GROWING FEMALE LEADERS: BEST PRACTICES IN IDENTIFYING AND MENTORING IN THE HTB NETWORK

By

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ABSTRACT

Within the network of the church connected to Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB), very few female church leaders and church planters exists. The purpose of this research was to identify best practices used by HTB network ministry leaders who have successfully identified and/or trained more than one ordained female church leader.

This project surveyed ministry leaders who identified and mentored female church leaders. The subjects were asked about their experiences of identifying and mentoring female church leaders. The project also interviewed women who were trained in the HTB network about their experiences of being identified and mentored.

The findings showed that no standard methods of identifying and mentoring female church leaders in the HTB network existed. The findings also showed that HTB leaders considered themselves confident in mentoring women but very few female women considered themselves to have been mentored in the HTB network, particularly by senior leaders in the HTB network.

Growing Female Leaders :
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CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Chapter

Chapter 1 provides the framework for identifying commonalties of practice in churches that have successfully identified and trained multiple female church leaders. The researcher provides a rationale for the project, which evolved from personal experience supported by research. Included in the overview of the research project are the research design, purpose statement, research questions, participants, and data collection and analysis methods. To add support for this type of project, themes of the literature review and contextual factors are identified. Further discussion of the anticipated project results establishes the significance for and impact on the practice of ministry.

Personal Introduction

The Holy Trinity Brompton network (HTB), a network of which I am part, is a family of evangelical charismatic churches within the Anglican church. Holy Trinity Brompton itself is the biggest Anglican church in the United Kingdom and has gone on to plant over eighty churches across all the London boroughs and most of the major cities in the UK. HTB has a vision to plant one hundred churches in the biggest one hundred cities and towns in the UK. I am proud to be part of this exciting vision.

However, this vision is not without challenges. Although the church has publicly affirmed the importance of the ordination of women, I remain one of the only ordained female leaders within the HTB network. Out of the sixty churches in the network, only one currently has a female senior leader. I have had a great experience working in this network and growing as a leader, but I have been saddened by the fact very few ordained female leaders exists.

I am not alone in this concern. Increasingly, I have had senior leaders within HTB approach me and ask how they might encourage more women to enter ordained roles in the network. I have also had many women who are exploring ordination ask, "Where are the ordained female leaders?" When people approach me and ask how they might help identify and train female leaders, I want to be able to give examples and ideas based on sound research as opposed to speculation and opinion. I believe this project will enable me to do so effectively. More importantly, I hope this project will result in more senior female leaders emerging from the HTB network in the next ten years. I have had a great experience working and being trained to grow into senior church leadership in the network, and I want to see younger women have this same kind of experience. I believe that women at a senior leadership level within HTB enrich the network in a unique way. They add different perspectives and help the network represent the diversity of the church. HTB is a significant part of the evangelical charismatic church in the Anglican church.

Most importantly, I believe that women serving in leadership is a vital component of seeing the kingdom of God grow in the UK. A vital need exists for the Church of England in the UK to be revitalized, and we need everyone to be released into what they are called to do to make this passage.

Statement of the Problem

There are many great opportunities available in church planting and church leadership within the Church of England. A fantastic amount of space also exists for new forms of church and for reshaping how ministry is thought about. However, though the network vocally affirms women in ministry, one ordained senior leader exists, and only

one woman has planted an HTB network church. Therefore, the presenting theology of women communicated by the network is not the reality of what is happening. I believe that part of the problem this creates is that many church leaders do not know how to proactively identify and train female church leaders.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this research was to identify best practices used by HTB network ministry leaders who have successfully identified and/or trained more than one ordained female church leader.

Research Questions

To find best practices for identifying and mentoring female church leaders within the HTB network, the research was guided by the following four questions:

Research Question #1

What practices do HTB network ministry leaders use to identity female church leaders?

Research Question #2

What practices do HTB network ministry leaders use to mentor female church leaders?

Research Question #3

How do HTB network female church leaders report that they were identified?

Research Question #4

How do HTB network female church leaders report that they were mentored?

Rationale for the Project

There are three key reasons this question is important at present. One is practical and two are theological.

Practically, due to the expansion of the HTB network, a need exists to increase the number of ordained church leaders in the HTB network. This expansion is part of a vision to plant one hundred churches in towns and cities across the UK in the next ten years. Another practical consideration is numerical—the retirement of some of the original HTB network leaders will begin in the next ten years. Therefore, a need exists to both replace those who retire and to expand. Engaging the women who are not already training to be church leaders is a great solution to this need to increase ordained church leaders.

Secondly, this project is important because of the biblical precedent of the importance of the role of women and particularly the way that Jesus affirmed the role of women. As recorded in John 20, the resurrected Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, leading her to be called *Apostolorum apostola* by some church traditions—the apostle to the apostles. In John 4, Jesus commissions the "woman at the well" to go and share the news of his Messiahship. Women were part of the group of disciples who traveled with Jesus throughout his ministry. Similarly, the apostle Paul, in the first church planting movement, identified and worked alongside a variety of women such as Lydia, Phoebe, Junia, and Priscilla. Therefore, a biblical precedent for women to be at the forefront of the mission of the church is present. In a church tradition such as that of the HTB which places a high value on the role of scripture and in which all ministry roles are fully available to both men and women, a need exists to be aware when women are not equally at the forefront of mission.

Finally, I believe this issue is important due to the historical context of revival within the UK. In the last two hundred years, many of the newer denominations which have seen people come to faith in Christ—the Salvation Army, the Methodists, the Quakers, and the Foursquare Church, for example—have put the leadership of women at the forefront of their growth strategies. If HTB is interested in seeing growth on a similar scale to those historical times of growth in the church, then engaging women leaders seems to have a historical precedent of being successful in this endeavor.

Definition of Key Terms

HTB network

The HTB network is an Anglican network of churches which are connected due to their links to Holy Trinity Brompton. The network is primarily relationally formed—for example, a curate planting a church from HTB would result in that church automatically becoming part of the HTB network. Some churches join the HTB network through new leadership having a link to HTB or an HTB network church. Most churches in the HTB network are located in England and are part of the Church of England. However, in more recent years, the HTB network has also expanded to include churches more worldwide. HTB now has churches in Malaysia, Kenya, Canada, and the US which would consider themselves part of the HTB network. HTB network churches are charismatic and evangelical in nature but may look different in style and structure depending on their context. While they have links to HTB, all churches are independently governed and have their own leadership structures.

HTB

HTB is the largest Anglican church in the UK based in Chelsea in London. HTB has around five thousand members. HTB is known for being the church which began the Alpha course, an evangelistic course that is now used by a variety of church traditions worldwide.

Church planting

Church planting is starting new churches or planting a congregation into an established Anglican church.

Ministry leaders

A ministry leader is someone who serves within the HTB network in church leadership. They do not necessarily have to be the ordained senior leader but are a person of significant authority within a church.

Female church leader

In this instance, I am defining a female church leader as an ordained woman in a leadership role within the HTB network. They do not necessarily have to be the senior church leader.

Incumbent

An incumbent is the senior church leader within an Anglican church structure. Sometimes they are also known by the title "Vicar" or "Rector."

Leadership pipeline

The leadership pipeline is the structure that is in place which generates the next generation of leaders.

Success

In this context, success is defined as the women who are currently serving or training for service in church leadership within the HTB network. In this instance, success is also defined by women remaining in the HTB network for their training, resulting in them being more likely to eventually become a lead pastor of an HTB church.

CRT

The Church Resourcing Trust (CRT) is the organization within the HTB network responsible for the administration of the network and for the training and administration of new HTB church plants.

Delimitations

For the purpose of this research, the project focused on ministry leaders in the HTB network who have successfully identified at least two women who have then gone forward to train for ordination in the Church of England (C of E) in the last ten years. The fact that the women were identified for ordained church leadership specifically is important. This importance is because while one can serve in lay leadership in the Church of England, one must be ordained to ultimately lead a church. Therefore, for HTB to be "successful" in identifying candidates, the women need to have been selected for training for ordination. The ministry leaders themselves can be ordained or lay but must be clearly serving in an official leadership role in an HTB network church.

The second category of leaders this project focused on is ministry leaders in the HTB network who have successfully mentored women towards church leadership. The ministry leaders must have mentored at least two women with a the intent to be a part of church leadership in the last ten years. The women who were being mentored must have

been considering ordained leadership specifically but do not necessarily have to have

been ordained. The ministry leaders must have been serving within an HTB network

church at the time that the mentoring took place, and the mentee must also have been part

of an HTB network church. The mentoring does not need to have been a formal

relationship but must have involved meeting with the women more than once with a view

of training them for church leadership.

The third category of people the project focused on is female church leaders or

those who are training for church leadership within the HTB network. For the purpose of

this research, the women need to have either been identified for leadership within an

HTB network church or have been mentored within an HTB network church. While there

may be other church traditions within the Anglican church that bear similarities to the

HTB network, this project is only concerned with HTB network churches due to the

prominent role those churches have in the strategic development of the wider Church of

England through the planting of resourcing churches. This criteria is also due to the wider

impact HTB churches have on the global church through their Alpha and Leadership

conferences.

In regards to female church leaders, this project is interested in women who go

forward for ordained leadership in the C of E from the HTB Network. These female

leaders can either still be training or be ordained. The female leaders must have either

been identified or mentored in church leadership within a HTB network church.

Review of Relevant Literature

There were three main categories of literature reviewed for this project. The first

category considered the biblical foundations of the role of women in leadership, the

second category considered what secular organizations have to say about the role of women in leadership, and the final section considered the role of the women within the modern church. Attention was also briefly been given to the role of women in the first five hundred years of the church.

The biblical foundations section includes an analysis of the role of women within the Old Testament with particular attention given to the book of Leviticus and the dynamic of cleanliness and uncleanliness in the role of women. This biblical passage was then compared to the later Jewish writings of the Mishnah and the role the Mishnah may have played in attitudes toward women at the time of Jesus.

Sue Russell and Jackie Rouse argue that passages such as Luke 10.38-42 (NRSV) and John 4.1-42 indicate that Jesus showed no fear in meeting alone with women or touching them (2018: 43). These passages argued for a rethinking of relationships between men and women by using the sibling mentality as the default mentality within the church. Ben Witherington also highlights Luke 7.36-50, Mark 7.24-36, Mark 1.29-31 and Mark 5.21-43, making a case for Jesus redefining the significance of women in the early church ('Women in the early Church" 3

The theological foundations section also examines the role of women and the debate surrounding this by addressing Paul's writings, such as 1 Timothy 2. This section looks at the interpretation of these texts from the perspective of scholars like Craig Keener. Also included here is a complementarian perspective on the writings of Paul, discussing the writings of Wayne Grudem and John Piper. The question of the Trinity's nature and relationship to gender roles is also examined alongside the Trinity's connection to eucharistic ministry and female presidency.

The second section considers the role of women within the business sector with particular attention given to two reports written by the consulting firm McKinsey and one report from Grant Thornton which consider the factors that lead to a more diverse workforce. This section also focuses on the economic reasons suggested by Leimon for encouraging women to enter leadership.

The third section considers the position of women within the modern evangelical charismatic church. This section begins by examining the work of Caroline Moore on "barriers to female church planters." (32) Attention was given to scholars such as Podles and Murrow who suggest that the growth in female leaders may be linked to church decline, an argument that is refuted by a Barna Group survey. The issues of mixed-gender mentoring, attitudes toward the ethics of one-on-one, mixed-gender meetings, and the Billy Graham rule are then considered from both the perspectives of scholars who affirm such mentoring and those who do not recommend such mentoring such as Ed Stetzer. Section three concludes by outlining suggested best practices in identifying and mentoring female church leaders, considering theories of Richard Moy and Kadi Cole.

Research Methodology

Type of Research

This project was a mixed method, pre-intervention study which involved both ministry leaders who identified and mentored female church leaders and female church leaders who were identified and mentored. In the first stage, a questionnaire was given to ministry leaders who self-identified as having participated in such mentoring. The questionnaire sought to find out the average number of women who had been mentored and/or identified per ministry. The questionnaire also asked respondents how they

identified potential church leaders and whether there were any differences in how they

identified female ones.

The project also involved several focus groups made up of female church leaders,

both in ministry and training, who had either been identified and/or mentored within the

HTB network. The focus groups were semi-structured involving a series of set questions

though the facilitator was able to ask for expansion and clarification. The focus groups

included a mix of people from each of the two categories in recognition of the fact that

some women fit into both categories and some into one or the other.

Participants

The first group of participants in the study were ministry leaders from within the

HTB network of churches. These participants were both male and female, though

predominantly male as that is the makeup of the HTB network leadership. The ministry

leaders did not have to be ordained but needed to have played or be playing a significant

senior role within church leadership and to have either identified or mentored at least two

female church leaders within the HTB network in the last ten years. The ministry leader

needed to have been working in a HTB network church at the time of the identification

and/or mentoring but did not necessarily need to be currently leading in a HTB network

church. For example, ministry leaders were still eligible to participate if they had retired

in the last few years.

The second group of participants were women who had either been identified or

mentored in church leadership in the HTB network within the last ten years. The women

did not have to be currently in a HTB network church to qualify for the study but did

need to either be ordained or an ordinand in good standing in the Church of England.

Instrumentation

      Research Question 1: What practices do HTB network ministry leaders use to identity female church leaders? The instrumentation used for data collection for this research question was the first part of a two-part online qualitative questionnaire which was emailed to all ministry leaders in the HTB network for them to self-identify whether they were eligible to take it.

      Research Question 2: What practices do HTB network ministry leaders use to identity female church leaders? The instrumentation used for data collection for this research question was the second part of the online qualitative questionnaire. Some ministry leaders were only eligible to answer one of the research questions, and some were eligible to answer both.

      Research Question 3: How do HTB network female church leaders report that they were identified? The instrumentation used for data collection for this research question was a focus group. The focus group involved data collection for both research question 3 and research question 4.

      Research Question 4: How do HTB network female church leaders report that they were mentored? The instrumentation used for data collection for this research question was a focus group. The focus group involved data collection for both research question 3 and research question 4.

Data Collection

      The data for the questionnaire was taken over a two-month period during which the questionnaire was emailed out to the relevant ministry leaders. The questionnaire was made up of four quantitative and six qualitative questions. Ministry leaders who qualified

for both Research Question 1 and Research Question 2 answered all ten questions.

Ministry leaders who only qualified for Research Question 1 or Research Question 2 only

answered seven—the four quantitative questions and the three qualitative ones that

related to either Research Question 1 or Research Question 2.

The focus group data was collected over a one-week period using three different

online focus groups. Each focus group last for forty-five minutes and was made up of a

group of six to eight people.

Data Analysis

The primary way the data from both the questionnaire and the focus groups were

analyzed was through theme analysis. The data was first transcribed and reviewed using

document analysis. The questionnaires were also collected and collated. The data was

then organized to generate categories, themes, and patterns among the responses.

Reflection on these coded responses enabled me to build theories which was then tested

by the data. These categories were also compared to the demographic data to ascertain

any possible correlation of responses. The questionnaire and focus groups were initially

analyzed separately but were then compared to investigate the themes that emerged.

Generalizability

This study was conducted in such a way as to allow other researchers to reproduce

the study in HTB network churches in the United Kingdom that share a common core of

beliefs and similar attitudes to the role of women in church leadership. The purposive

sampling method laid out in this project would require another researcher to have a high

level of knowledge of the ministry leaders, churches, and female leader trainees in the

HTB network to select and analyze an appropriate group of participants. The data

collected in this study can be used by other HTB network leaders to learn about best practices for identifying and mentoring female leadership candidates.

The methods of identifying and mentoring female church leaders in other parts of the Church of England or other denominations may vary from those used in the HTB network because of theological differences regarding the role of women in church leadership. However, the information from the study may be useful for other equalitarian charismatic evangelical churches wanting to explore best practices for identifying and mentoring women. In addition, the cultural norms of the United Kingdom would not necessarily translate to other cultures. The basic formula for determining best practices in identifying and mentoring female church leaders is reproducible, but the research questions, questionnaire, and focus groups would require modification to match the different methods and history of another denomination and/or culture.

Project Overview

Chapter 2 traces the biblical, historical, systematic, and practical theology of the role of women in church leadership. Chapter 2 also considers the role of secular research in the role of women in leaders. Chapter 3 further elaborates on the design of the study. Chapter 4 presents the findings that resulted from the questionnaire and focus groups, and Chapter 5 offers a summary and conclusion to this project.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The HTB network is church-planting movement within the Anglican church. Though the movement is affirming of the role of women as ordained church leaders, only a very small number of women leading HTB network churches exists. This project seeks to identify best practices in identifying and mentoring female church leaders within the HTB network. This chapter offers a biblical perspective on the role of women in scripture, first considering the influence of Leviticus and Deuteronomy on views of women in the Old Testament. Jesus' response and reaction to women in the New Testament is then considered alongside that of Paul. Attention is also given to Jesus' and Paul's approaches to identifying and mentoring men and women. A theological foundation for the role of women in church leadership is then considered from both a historical and eucharistic perspective.

Research on the role of women in secular leadership in business is then examined to identify parallels may exist to church leadership. Finally, relevant literature related to identifying and mentoring female leaders in the contemporary church is discussed.

Biblical Foundations

Before addressing specific Biblical examples of identifying and mentoring female leaders, considering the broader attitudes towards women in both the Old and New Testaments is important. The way women are viewed in scripture will affect the way and the extent to which they are identified and mentored for leadership.

Male and Female Relationships in the Old Testament

Before the New Testament is considered in detail, several passages from the Old Testament, specifically Leviticus and Deuteronomy, were examined to identify attitudes toward women that might influence the way that women were perceived in the Old Testament. The way that women were referred to within the early Law texts not only offered insight into the attitudes towards Jesus at the time of Jesus, but also had implications for the contemporary church.

