ABSTRACT

PRAYER, LEADERSHIP, and CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS:

LEARNING FROM THE PRAYER-LIVES

OF WESTERN RENEWAL MOVEMENTS

and THEIR LEADERS

by

Matthew Porter

This dissertation is about prayer, leadership, and church planting movements in the West. Although the Western church is in general decline, growing church planting movements nevertheless bring renewal. This study considers whether ten growing western renewal movements are praying movements led by praying leaders, by examining the rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of their personal and corporate prayer. The purpose of this research was to identify how the personal prayer of renewal movement leaders of the western church, influences the corporate prayer and development of their movement, in order to inform the prayer of church planting leaders in the North of England.

The literature review describes biblical, theological, historical, social science, and missiological foundations of prayer, taking particular note of Jesus Christ and Mary of Nazareth, and Aidan and Hilda, as examples of renewal leaders. Key scholars referenced include Clement, Seamands, G.E. Ladd, E. Peterson, Barth, Jeremias, Dunn, Graef, Fournier, Bede, Adam, Simpson, Ellison, DeGregorio, Mitton, Finney, Gross, Brown,

Bruce, Davie, Collins, Wallace, Addison, Bevins, Garrison, Keller, Thorpe, Ott & Wilson, and Sensing.

Data collection tools of background research, survey, and interview provided evidence which produced a thick description of the prayer lives of these leaders and their movements. The study proposes that renewal leaders and movements share a common understanding of prayer: recognising prayer to be foundational, connectional and transformational. Five key findings from the research are recognised, with church planting leaders in the North of England particularly urged to lead in prayer, prioritise prayer, and develop a prayer strategy.

PRAYER, LEADERSHIP, and CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS:

LEARNING FROM THE PRAYER-LIVES

OF WESTERN RENEWAL MOVEMENTS

and THEIR LEADERS

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of

Asbury Theological Seminary

By

Matthew Porter

April 2022

In Partial Fulfilment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

by

Matthew Porter

April 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the faculty of Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, U.S.A. for encouraging me in this research project, and especially to Dr. Winfield Bevins and Dr. Ellen Marmon. Asbury kindly awarded me a scholarship to enter the doctoral program; without it, this project and dissertation would never have been undertaken. Dr. Christian Selvaratnam and Dr. Ric Thorpe in the UK were also most helpful in guiding my thinking and preparation, particularly at the start of the project.

The congregation of the church I serve in the UK, of St. Michael le Belfrey in York, have been generous in giving me space to study while also leading them and the wider vision of the church, which is to be serving God's transformation of the North of England. I hope and pray that this project will assist in that broader task as we, and other churches in our region, prayerfully plant churches that plant churches.

Finally, I want to express hearty thanks to my wife, Sam, for nudging me to partake in the doctoral program at Asbury, and I am ever thankful to her and my sons for their patience as I have sought to find time to study 'in the gaps.'

May this work help me and others to combine prayer with action, so we can play our part in seeing a movement of church planting in our region in our day.

Soli Deo gloria.

CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Chapter

In this chapter, I will introduce my research project, providing the framework for understanding how the personal prayer life of renewal movement leaders of the western church influences the prayer of the movements they lead, in order to inform the prayer of church planting leaders in the North of England. As the researcher, I will provide a rationale for the project evolving from personal experience supported by research. This overview of the research project will include the research design, purpose statement, research questions, participants, and how results were collected and analysed. 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 establish the significance for and impact on the practice of ministry.

Personal Introduction

I am passionate to see, in my lifetime, a movement of church renewal in the North of England, and society transformed. In short, I long for revival. The last significant renewal movement in the North of England that historians now consider developed into a "revival" took place in the 1860's (Randall 9). During that time - some five generations ago - my great, great grand-parents, Benjamin and Anne Porter, were converted to Christ in a Primitive Methodist setting (R. Porter). Such was the impact of their conversion that every generation of my family since then has followed Christ. My prayer is: "do it again, Lord – in my day!"

On many occasions I have read and heard that there is no revival without prayer, and that church history and experience shows this to be the case. The seventeenth century minister and commentator Matthew Henry expressed it like this: "When God intends to bless His people, the first thing He does is to start them a-praying" (qtd. in R. E. Davies 247). The present-day Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has similarly said that there has never, to the best of his knowledge, been a revival in the church that did not begin with a renewal of prayer. "That's why prayer must come first. Without prayer there will be no renewal of the church, and without a renewal of the church, there is very little hope for the world" (qtd. in Greig 4).

For many years I have believed this, understanding that prayer is crucial to the life of the disciple and for missional transformation. In response, I helped establish St. Cuthbert's House of Prayer in the city of York, with a vision to be seeking God and his transformation of the North of England. I also wrote a simple book on prayer, designed mainly for new believers (Porter, *Prayer*), recognising that many people in the west find prayer difficult and are not sure where to start. For the last twenty-five years, I have sought to teach and model that nothing of lasting significance happens without prayer. I wanted to know if this was correct. I also wanted to discover if it was particularly exemplified in growing movements and in the prayer life of their leaders.

Much research has shown that leadership is important to the life and growth of an organization. I had been writing a leadership blog (churchleaders.blog) for some years and had often said that healthy organisations are normally led by healthy leaders. I wanted to know if this was also true for growing movements and whether they were led by praying male and female leaders. I was also keen to discover if their personal praying

influenced the praying of their movement. To help me investigate I chose to examine the prayer lives of female and male leaders of western renewal movements, in order to inform the praying of church planting leaders in the North of England, like myself. It was not possible to prove beyond reasonable doubt a causable link between prayer and *anything* - be it the growth of renewal movements, or some other matter. Prayer can never be proved in that way as there may always be another explanation. However, I did research the praying of the Christian movement leaders, and also the praying of their movement, and then made observations. Based on the outcome of the research, I assessed the importance of prayer to the leader and the movement, and I then proposed best practices and conclusions.

