation's not liking to share its pastor with the other congregation. Even though the leaders of the Calvary church realized the financial need to share their pastor, they were not happy with the necessity; 6). Remaining as a two-point charge would be time consuming for the pastor as he/she maintains multiple worship services, Sunday schools, committee meetings, bible studies, discipleship groups; 7). Each congregation would retain the mind-set of survival rather than a positive mind-set for growth.

The Committee determined that if the two congregations were to remain as a two-point charge, the following changes must take place in the lives of each congregation. 1). Each congregation must develop a program of lay visitation. The program would entail follow-up on visitors, members, inactive persons, sick persons, shut-ins, the elderly, and persons in hospitals and nursing homes. 2). Each congregation would need intentional programs of evangelism that are proven disciple makers. 3). Each congregation must employ intentional discipleship training programs. 4). Each congregation would need leadership development programs to equip people for future leadership positions. 5). Each

congregation must develop a shepherding ministry that would fit its own congregation. The program would provide for membership care, assimilation of new members into the life of the church, care for the ill, hospitalized, and shut-ins. 6). Instead of the pastor being responsible for and doing the majority of ministry, he/she would train and equip lay persons to oversee various ministries. Under the leadership of the pastor and the designated work areas, each congregation would be responsible to oversee the outreach ministries to meet the community needs. 7). Each congregation must be willing to change its agenda from maintenance to growth.

The Committee determined that unless each congregation was willing to make the aforementioned changes it would not be practical or feasible for each congregation to remain a two-point charge after the Kentucky Annual Conference of 1989.

#### Both Congregations Returning to

##### a Single-point Charge

The Committee reviewed the last option delegated by the charge conferences in considering each congregation's returning to a single-point charge. The Committee reviewed the previous history of each church in the following areas.

Church Membership: Over the past twenty-plus years the Calvary church declined from over 300 to a low of approximately 220 (Appendix C). Tower church, over the same

period, declined from around 150 to a low of approximately 115 (Appendix F).

Average Worship Attendance: Each congregation's average worship attendance steadily declined during the past twenty-plus years. Calvary church declined from the mid-nineties to approximately fifty (Appendix d). Tower church declined from over fifty to a low of thirty-five (Appendix G). Each church's history has been one of decline.

Advantages of Returning to a Single-point Charge: 1). Neither congregation would face the possibility of pain and grief in leaving its present facility.<sup>63</sup> 2). Neither congregation would have to be concerned about creating new classes, choirs, and groups as recruiting groups and ports of entry for new person.<sup>64</sup> 3). Neither congregation would incur any major debt. 4). Each congregation would have its own pastor. Calvary would have a full time conference pastor while Tower would be relegated to receiving a part-time student pastor, a retired pastor, or a part-time local pastor. 5). Neither congregation would have to lay down its prejudices of what the church should or should not be for the good of all concerned.

Disadvantages of Returning to a Single-point Charge: 1). Each church would retain the problem of inadequate parking facilities. 2). Each congregation would retain

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<sup>63</sup> Walrath, Leading Churches Through Change, 41.

<sup>64</sup> Hunter, To Spread the Power, 35.

aging buildings that need major renovation. 3). Each congregation would retain restricted access buildings for handicapped and elderly persons. 4). Each church would retain the problem of a limited number of laity to serve in leadership positions or in areas of ministry. 5). Each congregation would retain the problem of small congregations with ministries of survival rather than ministries that produce congregational growth. 6). The Tower congregation would be forced to receive a part-time pastor rather than the benefits of a full-time pastor. 7). Each congregation would retain locations of low visibility, restricted community access, and prohibitive locations for expansion.

The Committee agreed that if each church returned to a single-point charge, major changes must take place. 1). Each congregation would need to develop a program of lay visitation. 2). Each congregation would need to employ intentional discipleship training programs. 3). Each congregation would need to develop shepherding ministries that would fit its congregational needs. 4). Each congregation would need to utilize its pastor to equip people for ministry. 5). Each congregation would need to develop evangelism programs that will reach unchurched people and help them to become responsible disciples.

The Committee, feeling a sense of urgency in these areas, decided that if the two congregations went back to single-point charges without addressing these priorities in

ministry, they would return to the non-growth congregations each had been in previous years.

### New Insights Gleaned

New insights into congregational life were discovered during this study. The Committee desired to examine each church growth possibility thoroughly as an option for each congregation. The following possibilities were examined.

1). Each congregation would offer additional morning worship services.<sup>65</sup> Tower representatives concluded this option was not practical because of the small number attending the present worship service (forty-five), depleted parking facilities, lack of people to serve in nursery, choir, ushers, and musicians for the additional service.

The Calvary representatives decided the same but realized it would not affect them to such an extent as it would the Tower congregation because of Calvary's larger congregation.

2). Each congregation would create out-post Sunday school classes.<sup>66</sup> The Committee agreed that establishing out-post Sunday school classes had real possibilities for each congregation. It had the potential for helping each church grow by reaching out with ministries that meet the

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<sup>65</sup> Lyle E. Schaller, 44 Ways to Increase Church Attendance (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 49-53.

<sup>66</sup> C. E. Autrey, Basic Evangelism (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1959), 162.

unchurched needs.<sup>67</sup>

3). Calvary and Tower congregations could reorganize their organizational structure. Each congregation would be served by the same pastor, governed by one "joint" administrative board, and offer specialized ministries based on each congregation's central strengths.<sup>68</sup> After discussion, the Committee concluded that this option would only provide a different structure without solving the existing problems of parking, low visibility and accessibility, aging buildings, small laity pool from which to draw leadership, and restricted expansion possibilities.

4). Calvary or Tower congregations could create a new congregation. A few members of the Committee asked the question, "If the two congregations decide not to merge, merge with relocation, or relocate, is there a possibility of starting a new church separate from each congregation?" This question was examined as a possible option to reach unchurched people.<sup>69</sup> The Committee saw the potential of people in each congregation, who desired to see the church grow, leaving the existing congregation and becoming a part of the new congregation. It was decided that this could

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<sup>67</sup> Vincie Alessi, Evangelism in Your Church School (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1978), 24.

<sup>68</sup> Callahan, Twelve Keys to an Effective Church, Introduction Part II, 22.

<sup>69</sup> Schaller, 44 Ways to Increase Church Attendance, 59-61.

weaken each congregation to an even greater extent and even have the potential of destroying one or both of the congregations.

### Conclusion

The Committee still had the data to review and study from the survey questionnaires. The leader reminded the group of its responsibility in considering all the pertinent information concerning church growth options and that a final decision would not be called for until all data had been reviewed. He also asked the members to start praying for God's direction concerning the various options as they prepared to review the data from the surveys.



## CHAPTER 4

Survey Instrument / QuestionnaireDesign Stage

The Committee produced a survey-questionnaire to gain insight from colleague churches who had faced similar decisions.<sup>1</sup> Under the guidance of Janet Bokemeier Ph.D., Department of Sociology, University of Kentucky, the Committee developed an instrument to provide information concerning people's attitudes and church involvement from churches who had gone through merger, merger with relocation, or relocation without merger. First, the Committee sought to gain information in regard to a person's involvement in the local church and his/her attitude toward the church both before and after the above-mentioned options were exercised. Secondly, the Committee wanted to hear from the experiences of these other churches, and asked what people would do differently if they were to go through this experience again.

The Committee concluded that they had produced a survey-questionnaire that would provide adequate data to discover and explain how people respond to the

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<sup>1</sup> June Audrey True, Finding Out: Conducting and Evaluating Social Research (Belemont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1983), 11.

aforementioned possibilities.<sup>2</sup> The Committee field tested the survey-questionnaire for reliability on two separate occasions. The Committee designated persons from within its ranks who had not participated in the development of the survey-questionnaire to fill it out and make suggestions to help clarify potential problem areas.

The Committee used the following procedure for obtaining, clarifying, and evaluating the data received from the survey.<sup>3</sup> 1). Rev. Ben Hahn interviewed the pastor explaining the purpose of the survey, the procedures for distribution and the collection of the survey instrument. 2). Hahn supplied the pastor of the church with fifty survey-questionnaires to be distributed. 3). The pastor had his/her parishioners fill them out in a church setting such as Sunday evening worship, Sunday school or a mid-week prayer meeting. 4). The pastor collected and returned the surveys to Hahn.

#### Identification and Description of the Churches Surveyed

The Lawrenceburg United Methodist Church, Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, has existed for over one-hundred years. The church was surveyed because it experienced relocation. The

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<sup>2</sup> Gerald R. Adams, and Jay D. Schvaneveldt, Understanding Research Methods (New York: Longman, 1985), 51.

<sup>3</sup> Edward G. Carmines and Richard A. Zeller, Reliability and Validity Assessment (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979), 10.