Deborah Ellens offers an exegetical analysis and comparison of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Ellens contends that in Leviticus, the focus of the sex texts was ontology, classifying aspects of women's sexuality, whereas in Deuteronomy, the focus of the sex texts was property, referring to the man's ownership of the woman's sexuality and his duty to protect. She argues that women appeared as characters in the text in one of three ways: as agent, as property, and as agent and as property. She suggests that in Leviticus, women were consistently placed in the object slot and men were consistently placed in the subject slot of the grammar of the text (120). However, she also notes that while there were distinctions between women and men grammatically, both were seen to hold responsibility for maintaining the law in relation to male and female boundaries. She claims, for example, that Leviticus 20.10-21 indicates "[t]he intent of the laws is to protect sexual boundaries in general rather than woman's sexuality as man's property. In fact, woman is focalized like a man as an agent. Subordinate though she may be, she is responsible as is the man, to protect the classificatory order which constitutes Israel's purity system" (124). Men, therefore, had some distinctive responsibilities towards women even where gender roles differed.

Ellens sees a significant difference between men and women in Deuteronomy: "In Deuteronomy, the concern is that the woman and the man protect the woman herself as the sexual property of the man. The concern is to protect something coterminous with her body, belonging to the man" (130). However, other scholars such as Steinberg, disagree with Ellen's reading and argue that in texts such as Deuteronomy 22.28-29, which instruct the community how to respond to the rape of a women, the role of the woman was centralized in comparison to the book of Exodus where the father was centralized.

Blenkinsopp also disagrees with Ellens, arguing that the family laws in Deuteronomy were more focused on redefining male and female relationships in relation to the newly established, centralized government than to family groups—both men and women were the property of the wider system (12). Scholars such as White, reviewing Ellens' work, argue that she focuses only upon the parts of Leviticus and Deuteronomy that mention women, ignoring the wider socio-political implications of the text (45). The role and value of women in the Old Testament is therefore contested; however, the texts have arguably and historically been interpreted to put women in a subordinate, passive position.

The Mishnah

Before considering a New Testament perspective on female leaders in the context of Jesus and Paul, considering the broader Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts that would have influenced those who engaged with the early Church is helpful. Texts such as the Mishnah, while not part of the Bible, would have been well known to Jesus and many of his contemporaries and may have influenced their views on women. Some critical

examples within the Mishnah directly relate to attitudes around the identification and mentoring of female leaders.

Judith Wegner, for example, argues that the Mishnah "depicts a society whose central character is the adult Israelite male" (23). She asserts that who the religious text was written for says a lot about who was expected to learn within a faith context. By addressing adult Israelite men, the Mishnah created the assumption that such men have been identified as the ones who learn. Wegner also suggests that women were excluded from public life in part because their sexuality was dangerous, and that part of a woman's role was not to appear to be a sexual temptation to men. This exclusion seems to suggest a culture where men's responsibility was to learn, and women's responsibility was not to be a distraction to the men learning. If, however, Wegner is correct in her reading of the Mishnah, then Jesus' actions in relation to women in the Gospels marked a clear divergence from his cultural background as he both spoke to women and spent time with them alone.

Not all scholars of the Mishnah agree with Wegner's reading. Basser, for example, argues that her reading is heavily influenced by what he perceives to be her more comprehensive agenda, to argue that the Mishnah is damaging for women. However, she suggests that the theme presented in the Mishnah, that the role of women is to not be a sexual temptation, also appeared in later Christian literature about women learning. This interpretation of Leviticus and the Mishnah, even if not the most accurate, had a powerful influence on gender expectations and their role in the preparation of men and women for Christian leadership.

Jesus and Women

While Jesus never comments directly upon the role of women in the Gospels, several key accounts indicate the ways that he engaged with women. Two examples stand out as relevant to the broader topic: Jesus' interaction with Mary and Martha in Luke 10.38-42 and his engagement with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4.1-42. Focus primarily placed upon these, as "[t]hese are two examples of women who were challenged to learn and act upon Jesus' word. He treated women just as he treated his male disciples" (Russell and Roese 43). Kremski takes this a step further, arguing that in his dealings with women, one of the key things that Jesus displayed was a lack of fear (21).

Russell and Roese contend that Jesus' treatment of Mary and Martha in Luke 10.38-42 rejects the view of the Mishnah—that a woman's role was mainly determined by her economic status—and instead suggests women were also worthy of being discipled. Ben Witherington agrees, stating that "Jesus makes clear that for women as well as men, one's primary take is to be a proper disciple, only in that context can one be a proper hostess" ("Women in the ministry of Jesus"51). This refocusing on the role of women is essential, suggesting that Jesus' treatment of women was a movement away from the culture that he lived in. Women being held to the same standards as men is suggested as an expectation from Jesus that. Witherington suggests that Jesus was possibly alone with the two women, something that would have been culturally inappropriate for a Jewish man ("Women in the ministry of Jesus"51). As Witherington notes, "This text seems to reinforce what we found in Lk. 7:36-50, that Jesus did not accept the Levitical distinctions between clean and unclean people" ("Women in the

ministry of Jesus"52). If this distinction of clean and unclean between women was present at the time of Jesus, then he rejected it.

Another important passage to consider when looking at Jesus and women is John 4.1-42, Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. While Jesus treated the Samaritan woman as an intelligent person, he also called her to account for her sins. As Witherington suggests, "[b]y bringing some women to confession and pronouncing their sins forgiven he revealed his desire to heal the whole person and his recognition that women were as capable of as many sins as men" ("Women in the Early Church."60). Similarly, Russell and Roese argue that Jesus did not measure women to any different standard than men, but that "[women] were not 'in' because of their status as members of the tribe of Israel or 'out' because of their status as women. Like men, they were 'in' or 'out' because of their own choices, because of their actions, because of their obedience to Jesus" (63).

One thing that is clear in both these interactions and those in Luke 7.36-50, Mark 7.24-36, Mark 1.29-31 and Mark 5.21- 43 is that Jesus did not express fear in talking to, approaching, or even touching women. As Witherington argues, "Jesus's concern is for women as [people], rather than as sources of potential temptation or defilement" ("Women in the ministry of Jesus" 70). Jesus rejected some of the religious, cultural barriers of the age in ways that visibly shocked those around him. He did not appear to be interested in the possible effects such encounters with women, particularly the anointing with oil, might have on his reputation. If we believe that Jesus could also possibly have met with Mary and Martha alone, we can understand him as also challenging convention in that way. His engagement with women seemed to be more of a priority than upholding

a perceived standard of behavior. This example is key in considering how church leaders might engage with those they are mentoring, particularly if their mentees are female and they are male.

A final example of note in considering how Jesus treated women is that of his engagement with Mary Magdalene at the resurrection in John 20. This engagement could also be argued to be the third occasion on which Jesus met with a woman alone. This encounter, immediately followed by Mary Magdalene's report to the disciples that she has "seen the Lord," has led some scholars, such as Hermann Broch, to argue that she is the first apostle (263). This view was recently shared by Pope Francis, who described Mary Magdalene as an "apostle of hope" *("General audience on Mary Magdalene"*). Jesus chose a woman to be the first person to encounter his resurrected form, even though her gender will make his story less believable as women are not considered reliable witnesses by his contemporaries.

What is apparent is that Jesus conversed with women as if they have autonomy. Elisabeth Moltmann suggests that psychoanalytical research has demonstrated that Jesus was the only man not dominated by the animus (41); Hannah Wolff calls him 'the integrated man"—that is, a man who integrated and brought to maturity the masculine and feminine attitudes which are to be found in any human being (108). As a result of this, Jesus could enter an absolute partnership with women—the coming of Jesus released new values. Since his life and ministry, the old standard is no longer applicable; new patterns of behavior have been opened. Moltmann's perspective is that Jesus' behavior should now be the standard for male-female interactions. If this is the case, this standard certainly has implications for how churches identify and mentor female leaders.

How Jesus Mentored Leaders

The ways that Jesus treated his disciples and engaged them in leadership are also pertinent to the depiction of his attitudes toward women. While all of Jesus' twelve disciples are male, he rarely seemed to 'mentor' them one-on-one, instead speaking to them as a broader group of twelve on multiple occasions, such as when he offers the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13. The disciples receive more profound teaching than many of the crowds that Jesus speaks to. Other examples are the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead in Mark 5.37-42 and Luke 8.50-55, the transfiguration of Christ on the Mount in Matthew 17.1-2, and Christ's travail in prayer at the Garden of Gethsemane in Matthew 26.36-39 and Mark 14.32-36. While Jesus did share one-on-one moments with Peter in John 21 and before the crucifixion, he seemed to do almost all his teaching to a group of people. Therefore, much of the way we disciple is interesting as discipling typically emphasizes one-on-one leader and mentee meetings as opposed to group settings. This model from Jesus might prove key later in considering how leaders are mentored.

How Jesus identified Leaders

The way Jesus identified leaders also contrasts with how leaders are often identified today. In many cases, Jesus either approached his most significant disciples directly, or they were invited to "come and see" by the other disciples. In the calling of the first disciples in Mark 1.16-20, Jesus approached them and invited them to follow him. Jesus called out to Peter and Andrew and then to James and John without any previous interaction. This type of calling is also shown in John 1.43-51 where Jesus calls

Philip. Philip then goes to Nathanael to call him to Jesus. However, Jesus is still the one who invited Nathanael to follow him. This pattern of identifying leaders is interesting when we consider that often in encouraging people to consider church leadership, we expect the first initiative to come from the people who are called as opposed to the one who calls. This practice was also unusual at the time. Keener illustrates that usually the disciple approached the rabbi and not the other way around ("IVP Commentary": 340). Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman also follows this pattern—he initiates the whole interaction, disciples her, and sends her out. In my experience, women rarely put themselves forward for positions of responsibility in the church even if they aspire to those. This scenario has been particularly true in preaching. Multiple men have approached or emailed me asking for opportunities to preach, but, at this point, no women have done so. Women have had to be directly asked to preach. Interestingly, Jesus seems to use the same model of approaching people directly, whether they are men or women.

The Pauline Church and Women

Some scholars, both historical and modern, would argue that scripture prohibits the role of women in church leadership. Many of these passages come from what are understood to be the writings of Paul. 1 Timothy 2.6 is probably the most used example for those who disagree with women leading in the church: "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man." John Calvin, in his commentary on 1 Timothy 2.6, suggests that this scripture should be interpreted, "that he takes from them the charge of instructing their family, but only excludes them from the office of teaching, which God has committed to men only…. woman, who by nature (that is, by the ordinary

law of God) is formed to obey" (142). Similarly John Chrysostom in a homily on 1

Timothy 2.6, stated, "The woman taught once- and ruined all." (Chrysostom 21)

Modern complementarians also hold that 1 Timothy 2.6 prohibits women from

preaching. DeYoung also suggests that despite recent scholarship, 1 Timothy 2.6

specifically prohibits women from preaching scripture in public meetings (DeYoung).

However, other scholars, such as Keener writing for CBE, argue that 1 Timothy

2.6 is more likely to have applied to a specific context at a specific time and should not

be considered a universal principle ("Interpreting 1 Timothy 2"). Similarly, Kroeger has

suggested that Paul's engagement with female leaders in other contexts makes it much

more likely that he was writing to engage with disorder in worship in a specific church

(256).

Other modern scholars, such as Clare Hendy (43) who would define themselves

as complementarians, would use passages such as 1 Corinthians 11.3—"But I want you

to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband,

and the head of Christ is God"—and Ephesians 5.23 to suggest that a principle of male

headship should prohibit women from holding senior office in the church. This

interpretation may not preclude women from serving in paid ministry but would restrict

the level of authority they could reach.

However, the principle of headship, centered around the Greek word "Kephale"

used in Paul's writing, has been much debated. Other scholars such as, Catherine Kroeger

argue that the word is better translated as "source," as opposed to head, changing the

emphasis of the passages (267). This interpretation is disputed by complementarians such

as Wayne Grudem (97).

On multiple occasions discussed in the Scriptures, the apostle Paul appeared to work with women and considered them partners in his church planting movement. Michael J. Bird argues that there are several examples of places in the time of Paul where women appeared to be leading churches, for example, Chloe, who is named in 1 Corinthians 11. He suggests she was probably one of the leaders of the Church in Corinth at the time. Bird also suggests that Paul placed significant trust on the theological understanding of Phoebe who was named in Romans as the deliverer of the letter written. However, while arguing that women can hold teaching positions in the Church is biblical, Bird suggests that suggesting that women should necessarily be the senior pastor in a church is not biblical as he still holds to a complementarian view of headship (78).

Keener argues that Phoebe's carrying of the letter is significant because at, the time, people would often write letters recommending the letter carrier ("IVP commentary"561). He suggests that Paul emphasizing Phoebe's spiritual qualifications is significant because Jewish and Greco-Roman circles would not have a high view of women's religious understanding, but she would have been vital in explaining any of the theology of the letter that would not have been understood by the listeners.

Multiple examples of other female leaders in the early church exists. Lydia in Acts 16.11-20 is suggested to be a wealthy and senior woman in the society. Some argue that she was approached by Paul to follow him into leadership, following the example of Jesus and his disciples. Marshall argues that her dealings in business suggest she was single or a widow (432), but this is not stated in the text so she could have been married. After she comes to faith in Christ, "[m]any of her households were baptized." (454) This occurrence suggests that not only did she have the personal autonomy to be baptized

herself, she was also a person of influence to those around her. Keener suggests, "She appears to be the head of the household consisting mainly of servants, though it is not impossible that she is married to a husband who leaves her religious activities alone" (612). Later in Acts 16 after Paul and Silas's arrest, they go to Lydia's house where it is recorded "many brothers and sisters were." Mays suggests that Lydia is therefore likely to have become the patron of the church in Philippi at the very least (Mays 54).

Paul also records examples of women and men working together in ministry, for example, the married couple Priscilla and Aquila who are described as hosting a church in 1 Corinthians 16.19. Priscilla is described as being with her husband, as teaching Apollos' theology, and as a risk-taker for the Gospel as a co-worker alongside a list of men in Romans 16.3-4. Keener argues that Priscilla's name being listed first might suggest she held a higher social status than her husband or that (as Keener thinks more likely given Paul's disregard for social status) she held a more senior role in the church (571). Gaventa shares Keener's view, arguing that "[n]othing in Paul's comments justifies the conclusion that these women worked in ways that differed either in kind or quality from the ways that men worked."(284) Nine other women are included in the list at the end of Romans 16. Of note is Junia, who is said to be "[p]rominent among the apostles." While for many years discussion occurred surrounding whether the name Junias was a masculine one, many scholars, including Barton, Muddliman, Dunn, and Keener, now argue this is a mistranslation due to the pairing of the name with Andronicus, suggesting a married relationship much like that of Priscilla and Aquila. Barton calls the alternative "a shocking mistranslation" (Barton and Muddiman 821).

Therefore, a strong argument exists that Paul worked alongside both women and men consistently throughout his ministry. Russell and Rouse take it a step further, suggesting that Paul models a way of engaging together in community that holds mutuality and sibling relationships as the ideal. They argue that the community of faith is a liminal community in which once the believer has become a Christian, the believer abandons some of the former social strata while still existing within the established social system. Therefore, as Russell and Rouse explain, Paul gives the guidance that he gives.(42) However, interpersonal relationships between community members were not based on these statuses but on their shared identity as siblings in Christ. They were, as New Testament scholar Scott Bartchy describes, non-patriarchal without being egalitarian (5). As demonstrated above, women clearly held leadership responsibilities and were taken seriously by both Jesus and Paul as partners in ministry (Köstenberger and Schreiner 61).

Theological Foundations

The Early Church

The extent to which women held leadership roles in the early church is disputed by scholars. Some, such as Karen Torjesen, argue that women held roles that were equal to men. Torjesen's argument takes a slightly extreme tone, however, as she argues that early patristic writers adopted Greco-Roman sexist social attitudes which apportioned to men and women different sets of activities, different roles, and different standards for excellence, concluding that early church fathers plotted to remove the role of the women in leadership (34). This view is also held by Gary Macy, who argues that women were ordained for the first twelve centuries of the church. Elizabeth Moltmann asserts that "[i]t

is now generally agreed that much material about or written by women was lost or destroyed in the church's struggle with Gnosticism." (32) The challenges created by Gnosticism within the early church possibly had a detrimental effect on the growth of women in ministry. If a significant proportion of non-mainstream ministry was led by women, then the crackdown on Gnosticism might have become more focused on women. This view stands in contrast to that of scholars such as Wayne Grudem who argues that most churches in various societies through history have not allowed the participation of women.(563)

Lynn Cohick and Amy Hughes disagree with Grudem and Torjesen, proposing that throughout the first centuries of the church, women held responsibility and were respected and followed. Examples of women in leadership include Thecla, whom early Christians believed followed Paul and more significantly Macrina, sister of Gregory and Basil. Gregory casts Macrina in the role of Socrates in a philosophical dialogue with him as her student (Nyssa 4). Cohick and Hughes also highlight Monica, the mother of Augustine, as another key woman who was respected by her son as a theological equal and Paula, who was a friend of Pope Jerome. They agree that women were central to discussions of trinitarian theology and Christology. Susanne Heine also agrees that the picture of leadership in the church for women is not universal, arguing, "There is no doubt that a history of Christian hostility to women can be written, but so too can a history of Christian friendliness towards women" (5).

Systematics and Women

Some complementarians would argue that one of the key reasons that women should not serve as ministers within the church has theological foundations within a

theology of the imageo dei. However, arguments against the ordination of women are not simply held by a conservative evangelical perspective. Due to their eucharistic theology, Catholic and Anglo-Catholic Christians may also agree that women should not be ordained. Scholars such as Boucher would argue that the minister is called to imitate Christ in the Eucharist, and Jesus is male, so only a man can be a minister (Trapp 12). These complementarians would also agree this viewpoint is supported by the fact that Jesus only chose male disciples when he selected the twelve. This distinction is an important theological focus for an Anglican minister as presiding at the Eucharist is a significant part of leadership in the church and as only priests or presybters can do so. Acknowledging these arguments is important as the Church of England has a broad range of theological views within it from conservative evangelical to Catholic. This range of viewpoints was clear in the discussions around the ordination of women to the priesthood in the 1990s and continues to be important as the issue is not fully resolved (Percy 12).