Statement of the Problem

The substantive issue behind this research is the declining Church in the west, and more particularly in Europe, the UK, and in the North of England. Rather than being a Church growing in numbers and influence, instead - for the past century and more - the Church in most places has been retracting. Parishes have been amalgamated; churches closed; and many have left the Church and lost faith. Latest statistics for the United Kingdom show church-going attendance as the lowest on record – with on average 4.9 percent of people in church on Sundays in 2020 (Brierley Consultancy). In the North of England, the figures are lower, with Anglican churchgoing being about 1.4 percent, and total church-going probably no more than 3 percent (Porter, Northern 178). In some urban housing estates, the figures are much smaller, with Christian Selvaratnam, Director of Church Planting at St. Hild College (in the North of England), saying that in places the number may be lower than 1 percent, with the global Covid-19 pandemic probably exacerbating the situation (Selvaratnam, Message to Matthew Porter. *Messages,* 19 Mar. 2022). The reasons behind this continued decline are many and complex, with Harvey Cox and Charles Taylor attributing it to secularism (Cox; Taylor) and Callum Brown famously writing of 'The Death of Christian Britain' (C. Brown, *Death*). Others including Grace Davie are more open about the future (Davie, *Religion*), with Jane Garnett et al. being more hopeful (*Redefining*), and David Goodhew even noting that there are more signs of life than initially thought, especially in London (*Church Growth, London*). Nevertheless, all agree that the church in the North of England is at a low point, and that it is in desperate need of a significant renewal movement.

I wanted to know how such renewal movements occur. Those who have written on marks of such movements, including David Garrison note that prayer is always important (173). Winfield Bevins agrees, writing that "Many churches place their focus on maintaining buildings and planning budgets rather than seeking God's powerful presence through prayer. Consequently, churches … are essentially dying. They are in desperate need of spiritual renewal" (*Marks* 95). This made me wonder if the western Church had stopped praying. In particular I wanted to know about growing movements and whether they were marked by prayer, and led by praying leaders.

Much research suggests that leadership is central to growth. I see this in Scripture, with the people of the Old Testament generally doing well when they were aptly led (e.g. 2 Sam. 7 [NIV]), and the same being the case for the church in the New Testament (e.g. Acts 6:1-7). In the field of leadership studies, Jim Collins' empirical research into the most successful organisations has shown that they were typically led by a particular kind

of leader, who "displayed a powerful mixture of personal humility and indomitable will" (*Good,* ch. 2). I was curious to know if this was also true of Christian movement leaders, and if their humility, and their persevering will, might be particularly exhibited in their prayerfulness. If so, when did they pray? What did they pray? How did they pray? Why did they pray? I also wanted to explore if this impacted those around them, and the praying and development of the movement itself. That link between prayer, leadership, renewal, growth, and transformation is at the heart of issues addressed in this dissertation.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this research was to identify how the personal prayer of renewal movement leaders of the western church, influences the corporate prayer and development of their movement, in order to inform the prayer of church planting leaders in the North of England.

Research Questions

To achieve this purpose, I indentified three key research questions. These questions shaped the research, and ensured it was focused and strategic.

Research Question #1
What are the personal rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer, of western renewal movement leaders?

Research Question #2
What are the corporate rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer, of the movements they lead?

Research Question #3
How should this personal and corporate prayer inform the praying of church planting leaders in the North of England?

Rationale for the Project

This project is important for at least five reasons:

A. **Biblical:**

The project should interest anyone wanting to grasp a fuller biblical understanding of prayer, and the role of prayer in biblical leaders. Stories of renewal, church growth and planting in the Bible (e.g. Acts 2:42-47, 12:25-13:3, 16:6-10) suggest that prayer is crucial. I wanted to know if this was correct. I aimed to discover if prayer is foundational to salvation-history and the big story of Scripture, and more particularly to the lives two important biblical examples of renewal movement leaders - Jesus Christ and Mary of Nazareth.

B. **Historical:**

Historians of Christian renewal often link the reviving work of God's Spirit with significant prayer. I wanted to know if that was historically accurate. In particular I was intrigued to discover if prayer was central to the renewal movement led by Celtic movement leaders Aidan and Hilda. This project will therefore be of interest to students of history.

C. **Formational:**

This research into the prayer life of various renewal movement leaders gave a glimpse into their personal discipleship and devotional life. It helped me better understand their spiritual formation and leadership development, providing lessons for the present and future.

D. **Causational:**

This dissertation should fascinate those intrigued to understand the extent to which leaders influence their movement, and specifically how the personal prayer of leaders fueled the corporate prayer of the movement.

E. **Practical:**

Finally and perhaps most importantly, the conclusions of this research should help reflective practitioners as they seek to understand the relationship between prayer, leadership, and church planting movements - which is the title of this project. In particular, it should inform the praying of church planting leaders - particularly those working and hoping to see a church planting movement develop in the North of England. If as a result it is shown that growing renewal movements are typically led by praying leaders leading praying movements, then it may encourage and inspire me and other leaders to pursue a deeper and more grounded prayer-life. We might then, over time, see a further movement of God's Spirit, leading to cultural transformation and revival.

Definition of Key Terms

For the purposes of this study, a number of key terms are defined below.

Prayer: is, after Clement of Alexandria (c.150 A.D.-c.215A.D) "a conversation with God" (534);

Movement: is "a group of people who are organized for, ideologically motivated by, and committed to a purpose which implements some form of personal or social change" (Gerlack and Hine 370);

Renewal movement: is, according to Howard Snyder, a "sociologically and theologically definable religious resurgence which arises and remains within, or in continuity with, historic Christianity, and which has a significant (potentially measurable) impact on the larger church in terms of numbers of adherents, intensity of belief and commitment, and/or the creation or revitalization of institutional expressions of church" (34);

Church planting: is the practice of establishing worshipping communities, and is normally achieved either through starting new worshipping churches, or revitalizing old churches.

North of England: is the geographical region falling within the Northern part of the Church of England, formally known in the Church of England as the "Province of York."

Delimitations

I chose to focus my research on the west - limiting it to no further than the United Kingdom, Europe, North America and Australasia - as the aim of the research was to inform me and other church planting leaders in our region in our praying, as we seek to be part of a church planting movement in the North of England. While contemporary western culture is by no means monochrome, to include non-western contexts would

have added layers of cultural complexity and might have meant that conclusions did not apply in the North of England.