Church's previous location was in the city of Lawrenceburg, where the church had no off street parking, no room for expansion, and an aging building needing improvements. The people of the congregation parked on the street, in surrounding gas stations or wherever spaces were available. The pastor of the congregation is the Rev. Elgin Emmons. He is currently in his seventh year of pastoral leadership. The congregation was averaging 112 in worship attendance prior to relocating to its new facility.<sup>4</sup> Today, the relocated congregation averages 132 in Sunday morning worship.<sup>5</sup>

Christ United Methodist Church, Allen, Kentucky, came into existence by the merging of two congregations, Allen United Methodist and Dwale United Methodist Church. Both buildings were small with poor locations and dwindling or stationary memberships. Each church was located in the flood plains and was flooded many times. The pastor, Rev. Kenneth R. Lemaster, has been the pastor for fifteen years. He began as a student pastor, and after graduation from college and seminary, became the church's pastor on a full-time basis. Under Rev. Lemaster's ministry, the two churches merged and approximately three years later relocated. Before the relocation, the church was averaging

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<sup>4</sup> "Statistical Tables of the United Methodist Church", Kentucky Conference Journal Journal Year 1988.

<sup>5</sup> "Statistical Tables of the United Methodist Church", Kentucky Conference Journal Journal Year 1989.

approximately 127 in Sunday morning worship.<sup>6</sup> Today, the new congregation averages 167 in Sunday morning worship.<sup>7</sup>

The Grace United Methodist Church in Newport, Kentucky, was the final church surveyed. Grace Church was surveyed because the congregations of Salem United Methodist and Grace United Methodist merged and continued to use Grace Church's facilities. Salem United Methodist Church was severely damaged by a tornado and the church was not able to recover financially from the damages incurred. The two congregations, under the pastoral leadership of Rev. Donald Drewry for the past four years, studied their options and decided to merge. Each church averaged approximately fifty persons during Sunday morning worship before the merger.<sup>8</sup> Today, the merged congregation of Grace United Methodist remains a small congregation averaging only fifty-seven in Sunday morning worship.<sup>9</sup>

#### Survey-Questionnaire Results

Each of the three churches was given fifty questionnaires for their people to complete and their pastor to return to Hahn. The Lawrenceburg Church, hereafter referred to as Lawrenceburg, returned eighteen percent of the survey-questionnaires. Christ Church, hereafter

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<sup>6</sup> Kentucky Conference Journal, 1988.

<sup>7</sup> Kentucky Conference Journal, 1989.

<sup>8</sup> Kentucky Conference Journal, 1988.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

referred to as Christ, returned fifty-eight percent of the survey-questionnaires. Grace Church, hereafter referred to as Grace, returned twenty-two percent. A full compilation of survey results may be found in Appendix I.

### Insights Gained

Personal Interviews: Hahn's interview with the pastor of each local church proved beneficial. The interview allowed personal contact with the pastor whose church was going to be surveyed. It clarified why the church was selected to be surveyed, allowed the local pastor to review the survey-questionnaire before distributing it, and secured agreement for the complete procedure of distribution, collection, and return of the survey-questionnaire.

However, after the interviews were completed and the survey data compiled, the Committee generated the following insights:

- 1). The Committee lost control of the project once the interview with the pastor was completed. The success of the distribution and collection of the surveys rested with the local pastor.

- 2). The Committee needed to participate in the actual surveying of the local churches. Explanation of the Committee's project and the survey-questionnaire was left up to the pastor and not the Committee. This opened the door for confusion on the people's part in regard to the intent of the survey. Also, unclear survey questions could not be

clarified or explained.

3). Responses to the survey were hindered due to the pastor collecting the survey-questionnaire. The Committee believed the low number of people responding to the survey was due in part to the pastor being responsible for collecting and returning the surveys.

4). The Committee believed, in at least one interview, the pastor tried to "sugar coat" his experience. During the interview, the pastor continually verbalized unrequested information. As Hahn explained the project's procedure, the pastor kept indicating how smooth, simple, and easy his two congregations affirmed the decision to merge but the data from his congregation provided a contrasting perspective.

5). The pastors' excitement and commitment to conduct the survey dwindled. The Committee had to call and remind the pastors on numerous occasions to forward the survey instrument. The agreement to return the surveys in three weeks turned into months.

Survey Questionnaire: The Committee was disappointed in the congregational response to the survey. The Committee realized the reliability of such data was questionable due to the poor response. June Audrey True indicates that one must avoid drawing false conclusions in research. She indicates the three main kinds to avoid are illogical thinking, over generalization, or dishonesty.<sup>10</sup> However, the

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<sup>10</sup> True, 17.

Committee did feel it was able to glean various insights into merger, merger with relocation, or just relocation. The following items were significant to the Committee in its study.

1). Church attendance remained constant. Questions 3 and 19 indicate that church attendance remained high with people attending four or more times a month even after the church merged or relocated. This is significant because it indicates people remained committed to the overall mission of the church even if they did not agree with the decision.

2). Commitment to church organizations increased. Questions 4 and 20 indicate a larger number of people made commitments to serve on various organizational committees after the merger or relocation than before.

3). Time spent in church activities increased. Questions 5 and 21 indicate a larger number of people spent more time in church activities after the church decided to merge or relocate. This indicates an acceptance by the people to merge or relocate.

4). The need to merge or relocate was effectively communicated to the congregation. Even though there were slight differences in the individual categories in questions 6 and 7, the data indicates good congregational communication. People were told the reasons why such an event must take place and they responded to the communicated need and took ownership of the project.

5). The idea to merge or relocate came from the local congregation. Question 8 indicates the people perceived that the solution to their problem came from themselves rather than from an outside source.

6). The majority of people in each church indicated merger or relocation as necessary to keep the church alive. However, some people indicated in questions 9 and 10 that each church could remain in existence but would not grow any more.

7). People continued to feel good about the merger or relocation after the event. Questions 11 and 23 indicate that people felt better about the merger or relocation after it took place. Even though the increase was slight it was a positive indicator.

8). People have sentimental attachments towards buildings. Question 13 reveals the majority of people chose attachment to the building as the most negative factor in leaving the former facility. Responses to this question tracked with the Committee's study on the nature and mission of the church.

9). The people perceived the decision-making process as a corporate effort. Question 15 indicates the majority of people perceived the decision to merge or relocate as a corporate decision rather than an imposed decision by the pastor, a small group, or District or Conference leadership. This indicates the significance of group ownership, and



commitment to, a shared mission and purpose.

10). The people of Lawrenceburg and Christ perceived their congregations as being stronger after the merger or relocation. Responses to question 22 indicate stronger churches in their mission and purpose, financial giving, growing membership, larger sanctuary, and adequate parking since the churches merged or relocated. Grace church indicated the opposite to each of these categories. This church felt no better off than before the merger.

11). One congregation felt controlled by the other congregation's leadership after the merger. Question 27 responses raised the question whether a unified mission and purpose statement was developed, sufficient congregational meetings were held to iron out differences of opinions between each congregation, and corporate ownership given by each congregation to the project.

12). Spending adequate time in preparation for merger or relocation is a must for successful completion of the decision. Question 28 indicates the majority of people felt adequate time was spent in preparation for their future decision. However, a group of people in Grace church indicated that not enough time was spent in preparation.

13). Doing things right the first time is of great value. The people indicated that if they had it to do over again the following would be done: A). The congregation would spend more time in prayer concerning its decision.

B). The congregation would ask more questions concerning church growth options. C). Each church would schedule additional congregational meetings to keep its people apprised of the status of the project. These meetings would provide the possibility of ironing out congregational differences, solving potential problems, and unifying the joint mission and purpose of the new congregation.

### Conclusion

The Committee decided these insights were significant and informed its recommendation. Many of these same insights surfaced in the Committee's study on the nature and mission of the church and church growth options.

The Committee regarded the reliability of the data as questionable, due to the small percentage of people completing the survey, but still useful to its purposes. The survey results revealed people's feelings, concerns, and opinions that were vital to the Committee and each congregation's decision-making process. Therefore, the Committee considered, studied, and evaluated all the information concerning each church's future before making a formal recommendation to each congregation.

## CHAPTER 5

Evaluation of the ProjectRecommendation of theJoint Study Committee

The Committee completed its study in December, 1988. The Committee met twice in December to review all the data before making a formal recommendation to each congregation. At the next meeting, the chairperson and all nine members of the Committee were present. The vote was taken and seven members affirmed merger with relocation, two members affirmed remaining a two-point charge, while the chairperson of the committee did not vote.

The Committee recommended a final informational meeting be scheduled for each congregation before asking them to affirm or reject the Committee's recommendation. A letter was sent to each church member informing them of the two scheduled congregational meetings.

The first meeting was scheduled for January 8, 1989, during the Sunday morning worship service for the purpose of explaining the Committee's recommendation to merge with subsequent relocation. Each congregation was asked to meet separately to allow people the freedom to ask questions, raise concerns, and voice opinions concerning the proposed option without the other congregation being present. The second meeting was scheduled a week later on January 15, 1989, also during the Sunday morning worship service. This

meeting was to be conducted by the District Superintendent as an official Church Conference for each congregation. During the Sunday morning worship service each congregation would vote to affirm or reject the recommendation of the Committee (Appendix H).

The Tower United Methodist Church voted twenty-nine in favor of merger with relocation while two voted against the Committee's recommendation.

The Calvary United Methodist Church voted fifty-one in favor of the Committee's recommendation while forty-four voted against the recommendation. Five abstained from voting.

#### Survey-Instrument Questionnaire

The survey provided basic insights into the area of the Committee's study, but overall it was the weakest part of the study. The Committee felt if they were to do this phase of the study over again they would recommend the following improvements.