However, scholars such at Gretz and Hull argue that this representation is functional and, therefore, the minister is, as Gretz describes, the "mouthpiece" for Christ as opposed to a physical representation; therefore, the gender of the minister is not relevant (14). Alternatively, other scholars who support the equal ministry of women argue that negative consequences to not having women in equal partnership in the church exists. Agreeably, Gretz argues that only when the church is represented by both men and women does it fully represent what God is like (14).

Identifying and mentoring women in secular workplaces

Current contexts

The lack of senior female leadership is not an issue that is merely confined to the church. Currently, just thirty-seven of the fortune five hundred companies are led by women which is the highest number that there has ever been ("The Number of Women"). Various secular companies and organizations have also reported fewer women than men in employment. The recent 2018 Grant Thornton report (Grenz 2) found that while in 2018, 75 percent of companies worldwide had at least one woman on their staff, only 24 percent of women held senior roles, a percentage decrease from 2017. The report argues that businesses may be more concerned with fulfilling a diversity quota to avoid an all-men senior leadership team than with creating a genuinely inclusive culture. Exeter University has also done some recent research into the principle of the "glass cliff" within business, where women are "more likely to be placed in leadership positions which are risky or precarious. Women who make it to board level in the UK have typically overcome significant hurdles to get there and are often required to operate in a hostile environment" ("The Glass Cliff"). If women manage to become senior leaders, women are more likely to be placed in high-risk environments.

Benefits of Female Leadership

Leimon, Moscovici, and Goodier argue that there are multiple key reasons companies need to prioritize developing female leaders. One of these reasons is the leadership pipeline. The scholars assert that if women are entering employment in the same number as men, but dropping off at a senior level, then that represents a lot of financial investment and time investment in leadership development is being wasted. They suggest that "as companies compete for emerging leadership talent, women represent an underused resource" (23). They propose that as the Baby Boomer generation

retires and there are fewer leaders around, engaging women to be identified and mentored to a senior level becomes more vital. Even on a simple financial basis, training women for leadership makes sense—if a company is investing in the recruitment and training of women who are not progressing, then the company is expending considerable effort for little return. On a somewhat similar note, Kristof and WuDunn argue that empowering women financially is the best strategy for alleviating poverty in the developing world (10).

This theory is also supported by a recent McKinsey report, which argues that a more diverse workforce is more profitable (Hunt et al.). The report explains that many companies are seeing inclusivity and diversity as a growth strategy for the business as well as a social policy. The company's earlier research looked at the impact a higher percentage of women and more mixed racial composition of staff had on financial return. The research found that "the companies in the top quartile of gender diversity were 15 percent more likely to have financial returns that were above their national industry median." ("Why Diversity Matters" 12) The research also outlined five reasons why gender diversity is effective in increasing profitability: diversity increases the talent pool, strengthens customer orientation, increases employee satisfaction, improves decision making, and enhances the company's image.

The later 2018 report (Hunt et al.) still shows that diversity correlates to financial increases within companies, suggesting that "Companies in the top-quartile for gender diversity on executive teams were 21% more likely to outperform on profitability and 27% more likely to have superior value creation."("Why Diversity Matters" 2) The report also highlights a negative impact for companies that do not prioritize diversity: "The

penalty for bottom-quartile performance on diversity persists. Overall, companies in the bottom quartile for both gender and ethnic/cultural diversity were 29% less likely to achieve above-average profitability than were all other companies in our data set." The benefits are not simply financial; diversity can also lead to more workplace stability, as Morgan Stanley explains: "High gender diversity companies can deliver slightly better returns, with lower volatility."(4)

Strategies in identifying and mentoring Female Leaders

Despite the variety of reasons that engaging a more diverse workforce is profitable for companies, many companies still face challenges actually making diversity happen. All three key reports make recommendations as to how companies can increase the diversity of their workforce. Many of the recommendations are very similar across the three reports. The Grant Thornton report makes ten recommendations for increasing women in senior leadership in three categories: leadership, policy, and culture (13). These categories are used to highlight the recommendations made by several different bodies who consider this issue.

All three of the reports suggest that support from senior leadership is vital in bringing about transformation. Grant Thornton's report argues that leaders must champion the cause, make diversity and inclusion a core value, set goals, and link progress to pay (7). They emphasize the crucial role of the CEO or senior leader in championing the cause of diversity, arguing that without the senior leader creating a compelling vision, diversity stats are unlikely to change. "The fundamental change required is for business leaders to champion the cause of gender diversity. Tone at the top does matter to drive change, and there is some evidence of growing fatigue about

initiatives that do not lead to different behaviours." (12). The critical impact of the senior

leader seems to suggest that without that focus, other initiatives will struggle to gain

momentum. The report concludes, however, that no single solution to organizations

working to improve diversity exists. What is striking is how little movement there has

been in some areas in regards to change in numbers of women in senior leadership. This

question would also be worth considering in the relationship between the role of church

leader and diversity—if the senior church leader is not proactively focused on changing

the culture, can diversity be prioritized? This concern is echoed in research from

McKinsey that followed seventeen companies and identified four strategies that

consistently achieved more diverse teams. One of the strategies was "Commit and

cascade." (6) CEOs and leaders must articulate a compelling vision embedded with real

accountability for delivery and cascade this vision down through middle management.

Leaders also need to show a commitment to mentoring women in ways that are

helpful for their career progressions. "Some studies have shown that women are more

likely to receive vague feedback that is not connected to objectives or business outcomes,

which is a disadvantage when women are competing for job opportunities, promotions,

and rewards, and in terms of women's professional growth and identity" (Smith et al.). If

women are not receiving constructive feedback in the same way that men are, then they

are going to struggle to progress at the same pace as men because women are not being

trained to the same standard.

Who brings about Diverse Leadership?

Critique of the role of a diversity and inclusivity officer has occurred, particularly

due to the demographic makeup of many of these individuals. A 2018 report on the

industry around diversity in Australia found that the majority of diversity practitioners were non-disabled white women (Annese). The D and I practitioners were 83 percent female, and only 27 percent identify as being culturally diverse. Lisa Annese argues that this finding is hugely problematic: "If we, as a community of practitioners, don't seek to create spaces for people who don't look like the usual diversity suspects, then are we really any better than the pale, male and stale boardrooms inhabited by those who feel entitled to power because there are more of them than there are of others?" Perhaps this indicates the problematic nature of having someone in a company appointment to look at diversity—one individual is unlikely to personally fit the demographics of all underrepresented groups at one time.

Policy

The 2015 McKinsey report argues that diversity must come through programs and specific focuses, and five clear steps should exist in creating a diversity program, being:

1. Aspire—Create a clear value proposition for having a diverse and inclusive culture and set a few clear targets (not quotas) that balance complexity with cohesiveness.

2. Assess—Understand the current situation in terms of statistics and mindsets and learn from external best practices. Understand the root causes and underlying mindsets.

3. Architect—Differentiate initiatives by diversity group, for example, gender initiatives do not always resonate with other minorities. Lead from the top.

4. Act—Define the rollout strategy for all initiatives. Launch one to two highly visible flagship projects at the beginning of the effort. Monitor rigorously.

5. Advance—Continuously address potential mindset barriers through

systematic change management. Link diversity to other change management

efforts. (16)

However, even if all of these strategies are in place, programs can still struggle because

of unconscious bias in organizations. The company suggests that training and educating

people about bias can help with this issue.

The question of the rejection of diversity "quotas" that McKinsey raises is also

one that has been highlighted by other organizations focused on increasing female

representation on corporate boards, such as the 30% Club which campaigns for the

inclusion of women due to the benefit gained by organizations.

The 30% Club does not believe mandatory quotas are the right approach. Instead,

we support a voluntary approach in order to realise meaningful, sustainable

change. 30% Club efforts are complementary to individual company efforts and

existing networking groups, adding to these through collaboration and the visible

and voluntary commitment of senior business leaders. ("About Us")

The 30% Club focuses on initiatives, such as mentoring women who are not yet in

leadership, in order to increase the presence of women in more senior positions. Grant

Thorton agrees that organizations must avoid tokenism, and reduce "mini-me"

recruitment and promotion.

The later McKinsey report also suggests several additions, such as that companies

should craft an initiative portfolio. "Initiatives in pursuit of the I&D goals should be

targeted based on growth priorities, and investments made to both hard- and soft-wire the

programs and culture of inclusion required to capture the expected benefits."(8).

The report also agrees that I&D initiatives should be tailored to the relevant business area or geographic region context to maximize local buy-in and impact.

Culture

One methodology for increasing diversity in an organization via culture is that of a gender audit. As defined by the European Institute for Gender Equality:

> A gender audit enhances the collective capacity of the organization to examine its activities from a gender perspective and identify strengths and weaknesses in promoting gender equality issues. It monitors and assesses the relative progress made in gender mainstreaming and helps to build organizational ownership for gender equality initiatives and sharpens organizational learning on gender.

Grant Thornton's recommendations for culture that encourages diversity is one that investigates the benefits, is comfortable with discomfort, and shares stories.

Identifying and Mentoring Female Leaders in the Modern Church

Challenges for Women entering Church Leadership in the Modern Church

Within the modern evangelical charismatic church, several challenges exists that women in particular may face as they are identified and mentored into church leadership. The first challenge is what Caroline Moore defines as a "theological barrier" (34). Moore suggests that at least 50 percent of the Christian world does not accept the leadership of women. This challenge is faced by female church planters in particular, because

> [w]hile those in existing churches may receive a woman pastor reluctantly, they typically have the staying power to either give her a chance or wait her out.... disagreement over leadership will not run them off immediately, if ever,

especially if their theological leanings are more culturally oriented than biblically defended. (35)

However, a female church planter has no established congregation so people will only join who choose to follow her as a visionary leader. If some of the leadership or congregation of a HTB network church does not believe that women should be in church leadership, then women stand a lower chance of being identified or mentored into church leadership in that particular church.

Richard Moy, one of the leaders in the HTB network, shares this view that theological beliefs are one of the key reasons so few female church leaders exists in the HTB network. Moy suggests several specific ways this manifests practically, including attitudes toward women, fewer women leading in more conservative student CU's, and a church's desire not to upset people. The second challenge that women can face in entering church leadership is cultural attitudes. Moy argues that many people in evangelical charismatic churches assume that women are less ambitious and not as good as men at ministry.

Some of Moy's perspective would be argued by Wayne Grudem as the rationale behind why women should not be pastors (Piper and Grudem). Grudem contends,

God gave men, in general, a disposition that is better suited to teaching [and], moreover, governing in the church, a disposition that inclines more to a rational, logical analysis of doctrine and a desire to protect the doctrinal purity of the church, and God gave women, in general, a disposition that inclines more toward a relational, nurturing emphasis that places a higher value on unity and community in the church. (78)

Similarly, some scholars have argued that having more female pastors lowers church attendance. Podles, for example, links church decline to what he calls "the feminization of the church" (3). He argues that since the nineteenth century, Western Christianity has appealed more to women than to men, which has caused the number of men within churches to decline. He suggests that the increase in female clergy continues to perpetuate this issue though he would argue female clergy is not the root cause. Podles is not alone in connecting the increase in female church leaders to church decline. His views are also shared by David Murrow. Murrow argues that "[i]f men are to return to Christ, they need strong, godly laymen to help them in their walk…for too long we have asked men to follow our teaching, our methods, and our theology. Men do not follow these things. I'll say it again: men follow men" (56). If this view is taken to the extreme, the argument could be made that training and equipping more women would be unhelpful to focus on as doing so will lead to a further decline in attendance for men.

However, a recent Barna survey suggests that church decline cannot simply be reduced to men leaving the church. The Barna survey reveals that now "only 54% of the unchurched are men. In other words, the gender gap has narrowed from 20 points to just 8 points in the last ten years" ("Five Factors"). This statistic suggests that whilst the western church is still in decline, the issue is not simply a gender-based issue anymore. With the slow increase in female pastors in the last ten years, making the argument that female church leaders are increasing the gender divide in the church is difficult.

However, other scholars have argued that if the gender divide exists, the disparity in attendance due to the gender of the pastor is caused by cultural attitudes about women more broadly. For example, Caroline Moore argues a challenge exists for women to lead

assertively and still be likable and respected because women are held to different

standards than men. She calls this the double bind: "If a woman acts like a leader

(assertive, aggressive), she, will be less liked than her male colleagues. If a woman leader

behaves in more feminine ways, she is less likely to be respected" (56). Moore goes on to

say that this double standard makes life harder for female church leaders, because they

have no foundation to build upon. Overcoming this double standard will take more time.

Therefore, Moore suggests that rather than a God-created demeanor, women struggle

against cultural expectations of how they should behave. This struggle suggests that the

problem of the "feminization of the church" has more to do with cultural attitudes

generally towards women than what is "natural" or "biblical."

Moore's perspective is supported by recent research from the Harvard Business

Centre that researched the different words used in describing men and women in

leadership. The research showed that men and women receive different positive and

negative words when they work in leadership:

Our research on leadership attributes found significant differences in the

assignment of 28 leadership attributes when applied to men and women. While

men were more often assigned attributes such as analytical, competent, athletic

and dependable, women were more often assigned compassionate, enthusiastic,

energetic and organized. Consistent with our results, societal attitudes suggest that

women leaders are described as more compassionate (the most assigned attribute

overall) and organized than men leaders. By contrast, women were more often

evaluated as inept, frivolous, gossip, excitable, scattered, temperamental, panicky,

and indecisive, while men were more often evaluated as arrogant and

irresponsible" (Smith et. al).

This research highlights that men and women are not held to the same standards. Gender

issues still exist that affect the way men and women are perceived in leadership. If this

phenomenon is the case in business, then logically this phenomenon exists in the church

as some of those attitudes would transfer over from where many people work in business.

Longevity in Ministry

Various analyses have identified some practical reasons that women may struggle

example, revealed that statistically women are leading smaller churches but at the same

time being faced with more criticism that their male counterparts. This reality makes the

pressures on women feel higher than those on their male counterparts (23).

Moore argues that defining low self-image is something of a chicken and egg

scenario: "Yet, even women who enter leadership and church planting with a healthy

self-image will certainly find it threatened as they come face to face with the challenge of

leading against a negative tide of opinion" (61). She suggests that women church planters

might be internalizing negative attitudes unconsciously, which will influence their

leadership style. "Women without a strong sense of self or lacking a strong sense of call

either to parish ministry or church planting will be much less likely to take the risk of a

church planting venture or to stay with it if there is sufficient pressure in the process"

(62).

The second reason that women may struggle with longevity in ministry is

biological. Moore argues that, "[o]n the physical plane, women will have to make more

choices than men about the time they need away from work to give birth and raise

children" (67). She suggests this reality has implications for church planting, the biggest of which is that church planters often attract people of the age they are, so if they have waited till they are older to have children, that decision will have implications for the congregations. Currently, the Church of England has no nationalized maternity policy, which means that even if individual churches are supportive, younger women may feel anxious about beginning ministry prior to having children. For dioceses where maternity policies exist, the onus is often put on the woman to find her own maternity cover for the duration of her maternity leave—a challenge for a church leader (Eldridge 12).

Mixed-Gender Mentoring

Within the modern, charismatic, evangelical church, a mix of opinions exists about whether men and women can mentor each other. Historically, some evangelical churches had policies forbidding men and women mentoring each other, such as the "Billy Graham rule" ("Billy Graham Rule") and the later adopted "10 commandments" from Saddleback church ("10 Commandments").

The Billy Graham Rule is an unofficial but heavily quoted policy of the evangelist Billy Graham, who would never be seated in a car or go to dinner alone with a woman. Ministers often cite this rule as an example of good moral integrity (Jenkins:36). The Californian megachurch Saddleback later adopted this rule and extended this rule into the Saddleback commandments for staff, which focused upon the same principles but extended them to other situations. The application of both these rules made women and men ever to meeting alone very difficult. While these rules are applied equally to women and men, in church contexts where the pastors are overwhelmingly male, this rule does result in a situation where a male senior pastor would be unable to meet with a junior

woman in any one-on-one, traditional mentoring environment. This rule is still very much in use in parts of the broader evangelical church. Ed Stetzer, who is a lecturer at Wheaton college and is currently the executive director of the Billy Graham Centre for Evangelism, recommends this rule as best practice (Stetzer). He is also very affirming of growing women leaders (Stetzer).

The reasons for not mentoring across genders fit into two categories. First and most commonly, a concern exists that mixed-gender mentoring may lead to romantic relationships. This concern is shared by John Biehl, who argues that "mentoring relationships can get deep enough, fast enough that the love individuals can receive can easily be reinterpreted into sexual dimensions" (71). This concern seems to have increased in recent years for understandable reasons. Unfortunately, several high-profile Christian leaders, both in the UK and in the US, such as Bill Hybels, Mark Bailey and Carl Lenz, have had to step down or removed after having inappropriate relationships with women. However, the Billy Graham rule has been critiqued in recent years. Kreminski, for example, argues that in mixed-gender mentoring, not focusing on fear of sexuality as the primary driver for the focus of the mentoring relationship is important.

The second reason to avoid mixed-gender mentoring is that the experiences of men and women are so different that they cannot be helpful to each other. Kraft and Johnson suggests, "Who, but another woman can fully understand all the differing aspects of childbirth[?]" (71). Men choosing not to meet alone with women in a mentoring or work context is not something exclusively limited to church settings. In a recent case in the US, a police officer was fired because he refused to train a female deputy (Kuruvilla).

How to Identify and Mentor Women in the Church

Several methods exists for how to mentor women into leadership in the church. Using their model of sibling mutuality, Russell and Rouse suggest several ways that they see the Biblical model presenting itself, the four strands of which are: Using Privilege to Empower Others, Sharing Our Gifts, Respecting Other People, and Not Fearing Sexuality (54). Richard Moy suggests that one solution to the lack of female church leaders in the HTB network would be if leaders of large churches gave opportunities to women and extended the circle of relationships that they allowed into leadership from beyond their individual friendships. Kadi Cole highlights several different mentoring roles that she believes female leaders in the church need in order to thrive. She suggests that women need "male mentors, male sponsors and female coaches," and suggests that, "[a]lthough the roles of mentor, sponsor, and coach can be similar and overlap, especially in smaller staff settings, they have distinct and important differences that all leaders need" (44). Cole does not think that the Billy Graham rule is necessarily a barrier to women having mentors—in fact, she thinks the rule is useful—but she wants to draw a distinction between different types of mentoring. Cole argues that the downside to the Billy Graham rule is that the rule has resulted in women being under-mentored, suggesting, "[a]nd since women tend to get the short end of the stick on these guidelines, I think we need to do a better job reinventing them, teaching about them, and holding one another accountable to them" (54). Coles' three types of mentoring relationship help to offer a way to do this.