I also wanted to ensure I researched female, as well as male leaders. On first reading, leadership in the Bible and in church history can look mainly, and some think exclusively male, but careful research tells a different story (e.g. Romans 16, where Phoebe is described as a 'deacon' in v.1 which probably does not just mean 'servant' but is rather a role title; and Junia is described with her husband Androcinus as 'outstanding among the apostles' in v.7). In fact women have often been involved, in some capacity, in leadership of expansive church movements – and usually are today (Snyder 19-20; Stark 125-36; Randall 61). In the contemporary western cultural context where women are strongly urged to step up and lead, I wanted to ensure that the voice and experience of female leaders were recognized, heard, and researched, so the results could apply to present and future movement leaders of both genders.

While the biblical aspect of the literature review initially involved establishing a broad biblical understanding of the relationship between prayer and renewal movements from both the Old and New Testaments, the research on movement leaders had to be necessarily focused. So I chose to concentrate on one man and one woman in the Bible, settling on Jesus Christ and Mary of Nazareth, Jesus' mother. As such many biblical renewal movement leaders were ignored. Similarly, when I turned to church history, I needed to be selective; therefore, I similarly chose one man and one woman, Aidan and Hilda, missing out many notable historical figures.

The contemporary research required me to remain similarly intentional. In order to inform the praying of leaders in the North of England who are seeking to plant multiplying churches, I decided to limit my research to renewal movement leaders from a *western* context who were encouraging intentional church planting and leading or significantly influencing movements.

While the biblical and historical literature review researched an equal number of women to men, I realised that this would be difficult, knowing from experience that there were far fewer women leading renewal movements in the west, than men. In the end, I aimed to ensure that at least one third of those invited to be part of the research were female.

Most of the participants were leading organisations or churches they had pioneered, although some were started by others and the leadership had now passed to them. I aimed for my sample to be as diverse as possible, reflecting not just a balance of gender, but a variety of age, life experience, and social background.

For the research to be manageable, I decided to invite twenty movement leaders to take part in an initial survey, hoping that at least ten would agree, so I could interview up to ten leaders in more detail about their praying. While the sample would not be large, it would, I hoped, be significant enough to analyse the data and draw conclusions.

These delimits were helpful in guiding the research and ensuring it remained disciplined and manageable. My hope was that this pre-interventionist model of research into contemporary renewal leaders could then be compared and contrasted with my biblical, theological, historical, social science, and missiological literature review, drawing conclusions for my context today.

Review of Relevant Literature

My literature review fell into five main categories. These included -

A. **Biblical foundations:**

I needed to gain a thorough biblical understanding of prayer, and so wanted to read books and articles that covered both the Old and New Testaments, as well as focussing on the praying of renewal leaders who saw growth. Edmund P. Clowney, Michael Widmer and J. Gary Millar were particularly insightful. There were some key texts to explore (e.g. 2 Chron. 7:14 and various Psalms, as well as The Lord's Prayer in Matt. 6). While the general themes of covenant and kingdom, effective evangelism, church growth, and church planting were important, I especially wanted to focus on *renewal leaders* and so chose Jesus and Mary of Nazareth. Key texts on Jesus included: the Gospel accounts, especially the six core texts noted by Eugene Peterson; Karl Barth's writing on The Lord's Prayer, and articles by Joachim Jeremias and James Dunn on *Abba* and the kingdom of God. For Mary, core texts included the Gospel accounts, especially Matthew 1; Luke 1 & 2; and Acts 1:14. Works by Hilda Graef, John Macquarrie and Keith Fournier were also informative.

B. **Theological foundations:**

When considering theological foundations of prayer I had in mind key themes such as the Trinity, the kingdom of God, and the sovereignty of God. Stephen Seamands was helpful on trinitarian matters and G.E. Ladd on the kingdom of God. Issues relating to prayer and the sovereignty of God were important for me, as my conviction was that God was sovereign and in charge, and yet human prayer still made a difference. I was uncertain of how these two matters could be held together, and aware that this was an issue for many, I purposefully read on that issue, eventually discovering the writings of C. S. Lewis as a helpful guide.

C. **Historical foundations:**

I read many historical works on prayer, from church fathers to the Wesleys in the eighteenth century. However, I eventually settled on studying the two Celtic saints of Aidan and Hilda, digesting every historical work I could find on their spirituality. Key texts for Aidan included all related sources, particularly *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* by the Venerable Bede and recent works by David Adam and Ray Simpson. As for Hilda, again I read all related sources, including *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* by the Venerable Bede, and particularly works by Clare Ellison and Ray Simpson. Scott DeGregorio's *Cambridge Companion to Bede* proved highly beneficial, as did broader writings on the Celtic saints from authors such as Michael Mitton, John Finney, and George G. Hunter III.

D. **Social Science foundations:**

When considering the social science foundations, which revealed the human side of prayer, Gross was particularly insightful on the biological and cognitive background, and Brian M. Howell and Jenell Williams Paris on anthropological aspects. Callum Brown, Steve Bruce, and Grace Davie provided useful sociological explanations for the decline of religious adherence in today's western cultural context. Jim Collins showed that outstanding leaders of flourishing and expanding organisations are disciplined in approach, having an indomitable will. I was pleased to discover Anthony Wallace's 1954 paper on the 'revitalisating' effects of movements for it revealed early interest in how

movements develop. Wallace's work included religious movements and their leaders, which were central themes of my research.

E. **Missiological foundations:**

While I had read many missiological texts on evangelism and church planting in the past, the missiological focus of the literature review concentrated on movements, particularly relying on Steve Addison, Winfield Bevins, and David Garrison, and noting their interest in 'marks' of movements. I concluded that one was prayer, particularly having reviewed three seminal church planting text-books from Tim Keller, Craig Ott and Gene Wilson, and Ric Thorpe, and recognising that they all speak of the centrality of prayer.

Finally, the works of Tim Sensing, Norman Denzin, and Justus J. Randolph helped guide the research design.