- 1). Attention would be given to existing models of questionnaires rather than trying to develop one totally in isolation.

- 2). The Committee would submit the survey-questionnaire to Dr. Janet Bokemeier for her evaluation and comments prior to and after the field testing.

- 3). Additional work in field testing would be done to help insure clarity of purpose, intent, and desired results.

Also, additional field testing would help eliminate vague or unclear questions due to poor word selection. For example, question five and twenty-one asked how much time an individual spends in church affairs during the month. Because the Church at large has been plagued with so many scandals relating to sexual affairs, a better choice of words might be church activities rather than church affairs.

4). The pastor would be interviewed by the Committee with attention being given to his/her feelings and reactions rather than just the congregation's feelings and reactions to merger, merger with relocation, or relocation.

5). The Committee felt there would be a better response to the questionnaire if the following changes were made:

A). Instead of the local church pastor, a Committee member would be responsible for explaining the purpose of the project to the congregation. This could help eliminate any fear or anxiety on the congregation's part in filling out the survey knowing the project's purpose.

B). A Committee member would be present to administer and collect the surveys. Possibly, a person would feel uninhibited in giving his/her answers knowing the pastor of the local church would not be collecting and reading the surveys.

C). A Committee member would be present to answer any questions regarding the survey. This might increase the

number of responses to various questions as well as the completion of the survey-questionnaire.

6). The Committee would allow for an individual's personal insights, comments, and feelings to be recorded by the committee member as the survey is being completed.

7). The Committee would expand the borders of its surveying to include other denominations with churches having similar experiences.

8). The Committee would interview each church's committee that handled the study phase of its particular situation. The Committee felt additional insights into the area of church growth could be gathered by such a process. Questions such as, "What obstacles did you encounter during your study?", "What did you do to make the transition easier for the local congregation?" and "What problems did you encounter trying to sell the church property?", would provide the Committee with additional insight into the area of its study.

The Committee realized the churches' lack of participation in filling out the surveys crippled the possibility of gaining any significant and dependable data. Insights from the survey were considered, but were not weighed as heavily in the decision-making process as the other areas of study.

#### Decision-Making and Planning Process

The Committee maintained its original purpose in being

a study group who would periodically report its findings to each congregation for one's eventual approval or rejection. The Committee gave monthly reports to each congregation concerning its progress and findings of the study and allowed each congregation to start forming its own conclusions. The leader of the Committee stood firm with what the study was revealing regardless of whether it was well received or brought negative criticism. The Committee also maintained a firm stance and was not intimidated by negative congregational responses. From the onset, the Committee was determined to provide the best information possible so that each congregation could make an informed decision on its future. On many occasions, the Committee received feedback from the congregation concerning the monthly reports which caused the Committee to go back and do additional research and study in specific areas.

The decision-making process was comprised of the Committee's research and the congregations' appraisal of the research data. The pastor and Committee simply created the vision, did the research, presented the facts, and utilized feedback from each congregation to help produce a final recommendation. The decision to accept the final recommendation was left up to the members of each congregation on January 15, 1989. The Committee concluded that the final decision to merge and relocate was a congregational decision rather than the decision of the

Committee. This procedure provided a sense of ownership for each congregation's overall decision-making process.

### Effective Mission of the Congregation

Before the Committee's study, the mission of the church was out of focus. Each church had the traditional structure of Sunday morning worship, Wednesday evening Bible study, and Sunday school, with Calvary having an additional Sunday evening service and youth group meetings. This structure had been in existence for years with no idea if it was currently meeting the needs of the community. Neither church had seriously evaluated itself to see if changes needed to be made concerning its current ministries. The attitude of "we've always done it this way" prevailed throughout the years. Each congregation had good intentions but outreach ministries were non-existent. Survival was the main focus with all energy, time, and financial resources being expended on maintaining the existing ministries and membership.

During the study, the members of the Committee began to clarify their understanding of the mission of the church. Slowly, the mission of the church began to come into focus as the members of the Committee researched, studied, and wrestled with the underlying biblical principles concerning their study. Members of the Committee began to capture a vision for growth. Instead of nurturing ministries, the focus became ministries of outreach which would extend



across the social-network of believers and reach people with the gospel message. The main focus of these ministries was to make disciples and help incorporate the individuals into the life and ministry of the local church.

After the study, the atmosphere for church growth continued as different work areas (Sunday school, youth, evangelism and mission committees) evaluated their current ministries and made significant plans for the future to enhance growth. A new sense of "we can do it!" filled the hearts and minds of the leaders. Instead of thinking survival, now the focus was growth.

Both congregations are not totally where they ought to be; however, each has made significant progress. Each is realizing that the last command of Jesus Christ should be the church's first priority. Fulfilling the "Great Commission" is the number one priority for the church to grow. Reaching mankind with the gospel message is now a reality for each congregation as it joins with God's redemptive mission and purpose. The people of God, or the church as we know it today, continue to be God's expression of His love and reconciliation to a lost world.

#### Joint Study Committee

The Committee was comprised of nine lay persons, seven men and two ladies, and the pastor who chaired the Committee. Tower was represented by five members while Calvary was represented by four members. The members of the

Committee represented church membership ranging from three years through seventy.

The purpose of the Committee was established by the Charge Conferences of each congregation. The Committee was instructed to study the aforementioned areas of study and to make a formal recommendation to each congregation by January 15, 1989. The Committee was evaluated in the following areas.

Comprehensive Study: The Committee did an extensive study on the designated areas of study. Each member was assigned various tasks and responsibilities in the overall project and was held accountable for its completion. The Committee maintained its time schedule and completed its assignment on time. The Committee did not hesitate to go back and do additional research when called upon by either congregation. The Committee completed every part of its study on time with the final recommendation being completed one month ahead of schedule.

Group Participation: The Committee met monthly, with extra meetings called as needed. Seven out of the nine lay persons of the Committee were totally committed to the group project. The other two lacked the commitment of the others and missed many of the monthly meetings. The remaining seven were at every meeting unless there was an emergency or sickness that prevented them from attending.

The Committee respected each member's opinions. There

were times when the individual members disagreed with one another, but when the meeting was over a spirit of unity and love prevailed. One member completely frustrated the group. It seemed as though he threw a "monkey wrench" into every group meeting. Even though this person caused headaches, frustration, and even periods of anger, the Committee looked at him as someone who made the group do its homework. Run-of-the-mill answers were not sufficient for him as he wanted proof for everything. Even though he was like a "thorn" in the flesh, the group realized he served a specific purpose in challenging the Committee to do its best in its comprehensive study of the church growth options.

Communication: The Committee provided regular feedback to each congregation. Each month a report was given explaining the progress of the Committee and the data reviewed. The Committee was persistent in its communication to each congregation with various members of the group giving presentations with the group leader.

However, one area that concerned the Committee was the lack of enough combined congregational meetings. Even though there were four combined meetings, the Committee believed there should have been more meetings to make the overall decision-making process smoother. Differences, such as the time of the new worship hour, Sunday school time and structure, youth programs, and if the existing kitchen fund money need be refunded were issues concerning the people.

More combined meetings would have helped in ironing out these congregational differences.

Decision-Making Process: As mentioned above, the Committee maintained its original intention of being a study group and not a group decision-maker. The Committee allowed each congregation to make its own decision based on the study group's findings. However, there were members of the Committee who recruited members of his/her congregation to vote against the resolution to merge with relocation at the January 15, 1989, meeting. The Committee was discouraged with these individuals for tarnishing its overall purpose. Nevertheless, the final congregational decision remained in the members' hands and not The Joint Study Committee.

All in all, the Committee members accomplished their overall goal and objective. When the Committee made its final report and submitted its formal recommendation to each congregation, there was a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction, and pride knowing the job was completed.

#### Personal Insights Gained

The pastor of these two congregations gained many insights into the area of church growth during this study. He will be forever indebted to his co-workers on the Committee for their hard work, great insights, and persistence when the study seemed to get bogged down at times. The leader will carry with him valuable insights that will affect his ministry for the rest of his life.

1). Each church has its own character, personality, and even quirks that are unique. To tamper with some of these is taboo. People would rather fight than switch; pout than to ponder problems; get mad and quit attending or giving, rather than consider what new work God might be doing in their midst.

2). Church buildings become sacred shrines. The leader of the group changed churches a number of times in his life due to his parents moving to different states for employment and his own moving to Kentucky for schooling. Whether good or bad, the leader did not acquire a sense of church buildings as sacred shrines; rather, he looks at them as resources for ministry. The leader realizes he will always encounter people who believe church buildings are sacred shrines. The leader must be sensitive to the people and respect their personal opinions and beliefs.

3). Churches have a desire to grow but resist making the changes necessary to grow. People get comfortable in their surroundings and do not take change easily. The leader must use good judgement in initiating change and not change something simply for the sake of change. Rather, if change is necessary for the church to grow he must initiate it from the bottom of the organization so that the people will have an opportunity to give insights, raise concerns, give feedback, set goals and objectives, and give ownership to the leader's dream as though it was theirs.

4). People desire transforming leaders. From the study, the pastor perceived that transforming leadership is a major key to church growth. He must be willing to lead and equip his people for viable outreach ministries. Taking a passive enabler role is destructive both to the pastor and the congregation. The pastor is never stretched in his leadership potential and the congregation remains stagnant, never being challenged or motivated to grow.