Cole defines a "sponsor" as someone who is invested in endorsing and encouraging women forward but not necessarily directly training her. She defines a mentor as someone who takes the time and effort to invest more directly in training a

female leader, for example by bringing her along to meetings and giving her feedback. Cole suggests that women do benefit from female coaches as well as male mentors— people who will work with her to help her develop a broader understanding of what leading as a woman means.

Using distance to explain the closeness of each type of mentoring relationship, Cole argues that "(twelve feet apart), mentoring as a social relationship (twelve to four feet apart), and coaching as a personal relationship (four feet to eighteen inches apart), which is why I think female leaders receiving coaching from an experienced female ministry leader is best" (81). However, Cole also acknowledges how difficult finding female mentors can be as there as so few female leaders within the church.

Research Design Literature

The next step in this project was developing a tool for examining whether some of the challenges faced by women in the modern church were being dealt with in the way women were being identified and mentored in the HTB network. A questionnaire survey and a more generalized set of questions for focus groups tested the theory that ministry leaders who identified and understood some of the distinctive challenges faced by potential female church leaders were more effective in their practice of identifying and mentoring of female church leaders. The tools were also a means of better understanding whether there was a difference in the way women were being identified and mentored in the HTB network in comparison to men. The challenge was to design the questions that revealed potential female church leaders' experience without "coaching" responses. An external facilitator was recruited for the focus group in order not to bias the research that emerged.

Research into the development of an appropriate questionnaire tool relied heavily on Tim Sensing's teachings. Sensing describes fourteen kinds of questions and the information each is designed to evoke. The key for the research project was to ask questions in the questionnaire that enabled an open response to the research.

Summary of Literature

Several themes emerged through the literature review that were significant to the wider project. The first theme that emerged from the biblical section was the value and prominence of the role of women in the life of Jesus. Jesus did not seem to have an issue with meeting women alone or with engaging women. In fact, he appeared to hold women to the same standards of holiness that he held men. Jesus was not afraid to correct women, teach them, or commission them to go out to share the news about his identity. Jesus appeared first to women after the resurrection even though their testimony was considered unreliable.

Women also appeared to play a significant role in the leadership of the early church as well as in the growth of new churches. Paul seemed to work with a variety of different women in different churches and areas that he planted into. Similarly, many of the early church fathers, such as Basil, Augustine, and Jerome, had familial and friendship relationships with women who played significant roles in the early church.

Within the secular world of business, few women are serving in senior position or on boards. However, a strong economic case exists for the role of women in leadership within business. Some of this case may transfer to church growth. Suggestions to encourage more women into leadership within business include culture changing measures, leaders, and policy. Research has shown that change in this area needs to be

led from the top by the senior leader. Researching ministry leaders will show if this is also the case in the church.

Within the church, some challenges exists that are specific to women, including the reality that not all churches affirm the role of women, possibly leading women to feel they need to prove themselves more than men. Another challenge women may face is the belief that female leaders are contributing to church decline, something that the Barna Group has disproved. Women may also find the challenge of the "double bind" of not wanting to appear too strong or too weak. This may impact the longevity and confidence of women in ministry and may be something that needs to be picked up in identifying and mentoring church leaders. Women may also struggle to find mentors due to the difference of opinion in evangelical churches around mixed-gender mentoring. In a church culture where most church leaders are male, this difference of opinion could make it difficult for potential female church leaders to find mentoring. These challenges seem to suggest that specific challenges exists to being identified and mentored as a potential female church leader. In order to examine best practices, therefore, discovering how aware ministry leaders are of these challenges and whether they have strategies to manage these challenges is necessary.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter describes the research methodology used in this project. After a brief review of the nature and purpose of the project, the project's research questions are presented, along with the instrumentation used to address each question. The cultural context of the project is then presented, followed by specifics about the participants in the studies, the instrumentation employed, and the process of data analysis.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this research was to identify best practices used by HTB network ministry leaders who have successfully identified and/or trained more than one ordained female church leader in order to create a female leadership pipeline.

Research Questions

Research Question #1. What practices do HTB network ministry leaders use to identity female church leaders?

The purpose of this question was to identify the practices that HTB network ministry leaders believe they are using in order to identify potential female church leaders. In order to answer the question, an email questionnaire was used, which was sent to ministry leaders who fit the criterion of having identified at least one potential female church leader. The questionnaire was as follows:

- Question 1 – How many potential church leaders have you identified in the last 10 years?

- Question 2 – How many potential female church leaders have you identified in the last 10 years?

- Question 3 – How do you identify potential leaders within your church?

- Question 4 – Is there any difference in the way you identify female church leaders within your church?

- Question 5 – How much do you agree with this statement: "I feel confident identifying potential church leaders"?

- Question 6 – How much do you agree with this statement: "I feel confident identifying potential female church leaders"?

- Question 7 – How much do you agree with this statement: "I am more confident identifying potential church leaders of the same gender as me"?

- Question 8 – As you think about the process of identifying potential female church leaders, is there anything else you would like to share?

Question 1 established the quantity of potential church leaders the ministry leader had identified. Question 2 established what proportion of those people were women. Question 3 established the practices the leader used to identify potential church leaders, while Question 4 helped determine whether the leader had any specific approach to identifying female church leaders. Question 5 identified their self-perceived skill level in doing so, while Question 6 determined whether they were more or less confident in identifying women. Question 7 sought to discover if the leader had any hesitations around identifying potential female church leaders and then asked for more information if the answer was yes or maybe. Question 8 gave an opportunity for the leader to add anything else they wanted to about identifying potential female church leaders.

Research Question #2. What practices do HTB network ministry leaders use to train female church leaders?

The purpose of this question was to identify the practices that HTB network ministry leaders believe they are using in order to mentor potential female church leaders. In order to answer it, an email questionnaire was sent to ministry leaders who fit the criterion of having mentored at least one potential female church leader. The questionnaire was as follows:

- Question 1 – How many potential church leaders have you mentored in the last 10 years?

- Question 2 – How many potential female church leaders have you mentored in the last 10 years?

- Question 3 – How do you mentor potential church leaders within your church?

- Question 4 – Is there any difference in the way you mentor potential female church leaders?

- Question 5 – How much do you agree with this statement: "I am confident mentoring potential church leaders"?

- Question 6 – How much do you agree with this statement: "I am confident mentoring potential female church leaders"?

- Question 7 – How much do you agree with this statement: "I am more confident mentoring potential church leaders of the same gender as me"?

- Question 8 – As you think about the process of mentoring potential female church leaders is there anything else you would like to share?

Question 1 established the number of potential church leaders the ministry leader had mentored, while Question 2 established what proportion of those people were women. Question 3 addressed the practices the leader used to mentor potential church leaders. Question 4 established whether the leader had any specific approach to mentoring female church leaders. Question 5 identified the leader's self-perceived skill level in mentoring potential church leaders. Question 6 identifies if the leader felt more or less confident mentoring women. Question 7 sought to discover the leader's confidence in mixed-gender mentoring. Question 8 gave an opportunity for the leader to add anything else they wanted to about mentoring potential female church leaders.

Research Question #3. How do HTB network female church leaders report that they were identified?

This research question sought to establish how HTB network female church leaders believe they were identified. Three focus groups of five female church leaders each were used in order to collect the data for this question. The focus groups discussed the following questions:

- Question 1 – How were you identified for church ministry?

- Question 2 – Who identified you?

- Question 3 – What did they do?

- Question 4-How well do you think this process went?

- Question 5- As you think about the process of identifying potential female church leaders is there anything else you would like to share?

Question 1 asked each one to share how they were identified. Question 2 asked them to share who identified them. Question 3 invited them to share what this

identification process looked like, while Question 4 invited them to evaluate how successful they thought it had been. Question 5 asked them to share anything they wanted to about the process of identifying women for ministry. For each of the questions, the facilitator was invited to encourage elaboration on the topic.

Research Question #4. How do HTB network female church leaders report that they were trained?

This research question sought to establish how HTB network female church leaders believe they were mentored. Three focus groups of five female church leaders each were used in order to collect the data for this question. The focus groups discussed the following questions:

- Question 1 – Were you mentored before you became a church leader?

- Question 2 – Who mentored you?

- Question 3 – What did they do?

- Question 4 – How well do you think this mentoring went?

- Question 5- As you think about the process of mentoring potential female church leaders, is there anything else you would like to share?

Question 1 asked participants to share whether they were mentored as potential church leaders. Question 2 asked them to share who mentored them. Question 3 invited them to share what this mentoring process looked like. Question 4 invited them to evaluate how successful they thought this mentoring practice had been. Question 5 gave an opportunity for the women to add anything else they wanted to about the mentoring experience.

Ministry Context

The Holy Trinity Brompton network (HTB) is a family of evangelical charismatic churches within the Anglican church. Holy Trinity Brompton itself is the biggest Anglican church in the country and has planted over eighty churches across most of the major cities in the UK and all of the London borough. About half of the HTB network is based in London, but an increasing number of churches are being planted in other large cities across the UK, such as Nottingham, Birmingham, Derby, and Plymouth. Of sixty-seven churches, only two of the churches are led by a woman so the majority of ministry leaders in the church are male. Currently, all leaders in the HTB network are white and most are British. HTB is encouraging the ordination of women from within the HTB network, but this encouragement does not mean necessarily that all of the church leaders are in favor of the ordination of women. However, all HTB churches are part of the Church of England, which fully affirmed the role of women at all levels of the church. In theory, then, the possibility exists for women to be identified and mentored for church leadership from any church in the HTB network. Most ministry leaders have been trained and ordained in the Anglican church though this may not be the case for all of them.

Participants

Criteria for Selection

For the purposes of this research, the focus was on ministry leaders in the HTB network who had successfully identified at least two women who had then gone forward to train for ordination in the Church of England in the last ten years. In the context of this study, the women were identified for ordained church leadership specifically. This criterion is because, while serving in lay leadership in the Church of England is possible

without ordination, the leader must be ordained in order to ultimately lead a church. Therefore, to have been identified "successfully," the women needed to have been selected for training for ordination. The ministry leaders themselves could be ordained or lay but had to be clearly serving in an official leadership role in an HTB network church.

The second category of leaders focused upon was ministry leaders in the HTB network who had successfully mentored women towards church leadership. The ministry leaders had to have mentored at least two women with a view to church leadership in the last ten years. The women who were being mentored must have been considering ordained leadership specifically but did not necessarily have to have been ordained. The ministry leaders must have been serving in an HTB network church at the time the mentoring took place, and the mentees must also have been part of an HTB network church. The mentorship did not need to have been a formal relationship but must have involved meeting with the women more than once with a view to training them for church leadership.

The third category of people focused on was female church leaders or those who were training for church leadership within the HTB network. For the purposes of this research, the women needed to have either been identified for leadership in an HTB network church or have been mentored in an HTB network church. While other traditions within the Anglican church may bear similarities to those in the HTB network, only HTB network churches were used. This criterion is due to the prominent role HTB network churches have in the strategic development of the wider Church of England, especially in the planting of resourcing churches. This criterion is also due to the wider impact HTB churches have on the global church through their Alpha and Leadership conferences.

In regards to female church leaders, interest was placed on women who went forward for ordained leadership in the Church of England from within the HTB network. These female leaders could either still be training or be ordained. The female leaders must have either been identified for or mentored in church leadership within a HTB network church.

Focus was placed[on churches categorized as being part of the HTB network according to the list on its website and the CRT definition of churches belonging to the HTB network.

Description of Participants

Twenty ministry leaders were involved, focusing on having ten leaders who were qualified to answer the first questionnaire and ten who were qualified to answer the second. Some of the ministry leaders were able to answer both questionnaires, so some overlap existed between the two groups. The ministry leaders were a mix of ages and genders, but all were over the age of twenty-six.

For the focus groups, twelve current or potential female leaders were involved. I focused on having ten female leaders who were qualified to answer the first questionnaire and ten who were qualified to answer the second. Some of the ministry leaders were able to answer both of the questions, so some overlap existed between the two groups. All of the female participants were women.

Ethical Considerations

All persons who participated in the project gave their informed consent by signing the consent form, and by agreeing to its terms (see template in Appendix). The completed consent forms were mailed to the researcher before any questionnaires were distributed or

any focus groups met. When a signed consent form was received, the document was date-stamped and secured in a password-protected folder on the researcher's laptop. Throughout the duration of the project, the researcher was always in possession of the only password to the laptop.

All completed questionnaires were coded for confidentiality. All instruments were secured, including returned questionnaires, protocol analyses, field notes, and focus group transcripts in a password-protected folder. My facilitator for the focus group also signed a confidentiality agreement.

Confidentiality was kept throughout the project. Participants were made aware of the strict confidentiality measures in the consent form, in the cover letter sent with the questionnaire, on the phone at the outset of interviews, and at the beginning of the discussions in the focus groups. Again, all recorded participant responses were coded so that the data remained confidential. The researcher was the only one who possessed the key to the code.

Instrumentation

Identifying and mentoring potential female church leaders is a relational issue with a risk of subjectivity. Due to the object of this project's research, all instruments used to obtain data were qualitative in method and researcher-designed. Only the demographic questions included in all the instruments were quantitative. Four instruments—two questionnaires and two focus groups—served to collect the data.

Combined Questionnaire

The questionnaire was named "Ministry Leader Questionnaire" (Appendix 1). The evaluation of the best practices for identifying and mentoring potential female church

leaders was conducted by asking those involved to reflect on them. The eight questions

on the questionnaires covered both the topic of identifying female church leaders and that

of mentoring them. Both questionnaires were combined into one SurveyMonkey

questionnaire due to the assumption that some ministry leaders would qualify for both

questionnaires. The selection process in the questionnaire limited those who only

qualified for one section to only answer questions from that section.

Focus Group

The three focus groups were named group one, group two, and group three.

Participants were selected through an email advertisement to HTB network churches.

They self-selected to be part of the research project. Care was taken to ensure balanced

representation from the different churches in the network. All of the focus groups took

place in a rented room in a coworking space in London. A moderator asked eight

questions designed to produce a full picture of how church leaders were identified and

mentored. The participants were invited to respond to all of the questions to which they

felt they had something to contribute. The focus group conversation was recorded, and

observations were written down about the meeting.

<div align="center">

Expert Review

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Since the project's assessment instruments were researcher-designed, two expert

reviewers were used to evaluate and fine-tune the questions. A cover letter explaining the

project, the project's rationale, and the research questions were sent along with the

instruments and an evaluation protocol for each instrument was sent to each reviewer.

The helpful comments of the reviewers tightened up the wording of some questions,

combined or eliminated some questions, suggested other questions that might be asked, and affirmed the alignment of the instrument questions with the research questions.

Reliability and Validity of Project Design

For this project, both questionnaires and focus groups were employed to determine what practices had been found to be effective in identifying and mentoring potential female church leaders. The instruments were reliable as the questionnaire followed best practices for a questionnaire, including use of the Likert Scale, and was positively evaluated by three expert reviewers.

The framework for the focus groups was derived from the study of appropriate literature in order to give general structure for the questions. The data was then analyzed to find common themes and concerns. Commonalities in participant responses were collected under the heading of "best practices."

The use of focus groups as a primary instrument in this project allowed for multiple perspectives on the same aspect of mentoring. Tim Sensing notes that within focus groups, "[t]hrough group interaction, data and insights are generated that are related to a particular theme imposed by a researcher and enriched by the group's interactive discussion" (61). The hope was that the focus groups would generate more useful data, given that, as Sensing suggests, "[d]ifferences in age, gender, education, access to resources, and other factors will prompt a variety of responses that may not emerge in a homogeneous group setting or from the individual interview" (12).

Since this project's first research question investigated the various approaches to identification and mentoring, focus groups provided the best option for validity and

reliability as they allowed for the in-depth exploration of the perspectives of numerous potential female church leaders.

Data Collection

The type of research in this project was pre-intervention. This project measured and described potential best practices. Although the research did develop strategic recommendations, the project did not entail the development and engagement of a tool or the measurement of a tool's post-intervention results. This project engaged in qualitative research. According to Pathak et al.:

> [The q]ualitative method is used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behavior, and interactions. It generates non-numerical data. The integration of qualitative research into intervention studies is a research strategy that is gaining increased attention across disciplines. Although once viewed as philosophically incongruent with experimental research, qualitative research is now recognized for its ability to add a new dimension to interventional studies that cannot be obtained through measurement of variables alone. (Sensing 4)

Sensing says that qualitative research "produces culturally specific and contextually rich data critical for the design, evaluation, and ongoing health of institutions like churches" (75).This project used questionnaires and focus groups to hear and record the experiences of leaders and potential female church leaders in identifying and mentoring the latter.

The first research tool used was the questionnaire for church leaders. The interviews had the same framework as the focus groups in order to assess the perceptions

of the best practices for identifying and mentoring potential female church leaders as understood by the two participant groups.

The second qualitative instrument employed was the focus group. Three focus groups were conducted with four to six participants each for a total of fifteen women. In order to give these focus groups a structure consistent with the other components of this project, a protocol was developed from the research obtained in the literature review. To avoid any bias that the researcher's presence might have created, an external focus group facilitator was used.

The focus groups were conducted in person by the focus group facilitator. The researchers then transcribed the audio recordings and manually examined them to identify common words and themes. A comprehensive list was then made of the common practices identified under each section of the framework. These common practices were identified as "best practices."