Research Methodology

Type of Research

The research I undertook in order to achieve my purpose was pre-interventionist and mix-methods in approach.

1) This research was pre-interventionist. I wanted to learn best practices by identifying and understanding the prayer-life of various movement leaders. I also wanted to understand the corporate praying of the movements they led, in order to see if there were similarities and differences. In particular, I wanted to discover the rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer in past and present movement leaders and in their movements. In essence, I wanted to know when they pray; what they pray; how they pray; and why they pray.

I was also interested to hear stories of answered prayer, wanting to discover how important testimony was as they told stories of transformation through prayer. Finally, I wanted to apply this contemporary research, and my literature review, to my context. I especially wanted to ask what the best prayer practices are for church planting leaders in the North of England.

2) I used a Mixed Methods design of qualitative and quantitative research, using a variety of kinds of instrumentation, including a) background research; b) a survey (qualitative and quantitative), and c) an interview (mainly qualitative), using clearly defined protocols.

Participants

My participants were the leaders of contemporary renewal movements in the western context. I wanted to interview women and men who were leading not just one church but were influencing a movement of churches that was having an impact beyond their locality. Most were leading a growing network of churches, planting churches that were planting churches. Each, either directly or indirectly, had some impact on church planting in their region or nation or continent. I identified these people partly through my previous background knowledge, partly through conversations with male and female renewal leaders, and also through advice taken from Ric Thorpe, the Bishop of Islington in London, UK, who is responsible for church planting in the Church of England, and from Christian Selvaratnam, who is based in Mirfield, Leeds in the North of England.

I received permission to undertake this research from the Institutional Review Board of Asbury Seminary in June 2021, under IRB ID # 21-12.

I emailed each of those selected to inform them of the research, inviting them to complete an online survey, and explaining that I would select some for a follow-up interview.

Instrumentation

Building on the foundations of the theological, biblical, historical, social science, and missiological literature, preparatory work for the field research was undertaken by choosing appropriate research instruments. The instruments – that is, the data collection tools – used for this research were a) background research; b) survey and c) interview.

1) The background research involved gathering as much data as I could on each leader and their movement. Given I had limited time, two to three hours were assigned to this for each participant. This background research involved internet searches on them and their movement, seeking to gather writings, blogs, social media posts, and any material of relevance to the research questions. Time did not allow listening to online sermons.

2) The next instrument used was an online *Prayer Survey* that was semi-structured in approach. I designed a set of questions that I wanted to ask all participants, so that each answered similar questions. This was part of ensuring that the research was reliable and valid.

3) The third instrument was the interview. I aimed to follow-up 10-12 of the participants with a telephone or Zoom interview. I knew each leader was a busy person so made it clear in initial correspondence that the Prayer Survey should only take 20-25 minutes and the interview a similar time length. I recognized that some might be reluctant to give time to both a survey and an interview, but hoped most would, especially once they understood the nature of the research. Once the research began, ten of the twenty movement leaders completed the survey, so I followed up all ten, inviting them to be interviewed. Seven out of these ten agreed who I subsequently interviewed.

I designed the survey and interview to align with the purpose statement of the project and identified three research questions.

Data Collection

Having followed the above approach, using the instruments described, I collected data in the following ways.

a) Data found by way of background research was pasted into a document created for each participant and stored securely.

b) The survey was created using the specialist online platform called *Survey Monkey.* This platform gathered the data, provided some basic processing aids, and saved it securely online, allowing it to be retrieved for analysis.

c) For the interview, I recorded the audio part of the zoom call and then later transcribed the audio data into written transcripts. These transcripts had information anonymised so as to remove any ability to trace the identity of the participant. I securely stored the transcripts.

The time-line of the data collection, a total of five months, began in September 2021 and ended in January 2022. Background research took place in September 2021. I

emailed the Prayer Survey to the movement leaders in September 2021 which most completed in October 2021. The Prayer Interviews took place between December 2021 and January 2022.

Data Analysis

Data connected from Research Question #1 (RQ #1), relating to the content and practices of prayer, was gathered by reading and re-reading each participant's survey responses and the interview transcripts of those interviewed, along with the background information discovered on each participant. Research Question #2 (RQ #2), on the corporate prayer life of their movement, was similarly ascertained by reading and re-reading each participant's survey responses and interview transcripts of those interviewed, along with the background information discovered on each participant. Data relating to Research Question #3 (RQ #3), on how this informs the prayer of church planting leaders in the North of England, was discovered mainly by analysing a specific question asked at the interview, as well as more generally by considering the survey responses and material gathered by way of background research.

Having read the data gathered from the three instruments multiple times on different occasions, categorization then began, which reflected the purpose of the research. Categories were coded. This categorization and coding sought to be exhaustive, so data fitted into one category or sub-category. I also aimed for the categories to be sensitizing, so they were named in such a way that they were as sensitive as possible to what was in the data. I also tried to ensure the categories were congruent, so that the categories fitted together coherently.

Generalizability

This research is significant because it analysed something important: our prayers. It particularly examines the prayers of western leaders of movements, and the praying of their movements. These western movements are growing in a context where most other parts of the church are in decline. This is unusual and significant. If prayer is deemed to be important to these leaders and to their movements, it is right to ask whether their praying might be playing a part in the growth they are seeing.

The research is worthy to be done and will be applicable to churches, movements, and their leaders across the world, but particularly in the west, and most specifically in the North of England.

I believe the research is dependable, in that it presents an accurate account of how a selection of leaders of growing renewal movements in the west understand their personal praying and the corporate praying of their movement. It also gives helpful insight into the prayer life of two biblical movement leaders – Jesus and Mary – and two historic movement leaders – Aidan and Hilda - noting their influence on the growth of their movements.

I consider the research to be credible in that it was properly undertaken, using tried and tested methods. It was approved by the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) and is research upon which others can rely.

Finally I consider this work to be significant in that: a) it strengthens the church's growing research into the understanding of prayer, and particularly the relationship between personal and corporate prayer; b) it explores the important role that leaders play

in the movements they lead; and c) it suggests links between prayer, the role of leadership, and the growth of renewal movements. It also gives me added confidence to continue to communicate that nothing of lasting significance happens without prayer.