5). The pastor must be willing to lead his congregation. He must be willing to dream, inspire, motivate, and lead his people in the direction he believes best, realizing the possibility for failure is ever present. He must not worry about the potential for failure but take occasional failures and use them as building blocks for future growth potential. The pastor must be willing to use all of his resources and the resources of his people in accomplishing the overall mission of the organization.

### Conclusion

The project leader is satisfied with the overall results of this project. He believes his hypothesis to be proven true "that two administratively yoked churches, with numerical decline, located in declining areas, can come to a decision about their future when the decision-making process is rooted in scripture and collaboratively led with appropriate insight from churches, literature, and the leader group's shared vision and purpose". Even though he

realizes there were areas which he would do differently the next time, the leader believes this joint study by the Calvary and Tower congregations validates this hypothesis.

## APPENDIX A

A RESOLUTION TO STUDY MERGER AND RELOCATION

WHEREAS: our Administrative Council has been apprised by our District Superintendent of an interest on the part of a neighboring sister United Methodist Church in the concept of merging with our church with the merged congregation relocating its facilities to a more visible location with a larger campus, thereby providing for the possibility of larger and more adequate facilities to make possible greater ministry in Christ's name as a regional United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS: our Administrative Council in a duly called meeting on November 15, 1987, discussed this concept and arrived at a consensus that the possibility of merger and relocation merits full consideration by members of our church; and

WHEREAS: said Administrative Council, feeling that a matter of this magnitude should be considered and discussed by the entire membership of our church, requested the District Superintendent to call and conduct a Church Conference to consider this matter on this day, December 6, 1987; and

WHEREAS: this Church Conference, now in session, was



called pursuant to that request and was duly announced as prescribed by the Book of Discipline, said announcement being made both from the pulpit and by letter mailed to all known members,

BE IT THEREFORE NOW RESOLVED: That this Church Conference, after full and complete discussion, does hereby affirm the concept of asking that our pastor, Rev. Ben Hahn, be appointed to also serve as pastor of the Tower United Methodist Church, Dayton, Kentucky, as well as our church so that both churches can effectively study all options open to both churches, including, but not limited to, the five items hereinafter listed: 1). Study the possibility of merging one congregation into the other existing congregation. 2). Study the possibility of merging both congregations with subsequent relocation to a new location. 3). Study the possibility of both churches remaining as a two-point charge. 4). Study the possibility of both churches returning to a single-point charge. 5). Allowing for the "Joint Study Committee" to make additional recommendations to both congregations. Implementation of this decision is contingent upon the concurrence of our sister congregation and their expressing the same by adopting a resolution similar in nature to this resolution in a Church Conference to be conducted by the District Superintendent in the near future; and

BE IT THEREFORE NOW FURTHER RESOLVED: that this

specific steps to be taken in implementation of this resolution, once it is adopted by both Church Conferences, shall be as follows:

1. Both churches shall send a request to the Resident Bishop through the District Superintendent asking that Rev. Ben Hahn be appointed to serve as pastor of Tower United Methodist Church, Dayton, Kentucky, as well as Calvary United Methodist Church, Bellevue, Kentucky, beginning January 1, 1988, with the intention that this dual appointment will continue at least until the Kentucky Annual Conference of June 1989; and

2. The Administrative Council of each church shall appoint a number of its members to serve on a committee to be known as "The Joint Study Committee", and that said Joint Study Committee shall study the five aforementioned possibilities, keeping both congregations fully informed by all appropriate means of the progress of said study; and

3. The Joint Study Committee shall report with recommendations to both congregations, meeting either as individual congregations or as a joint body, as may be determined by the Joint Study Committee after consultation with the District Superintendent, not later than January 15, 1989; and

4. An appropriate request shall be presented to the Resident Bishop through the District Superintendent immediately following the January 1988 meeting(s) regarding

all matters relating to charge lines, and pastoral appointment(s) for the conference year 1989-90; and

BE IT THEREFORE NOW FURTHER RESOLVED: that both congregations be assured that their adoption of this or a similar resolution at this time represents a decision on the part of either church to only:

A. Join in making a request that the Resident Bishop appoint Rev. Ben Hahn as pastor of Tower United Methodist Church, Dayton, Kentucky, as well as Calvary United Methodist Church, Bellevue, Kentucky, beginning January 1, 1988, with the intention that said dual appointment will be continued until at least the Kentucky Annual Conference of 1989; and

B. Authorize the Administrative Council to appoint a committee of five to seven persons to serve with a similar committee from Tower Church on the Joint Study Committee to conduct aforementioned study and report to both congregations as set forth above.

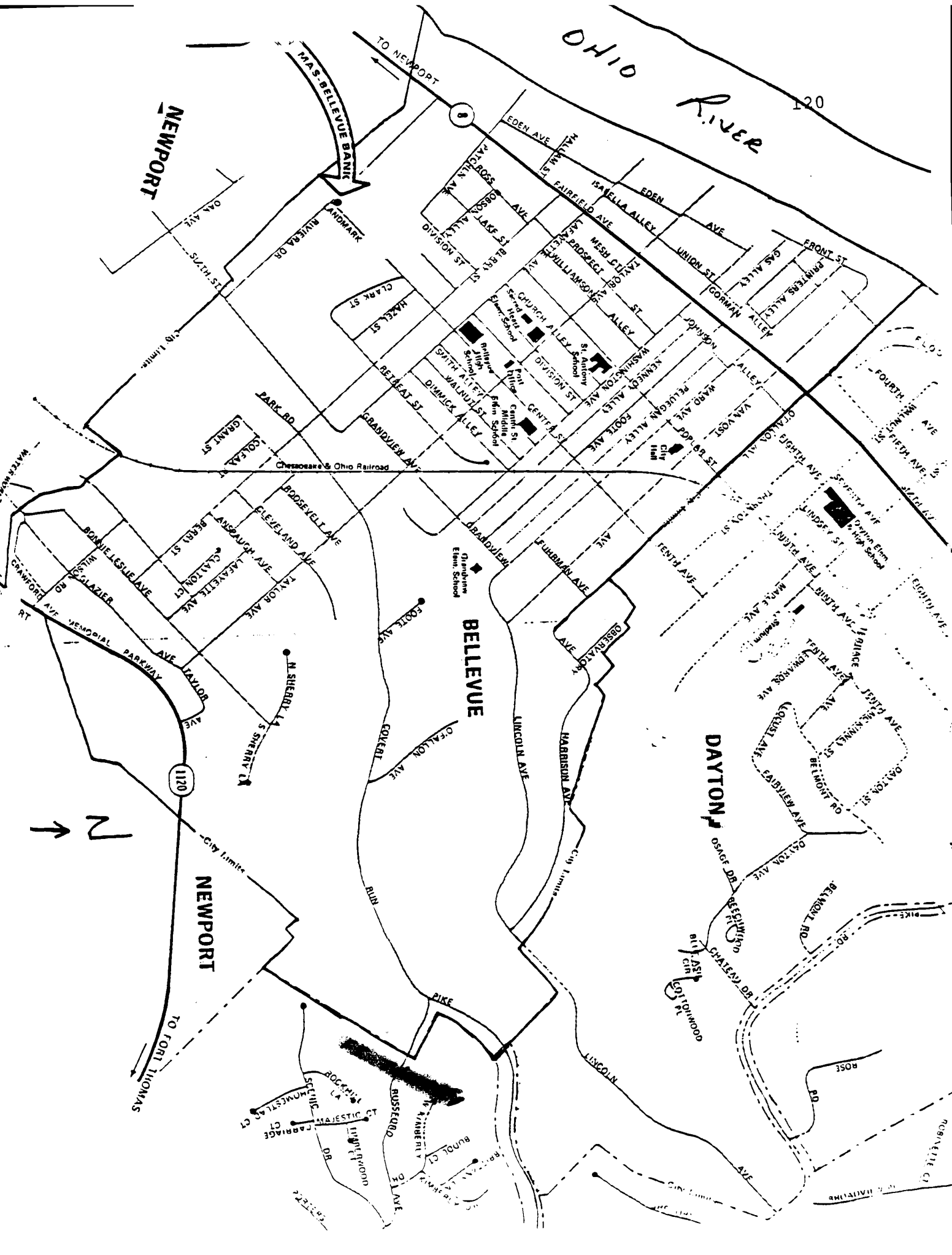
C. A final decision on any matter pertaining to the Joint Study Committee's recommendation will not be made until the Joint Study Committee has completed its work and reported its findings and recommendations to both congregations as set forth above.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doug Colyer, Chairman  
Calvary United Methodist Church  
Administrative Council