Data Analysis

The data was collected and analyzed in Microsoft Excel 2016. Excel was also used to compute the descriptive statistics, most notably the demographic data of the participants answering each question. Each question was individually analyzed to determine the statistical significance of the responses. As noted, the qualitative information was examined from the questionnaire to identify common words and themes. These data points were named in a way that described their content and arranged under the headings of the framework contained in the focus group protocol. This list was labeled "best practices" (BP). The categorized data points were numerically labeled under

each of their headings (for example, the heading "Mentoring" would then contain BP1, BP2, BP3, etc.)

The data from the focus groups were examined, named, and organized in the same way as the questionnaires. The transcripts of the focus groups were examined by the researcher to identify common words and themes. These data points were named in a way that described their content and arranged under the headings of the framework contained in the focus group protocol.

A comprehensive list was then created from the two separate lists and manually examined for similarities and differences. Notes were made on findings from the interaction of the two lists. These comprehensive results were synthesized with findings from the literature review.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The HTB network is a church-planting network within the Anglican Church. While the network is verbally affirming of female church leaders, very few female church leaders exists in it. This research considered best practices in identifying and mentoring potential female church leaders within the HTB network in order to make recommendations on how to increase their number.

This chapter identifies the participants in the study and their demographic makeup. Then this chapter presents the qualitative data from the online survey and the qualitative data from the focus groups for each of the four research questions. This chapter concludes with a list of major findings derived from the presented data.

Participants

There were twenty-four participants in the online survey. The participants were gathered from a post in the HTB network leaders' Facebook group and an email to all HTB network leaders. Twelve of the participants were male and twelve were female. Of these, 8 percent were aged twenty-five to thirty-four, 33 percent were thirty-five to forty-four, 29 percent were fifty-five to sixty-four and 4 percent were sixty-five to seventy-four. Fifty-four percent labeled themselves as the ordained senior leaders in their churches. Seventy-five percent of male participants and 25 percent of female participants described themselves as the ordained senior leaders in their churches.

Q4 Which of the following best describes your church leadership role
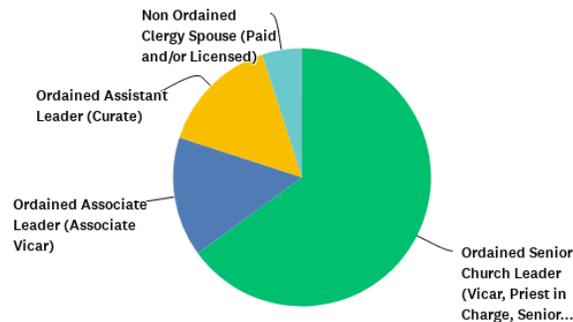
Figure 4.1

The three focus groups had a total of fifteen participants. The focus groups were formed through an email to all female HTB network leaders and trainee leaders. An email was also sent to all former female HTB network leaders. Six participants were training to be church leaders, and nine participants had been ordained in the Anglican Church. Two were in senior church leadership positions. All the focus group participants were female.

Research Question #1: What practices do HTB network ministry leaders use to identity female church leaders?

The purpose of the first research question was to identify what practices HTB network ministry leaders currently use to identify female church leaders. The tool used for collecting the answer to this research question was a survey administered through SurveyMonkey. Twelve questions were asked in the survey in order to answer this question. Questions 1 to 4 collected statistical data about the participants who answered the survey. Question 5 established the number of potential leaders identified by the ministry leaders. Question 6 identified if the leaders felt more or less confident

identifying women. Question 7 sought to discover if the leader had any hesitations about identifying potential female church leaders and then asked for more information if the participant answered "yes" or "maybe." Question 8 gave an opportunity for the leaders to add anything else they wanted about identifying potential female church leaders.

When asked how many potential ordained church leaders they had identified within the HTB network, 20 percent of HTB ministry leaders reported having identified ten or more. Twenty-four percent reported to having identified five, and another 24 percent reported having identified three to four. When asked how many potential ordained female church leaders they had identified in the last ten years, 8 percent said ten or more, 20 percent said five, and 16 percent reported four potential ordained leaders.

Q5 How many potential ordained church leaders have you identified in the last 10 years?
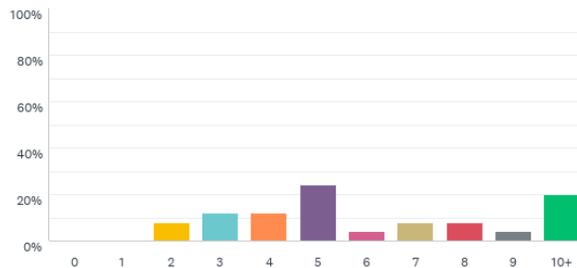
Figure 4.2

Q6 How many potential ordained female church leaders have you identified in the last 10 years?
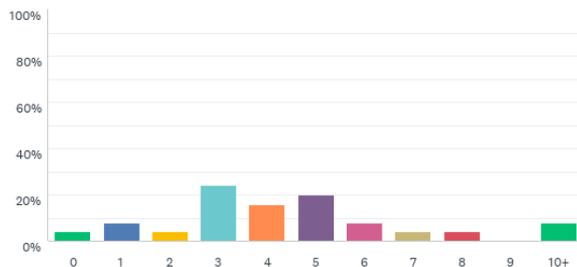
Figure 4.3

Several themes emerged out of the question "How do you identify potential ordained church leaders within your church?" Five specific themes stood out the most.

Already Leading

Multiple responses highlighted the need to look for those who are already leading in the church. On respondent suggested, "A leader has a following. I put all leaders on Alpha and I see how they do! Future ordained leaders are those who cannot help but form a church in their midst—they are gatherers." Participants also highlighted the need to observe potential leaders leading in order to assess whether they had the abilities required. For example, one participant observed potential leaders in an informal setting to see if they "naturally" took to leadership. All participants referenced looking for leadership skills in potential church leaders in some way.

Leadership Opportunities

A connected theme that emerged was proactivity in identifying potential church leaders through giving them opportunities to lead. In contrast to the previous theme, this theme means the ministry leader is the one initiating the opportunity. The focus was on the invitation from the ministry leader to take on responsibility. "Inviting them to engage with, and practice ministry in a supportive environment." One participant mentioned that they would always "[m]ake sure that I ask those who will never volunteer too."

One-on-One

Three participants mentioned the importance of one-on-one meetings in identifying leaders. One participant suggested that this one-on-one meeting was the final stage after giving potential leaders an opportunity to lead. "I will also ask them if they've thoughts about ordination, say that I've seen it in them. Would they like to have a coffee

to chat about it?" Others also referenced "individual conversations," with one emphasizing "inviting people regularly to come and meet me or with others to explore ordination." The one-on-one conversations suggested a proactive approach on behalf of the ministry leaders in relation to potential ordained church leaders.

Church Vocation Culture

Two ministry leaders also mentioned referencing vocations and calling from the front of church through teaching. One participant mentioned the importance of ensuring a diverse group of voices were given the opportunity to lead and preach from the front of church. Another participant referenced the idea of "set[ting] a culture of expectation that God will call people to church leadership."

Prayer

Finally, three participants referenced the importance of prayer in the process of identifying potential ordained church leaders. Two participants referenced the role of the Holy Spirit. One said, "I think [there is] a fair helping of the Holy Spirit prompting it at a thought." The other noted, "I look for an anointing to preach. I look for an anointing of spiritual authority."

Question 8 asked participants "Is there any difference in the way you identify potential ordained female church leaders within your church?" Fourteen of the participants said no though one of them added, "I hope not." Ten of those who responded "No" were male. Some of those who wrote no elaborated further on their answers. One of the male participants said, "Not specifically. When we have had female associate vicars they may have more often than me been the people that potential female church leaders approached in the first instance of a conversation." A female participant said, "No.

Except I might share more about my experience growing up in a non-affirming church. But other than that, no difference. I'd probably find it easier being female." Another male participant wrote, "No, perhaps I am a bit more intentional but the methodology is the same." This view was shared by another participant who stated, "No, though I am coming to recognize that sometimes a female leader might hold back for a variety of reasons."

One of the most-used words in response to this question was "encouragement," which was mentioned seven times in participants responses. This was used significantly more than in the response to Question 7. One participant mentioned that with potential female church leaders, they had "[a]n awareness that women may need more encouragement to step forward." Another leader described the experience that "[w]omen tend to count themselves out, where generally men tend to count themselves in."

Six participants mentioned a need to be more proactive in identifying potential female leaders. This need was mentioned in connection to the idea that one should seek those who are already leading in the church for potential ordained church leaders. One participant said, "Because I put 'look at who is already leading' first above, you cannot just rely on that for potential ordained women, because lay leadership may be more male-dominated (and as it happens not in the churches that I am in)." This belief was shared by another participant, who said, "Yes, with females I look for signs of leadership gifts that they might not have 'stepped into' yet-—e.g., they have the capacity to lead services/preach, but may not have had the opportunity yet."

Finally, several participants referenced needing to think more carefully in relation to identifying female leaders. One said, "I look behind the obvious and check that I'm not ruling her out by applying an 'alpha male' filter created simply by the sheer number of

them in my network." Another participant reflected on the influence that their own

attitude may have had on the process of identifying women. "In my earlier years, [I] had

to watch out for my own potentially inadvertent institutionalized sexism, which could

have prevented women from coming through."

Questions 9 and 10 assessed the degree to which ministry leaders self-identified

as confident in their practice of identifying potential church leaders. Question 9 asked

how confident participants felt in identifying potential church leaders in general, and

Question 10 asked that specifically in relation to female church leaders. Question 9 asked

"How much do you agree with this statement: 'I feel confident identifying potential

ordained church leaders'?" Forty-four percent of participants chose "Strongly agree,"

while 56 percent participants put "Agree." Question 10 asked, "How much do you agree

with this statement: 'I feel confident identifying potential ordained female church

leaders'?" Again, 44 percent of participants chose "Strongly agree," and 56 percent of

participants chose "Agree."

Question 11 asked, "How much do you agree with this statement: 'I am more

confident identifying ordained potential church leaders of the same gender as me'?" Eight

percent strongly agreed with the statement, 16 percent agreed, 16 percent neither agreed

not disagreed, 44 percent disagreed, and 16 percent strongly disagreed. Question 12 was

an invitation: "As you think about the process of identifying potential ordained female

church leaders, is there anything else you would like share?" All the participants save one

had additional comments to make.

Several themes emerged. One was family life and calling. Participants mentioned

challenges in how ordained ministry fits into family life and the impact that had on

identifying women. A lack of discussion and transparency around ministry and family life were mentioned. This situation was described as an issue in the practical identification of potential female church leaders, both in making finding time to meet up difficult and as an additional barrier for young women to face. One participant noted, "I think there are more complicated questions for women which prevent early conversations. They are so concerned about how it will fit with their family that they let the idea brew for longer before sharing it. By the time it comes out it has become quite a burden."

A lack of role models for potential female leaders was a problem raised by many of the female participants who answered the survey. Several participants suggested that having more female role models would help women gain the confidence to step forward. As one noted, "Every potential priest needs help imagining themselves into the role. There are still fewer female models, and less diversity amongst them. So potential female leaders may need more help in that step of imagining themselves being an ordained leaders [sic]." Participants suggested that a lack of female roles models might cause a delay in women stepping forward.

Another aspect of identification that was mentioned was the distinction between identifying potential ordained women and identifying potential ordained women who would go on to lead churches. Two participants made a distinction between women being identified for senior church leaders and being identified to be ordained. One participant highlighted this distinction in their approach. "There are both men and women that I have encouraged and supported to explore ordained ministry, though not necessarily for parish incumbency and the role of 'senior leadership' within a local church context that follow."

Another participant reflected that they had seen female candidates being asked to train as self-supporting ministers, something they had not seen happen to male candidates. One participant raised related concerns about the impact that non-ordained female leaders of churches might have on identifying potential female church leaders. They said, "The church has to stop modeling non-ordained female leaders (usually the spouses of ordained men) as an alternative; it devalues the role of ordained women."

Research Question #2: What practices do HTB network ministry leaders use to mentor female church leaders?

The purpose of the second research question was to identify what practices HTB network ministry leaders currently use to mentor female church leaders. The tool used for collecting the answers to this research question was the survey administered through SurveyMonkey.

Question 13 asked how many potential ordained church leaders the participants had mentored in the last ten years. Question 14 asked how many potential ordained female leaders participants had mentored in the last ten years. Question 15 asked participants how they mentored potential ordained church leaders within their churches. Question 16 asked if any differences existed in the way leaders mentored potential ordained female church leaders. Question 17 asked participants how much they agreed with the statement "I am confident mentoring potential ordained church leaders." Question 18 asked participants how much they agreed with the statement "I am confident mentoring potential ordained female church leaders." Question 19 asked participants how much they agreed with the statement. "I am more confident mentoring potential ordained church leaders of the same gender as me." Question 20 asked participants whether there

were any other thoughts they would like to share as they thought about the process of
mentoring potential ordained female church leaders.

Question 13, illustrated in the graph below, revealed the wide range of mentoring
experience of those who answered the survey. Over half of participants said that they had
mentored six or more potential church leaders.

Q13 How many potential ordained church leaders have you mentored in the last 10 years?
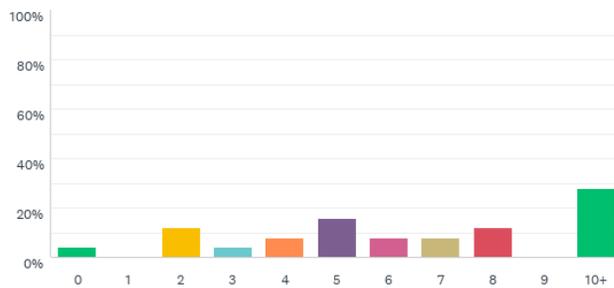
Figure 4.4

Question 14, illustrated in the graph below, asked how many potential female church
leaders participants had mentored in the last ten years. Thirty-six percent of participants
had mentored six or more female church leaders. All participants bar one had mentored at
least two potential female church leaders.

Q14 How many potential ordained female church leaders have you mentored in the last 10
years?
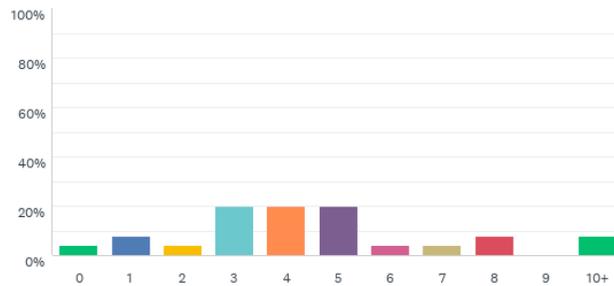
Figure 4.5

Question 15 asked how participants mentored potential leaders within their churches. Several different themes emerged, and the responses indicated that mentoring practices were diverse. The emerging themes were as follows.

Meeting up One-on-One

Ten participants mentioned meeting up to discuss their leadership as an important part of the mentoring process. Most participants assumed mentoring involved one-on-one engagement with the potential ordained leader. The word "regular" was commonly used in those responses that referenced meetings.

Eight participants referenced regular meetings. One said, "I mentor them mainly by meeting with them one-to-one in a variety of settings, including my home." One participant talked about the importance of having specific meetings related to different aspects of the individual's life, such as "discipleship, vocational discernment and mentoring."

Three participants referred to the importance of using one-on-one meetings to go through the vocations criteria and assist potential leaders with Church of England processes. One noted, "I had regular meetings, and talked through where they were in discernment process, and what aspects of church life they needed [to] get some experience with." Two participants also highlighted the importance of focusing on more than just the leadership mentoring, and of considering on both the spiritual and practical aspects of the mentees' lives as well.

Opportunities to lead alongside Leader

A theme that emerged was a vision for mentoring that involved the mentee learning from the mentor in practical settings. One participant said that they

"[e]ncourage[d] them to participate in leading alongside me, growing the setting and opportunities." Others also talked about the relationship between encouragement and giving leadership responsibility. Reflecting on leadership roles was also mentioned in relation to this theme. One participant noted the importance of "[s]haring in leadership tasks and reviewing them together," while another used the language of apprenticeship to describe this journey, saying "They become an apprentice." The theme of giving opportunities to lead to those who were potential ordained leaders also emerged.

Group Mentoring

Three participants also referenced mentoring in a group either in a formal setting "through an intern scheme" or through gathering groups of others exploring vocations together. One participant said their practice was to "[g]ather them as a group and meet once a term and they are also mentored by clergy term." All references to group mentoring also mentioned one-on-one mentoring as well.

A diversity existed as to the structured nature of mentoring. One participant had a very structured approach, saying that "[m]entoring occurs in explicit and defined contexts." In contrast, another participant had a more unstructured approach to mentoring, though they listed several aspects of their mentoring: "No fixed model. Bring them alongside. Enabling them through experience. Growing them in different areas of ministry and their confidence to lead."

Two participants, one who now works in theological education and one who is a senior church leader, noted that they are no longer the ones who do the primary mentoring. The theological educator mentioned that this was simply due to their role change. The senior leader suggested that "[o]thers in the team have tended to do more of

the regular mentoring than me—so in that sense it happens in a delegated way through

my leadership. But with occasional involvement from me rather than regular mentoring."

Question 16 asked if there was any difference in the way that participants

mentored potential female church leaders. Half of the participants responded "No" to this

question, although several elaborated further in their responses.

Women have mainly mentored Women

Two female participants who responded indicated that they mainly mentored

women for a variety of reasons. One reason given was that a participant observed that

women seemed to have trouble finding a mentor: "With one exception, all the people I

have mentored have been female. Largely because they have found it difficult to find a

male leader who would mentor them and/or have understood the difference that being

female makes to going through the ordination process." Another female participant

indicated mentoring women was easier. "It's easier for me to form deep relationships

with female leaders, and I guess that's where I naturally end up." Still another female

participant said that while they had identified men for leadership but currently only

mentored female leaders.

Dynamics around Gender/Spouses

Three male participants noted their awareness of additional dynamics around

gender in their mentoring of women. For two participants, their spouse played a role in

the way that they engaged in mentoring women. One said, "No, though I make sure that

my wife is aware of what I am doing and who I am connecting with on my own, both

men and women, so that there is no room for misunderstanding." Another participant

indicated that he would reduce his one-on-one mentoring of women "due to my concerns

about spending too much time with a person of the oppositive sex who is not my wife."