Project Overview

Chapter 1 provides the framework for investigating the prayer life of a number of renewal leaders in the west, and their movements. I provide a rationale for the project evolving from personal experience supported by research. Included in the overview of the research project are the research design, purpose statement, research questions, participants, and how results were collected and analysed. 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 establish the significance for and impact on the practice of ministry.

Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature. It covers key foundations relevant to the field research, including biblical foundations, theological foundations, historical foundations, social science foundations, and missiological foundations. It particularly highlights Jesus Christ and Mary of Nazareth as biblical examples of movement leaders, as well as Aidan and Hilda as historical examples of movement leaders, and asks the same questions of them that were asked of the renewal leaders who participated in the field research, namely: what are their rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer, and of the movements they led? The section on Aidan and Hilda is, as far as I am aware, a uniquely thorough analysis of their prayer lives.

Chapter 3 introduces the project research methodology. It explains what was done and how.

Chapter 4 reports the data collected, organized by the three research questions highlighted in Chapter 1. This chapter gives detailed analysis of what was discovered in and through this field research.

Chapter 5 integrates major findings with recommendations for church planting leaders in the North of England, including myself.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

In this chapter, I identify past research relevant to this project. I synthesize and summarize core literature that addresses both the nature of the project and the three research questions under consideration. Data is analysed, interpreted, and presented in a clear and structured manner. Some literature are deemed to be especially significant.

The findings are then presented under five headings: 1) biblical foundations; 2) theological foundations; 3) historical foundations; 4) social science foundations; and 5) missiological foundations. This is the framework that supports the evidence presented, providing a rich, thick description of past research which is pertinent to the prayer life of movement leaders, and their movements, in order to inform the prayer of church planting leaders in the North of England.

This dissertation on prayer has been written at an opportune moment, for interest in prayer is on the rise. W. B. Hunter describes how for the last two hundred years or more, scholars have been discouraged from studying the subject because: 1) of an anti-supernaturalist worldview, due to rationalist Enlightenment thinking; 2) of the prevalence of philosophical existentialism, whereby prayer was seen as purely personal, existing in the so-called 'private' world of individuals and so of no interest to researchers; and 3) research was mainly concerned with larger social, political, and economic issues, rather than matters of personal spirituality (727).

Today however, the landscape has changed and the topic is of great interest to many. The rise of social sciences, especially cultural anthropology, has shown that prayer is a common human social practice, and therefore deserving of research (Giordan, *"You Never Know,"* 1). Indeed in the great monotheistic religions of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, prayer is at the heart of what it means to believe (Keller, *Prayer* 35). Also, the cultural shift towards more post-modern thinking in the latter part of the twentieth century elevated the role of experience in life and decision-making (Frie *xi*ff; Grenz, *Beyond Foundationalism* 48), with a corresponding fresh interest in spirituality. Even more recently, lifestyle surveys, undertaken in 2020 by Jeanet Sinding Bentzen during the global Covid-19 pandemic, have shown a surprising interest in prayer, with it being the most 'searched' topic on the internet in the early months of the global lock-down (qtd. in Glatz 2020). For these reasons and more, prayer is now deemed to be a topic of interest and worthy of research.

While prayer is a broad topic with varied ways to pray (Foster 45; Keller, *Prayer* 28ff; Porter, *Prayer,* 65) this dissertation is intentionally focussed - on the rhythms, content, practices and understandings of prayer exercised by renewal movement leaders and their movements. In order to consider such prayer, further clarification is needed on what prayer is.

Many have attempted to define prayer. Pioneering French sociologist Marcel Mauss (1872-1950) saw prayer as a basic and common social phenomenon, and said that "prayer is a religious rite which is oral and bears directly on sacred things" (57). While such a definition may be partly helpful from a social science perspective, for our

purposes, it is too prescriptive, for three reasons. First, suggesting it must be a 'rite' rules out the wider sense of being prayerful which is an important aspect of prayer, especially for followers of Jesus. Second, prayer is not exclusively 'oral,' for there are other forms of prayer, including written prayers and symbolic prayers. Thirdly, by distinguishing the ordinariness of prayer from the 'sacred,' Mauss perpetuates a modernist sacred-secular dualism, which is now challenged both by post-modern thinkers and by biblical theologians, who would want to offer a much more integrated understanding of the place of faith and religion in contemporary life (Hartl 2; Greig 10-12; G. Millar 239-40). That is why this dissertation prefers the simple and ancient definition of prayer by Clement of Alexandria (c. AD150-215), who said that prayer "is a conversation with God" (534). Theologian Oscar Cullmann agrees by saying that "it is conversation with God as the partner" (17).

This does not mean that the social context in which prayer is practiced is without change, or that humanity always prays in the same way, as Giuseppe Giordan and Linda Woodhead make clear. While it is not necessary to embrace Woodhead's proposal that the world has changed so much, and human understanding progressed to such an extent, that a new definition and paradigm of prayer is needed (228), nevertheless prayer is a highly interesting topic of study. It is fascinating talking with people about their praying - as I have discovered from the interviews conducted as part of this study - and to discover the variety of ways that people pray today; in doing so, we are given a glimpse into something profoundly intimate and deeply embodied (Wilkinson and Althouse 166),

As consideration is given to the way that renewal movement leaders converse with God in this way, Chapter 2 will review past literature on the subject, by examining:

1) Biblical Foundations
2) Theological Foundations
3) Historical Foundations
4) Social Science Foundations
5) Missiological Foundations

We begin with biblical foundations for "Christians are people of the book" (Grenz, "Spirit and Word" 357).