APPENDIX B

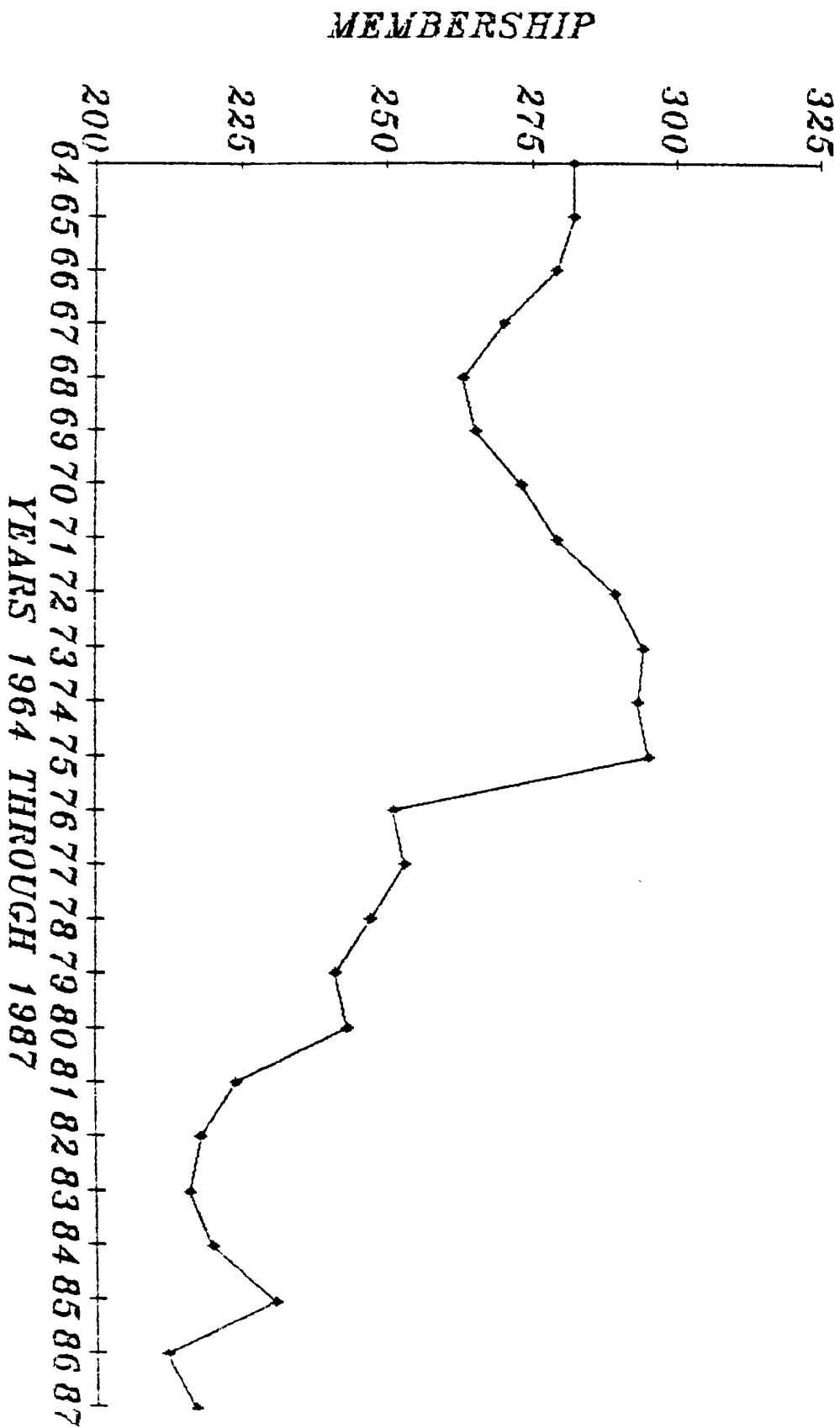
MAP OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY HIGHLIGHTING BELLEVUE, KENTUCKY



## APPENDIX C

## CALVARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MEMBERSHIP TRENDS

CALVARY U.M.C.  
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

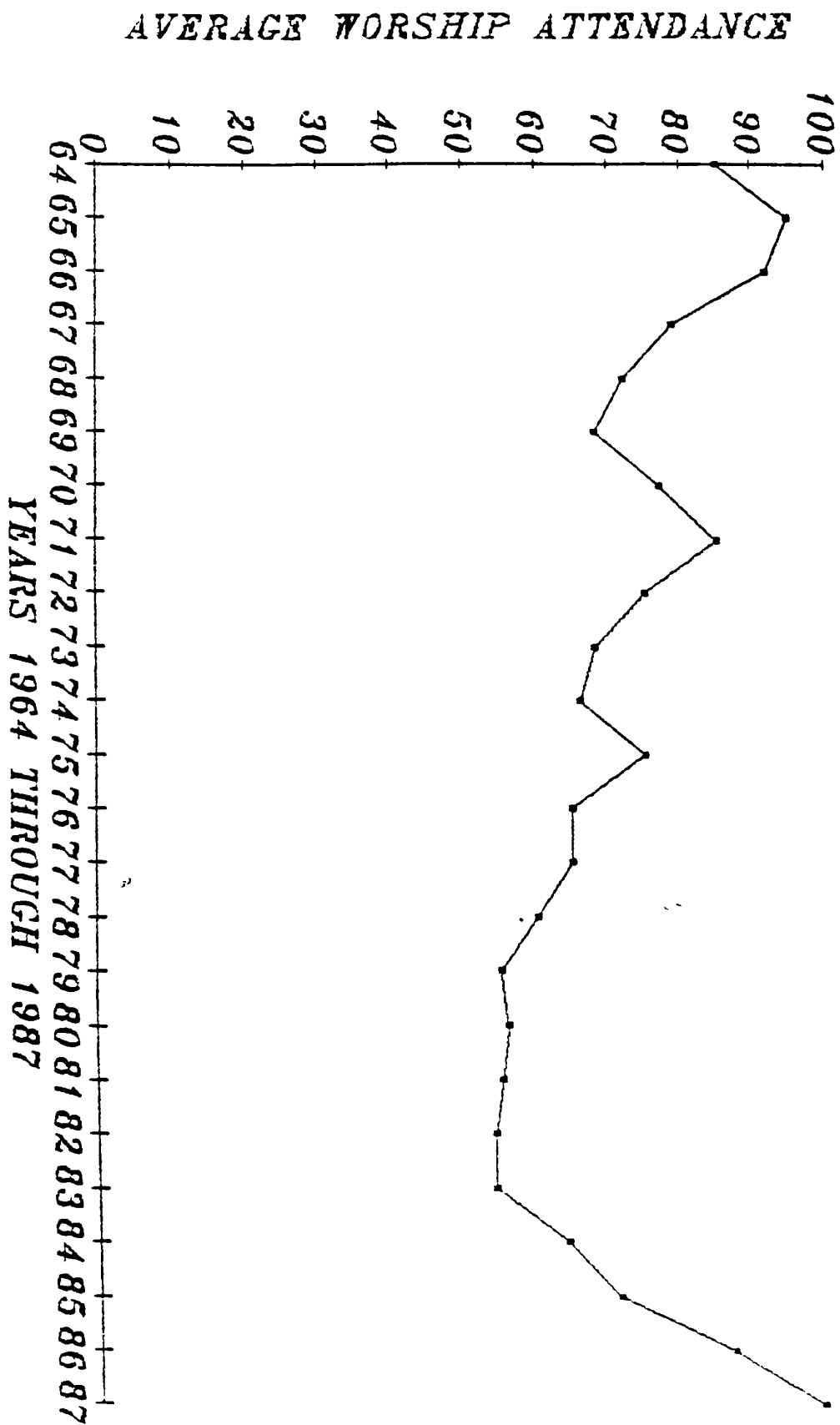




## APPENDIX D

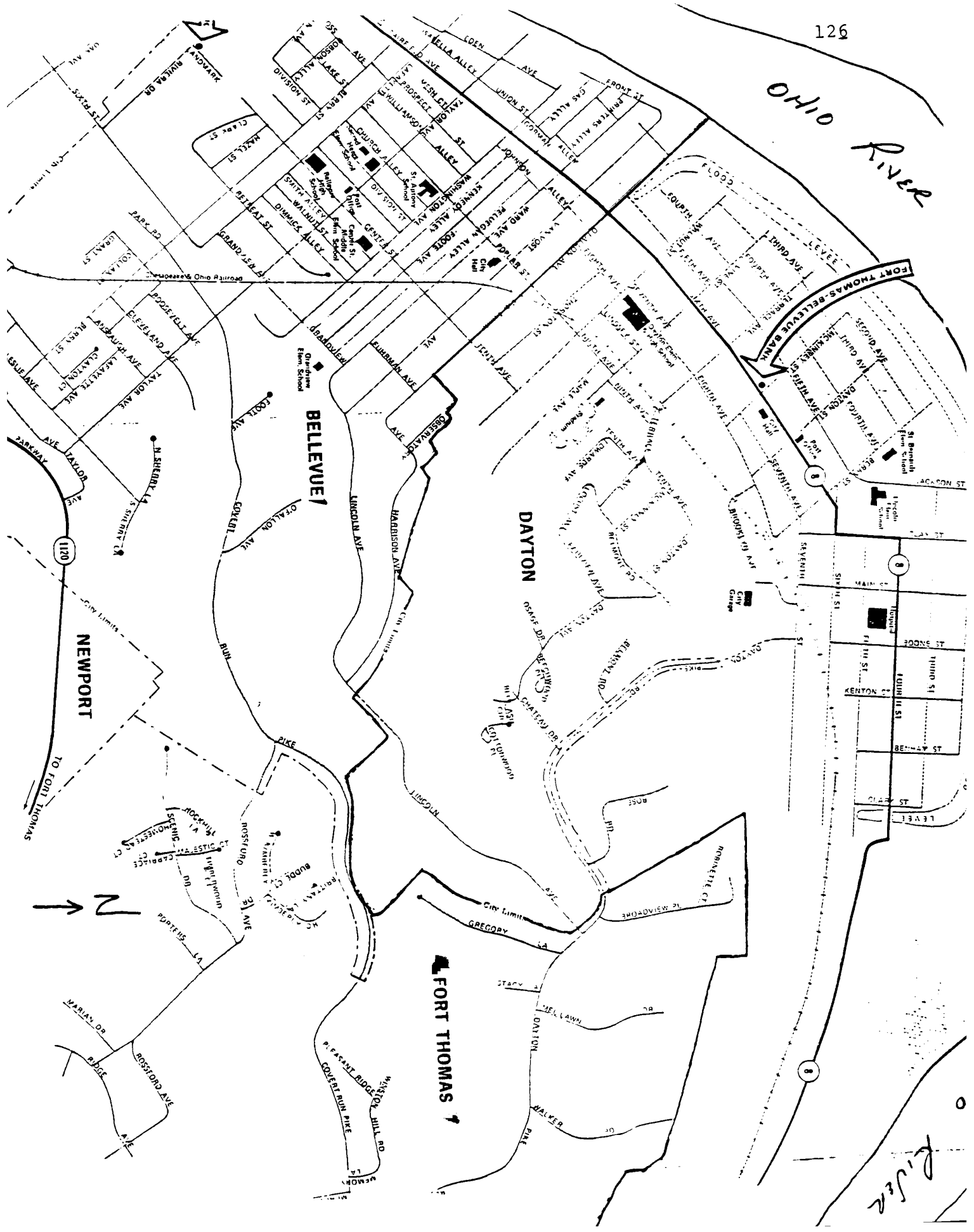
CALVARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