Three other participants mentioned a need for greater awareness in mixed-gender

mentoring and a focus on good practice, ensuring "there is no potential for mixed

messages."

Model of Mentoring

One participant stated that his model of mentoring was structured in such a way

that gender did not impact his practices as his practices were primarily group-focused. He

argued that "[g]roup mentoring helps smooth over gender concerns." Another participant

indicated that most of their mentoring of women happened in the context of their line

management/supervision of a staff member.

Encouragement

Five participants indicated that they had found that women sometimes needed

more encouragement as part of their mentoring. One participant also noted the

importance of that encouragement: "Some individuals need greater encouragement,

affirmation, confidence building, etc. This is more often women than men but not

exclusively." Another mentioned this need in relationship to preparing for working within

the church: "Provide more confidence building and encouragement, to go against the

flow of being in a male dominated institution." A third also suggested that dynamics exist

which they concentrate on when mentoring women: "Yes, talking about how women's

voices can be heard; reflections on how to be a woman in leadership irrespective of

marital status."

Mentee sets the Agenda

Two participants who chose "No" in response to the question did highlight that they allowed their mentee to set the agenda which can have implications when the mentee is female. One said, "I mostly let them set the agenda in terms of identifying the things they want to discuss, there might be differences in terms of the things they want to discuss and for women, gender is usually one of those things whereas for men it is usually not!"

Question 17 asked, "How much do you agree with this statement: 'I am confident mentoring potential ordained church leaders?'" Ninety-five percent of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that they were confident mentoring potential ordained church leaders.

Q17 How much do you agree with this statement- "I am confident mentoring potential ordained church leaders"
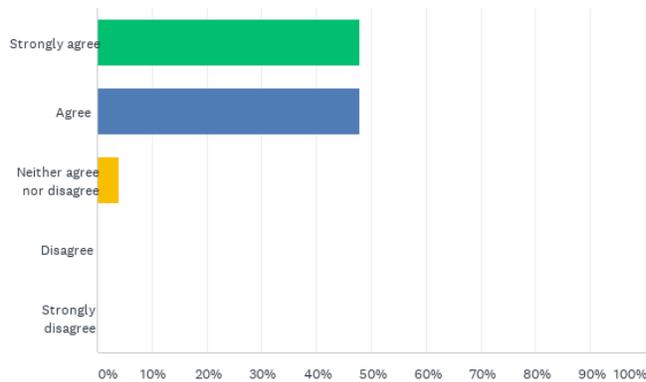
Figure 4.6

Question 18 asked, "How much do you agree with this statement: 'I am confident mentoring potential ordained female church leaders?'" Again, 95 percent of participants strongly agreed or agreed.

Q18 How much do you agree with this statement- "I am confident mentoring potential ordained female church leaders"
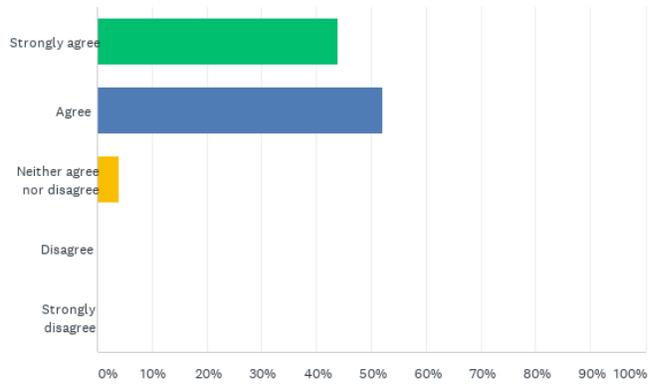
Figure 4.7

Question 19 asked, "How much do you agree with this statement: 'I am more confident mentoring potential ordained church leaders of the same gender as me?'" The graph displays the results.

Q19 How much do you agree with this statement- "I am more confident mentoring potential ordained church leaders of the same gender as me."
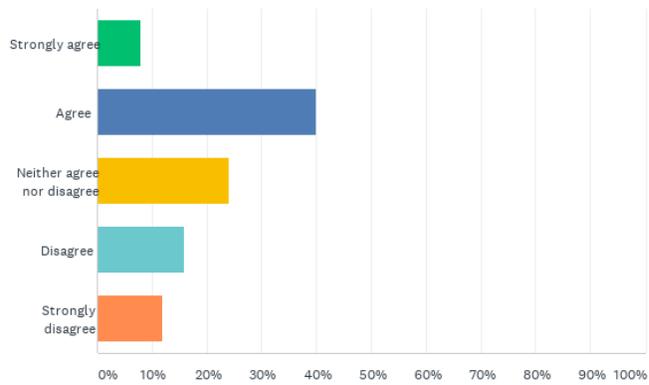
Figure 4.8

Question 20 asked if the participants had anything to add when they considered best practices for identifying and mentoring female church leaders. Twenty-two

participants added comments to this section. Below are some themes that were shared and several additional comments of note.

Need for Female Mentors

Two participants highlighted the need for more ordained women who can mentor potential female church leaders both within a centralized structure and in individual churches. "We need more support structure for female ordained, so that in situations (e.g., SMS dioceses) where they have less [sic] other female church leaders to connect to directly they can still find support and advice for the specific situations they may encounter as a female in leaders[hip]." Two of the male participants reflected that they thought they would benefit from having female clergy within their churches. Another participant also mentioned the usefulness of a mixed-gender clergy team: "This is an obvious point to make, but having a mixed gender clergy team (I am fortunate to work with a clergy team) I think helps congregation members—both female and male—to see and experience that ordained leadership is a vocation and calling open to them (whatever their gender)."

Need for Male Mentors

In contrast, three other participants highlighted the important of mixed-gender mentoring in best practice for mentoring. According to one participant, "[w]omen need men and women to encourage and mentor them. Being affirmed and mentored by a male can be hugely beneficial. To be affirmed in a setting where female ordinands and priests aren't very visible means men must do it." The need to keep mixed-gender teams was also raised. "I think that promoting female leadership is a positive thing but we do need

to be aware of segregating ourselves too much. I think male leaders need to mix A LOT with females to change the stereotypical narrative that's unconsciously bred."

Dynamics around Clergy Spouses

One participant highlighted a challenge that they had observed around the dynamics between female potential ordained leaders and female clergy spouses: "Women married to ordained church leaders need to define their own sense of call and be mentored distinctly from their husbands. It is usually helpful for them to have their own training/ministry track, even if they are—at some stage—called to ministry jointly (beyond parenting their children.)" Another participant also suggested ensuring the visibility of ordained women was helpful. They argued, "Seeing ordained female leaders will encourage more women to come forward. Therefore, putting forward none ordained female leaders will devalue this."

Research Question #3: How do HTB network female church leaders report that they were identified?

The instrumentation used for data collection for this research question was a focus group. The focus group involved data collection for both Research Question 3 and Research Question 4. Three focus groups met for an hour on Zoom on three consecutive days. The focus groups were made up of women who were either ordinands or ordained Anglican leaders. To qualify for the focus groups, the women had to have either been identified in an HTB network church or trained in a HTB network church. These women did not currently have to be in a HTB network church. The first half of the focus groups focused on Research Question 3. The second half of the focus groups focused on

Research Question 4. The recordings of the focus groups were then transcribed so that the data could be analyzed.

The focus groups were asked five questions in relation to Research Question 3. Question 1 asked participants "How were you identified for church ministry?" Question 2 asked, "Who identified you?" Question 3 asked, "What did they do?" Question 4 asked, "How well did you think this process went?" Question 5 asked, "As you think about the process of identifying potential female church leaders, is there anything else you would like to share?"

Identified by Suggestion

One of the key themes that immerged from the focus groups was that the majority of those identified had the idea of exploring ordination suggested to them by leaders. For six participants, ordination was not something they had considered before someone suggested they become ordained. One noted:

> She said, "Oh well, if that's (ordination) something that you would like to pursue, you know that you can always talk to us." And I hadn't even thought of it. I mean, that…the sort of ordination thing hadn't even occurred to me at that time, but it was definitely that conversation that started it, that I thought, "Oh alright, that is a possibility."

For seven participants, a significant gap existed between an initial conversation in which someone suggested the idea of ordained leadership and them going forward to explore it. Some participants were identified at a very young age through being involved early in leadership. One noted, "I first identified as potential ordained church leadership in my teens, my early about 13, 14. I then was not in Church of England churches for a

period in my early 20s, returned back to [a] Church of England church which was HTB network and kind of picked up the process again. So was sort of re-identified almost." For some participants, the gap between first being identified for ordained leadership and then stepping forward was decades. One said, "[It was]at least half my lifetime between being kind of first, someone saying, 'I think you could do this'…And actually getting to the point of being ordained." For five participants, identification often happened over an extended period and involved multiple different ministry leaders serving the role of identifier.

St. Mellitus

Four participants indicated that they had in fact been identified for leadership first at St. Mellitus (a theological college based at HTB) as opposed to at their church. St. Mellitus was then often the link that caused the participant to end up at an HTB church for their placement. "I was studying at St. Mellitus as an independent student, and as part of that, professors or different people were saying things to me, so ultimately I kind of got on board or God got me on board." One participant also referenced the flexibility of the training experience at St. Mellitus as being crucial to their pursuit of ordination. Another participant highlighted that without knowing about contextual training, they would not have considered getting ordained. They said that for identifying women, "it's just really helping people to become aware that there are options, especially if you're a mum, of training, that it's a possibility."

Not identified at HTB

Eleven of the participants were not identified at an HTB church but brought into the HTB network through ordination placements at St. Mellitus. Only five of the participants were identified at HTB or an HTB network church.

Two participants who were at HTB were initially identified in other settings, for example at St. Mellitus or through a university chaplaincy. One explained, "For me, I think it was more through my links with St. Mellitus… I was at HTB for about seven years, and I didn't really get approached about it through links there. I think that was more when I'd identified it and kind of took it to my service pastor and said, 'Can I explore this?'" Women then approached clergy at HTB to begin the process of ordination.

The Identifier

Considerable diversity existed in the individuals who played the role of identifier. For four participants, the identifier was the vicar. For one participant, their Vicar had given them significant leadership responsibility before they considered ordination: "[T]he Vicar just got me doing more stuff, so I looked after prayer ministry for a while. He asked me to be on the PCC. Also, I remember quite significantly he asked me to preach. That was quite a big thing, it felt like a real kind of clicking. 'Oh, this feels right' kind of moment." For many of the participants, the identification process was lengthy, involving lots of conversations. "My vicar kept on drip-feeding, but also seriously pushed me outside of my comfort zone, gave me opportunities to lead services, to preach, to set up whole mission events, just kept on giving me opportunities, so I had loads more experience before I got anywhere near thinking about ordination." For both participants, a

key part of the identification process seemed to be about having discovered a calling through service to the congregation.

Throughout the focus groups, many of the participants were identified by a range of different people. Some identifiers were ordained and some were not, some were male and some were female, some were of a similar age to the participant and some were older. One of the significant similarities was that all participants were approached by their identifiers as opposed to being the ones doing the approaching.

Challenges

One of the main challenges that participants mentioned in their process of being identified for ministry was that they found the process slow for a variety of reasons. Some participants who were part of larger churches found the process from identifying a calling to having a meeting within the church quite slow. One said, "From approaching the service pastor, I guess a big church like HTB, it then took three months to meet that person because they were so busy….it felt like I had to really push for it at that point." Another participant also used the word "push" when describing their experience: "I knew my service pastor fairly well, to be honest, that part of the process, I had to be quite pushy, say hi at the end of services, keep emailing his PA. If I'd been in a different headspace I could have just stopped I think and it wouldn't have gone any further."

In contrast, another participant found the process at HTB moved very quickly. "It was really quick…That was just fortune on my part in that perhaps who identified me…cause my story goes back, basically my service pastor was my alpha host and he was one of the people who identified it." A strong connection appears between how

influential the identifier was in larger churches and the speed at which the participant progressed through the wider discernment process.

For three participants, being part of a larger church meant that their identifier was more likely not going to be one of the clergy.

A good friend in the church came out and asked me if I was interested in church leadership. It was a bit odd because without her going to be vicar and saying, "I've realised [name redacted] has a call." I probably wouldn't have found it very easy to kind of like get that affirmation from the clergy, just because it was so big and people didn't know you.

Another participant faced challenge in their identification process due to a change in leadership in their church. "Our vicar was brand new…despite the link with St. Mellitus and all of that stuff it stalled and then he came, and then seemed very intent on not doing anything until I'd proved to him something…and then, also slightly complicated for me because my husband also wanted to go through it at the same time…I felt "Well let's look at him first and if it's right for both of you…". This experience did not stop the participant from pursuing ordination and becoming an ordinand, but they did feel that it slowed the process down. This seems to suggest that the role of identifier as advocate is important in this process.

Lack of Role Models

Another challenge highlighted in the process of identifying potential female church leaders was seeing a limited number of female church leaders. The sense from one participant was that the lack of female role models was off-putting to her in her process of being identified. "I've been in the HTB network for six years now. And so, I think I

felt that it was difficult to enter into the process at HTB which is why I did it through my

work. And I've definitely seen in the church that I was in before… that it's easier for the

guys to be identified that the girls." The lack of female senior leaders in the network was

also mentioned as something that can make the HTB network feel inaccessible to women,

"[a]nd I don't know how much of that is true, or perceptive…to kind of wind up just

having a perception of some aspect of male-ness or a certain type."

Research Question 4: What practices do HTB network ministry leaders use to train

female church leaders?

The second half of the focus groups focused on Research Question 4. The

recordings of the focus groups were then transcribed so that the data could be analyzed.

Ten of the participants in the focus groups were still in a training position within a

church whether as an ordinand or curate. However, five of the group had completed the

process of training by the time the focus group took place. They were invited to reflect on

their experiences during their training related to the questions. The responses to the

questions on mentor, therefore, both relate to participants current experiences and also

reflect on past experiences, depending upon the participant.

Not Mentored

A significant proportion of those interviewed in the focus groups, over half,

reported not being mentored throughout the process of their training. In one focus group,

all six of the participants responded that they had not been mentored but highlighted that

they would have really valued being mentored during training.

Two participants indicated that they had been line-managed by a church leader

through their training but that the meetings were focused on work performance and tasks,

which they considered not to be mentoring. Seven participants indicated that they had been mentored prior to training in the HTB network but that their mentoring had stopped once they had become an ordinand or a curate.

In one of the three focus groups, all five participants listed a wide range of people of different genders, ages, and roles who mentored them in the process of training for leadership. While some of those mentioned were ordained, none were leading in a HTB church. "I was mentored up until I became a curate and then not when I was a curate within the HTB network."

Hard to find a Mentor

Four participants mentioned that they had attempted to find a mentor but were unable to do so. Several reasons were given for this. One participant mentioned that she had asked two people at her current church if they would mentor her but had been turned down because they said they were too busy.

Another participant wanted to find a mentor who was a church leader but was not able to do so:

> I asked if somebody a male church leader for another church would mentor me, 'cause I thought there was a lot that he could help me with, and I never heard back. I did get offered to be mentored by another associate vicar but didn't feel that was, who happens to be a woman, but what I need right now is actually someone who's leading a large church with a huge, a very large amount of social transformation ministry, navigating lots of different dynamics.

The challenge of finding a church leader as a mentor was also highlighted by those who were being mentored.

Mentored by a Non-Ordained Person

Two of the participants of the focus groups indicated that they were being mentored by the non-ordained wife of the vicar. One of the participants had a positive experience with this mentoring, and the other felt that being mentored by the wife of the vicar had lacked clarity. "A lot of the more mentoring stuff initially was, I think was supposed to be being done through lunch with the vicar's wife but that really didn't go so well. I basically had to extricate myself from those meetings after about eighteen months, because suddenly I didn't know who I was having lunch with, if it was friend, or vicar in disguise."

Two other participants also reported being mentored by a non-ordained woman in their church. Both participants spoke positively of the experience, though one participant mentioned that finding the time to be mentored was a challenge. "Most of the time over the phone, mainly because my mentor is very busy, potentially is a downside to having someone that isn't a full-time incumbent…it definitely feels like it's one of many things on her very long to-do list."

Ordained Women not leading Churches

Three participants described being mentored during training for ministry by ordained women who were not their church leaders. Some of those ordained women were part of a ministry team of the church, others were retired, and some were non-stipendiary.

One of the reflections that those who were mentored by ordained women was that rarely were they leading a church. "During the course of this conversations, I have realised that the two women that were ordained that have been part of my mentoring life were ordained but not leading churches." For some women, this reality was felt to be a

challenge, especially if they wanted to be mentored by someone of the same gender.

"Well, everyone deserves to be mentored by people who are at the level they are aspiring

to, and at the moment a lot of women are having to put up with people who are not that

level who are doing something different. So, at the moment that's really difficult if

there's only three incumbents in the network who are women."

Mentored by a HTB Church Leader

Of all of those that were in the focus group, only four women described

themselves as being mentored by an HTB church leader. For one participant, the ordained

female leader of a clergy couple was her mentor. For the other two, their mentor was the

male church leader of the church, either the church they were the ordinand in or the

curate. One participant was mentored by two male HTB church leaders, both in the

process of discernment and as an ordinand. "I'm really grateful I haven't had that

experience, both when I was exploring and my service pastor would meet for coffee with

me in a coffee shop and it wouldn't be a problem. And my supervisor now is wonderful

and very much… we regularly meet up and I feel like he's mentoring me into ordained

leadership." Only this participant and one other referenced being mentored by the church

leader of the church in which they were placed.

Another participant mentioned having a male church leader as a supervisor but

did not feel that this experience was the same experience as being mentored by the

church leader. "It was a regular meeting at church during a workday, about once every

three weeks. And it wasn't holistic. It was a catching up on ministry takes and he'd bring

his list and we'd tick them off and that was it really." Several other participants also

mentioned being line-managed by a male church leader but stated that they did not

consider it mentoring.