Biblical Foundations

Christian theology is predicated on the Bible. Any study on prayer must therefore take account of the biblical foundations of prayer. Such a study has the potential to be vast, not only because prayer is a common biblical theme, but also because prayer is deeply rooted in passages of narrative or poetry where the main emphasis or theme is elsewhere, and as such prayer is easily missed (G. Millar 17). So, instead of attempting to synthesise all biblical material on prayer and offer a comprehensive biblical understanding of prayer, this section focusses particularly on the praying of two key renewal leaders in the Bible: 1) Jesus Christ, and 2) Mary of Nazareth. First, however, prayer in the Old Testament and then the New Testament are briefly considered, to provide a context for examination of the praying of Jesus and Mary, and the early Christian renewal movement that followed. The Old Testament is, for Widmer, the best starting place, for he believes there to be no better Old Testament theme than prayer to help us understand both the Old Testament and the Christ it points to (5). Wolfhart Pannenberg also recognizes that Jesus directs his prayers to the God of the Old Testament

(159), as does Mary (Buby 39), so this biblical study begins by taking note of Old Testament prayer.

Old Testament

The Christian Bible begins with the trinitarian God not only creating, but speaking (Wenham 17-18), for as the Spirit of God hovered over the waters (Gen. 1:2), so God the Father spoke his word bringing creation into being (Gen. 1:3ff; Ps. 33:9). God said 'Let there be' and life was created. Christian theology says this creation took place through the Son (John 1:3; Col. 1:16), and so all three persons of the Trinity were at work (Torrance 353). While it is difficult to find a theologian using the word 'prayer' to describe the process by which creation occurs, Stanley Grenz hints at it in his *Theology for the Community of God* (131), particularly as he speaks of the role of the Father creating through the word, and of creation being an act of self-giving love, outflowing from the triune God (133ff). This literature review would go further, proposing that it could be said that God *prayed* created into being, for prayer, as we have seen, is conversation. Through divine conversation – through prayer – creation was formed. This creation culminates in God's prayer to the other Persons of the Trinity: 'let us make human beings in our image' (Gen. 1:26). God created men and women to live in relationship with each other and with him, with Genesis 2 and 3 describing the divine-human relationship founded on conversation (Wenham 76-77) – that is, prayer. Although that relationship was fundamentally broken when humans chose to sin at The Fall (Gen. 3), God nevertheless desired to live in community with people, and human beings still had a deep longing to know God, having been made in his image (*imago dei*; Gen. 1:27) and desiring relational connection (Seamands 31ff). Hence, Gen. 3:9 says that 'the Lord God called to the man,' which is followed, and paralleled, by people beginning 'to call on the name of the Lord' (Gen. 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 21:33). Wenham and other commentators see this human 'calling' as a clear reference to 'worship, most obviously prayer' (Wenham 116; Driver 71; von Rad 157). Barth calls this an 'invocation' and sees it as central to all prayer (*Prayer* 22), as reflected in the cry of later prophets to 'call' on, or to, God (Joel 2:32; Isa. 55:6; Jer. 33:3). As such, some theologians such as G. Millar define prayer as: 'Calling on the Name of the Lord' (17).

This desire for communication and community, rooted in prayer and marked by covenant, was taken up by Abraham and the Patriarchs, as the history of God's relationship with humanity became entwined with, and earthed in, the Israelite people. Although God's covenant-prayer relationship was with all who would call upon him, God desired and required special friendship with Israel and their leaders. While the Old Testament narrative is clear that ordinary people can pray effective prayers (Peskett 22), it was important that leaders led the way in prayer. Leaders who cultivated a close, obedient, and prayerful relationship with God tended to excel, as did their people, whereas those who neglected communion with God found that they and their community struggled. When the people of Israel were wayward, Yahweh their God would raise up renewal leaders – that is, prayerful and prophetic leaders who helped restore the fortunes of God's people (Widmer 1, 28ff; Brueggemann 5).

Moses is a prime example of such a renewal leader, who led God's people out of slavery in Egypt in preparation for a return to their patriarchal home in 'the promised land.' He was called by God, and conversed with God (Exod. 2-3). Clowney describes

him as 'Moses the Intercessor' (10), although Widmer goes further, following Friedrich Heiler seeing him as Israel's "archetypal intercessor" (121-22), and as such "the father of biblical intercessory prayer" (Widmer 57). Moses called on God and developed his prayerful relationship to such an extent that the writer of Exodus states that 'The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend' (Exod.33:11).

After Moses' successor Joshua helped God's people become established in the land of Israel, so-called 'judges' led them, who delivered them from their enemies (Judg. 2:16) and brought renewal. This was in response to the people 'crying out to the Lord' in prayer (e.g. Judg. 3:9, 3:15, 4:3, 6:7, 10:10), aided by the priest-prophet Samuel, whom Widmer sees as Israel's second legendary intercessor (172). The subsequent period of history, where they were led by kings, reached its zenith in David. Like Moses, David is described as someone close to God, who conversed with him, being 'a man after God's heart' (1 Sam. 13:14). David's name is attached to seventy-three of the Psalms (Longman and Dillard 215) – the inspired sung prayers which express a breadth of experiences and emotions – used in the Jerusalem temple and which have subsequently shaped Jewish and Christian prayer and worship ever since (Bonhoeffer). While attempts by nineteenth and early twentieth century form-critics such as Gunkel and Mowinckel to root each psalm in its own *sitz in leben* (form-setting) have been of some academic interest (Gunkel, *Psalms*; Mowinckel, *Psalms*), Clowney believes the effect was a loss of scholarly interest in them *as prayers*. However in recent years this has changed, with contemporary theologians seeing the Psalms as a 'covenantal prayerbook' (Longman and Dillard 228), reflecting something of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's view that the Psalter is 'The Prayer-Book of the Bible' (*Psalms*). The book of Psalms is a powerful and inspirational devotional book at the centre of the Bible, revealing a people who believed that prayer to Yahweh was a source of courage and strength, and a powerful tool against the enemy (Jung 57).

Israel's developing history – of a divided kingdom, followed by exile and restoration – is notably linked to their covenant relationship with God. Indeed the larger framework of prayer in the Old Testament is the covenantal relationship (Widmer 507). The people's faithfulness, or unfaithfulness to God and his covenant, was exemplified in their praying, or lack of prayer. A key text in this regard is 2 Chronicles 7:14, which is set in the context of the covenant being renewed under King Solomon, which reads:

> [I]f my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Faithful prayer was part of the covenant relationship, with God promising to hear and respond to sincere prayers with forgiveness from past wrongs and blessings for the future (McConville 39-40).