# CALVARY U.M.C. AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE



## APPENDIX E

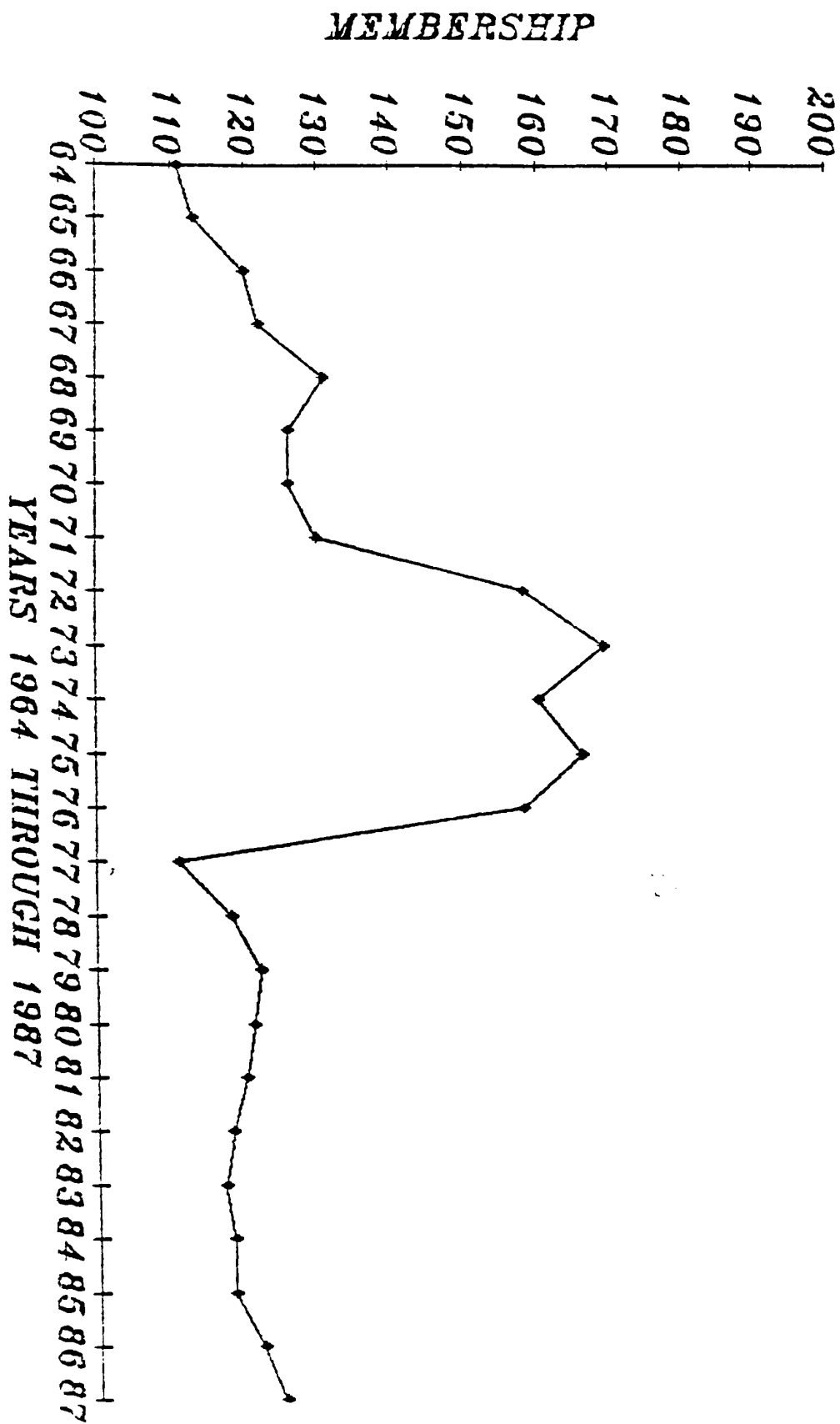
MAP OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY HIGHLIGHTING DAYTON, KENTUCKY



## APPENDIX F

## TOWER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MEMBERSHIP TRENDS

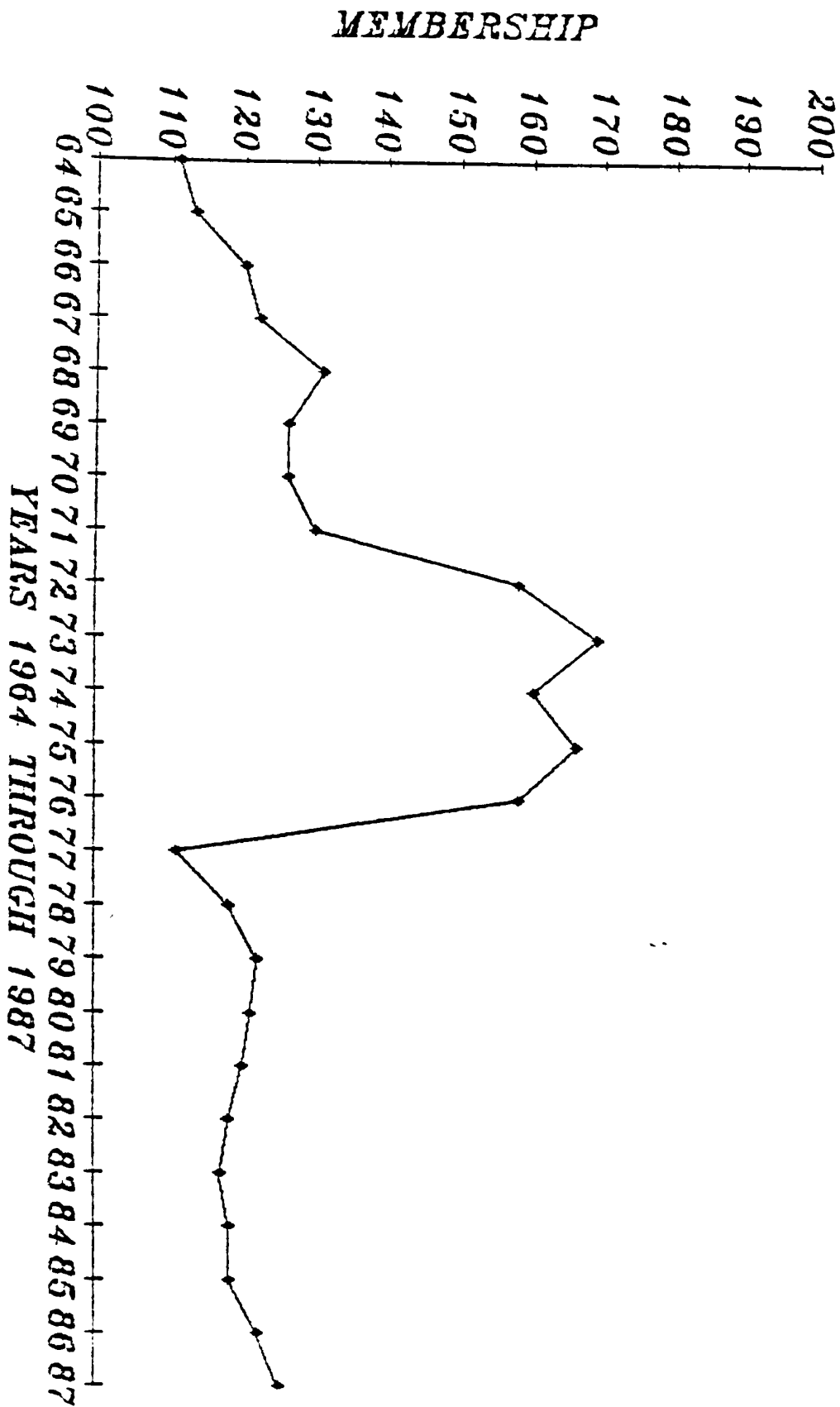
**TOWER U.M.C.  
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP**