However, another participant who was line-managed by their male church leader

did consider this experience to be mentoring as their meetings had both an emphasis on

line management and on mentoring. "My supervisor, we meet every other week, once a

month more business, church, to do list, and then the other time, more big picture "where

do you see your ministry, in five years [sic]."

Proactive in seeking out Mentors

Several of those who were being mentored mentioned the importance of being

proactive in seeking for mentors. One participant noted that she had only been able to

find mentors through approaching and asking them. Another participant suggested that

the process of having to find the mentors herself had been a positive one. "I think I have,

again always sought out mentors. I'm not sure that that's a bad thing. I think it's made me

own it and really want it and really value the time."

How Mentoring took Place

As only six people who were interviewed in the focus group said that they had

been mentored, very few participants were able to answer questions regarding their

experience of mentoring. Five of those that said they had been mentored said that the

mentoring had taken place in one-on-one meetings, either in coffee shops or in homes.

For all five participants, mentoring was semi-regular with meetings four to six weeks

apart. One participant described their experience of mentoring in quite a different way:

> So for me, it wasn't formal. It wasn't like, "I'm going to mentor you." But it was
>
> being seen and invited to everything and challenged to step up, and step out of my

comfort zone. But I worked for the church, so it was my boss in the end. So, we

did lots of one-to-ones." It wasn't really a mentoring session; it was more having

someone who believes in you and champions you.

This participant considered their line manager to also be investing in them from a

mentoring perspective.

Mentoring process

Different participants described the mentoring that they experienced as having

different foci. For three participants, the mentoring had a holistic focus, concentrating on

both leadership and on wider life topics.

Two participants found that their mentor tailored the experience of mentoring to

what they wanted the mentoring to be. For one participant, their mentor asked them to

shape what the mentoring experience would be.

She very much said to me, "What would you like out of this? How would you like

it to work?" I like the idea that the vicar is aware of people in their church, they're

raising up leaders, male or female…if I look at the model that Jesus does, that's

exactly what he does. He does it and then he shows them how to do it, then he

gets them to do it and holds their hand, and then he sends them out to do it. And

the person who's in the ideal position for that is somebody leading the church. So

I feel that, actually we need to get leaders to raise up leaders.

Why Participants were not being Mentored

Around half of the time allocated to research question four explored why

participants felt that they were not being mentored within the HTB network. Participants

had a variety of views as to why mentoring had not been happening. Several different

themes emerged:

Gender dynamics. The first theme that emerged in the discussion of why women

thought they were not being mentored was questions around gender dynamics,

particularly around policy on men mentoring women. While this does not appear to have

been an official policy, some of the participants suggested they had noticed a resistance

to women being mentored by men. For one participant, this experience manifested in

unspoken rules. "I wouldn't know whether it was an across the network thing or whether

a culture thing or whether it's specifically of HTB, that there is definitely a sense being

tricky with men mentoring women, and like you say that like it's dangerous of

something." One of the participants suggested that this culture had an impact of on the

quality of training that female leaders experienced within the HTB network, and no

alternative solution had been created.

> My experience is that men won't mentor women and there are no female leaders
>
> so the women don't get any…there's nothing. And I have been at college studying
>
> and we've had a speaker come in who told all the male students not to meet one to
>
> one with women and mentor them. And I find that really disturbing. Unless
>
> you're gonna come up with a plan B…I do get. . .it's not that that's not a point,
>
> it's just that if that is your point, then what are you doing? Because if you think
>
> the church is an army, half the army is female, what are you doing to raise up
>
> female leaders?

Another participant suggested that women who were leading in the network were

"good at rolling with the lads," which she suggested meant that "if you can make it with

the boys then you're alright, kind of thing." Another participant highlighted the challenge with being automatically matched with mentors of the same gender just because she was of the same gender. She suggested that being linked to someone who is in a similar role or a role to which she aspired would be better.

Women encouraged in Leadership. Five participants, while not being mentored, highlighted how supported they had felt in the HTB network as a woman going forward in leadership. "I know HTB get a lot of flak for not having enough women in leadership or in upfront positions…my own experience is one of having been absolutely encouraged from the very, very beginning through the entire process." Two participants noted that they had felt that the HTB network was working hard to encourage female leaders but that the HTB was grappling with having to start from scratch which was causing challenges. "My experience has been they've gone out of their way to try and encourage female leaders, but they're having to start from bottom up 'cause they haven't slowly developed them so they're importing them, so it's more difficult." One of these challenges was trying to come up with a structure for mentoring.

Lack of infrastructure. Two participants suggested that the lack of mentoring was perhaps due to a lack of structure for it. One participant suggested not receiving mentoring was not "for lack of want, it was more just lack of organization and getting on top of it." A disconnect between the support for women in the network and the practicalities to make it happen was raised several times.

The other related challenge that was mentioned was the size of HTB churches making finding a mentor quite difficult. "A lot of people can be quite anonymous. So maybe there's something in addressing that, because if people aren't necessarily gonna

put themselves forward and they don't have those conversations naturally, that could be a real barrier." This occurrence was suggested to hinder organic development of mentoring relationships. Another participant compared their previous corporate experience to training through the HTB and wondered where the development spaces were. "I've been quite surprised that there doesn't seem to be development space, or networking space for curates, or there may be one that I just haven't been invited to."

Focus on church planting. Another theme that emerged from exploring why some women were not being mentored was whether the focus on church planting added challenges to the leadership structures. Three women indicated that they did not feel that there was a place for them in the network as they did not feel called to plant a church or to be pioneers. While the women spoke well of the HTB network and its desire to church plant, they felt that the HTB was not the place for them.

> I've really appreciated my curacy and learnt lots, but actually is it just that HTB is not the network for me? I love lots about their culture and the way they're pushing forward and positive and proactive.... but I'm not a pioneer I'm about kind of growing a church rather than starting a new thing. I've sort of had a couple of conversations, and it was like, "No, you're not a pioneer. So basically, there isn't really anything for you.

One participant speculated on whether this challenge was unique to women or to anyone within the HTB network who was not called to church plant.

> But the reality is, unless you are a planter, there isn't [sic] opportunities really. I don't know if that is male and female though. So that would be a big question because HTB is a planting network and that is a high priority, which is a great

thing. I'm not dissing that at all, does that mean that if you are a male curate or

ordinand in the network, that you don't get given opportunities unless you're

willing to plant a church.

Another participant was concerned that the desire for pioneering sometimes caused the

"people side of stuff to get lost." She said that often she felt she was given "something to

do because it's a task…but has nothing to do with my personal development or actually

someone knowing me and knowing who I am, and wanting me to grow." However,

another participant reflected that perhaps having to be someone who pushed to be

invested in and mentored was a positive thing, based on the type of leaders that HTB was

trying to develop. "I think it's an organization that rewards people who push and maybe

that's what HTB needs because it is a church… we're identifying pioneering-type people

who are gonna go out there and plant churches?"

Challenges for Women in Leadership.

Four participants highlighted specific challenges for women in leadership that

they faced being in the HTB network and noted they would appreciate further mentoring

and support with these challenges. One of the issues that was raised was the significant

role of the spouse in the historical culture of HTB leadership. One participant had a

husband in a high-powered job unrelated to the church and was considering what

becoming a church planter would look like. She was concerned about how they would be

able to have a family while both working when the model she had seen was one spouse

being at home full time to raise a family. Another participant also shared that she

struggled with expectations for spouses in church planting especially around gender. "So

often, the wife comes along and they look after the children, but they are planting with

the husband. I've seen that with my vicar at the moment. He's planted and his wife is a stay-at-home mum, but she does some stuff for the church." She wondered how she would be able to plant as a single person.

Another related challenge that was raised was a desire to have a conversation about the role of non-ordinand spouses in leadership. A concern was raised about a lack of clarity in accountability structure, in particular around clergy wives. One participant indicated that this related to the dynamics being female clergy and clergy wives.

It's just a thing, ordained women and non-ordained wives, and it's a thing in the parish where you have a woman who's within your accountability structures…I'm not saying wives shouldn't be in church leadership, I'm not saying that at all, I'm just saying sometimes it doesn't always work out well because they're often not within the accountability structures.

Another participant also highlighted frustration with vocation around the role of spouses in leadership. "I also know women who are within the HTB network who have told me they're not gonna bother going forward for ministry and going forward for ordination because they literally, the don't know what they would get that is better than they already had, because they're married to someone."

Summary of Major Findings

Several major findings became clear from the data analysis of both research tools.

1. There is not a standard method of identification for identifying female church leaders.

2. There is not a standard method of mentoring for mentoring female church leaders.

3. All the church leaders surveyed felt confident mentoring women.

4. Two thirds of focus group members within the HTB network considered themselves not to have been actively mentored.

5. Potential female church leaders are rarely being mentored by senior church leaders.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The HTB network is a church-planting network within the Anglican Church. While the network is verbally affirming of female church leaders, few such leaders exist. This research considered best practices in identifying and mentoring potential female church leaders within the HTB network to make recommendations on how to increase the number of them.

This chapter identifies five findings from this research project and explains how they correspond to personal observations, the literature survey, and the project's biblical framework. This chapter then outlines the research study's limitations, unexpected observations, and recommendations for further study.

Major Findings

Major Finding #1—There is not a standard method of identification for identifying female church leaders.

Different church leaders use different methods when identifying female church leaders, and these methods vary widely. This reality was reflected in the focus groups' responses; different women had different experiences of being identified though there were some similarities as well. While seeing that women needed encouragement to be identified to consider church leadership was the expectation, the universality of the experience for all of the focus group participants was surprising. Almost all the female leaders had been identified for leadership by someone in their church, some at a very early age. Church leaders and youth workers gave them many opportunities. These

opportunities emphasized the importance of training on best practices for ministry staff working with women even at a young age. Many of those identified had also given others opportunities to try out aspects of being a church leader, using their own experience of being identified to identify women proactively as part of their leadership practice.

Many of the survey responses also highlighted a recognition that women need to be proactively identified and approached to consider an ordained vocation. Many of those who responded indicated that they had a good understanding of the need to be more proactive in encouraging women. Role models and affirming women from the front of churches were mentioned as part of this practice. This understanding highlighted that the best practices for identifying suitable women is not simply encouraging them to consider church leadership but thinking carefully about broader church culture and how the culture might help women consider ordination.

Alongside this finding, helping woman consider ordination seemed like a priority for the church leaders who answered the survey. Given the high number of HTB network leaders who responded to the survey, this statistic suggests that encouraging women to take leadership roles is becoming a key value for many in the network.

In the literature review, Kadi Coles' work on developing female leaders also supports this finding. Coles suggests that women need a "sponsor," someone who will put them forward into leadership roles (Cole: 32). This idea is supported by the research results. Many of those surveyed recognized that they needed to be proactive in encouraging women to be considered for church leadership. The focus groups' responses also suggested that most of the women who had training for church leadership had people who had served in that sponsoring role through their process of discernment. Similarly,

the McKinsey report on women in business highlighted the importance of the senior

leaders of organizations modeling priorities related to diversity in leadership (15). Being

proactive in approaching and identifying women as senior leaders is one practice that the

findings suggested is being modelled within HTB Network Leaders.

      The biblical framework for this project supported this finding. The diversity of

ways that leaders are identified within the biblical framework supports this finding.

Biblically, no standard method exists for how God calls individuals.

      Biblical precedent exists for choosing to approach potential Christian leaders. In

both the Old and the New Testament, God is the one who calls, and often the people he

calls are unexpected within their context. Within the Old Testament, this unexpected

nature of calling is true in the case of Moses in Exodus chapter 3, David in 1 Samuel 16,

and Esther in Esther's book. All these individuals are either approached directly by God

or by prophets of God. Similarly, as Keener suggests, Jesus is the rabbi who calls his

disciples (28). Jesus' actions would have been unusual for the time as rabbis usually

expected potential disciples to approach them with a request to study. Jesus also

approaches women, like the Samaritan woman in John 4 and Mary Magdalene in John

20, and called them to testify to who he was despite the social risk for him to meet with

women alone. This precedent set in the Old Testament and modeled by Jesus is also seen

in Paul's ministry. In Acts 16 13-15, Paul approaches a group of women, including Lydia,

to tell them the gospel.

Major Finding #2—There is not a standard method of mentoring for mentoring female church leaders.

Different church leaders use different methods when mentoring female church leaders, and those methods vary widely. This finding was surprising as a lack of consistency in mentoring is part of the reason that this project was begun in the first place.

In the literature review, Kadi Coles' three types of mentoring might give an indication as to why no standard method exists for mentoring potential HTB female leaders. Cole talks about the differences between advocates, coaches, and mentors, defining mentorships as a personal, one-on-one relationships (42). The responses given within the survey references elements of each of the different types of mentoring. Lots of HTB leaders position their mentoring as being advocates for women in the culture of the church. Some female HTB leaders spend time mentoring potential female church leaders one-on-one. Each leader's response was slightly different as they described their methods of mentoring. The experiences of women in the HTB network also varied significantly and suggest that these women have not been involved in any standard process of mentoring coordinated by the network. While most women had experienced some elements of either advocacy, coaching, and mentoring, no consistency was present across all potential female church leaders.

The biblical framework for this project supports the idea that not one standard method of mentoring exists within scripture. Throughout scripture, different leaders are mentored in a variety of ways. Like the twelve disciples, some are mentored by Jesus over an extended period, in a larger group, and one-on-one. Jesus' mentoring practices

also appear to apply to some female disciples, such as Susanna and Mary Magdalene. Alternatively, some of those mentored by Paul, such as Lydia, appear to have had a brief period of engagement in Acts 16.11 and then to have become part of the church written to in Philippi. One element of scriptural mentoring in the early church that appears consistent is that the mentor and the mentee spend a significant portion of time together while the mentee is being trained as a leader.

Major Finding #3—All of the church leaders surveyed felt confident mentoring women.

All the church leaders who were surveyed were confident mentoring women. Given the expectation that mentoring women might be an area of weakness for the network, the overwhelming sense of confidence was surprising. The survey responses framed mentoring in much broader terms than that of the focus groups. The survey responses mentioned activities such as working alongside a mentee and giving opportunities as a key part of mentoring.

By contrast the focus groups often seemed to see mentoring primarily as taking place one-on-one in a structured pattern of meetings outside of the church environment. The difference between the survey and the focus group responses suggested a disconnect in understanding as to how well mentoring women in the HTB network is going. This disconnect is due to differing understandings and expectations about what being mentored involves. Many of the potential female leaders saw mentoring as intentional one-on-one time outside of traditional management structures that invested in their wider development. Potential female leaders in the importance of a mentoring relationship having a clear and defined structure. Whilst HTB network leaders felt confident

mentoring women, their mentoring methods vary wildly. This scenario leads to the possibility that church contexts exists where HTB network leaders believe they are mentoring a potential female church leader, but the potential female church leader does not feel mentored.

There is precedent within the biblical framework of this project for leaders feeling confident mentoring potential female church leaders. Jesus engaged with women like Mary and Martha, whom he described as his "friends," with confidence at a point when significant nervousness and cultural rules was related to women being alone with men. Jesus did not allow a fear for his reputation to stop him from engaging with women as people who were worthy of being taught. To desire to be confident in mentoring women as a church leader is to seek to follow the example of Jesus.

Major Finding #4—Two-thirds of focus group members within the HTB network considered themselves not to have been actively mentored.

The fourth finding of this project was discovered in a comparison between the survey responses and that of the focus groups. Many of those interviewed in the focus groups reported that they were not being mentored or had not been mentored as part of their training process for church leadership The dissonance between the survey responses from church leaders and the focus groups' responses on these issues was surprising. Three likely reasons exist for this dissonance: differencing classifications of mentoring, discrepancy in survey responses, and differing approaching to mixed gender mentoring.

 One reason is that ministry leaders and focus group participants have different classifications of what mentoring is. Most potential female church leaders in the focus group saw mentoring primarily as taking place one-on-one in a structured pattern of

meetings outside of the church environment. This definition of mentors was not shared consistently by all HTB ministry leaders. Therefore, a church leader may think that they are mentoring an individual, but the mentee does not feel mentored.

The second possible reason for this dissonance is that some of the churches that the focus group participants were part of were not the same churches as those led by the ministry leaders who responded to the survey. In comparing the survey responses to that of the focus group, this phenomenon may be the case. The ministry leaders who answered the survey had to have identified or mentored at least two potential church leaders. This criteria means that church leaders who hadn't mentored women did not participate in the survey.

The third possible reason for this dissonance is a lack of policy on mixed gender mentoring within the HTB network leading to inconsistency in mentoring practice. Within the literature review, Ed Stetzer's approach to potential female church leaders, in particular, illustrates the tension that some male church leaders may feel. On the one hand, Stetzer is very encouraging of the idea of women becoming church leaders; on the other hand, he recommends that men and women should never meet alone. This tension identified in the research seems to exist within the HTB network as well. While great enthusiasm exists for women being trained as potential church leaders, a lack of infrastructure and policy around mentoring women hinders making this possible.

The focus groups also highlighted that many participants did not see their supervisions or line management meetings as part of mentoring. Whilst some participants did find their line manager also took on the role of mentor, mentoring could not be taken for granted. In contrast, many of those answering the survey referred to line management

of staff as part of their mentoring process. The differences between the survey responses and the focus group in this regard suggests a significant gap exists between ministry leaders' and potential female church leaders' understandings of what mentoring is between ministry leaders and potential female church leaders. Further clarity on this issue will help in improving practices in this area. A shared working definition of what mentoring is and isn't would be useful in relation to line management arrangements in churches.

Disappointingly, the results appear to suggest that there is still a long way to go in mentoring women in the HTB network. While the survey results clarify that many leaders are willing to mentor and feel confident, many potential female church leaders do not see themselves being mentored intentionally.

Major Finding #5—Senior church leaders are rarely mentoring potential female church leaders.

The finding that very few women were being mentored by senior church leaders within the HTB network was the most concerning to me. While many potential female leaders had a desire to be mentored, being mentored by a senior church leader was unlikely. Finding a mentor who was a senior church leader was a particular frustration for potential female church leaders who aspired to be a senior leader of a church as they were concerned that they were not being fully prepared for the responsibility.