When prayer was lacking, God raised up prophets to call them back to him. Unsurprisingly, then, the prophets manifested a growing and deepening emphasis on prayer (Clowney 18). Indeed Widmer recognises that the ministry of the prophet was by its nature two-fold: 1) proclaiming God's message to people, and 2) advocating the people's prayers to God (11). The last Old Testament prophet was John the Baptist (according to Jesus in Matt. 11:11). John prayerfully prepared the way for the coming of Jesus, whom Christ-followers have always believed is the perfect renewal leader.

The following conclusions can then be made about the rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer in the Old Testament.

a) Rhythms. While there are many Old Testament examples of people praying spontaneously and often at a time of crisis (e.g. Jacob in Gen. 32:22-32; Hannah in 1 Sam. 1; Hezekiah in 2 Kings 19-20), for a large number, prayer was part of the routine of life for God's faithful people, expressed in the rich vocabulary of words employed to speak of prayer in the Old Testament (M Thompson 6). Daniel prayed three times each day (Dan. 6:11), and some psalms were especially designed for the evening (e.g. Ps. 4) and others for morning use (e.g. Ps. 5). The perpetual fire burning on the altar in the tabernacle (Lev. 6:13) probably shows (Peskett 24) a desire for prayer to be offered continuously.

b) Content. On the topic of *what* they prayed, Howard Peskett provides a helpful list of the types of praying found in the Old Testament. This includes prayers of: adoration; worship; praise; thanksgiving; confession; lamentation; entreaty; petition; intercession; mediation; supplication; vows; oaths, asseverations (solemn declarations); oaths and curses (Peskett 29-32).

c) Practices. When considering *how* they prayed, Peskett shows that some, like Abraham (Gen. 18:22) and Hannah (1 Sam. 1:26), prayed standing; others, like the Psalmist (Ps. 95:6), Solomon (1 Kings 8:54) and Daniel (Dan. 6:10), knelt; some, e.g. Eliezer (Gen. 24:52), Joshua (Josh. 5:13-16) and Moses (Num. 16:45), prostrated themselves; and sometimes with hands lifted up (Ps. 63:4) or spread out (Exod. 9:29; Isa. 1:15) in prayer (Peskett 25). Fasting was often closely associated with prayer (Lev. 16; Zech. 8:19; Esth. 9:31; Joel 1:14) and especially practiced in times of grief, penitence and when seeking God's guidance (Peskett 25).

d) Understandings. Walter Brueggemann's important study on Old Testament prayers highlights seven features of prayer that helpfully offers an Old Testament theological understanding of prayer. These characteristics are: 1) God is fully involved in the prayers; 2) prayer is a genuine interactive dialogue; 3) there is no pretence or posturing in prayer; 4) Israel's prayers can be intimate and personal; 5) these prayers normally take a long view of life; 6) the prayers are highly contextual; 7) the central way of praying was by using the imperative – i.e. in declaratory form – such as 'save', 'restore', 'heal' etc. (132-35).

These characteristics of prayer would have informed and formed the praying of Jesus and the prayers found in the New Testament.

New Testament

Turning to the New Testament and the praying of Jesus, Widmer notes that the entire life, ministry, and death of Jesus can be viewed through the lens of prayer, and that this is a work which Jesus continues to pursue now in heaven (528). The New Testament presents Jesus as both 'our master and companion in prayer' (E. Peterson 163). The only thing the disciples specifically asked him to teach them, was how to pray (Luke 11:1) which suggests that his prayer life was deep and compelling (Webb). After his death and resurrection, Jesus invited his disciples to remain in prayer, that the promised Holy Spirit would come and empower them to witness (Acts 1:4). This they did (Acts 1:14) and as they prayed the Spirit came upon them at Pentecost (Acts 2) and the church of Christ was born. This church was 'a church of prayer' (Turner 72). From the subsequent description of this primitive church in Acts, and from the New Testament epistles, prayer was a central and distinguishing characteristic of the New Testament church and its leaders

(Wilkins 941). Prayer is mentioned in all the major epistles and most of the shorter ones too (e.g. Rom. 1:10; 1 Cor. 14:14; 2 Cor. 13:3; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 3:16; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17; 2 Thess. 3:1; 1 Tim. 2:1; 2 Tim. 1:3; Philem. 4; Heb. 13:8; Jas. 1:5; 1 Pet. 4:7; 1 John 5:14). From the twelve apostles, to individual church leaders and the communities named in the New Testament, prayer was at the heart of church life.

As they prayed, the disciples were filled again with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31). As he prayed, the first martyr, Stephen, went to heaven (Acts 7:60). As Ananias prayed for him, Saul received his sight (Acts 9:18). It was in response to the gentile Cornelius' prayers that the Lord sent Peter to share the good news of Jesus (Acts 10:4). While the church was praying, an angel visited Peter and miraculously saved him from prison and death (Acts 12:5). As the Antioch church fasted and prayed, Paul and Barnabas were called and sent out to evangelise and plant churches in their region (Acts 13:2-3). At a place and in a context of prayer, the gospel first took root in Europe, in Philippi (Acts 16:16). As the disciples were praying, a miraculous earthquake took place, releasing Paul and Barnabas from prison and causing the jailer to put his faith in Christ (Acts 16:25). While in prayer, Paul concluded his emotional meeting with the elders of the church in Ephesus, knowing that he would not see them again (Acts 20:36). While John was in the Spirit – almost undoubtedly in prayer (Scott 38; Paul 69) – he wrote the inspirational Book of Revelation (Rev. 1:10). The prayers of God's people, according to John in Revelation, are received by God as a sweet offering (Rev. 5:8, 8:4).

Prayer therefore is central to the New Testament, and to the Bible as a whole (Osborne 244). In the same way that the Bible begins with prayer (Gen.1), so the Bible ends in prayer (Rev. 22:20). It is a basic and foundational practice of God's people, inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26), and modelled and renewed by the person of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was the greatest renewal movement leader. It is therefore right, as consideration is given to the New Testament for biblical foundations of prayer, that this literature review considers, first, the prayer life of Jesus Christ and its influence on the movement he initiated and led.