## APPENDIX G

## TOWER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

**TOWER U.M.C.  
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP**





## APPENDIX H

A RESOLUTION TO MERGE AND RELOCATE

WHEREAS: the Joint Study Committee having been duly commissioned by the two local congregations of Calvary United Methodist and Tower United Methodist in December 1987 to study the future of both existing churches; and

WHEREAS: the Joint Study Committee conducted a thorough study on the options designated by the Church Conferences of Calvary and Dayton Churches which included, but was not limited to, the following areas of study: 1). Both churches would remain a two-point charge after the Kentucky Annual Conference in June of 1989; 2). Both churches would return to a single-point charge with both churches receiving an appointed pastor after the Kentucky Annual Conference in June 1989; 3). Both congregations would merge forming one congregation; 4). Both congregations would merge forming one congregation with subsequent relocation; and 5). Allowing the Joint Study Committee to make additional recommendations it felt that would best suit the future of both congregations; and

WHEREAS: the Joint Study Committee studied the above mentioned options and made periodic reports throughout the year of 1988 to both congregations as to the results of their study; and

WHEREAS: The Joint Study Committee completed their study in the prescribed time established by the two church conferences and have presented their findings to both congregations on January 8, 1989; and

WHEREAS: this Church Conference, now in session, was duly announced as prescribed by the Book of Discipline, said announcement being made both from the pulpit and by letter mailed to all known members,

BE IT THEREFORE NOW RESOLVED: that this Church Conference, after having full and complete discussion at the previous informational meeting on January 8, 1989, affirm the Joint Study Committee's recommendation for the two congregations to merge forming one congregation with subsequent relocation to a strategic location; and

BE IT THEREFORE NOW FURTHER RESOLVED: that this recommendation of merger with relocation be contingent upon the availability of a piece of property that would be conducive to providing adequate space for relocation; and

BE IT THEREFORE NOW FURTHER RESOLVED: that a "Joint Building Committee" be formed with representatives from both Churches to act as necessary concerning relocation; and

BE IT THEREFORE NOW FURTHER RESOLVED: that if the availability of a piece of land is nonexistent that this recommendation to merge and relocate would then be considered null and void; and

BE IT THEREFORE NOW FURTHER RESOLVED: that both

congregations would then return to single-point charges after the Kentucky Annual Conference in June of 1989 as dictated by the Church Conferences in December 1987.

Respectfully submitted

Joint Study Committee  
Calvary and Tower United Methodist Churches

## APPENDIX I

Survey Instrument / Questionnaire

The following is a compilation of the data gleaned from the surveys.

AGE:	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
15-20			
21-25		1	
26-30		3	
31-35	4	5	
36-40	2	3	
41-45	2	5	
46-50			
51-55			
56-60	1	3	
61-65		2	1
66-70	1	2	4
71-75			2
76-80		4	2
81-OVER		1	2
SEX:			
Male	4	14	1
Female	6	15	10
MARITAL STATUS:			
Single		2	2
Separated		1	
Divorced		3	
Widowed	1	3	9
Married	9	20	
SPOUSE MEMBER:			
Yes	6	14	
No	4	6	11
DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN?	15	33	3

SECTION I. BEFORE YOUR CHURCH MERGED WITH ANOTHER CONGREGATION - OR YOUR CHURCH RELOCATED.

1. HOW LONG WERE YOU A MEMBER OF ONE OF THE LOCAL CHURCHES BEFORE THE MERGER - OR BEFORE YOU DECIDED TO RELOCATE?

	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
LESS THAN ONE YEAR		3	
1-5	4	3	
6-10	1	2	
11-20	4	6	
21-30		6	
OVER 30+ YEARS		6	11
NO RESPONSE	1	3	

2. DID YOU WALK OR DRIVE TO CHURCH MOST SUNDAYS?

WALKED TO CHURCH	2	3	11
DROVE TO CHURCH	9	26	
AVERAGE MILEAGE DRIVEN	2.5	14	

3. ON THE AVERAGE, ABOUT HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU ATTEND CHURCH WORSHIP DURING THE YEAR BEFORE THE CHURCH MERGED -OR BEFORE THE CHURCH DECIDED TO RELOCATE?

NONE		1	
ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR			
ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH		1	
FOUR+ TIMES A MONTH	10	26	11
NO RESPONSE		1	

4. ON HOW MANY CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS, COMMITTEES, AND GROUPS DID YOU HOLD MEMBERSHIP BEFORE THE MERGER - OR BEFORE THE CHURCH RELOCATED (NOT INCLUDING CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP)?

NONE	2	5	3
ONE		7	1
TWO	2	8	2
THREE	4	2	1
FOUR		1	1
FIVE OR MORE	1	4	3
NO RESPONSE	1	2	

5. HOW MUCH TIME WOULD YOU SAY YOU SPENT DURING THE COURSE OF AN AVERAGE MONTH IN CHURCH AFFAIRS BEFORE THE MERGER - OR BEFORE THE CHURCH RELOCATED (INCLUDING TIME FOR MEETINGS, COMMITTEE WORK, TRAVEL, STUDY, WORSHIP, ETC. )?

NONE		2	1
1-5 HOURS	1	6	3
6-10 HOURS	6	4	
11-15 HOURS	1	6	3
16-20 HOURS		3	
OVER 20 HOURS		6	3

	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
NO RESPONSE	2	2	

6. WHEN YOUR CHURCH DECIDED TO MERGE - OR DECIDED TO RELOCATE, WHAT WAS THE MAJOR REASON COMMUNICATED TO THE CONGREGATION FOR THE NEED TO MERGE - OR TO RELOCATE?

PASTOR AND			
ADM. WANTED IT		4	
INADEQUATE PARKING	7	5	
FINANCIAL PROBLEMS		7	3
DECLINING MEMBERSHIP		8	4
CHANGE IN COMMUNITY		1	1
SANCTUARY TOO SMALL	3	15	
REFOCUS OF PURPOSE			
AND MISSION OF CHURCH	1	10	
OTHER		9	6

CHRIST: Eight indicated the need to get out of the flood area and one indicated the need for educational space.

GRACE: Five indicated the reason to merge was because of a tornado and one indicated the reason for the merge was to accommodate the District Superintendent and Conference.

7. IN YOUR OWN OPINION, WHAT WAS THE REASON FOR YOUR CHURCH TO MERGE - OR TO RELOCATE?

PASTOR AND			
ADM. WANTED IT		4	1
INADEQUATE PARKING	7	5	
FINANCIAL PROBLEMS		6	5
DECLINING MEMBERSHIP	1	7	3
CHANGE IN COMMUNITY			
SANCTUARY TOO SMALL	3	15	
REFOCUS OF PURPOSE			
AND MISSION OF CHURCH	2	9	
OTHER	3	12	5

LAWRENCEBURG: (1) "The loss of real long term growth was being stifled." (1) "The need to relocate because of growing membership." (1) "The need for more room, Sunday school, kitchen and fellowship hall."

CHRIST: (10) "Because of the churches being in the flood area." (1) "The need for more educational space." (1) "The church functions better as one community."

GRACE: (4) "Because of the tornado." (1) "To accommodate the District Superintendent and Conference."

8. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT WAS THE SOURCE OF THE IDEA TO MERGE - OR TO RELOCATE?

	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
MEMBERS	5	22	4
PASTOR	4	10	
DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT		8	7
CONFERENCE	2	6	2
DENOMINATIONAL BOARD			1

9. IN YOUR OWN OPINION, WAS THE MERGER - OR RELOCATION - NEEDED FOR THE CHURCH TO STAY IN EXISTENCE?

YES	6	21	9
NO	4	8	2

10. IF YOU ANSWERED QUESTION 9 NO, WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN DONE TO SAVE THE CHURCH?

LAWRENCEBURG: "We would have stayed in existence but it would have been crowded."

"We would never grow anymore...but I feel would still exist."

"The church would still exist but no room for expansion."

CHRIST: "Members of the congregation needed to become more active."

"Don't know."

"I believe the Allen U.M.C. would have continued on its own."

-Five persons did not respond to this question even though they answered question nine with a no answer.

GRACE: "All work together with one accord."

-One person did not respond to this question even though this person answered question nine with a "no" answer.

11. HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT THE MERGER - OR RELOCATION - BEFORE ITS COMPLETION?

GOOD	10	26	5
BAD		1	3
INDIFFERENT		1	2
NO RESPONSE		1	1

12. WHAT WAS THE MAJOR FACTOR IN YOUR ATTENDING THE FORMER CHURCH BEFORE THE MERGER - OR BEFORE THE RELOCATION?

LIVED CLOSE	4	3
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	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
CLOSE RELATIONSHIP			
WITH MEMBERS	6	13	4
GREW UP IN CHURCH	2	19	7
OTHER	1	2	
NO RESPONSE	1	1	

LAWRENCEBURG: "I have always been a Methodist."