A significant concern is that potential female church leaders will struggle to reach their full potential if they are not being invested in by high-caliber leaders. A lack of mentoring for women by senior church leaders is especially concerning if potential male leaders are being invested in by senior church leaders. This reality is especially a concern

if churches are seeking to mentor leaders within a biblical framework. Jesus spent significant time mentoring and investing in his followers. The fact that mentoring women is not happening consistently within the HTB network seems inconsistent with a biblical framework.

This finding shows that the experience of potential female leaders within the HTB network is consistent with the literature review. The idea that women often struggle to find leadership mentors is supported by wider research on women in church leadership such as Moy and Moore. Moy argues that in part this struggle is caused by mixed gender rules such as "The Billy Graham Rule" which are commonly used in church policy both formal and informally ("Men only a charismatic crisis") Christian literature on mentoring has often suggested that mixed gender mentoring is unwise (Jenkins 21). As most senior church leaders within the HTB network are men, the finding that women are not being mentored by senior church leaders suggests that wider Christian attitude toward mixed gender mentoring influences mentoring in the HTB network,

This finding also has an impact on the development women as leaders within the wider organization of the HTB network. Both McKinsey reports that focus on increasing diversity within organizations indicate that for organizations to see significant shifts in the diversity of their companies, change must begin with the senior leadership (McKinsey). The concern becomes whether the HTB network will struggle to see female church leadership become more numerous until senior leaders take time to mentor and invest in female church leaders.

Ministry Implications of the Findings

The implications of this study's findings will be offered as recommendations to the leaders within the HTB network as the network continues to develop best practices for encouraging more women to become leaders. This study will serve as both an encouragement and a challenge to the network. The encouragement is that a good understanding of best practices for identifying potential female leaders within the HTB network seems to exist. Women are being identified as potential church leaders within the HTB network. However, the challenge is what happens to women after they have been identified for leadership. The network would benefit from a structured, clear approach to mentoring women that was consistent across the churches. This study indicated that church leaders are not mentoring many potential female church leaders.

Leaders recognize that women may need more proactive encouragement to consider church leadership

The encouraging finding from the research was that leaders are aware that women may need more encouragement to consider church leadership. Women may not put themselves forward to consider ordained church leadership and, therefore, need to be approached to consider the possibility. An awareness amongst church leaders exists that if they want to see more women considering ordained church leadership they need to be proactive.

The number of women in the focus group whose journey to ordinand leadership began with a leader approaching them is testament to this practice having an impact within the HTB network. Many women record positive experiences of being identified for church leadership, feeling supported and affirmed from their sending churches. The

increase in numbers of women training as ordinands and curates in the network indicates

that a proactive approach to identifying women is proving effective. When I entered the

HTB network as a young woman, there were two to three other women training across

the network. There are now around thirty women training for ordination in HTB network

churches.

The experience of women being mentored in the HTB network is inconsistent.

The findings indicate the wide variety of experiences of women training for

church leadership in the network. Some women have had positive experiences of being

mentored throughout their training. However, other women have felt they had little

support or mentoring. This reality means that the experience of women training in the

HTB network is extremely inconsistent across churches. There are two specific dynamics

that contribute to this inconsistency outlined below.

A lack of clear policy around mixed-gender mentoring is a barrier to best

practices in mentoring potential female church leaders. The HTB network does not

have a standard method for the mentoring of potential church leaders. No policies or

guidelines exist that apply to HTB network churches. No standard policies exist that

apply to mixed gender mentoring. Each church leader, therefore, has their own practices

and methods of mentoring potential church leaders. Each church leader also has their own

practices for how potential female church leaders are mentored within their church.

Surprisingly, few of those interviewed in the focus groups considered themselves

to have been mentored. Very few women were being mentored by male church leaders

despite those leaders indicating confidence in mentoring women. One of the reasons that

was suggested for why male church leaders were not mentoring women was a nervousness around mixed gender mentoring.

Nervousness and a lack of policy around mixed gender mentor has led to occasions where women are offered female mentors and turned down for mentoring by men. In some cases, where an appropriate female mentor was not available, the potential female church leader was not mentored at all. Gender dynamics were surprisingly rarely mentioned within the survey except for one participant who mentioned a need for openness with his spouse when he was meeting with female leaders.

In the last five years, multiple well known male evangelical leaders outside of the HTB network were discovered to have had inappropriate sexual relationships with women. Therefore, male clergy who are nervous around meeting with women one-on-one is completely understandable. This nervousness has led to situations where church leaders have avoided mixed gender mentoring. The possibility exists that mixed gender mentoring in no way increases the risk of inappropriate relationships within churches, but the fear may be impacting individual church leaders' mentoring practices.

At the present, time a tension seems to be present within the HTB network regarding mentoring female church leaders. On the one hand, the findings indicate that the network wants to encourage women into church leadership but a nervousness remains regarding mixed gender mentoring. This tension is compounded by the fact that middle class British culture is often very reserved, discussing dynamics around sex and gender could be seen as forward or rude. HTB network is mainly led by middle class British men. This circumstance can mean that while there are no standard policies regarding

mixed gender mentoring, unwritten cultural rules are at play. Ironically, discussing mixed gender and creating a best practice policy removes much of the perceived fear.

The challenge for the network is that until the perceived nervousness around mixed gender mentoring is openly named and addressed, potential female leaders will continue to be at risk of not being mentored within their training in the network. A policy on best practices in mixed gender mentoring would both offer useful clarity to this issue and help to standardize and clarify the networks' position on mixed gender mentoring. A lack of clarity around clergy spouses' role is a barrier to best practices in mentoring potential female church leaders.

Several participants in both the survey and the focus group mentioned the unclear leadership role of non-ordained female spouses mentoring women pursuing ordination as an unaddressed challenge for the HTB network. For some participants, the role of the non-ordained staff as unpaid leaders of the church had created confusing dynamics for them within their church as they explored what being an ordained female church leader meant. For others, being mentored by the non-ordained female spouse had led to confusion about who was accountable within church leadership. Some participants wanted to be mentored by the male ordinand leader but did not have the option made available.

Interestingly, no male respondents mentioned the role of the non-ordained female spouse in their responses. Whether or not male church leaders do not see the role of the female spouse as a challenge to establishing best practices for mentoring women is unknown. Curiosity causes one to question if this issue is undiscussed because of the

pastoral sensitivities involved. The role of the female spouse is a sensitive subject for the network.

The leadership role of the non-ordained female spouse being raised so often throughout this study was not anticipated. Even if this is a sensitive subject for the HTB network, the role of the spouse, in particular the female spouse, in leadership is something that needs to be discussed further. The lack of clarity on the spouse's leadership role appears in some cases to be having a detrimental impact on the development of potential female church leaders. Cases exist within the study where the non-ordained female spouse has positively impacted the development of potential female church leaders. Married church leaders considering how their spouses' role within a church might impact the development of ordained female church leaders would be a positive step to take to open up the dialogue in this area.

The literature reviewed had little to say about the role of wives in the development of female church leaders. The lack of secular research may be because in a secular context, the spouse's role does not have the same implications as in a church environment. Christian literature on mentoring did not mention the dynamics between female spouses and female ministers. This lack of existing research may be because the dynamic between the two is a recent issue as more women are becoming leaders within evangelical churches.

Limitations of the Study

Although I faced some limitations during my research, I do not believe that they impacted the generalization of my study findings. One factor that may have had an impact on the study was the COVID-19 pandemic which may have reduced the number

of people able to participate due to increased time pressures caused by crisis management. Another limitation was that the study only engaged with women who had been selected for training for ordination within the Anglican church and who had been at an HTB network church. Comparing their responses to those of women who had not been selected for training within an Anglican church or who had decided not to continue to explore church leadership would be interesting.

Equal proportions of men and women responded to the church leader survey despite there being many more male church leaders in the HTB network who did not answer the survey. This may have had an impact on the results of the study. A weakness that impacts generalizability is that the survey participants self-selected. As such, those who were already interested in the topic being studied chose to participate and those who were not interested, may not be supportive of women in ministry, or not active in mentoring women simply chose not to participate.

The study was focused upon the HTB network, a part of the wider Anglican church and its subculture. The focus groups only interviewed women within the HTB network and not potential male church leaders. The focus groups took place on Zoom instead of in person which may have affected the group dynamic.

Unexpected Observations

One unexpected observation in completing this study was how easy finding participants for the focus groups was, but how difficult finding participants for the survey was. Many women wanted to talk about their experiences in the HTB network. The COVID-19 pandemic may have had an influence on this situation. COVID-19 meant that many people were working from home during the day and more may have been willing to

participate in the focus groups when they were on zoom rather than having to travel to participate in the research.

There were several additional findings raised by the research. One was how many women in the study needed to be identified on multiple occasions to consider the idea that they might be called leadership. For some women, this process of multiple identifications took place over many years; they may have been first identified as a teenager and not explored being ordained until years after. While the increasing possibilities for women within the Church of England may account for a delay in women exploring ordination, being an ordained woman is so much more "normal" now than twenty years ago.

If women are commonly approached multiple times to consider church leadership, current church leaders need to avoid assuming that if a woman has been asked to consider church leadership once she should not be asked again. I was encouraged by how many church leaders highlighted their awareness that many women needed repeated encouragement and opportunities. This data suggests that many church leaders are aware of this finding and apply this finding to their practices.

Many of the participants in the focus groups raised questions about how family life fit into ordained leadership. Some had waited to have children before pursuing ordination. Some church leaders mentioned the increased impact that family life questions had on women and mentioned that this could delay the process of them going forward for leadership. The lack of clarity around family life policies, as mentioned in the literature review chapter, created added challenges for women going forward with

ordination. Several women in the focus groups had questions about how having children

worked within the Church of England.

<div align="center">**Recommendations**</div>

Three recommendations arose from the findings of the research that the HTB

network could apply in order to continue to improve the ways the potential female church

leaders are identified and mentored within the network. They are to train new church

leaders in best practices in identifying potential female church leaders, to create a

network wide mentoring policy that addresses mixed gender mentoring, and to increase

clarity on the role of the clergy spouse within leadership development.

One final suggestion applies more broadly to the structures of the wider Church of

England. My hope is that these recommendations offer both practical suggestions and

suggests some areas for future research.

Train New Church Leaders in Best Practices in identifying Potential Female Church Leaders

As the HTB network continues to grow and more churches are planted across the

UK, a risk exists that some of the best practices demonstrated by leaders within the

survey on how to identify female church leaders will be lost. Best practices in this area

should be shared amongst the next generation of HTB network church leaders.

I recommend that the network includes a section on how to identify potential

church leaders within the training for church planters that gives attention to best practices

in identifying potential female church leaders.

Creating a Network Wide Mentoring Policy that addresses Mixed Gender Mentoring

A network wide mentoring policy for training potential church leaders would offer useful guidance and consistency in how potential church leaders are mentored. A policy that also addresses and offers guidance on mixed gender mentoring would help to resolve some of the barriers that women within this research have faced in finding appropriate mentors

I recommend that the HTB network mentoring policy uses Kari Coles' categories of mentoring—"the advocate," "the coach," and "the mentor"—on a structural level to improve the quality of the leadership development within this network.

Increase Clarity on the Role of the Clergy Spouse within Leadership Development

The HTB network would benefit from a conversation about leadership dynamics between female spouses and potential female church leaders. This might be a challenging conversation but a greater understanding of each other's experiences would be beneficial.

As more women become church leaders within the HTB network, the role of the spouse may also evolve with the introduction of male spouses. Further research on the different models of clergy spouse within HTB network churches would be beneficial.

Recommendations for the W ider Anglican Church

The findings also highlighted some challenges for women that affected the wider Anglican church, particularly those related to spousal and family life. I was shocked at some of the implications for women in the Church of England's family life, in particular the lack of maternity cover available for female church leaders. This issue needs to be addressed in the wider Church of England. Further research could consider to what extent

these policies may hinder the development of potential female church leaders within the wider Anglican Church.

This research project, while concentrating on the HTB network, may also offer insight into issues facing women being identified and mentored to lead in contexts that have been historically male. The research may also be useful for those involved in training institutions within the Anglican church. As the HTB network is a church planting network, the research may also be useful for other church planting movements who want to see an increase of female church planters.

This research was undertaken for the benefit of church leaders who want to see more female church leaders within the HTB. The research would also be of benefit to wider Church of England leadership who work with HTB network churches. The research would also benefit those who work within a leadership development and/or vocation role within the Anglican church.

Most importantly, the group I hope who will benefit from the study are the women and girls sitting in churches across the country who God is calling to be the next generation of HTB church leaders. May we steward their call well.

Postscript

I am extremely grateful and proud to be a church leader within the HTB network. Throughout my own time as potential female church leader, exploring a call to church planting, I have felt consistency encouraged, identified, and mentored. I am excited about the future of the HTB network and its influence on the wider church.

I have undertaken this project as an attempt to ensure that as a network we continue to strive to be the best we can be in developing future female leaders for the

vision and task ahead of us. I want every woman who is identified and trained within the network to have the same positive experience that I did.

I know courage and vulnerability to look inwards and consider where we still have room to grow in our training of female leaders is required. During my time of writing this project, a number of extremely public cases of toxic and unhealthy Christian leaders' behaviors were being brought to light, cases that have had a painful impact on many. To grow in wisdom and discernment regarding gender dynamics within the church requires much of all of us. However, I have confidence that with the grace of God and through the power of the Holy Spirit we will continue to humbly improve and grow into a network where women and men boldly step into the vocations that they are called to.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A—SURVEY QUESTIONS

Survey Questions from Survey Monkey

Demographic Information

1. Gender _ Male_ Female

2. Age Range _ 18-24 _ 25-34 _ 45-55 _ 64-74_75 and above

3. Which of the following best describes your church leadership role?

    Ordained Senior Church Leader)Vicar, Priest in charge, Senior Pastor)_Ordained

    Associate Leader (Associate Vicar)_ Ordained Assistant Leader (Curate)_ No

    Ordained Clergy Spouse (Paid and/or Licensed)_ Non Ordained Clergy Spouse

    (Volunteer leader)_Non Ordained Ministry Leader(Paid Staff)_Non Ordained

    Ministry Leader (Volunteer)_Other (please specify)

How many potential ordained church leaders have you identified in the last 10 years?

0_1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10+

How many potential ordained female church leaders have you identified in the last 10

years?

0_1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10+

7. How do you identify potential ordained leaders within your church?

Is there any difference in the way you identify potential ordained female leaders within

your church?

9. How much do you agree with this statement- "I feel confident identifying potential

ordained church leaders?

Strongly agree_Agree_Neither agree nor disagree_Disagree_Strongly disagree

10. How much do you agree with this statement- "I feel confident identifying potential ordained female church leaders?

Strongly agree_Agree_Neither agree nor disagree_Disagree_Strongly disagree

11. How much do you agree with this statement-"I am more confident identifying ordained potential church leaders of the same gender as me."

Strongly agree_Agree_Neither agree nor disagree_Disagree_Strongly disagree

12. As you think about the process of identifying potential ordained female church leaders is there anything else you would like to share?

13.How many potential ordained church leaders have you mentored in the last 10 years?

0_1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10+

14.How many potential ordained female church leaders have you mentored in the last 10 years?

0_1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8_9_10+

15. How do you mentor potential ordained leaders within your church?

16.Is there any difference in the way you mentor potential ordained female leaders within your church?

17. How much do you agree with this statement- "I feel confident mentoring potential ordained church leaders?

Strongly agree_Agree_Neither agree nor disagree_Disagree_Strongly disagree

18. How much do you agree with this statement- "I feel confident mentoring potential ordained female church leaders?

Strongly agree_Agree_Neither agree nor disagree_Disagree_Strongly disagree

19. How much do you agree with this statement-"I am more confident mentoring ordained potential church leaders of the same gender as me."

Strongly agree_Agree_Neither agree nor disagree_Disagree_Strongly disagree

20. As you think about the process of mentoring potential ordained female church leaders is there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX B—FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Focus Group Questions

1.How were you identified for church ministry?

2.Who identified you?

3.What did they do?

4.How well did you think this process went?

5.As you think about the process of identifying potential female church leaders is there anything else you would like to share?

6.Were you mentored before you became a church leader?

7.Who mentored you?

8.What did they do?

9. How well do you think this mentoring went?

10. As you think about the process of mentoring potential female church leaders there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX C—CONSENT LETTERS

Consent to Questionnaire

You are invited to be in a research study being done by Sarah McDonald Haden from the Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are a ministry leader in the HTB network who has identified and/or mentored at least one potential ordained female church leader.

The purpose of this research study is to discover best practice for identifying and mentoring ordained female church leaders within the HTB network, and will take you approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to.

The questionnaire is anonymous and no information is collected that identifies you. You can read the privacy statement here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/legal/privacy-policy/

If something makes you feel uncomfortable in any way while you are in the study, please tell Sarah McDonald Haden who can be reached at sarah.mcdonald@asbury.edu. You can refuse to respond to any or all of the questions, and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time.

If you have any questions about the research study please contact Sarah McDonald Haden at sarah.mcdonald@asburyseminary.edu.

Consent to Focus Group

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Best practice in identifying and mentoring potential female church leaders in the HTB network

You are invited to be in a research study being done by **Sarah McDonald** from the Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because *you are female church leader or female church leader in training in the HTB network*

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to join a focus group around afternoon tea on April 20th 2020 from 3.30pm- p.m. at St Mellitus College. The focus group will be facilitated by the researched and then transcribed by the researcher.

If anyone else is given information about you, they will not know your name. A number or initials will be used instead of your name.

If something makes you feel uncomfortable in any way while you are in the study, please tell *Sarah McDonald* who can be reached at sarah.mcdonald@asbury.edu. You can refuse to respond to any or all of the questions, and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact **Sarah McDonald** at **sarah.mcdonald@asbury.edu.**

Signing this paper means that you have read this or had it read to you, and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or even if you change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do.

14/04/20

Signature of Person Agreeing to be in the Study   Date Signed

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