CHRIST: "The Pastor."

"I was looking for a loving and caring church."

13. WHAT FACTORS DID YOU CONSIDER THE MOST NEGATIVE IN LEAVING THE FORMER FACILITY?

ATTACHMENT TO BUILDING	6	13	4
RELATIVES GREW			
UP IN CHURCH		7	3
FELT NO NEED TO LEAVE		1	1
OTHER		3	1
NO RESPONSE	4	8	4

CHRIST: "The possibility of financial difficulty in construction costs."

"No negative feelings on my part. I had not attended Allen long enough to become attached to the facility."

"Memories of important events of my life in the church."

GRACE: "I worked for over fifty years for the church."

14. WHAT DIFFERENT OPTIONS DID YOUR CHURCH CONSIDER BEFORE DECIDING TO GO AHEAD WITH THE MERGER - OR RELOCATION?

LAWRENCEBURG: Five persons gave no response.

- Three persons indicated the buying of additional property and expanding the present facility.

-One indicated he/she was unsure.

-One indicated none.

CHRIST: Thirteen persons gave no response.

-Eleven indicated none as their response.

-Two indicated addition of classrooms to present facilities.

-Three indicated that merger was the only option available.

-The possibility of getting a full-time pastor for the small church even though financially it probably was not feasible.

GRACE: Four persons gave no response.

-Two indicated the repairing of existing property.

-Five indicated none as a response.



15. IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS, PLEASE INDICATE  
HOW THE DECISION WAS REACHED?

	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
PASTOR		5	2
DISTRICT SUPT.		6	1
CONGREGATION AS A WHOLE	7	22	5
GROUP OF PEOPLE WITHIN THE CONGREGATION		2	3
STUDY COMMITTEE	1	5	1
NO RESPONSE	2	3	2

SECTION II. AFTER THE MERGER - OR RELOCATION.

16. DID THE TWO CHURCHES?

MERGE WITHOUT RELOCATION		8	7
MERGE WITH RELOCATION		18	4
MAINTAINED SEPARATE FACILITIES			
RELOCATED TO A NEW LOCATION	10		
NO RESPONSE		3	

17. HOW LONG HAVE THE TWO CHURCHES BEEN MERGED - OR  
HOW LONG HAS THE CHURCH BEEN RELOCATED?

LESS THAN 1 YEAR	10		
LESS THEN 3 YEARS		19	11
LESS THAN 5 YEARS		9	
LESS THAN 10 YEARS			
NO RESPONSE		1	

18. DO YOU WALK OR DRIVE TO CHURCH SINCE THE MERGER -  
OR RELOCATION?

WALK		2	1
DRIVE TO CHURCH	10	27	11
AVERAGE MILEAGE DRIVEN	2	4.5	2

19. ON THE AVERAGE, ABOUT HOW OFTEN DO YOU ATTEND  
CHURCH WORSHIP NOW SINCE THE MERGER - OR SINCE THE CHURCH  
HAS RELOCATED?

NONE			
ABOUT:			
ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR			
ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH			1
FOUR+ TIMES A MONTH	7	27	10
NO RESPONSE	3		

20. IN HOW MANY CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS, COMMITTEES, AND GROUPS DO YOU NOW HOLD MEMBERSHIP?

	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
NONE	3	4	4
ONE			
TWO	2	6	2
THREE	3	8	3
FOUR		3	2
FIVE OR MORE			
NO RESPONSE	2	2	

21. HOW MUCH TIME WOULD YOU SAY YOU SPEND DURING THE COURSE OF A MONTH IN CHURCH AFFAIRS SINCE THE MERGER - OR RELOCATION? (INCLUDING TIME FOR MEETINGS, COMMITTEE WORK, TRAVEL, STUDY, WORSHIP, ETC.)

NONE	1		1
1-5 HOURS		7	3
6-10 HOURS	5	8	3
11-15 HOURS	1	5	
16-20 HOURS		6	1
OVER 20 HOURS		3	2
NO RESPONSE	3		

22. SINCE THE MERGER - RELOCATION, DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE A ADEQUATE CHURCH IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS?

NEW MISSION AND PURPOSE			
YES	3	26	
NO		3	3
FINANCIAL GIVING			
YES	3	26	2
NO		3	3
GROWING MEMBERSHIP			
YES	3	28	
NO		1	3
LARGER SANCTUARY			
YES	3	29	1
NO			3
ADEQUATE PARKING			
YES	3	29	5
NO			3
NO RESPONSE	7		3

23. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE MERGER - RELOCATION NOW?

	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
GOOD	8	27	6
BAD			1
INDIFFERENT		2	3
NO RESPONSE	2		1

24. IF YOU BECAME A MEMBER AFTER THE MERGER -  
RELOCATION, WHY WERE YOU NOT A MEMBER PREVIOUSLY?

ATTENDING ANOTHER CHURCH	1	1	
NOT ACTIVE IN CHURCH		1	
DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT CHURCH			
OTHER		1	
NO RESPONSE	9	26	11

CHRIST: One person responded that he/she was not ready.

25. IF YOU BECAME A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH AFTER THE MERGER - RELOCATION, WHAT FACTORS WERE MOST INFLUENTIAL IN YOUR BECOMING A MEMBER?

LIVED CLOSE  
TO THE CHURCH

RECOMMENDATION  
OF A FRIEND

SAW CHURCH AS  
I DROVE BY

DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION	1		1
NO RESPONSE	9	27	10
OTHER		2	

CHRIST: "I wanted to work in the church."  
-"Visited the church and felt good about it."

26. WAS THE NAME OF THE CHURCH CHANGED WHEN THE  
CONGREGATIONS MERGED TOGETHER?

YES		26	2
NO	1	1	9
NO RESPONSE	9	2	

27. DO YOU FEEL ONE FORMER CHURCH "CONTROLS" THE  
LEADERSHIP EVEN THOUGH THE CHURCHES HAVE MERGED?

YES		1	5
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	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
NO		27	5
NO RESPONSE	10	1	1

28. DO YOU FEEL ADEQUATE TIME WAS SPENT IN PREPARATION FOR THE MERGER - RELOCATION?

YES	5	27	5
NO			5
NO RESPONSE	5	2	1

29. IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE MERGER - RELOCATION, WHAT ALTERNATIVES MIGHT HAVE BEEN BETTER?

TWO-POINT CHARGE		1	
PART-TIME PASTOR			
MERGER			
WITHOUT RELOCATION			1
NO RELOCATION			
OTHER			1
NO RESPONSE	10	28	9

GRACE: "The need for congregational meeting with complete membership notified so that everyone has an opportunity to be at meeting."

30. IS THE MERGED - RELOCATED CHURCH STILL IN THE CITY LIMITS OF THE PREVIOUSLY EXISTING CHURCH(S)?

YES	6	20	11
NO		9	
NO RESPONSE	4		

SECTION III. IF YOU HAD IT TO DO OVER AGAIN, WHAT WOULD YOU DO DIFFERENTLY?

EACH QUESTION WAS RATED USING THE FOLLOWING GUIDE:

- 1 - STRONGLY DISAGREE
- 2 - DISAGREE
- 3 - UNSURE
- 4 - AGREE
- 5 - STRONGLY AGREE

31. PRAY MORE ABOUT  
MERGER

RESPONSES	3	21	6
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	4.7	4.5	3.2
NO RESPONSE	7	9	5

## 32. ASK MORE QUESTIONS

	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
RESPONSES	3	21	5
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	3	3.9	2.8
NO RESPONSES	7	8	6

33. HAVE MORE JOINT MEETINGS WITH CONGREGATION(S)  
BEFORE THE MERGER - RELOCATION TAKES PLACE.

RESPONSES	3	21	5
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	2	3.3	3
NO RESPONSE	7	8	6

## 34. RENAME MERGED - RELOCATED CHURCH WITH A NEW NAME.

RESPONSES	4	22	2
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	1	3.1	3.5
NO RESPONSE	6	7	9
	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE

## 35. GET A NEW PASTOR FOR THE NEW CHURCH.

RESPONSES	4	21	2
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	1	1.6	1.5
NO RESPONSE	6	8	9

## 36. BUILD A LARGER SANCTUARY AND NOT RELOCATE.

RESPONSES	4	21	2
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	1	1.7	2
NO RESPONSE	6	8	9

37. BUILD A LARGER PARKING LOT AND NOT MERGE OR  
RELOCATE.

RESPONSES	4	21	2
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	1	1.6	2
NO RESPONSE	6	8	9

## 38. PAY MORE ATTENTION TO CHURCH GROWTH RESEARCH.

RESPONSES	4	21	1
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	2.3	3.9	4
NO RESPONSE	6	8	10

39. HAVE A MORE DEFINED PURPOSE AND MISSION FOR THE  
CHURCH MERGER OR RELOCATION.

RESPONSES	3	21	2
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	3	3.3	3

	LAWRENCEBURG	CHRIST	GRACE
NO RESPONSE	7	8	9

40. USED RESOURCES FROM CONFERENCE OR DENOMINATIONAL HEADQUARTERS MORE EFFECTIVELY REGARDING MERGING, RELOCATION, AND CHURCH GROWTH.

RESPONSES	3	21	2
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	3	2.9	3
NO RESPONSE	7	8	9

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