Jesus Christ

The Bible roots Jesus' birth in time and history, but does not tell us the precise date of his birth (Luke 2:1-3). Other historical documents concur (Josephus 18, 20; Tacitus 15:44), although scholars today are reasonably sure the date is around 4 BC (T. Wright, Luke xii; Macquarrie, Mary39). Jesus was born in the Near East, in Bethlehem, and brought up in Nazareth with his birth and infancy described in the gospels of Matthew and Luke (Matt. 1-2; Luke 1-2). All four gospel writers give much information about his life and ministry from the age of 30, including details of his prayer-life. Scholars note that Luke has a special interest in prayer (Dunn, "Prayer" 618), and particularly in Jesus' prayer-life, which is reflected in the amount of space devoted to prayer in Luke's gospel narrative (Turner 59). Dunn thinks that all the gospel writers were able to draw on a substantial living memory of Jesus as a person of prayer ("Prayer" 618). However, outside of the infancy narratives and one incident when he was a boy, little is recorded or found in other sources of his formation, although we do know he was nurtured in the religious context of first century Israel, which was the context in which he learned to pray.

Before analysis and synthesis are undertaken of Jesus's praying, it is important to recognize that his prayers are described by the gospel writers not just as a sign of his spirituality, but also as markers in salvation-history (Harris, unpublished, qtd in Smalley 60). The same point could be made of many of the key prayers found in both Testaments of the Bible, but it is especially apparent in the prayers of Jesus. Smalley recognizes that in Luke's gospel, for example, Jesus' praying 'underlines critical moments in the unfolding' of God's eternal plan (61). This shows that Jesus prayed not just for *foundational* reasons, because prayer was basic to his life of obedience and dependence on God, nor only for *connectional* reasons, linking him relationally with the Trinity, but also for *transformational* reasons, in order to change people, situations and indeed the history of the world. The heart of this transformation took place through Christ's death and resurrection, with followers of Jesus believing that his sacrificial death and glorious resurrection defeated sin and death and opened access to God for all (Eph. 2:18; Heb. 4:14-16; 10:19ff). As Jesus prayed, especially in key moments of salvation-history, the 'dynamic energy of the Spirit' (Lampe 169) was released, bringing God's transformative kingdom. Smalley has shown that this 'triadic relationship' of prayer-Spirit-kingdom is central to salvation-history, especially in Luke's gospel (66) - and it all begins, and is rooted, in the prayer-life of Jesus.

Joachim Jeremias describes two sides of Jesus' prayer-life. One side is rooted in the Jewish religious tradition of the day, a tradition which Jeremias and others following (including Dunn and Miller-Hardie) recognize had been developing, and by the first century A.D. was expressed in the daily habit of praying three times each day, at sunrise, in the afternoon at 3pm, and at sunset. This three-fold structure had been practiced by Daniel towards the close of the Old Testament period (Dan. 6:10), with the afternoon prayer noted in Acts 3:1 and evening prayer in Ezra 9:5. These scholars describe how during the morning and evening prayers, the *Shema* would be recited, which involved declaring credal words from Deut. 6:4-9, 11:13-21 and Num. 15:41, beginning with the phrase 'Hear O Israel.' After the *Shema*, the prayer called the *Tephilla* was used, a hymn made up of a number of benedictions. In the afternoon, only the *Tephilla* was recited (Rowland 45). This would have been Jesus' daily pattern which he would have learned since childhood with these prayers being 'Israel's great treasure' (Jeremias 72). Dunn notes that Jesus valued this tradition; indeed Jesus is on record for being zealous for the temple and its prayer-life (Dunn, "Jesus and the Spirit" 16; Matt. 21:13; John 2:17).

However, another side to Jesus' prayers shattered custom and established a new way of praying (Jeremias 78). While some scholars may be correct that Jesus' prayers were intentionally socially disruptive and included subversive humour (Taussig 6), this study suggests that Jesus' praying was new and radical in four particular ways: a) in his rhythms, b) in his content, c) in his practices, and d) in his understanding of prayer. However, before this four-fold structure is used to analyse the praying of Jesus, it is necessary to take note of the main prayers of Jesus recorded in the Gospels, for Donald Coggan is surely right when he states that it is best to 'watch our Lord at the work of prayer before we study' his praying (15).

As E. Peterson observes Jesus at prayer, he notes seventeen references in the gospels to Jesus' active prayer life, with six key passages giving us a core understanding of his praying (164). These passages show the dominance of thanksgiving (Jeremias 78) and the primacy of The Lord's Prayer (Dunn, "Prayer" 619). As consideration is given to

these six passages, E. Peterson's summary headings will be used for guidance, followed by commentary on these prayers before analysis is undertaken on what they reveal of Jesus' rhythms, content, practices, and understanding of prayer. Focus will particularly be given to The Lord's Prayer, as it is widely recognized as the most significant and influential prayer of Jesus. This prayer soon became a community prayer of the first believers (Cullmann 38), and was held in awesome reverence in the ancient church. This is seen, for example, by the respect paid to it by Cyril of Jerusalem in his final Catechetical Lecture, delivered in 350 A.D. (155-57), as he exegetes it and ends by saying: 'Then after completing the prayer thou sayest, *Amen;* by this *Amen,* which means "So be it," setting the seal to the petitions of the divinely-taught prayer' (Cyril, Lecture 23, 157). This great prayer of Jesus is now widely regarded as probably the most well-known, well-prayed and influential prayer in history (Bitesize).

Six Key Prayers of Jesus

1) **Jesus Prays With Us**: The Lord's Prayer – Matt. 6:9-13 (parallel in Luke 11:2-4)

> **9** This, then, is how you should pray:
> 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
> **10** your kingdom come,
> your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
> **11** Give us today our daily bread.
> **12** And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
> **13** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

This prayer of Jesus recorded in Matt. 6 is widely known as The Lord's Prayer. Luke says it was Jesus' response to his disciples' request that he teach them to pray (Luke 11:1). Matthew sets it in the context of the Sermon on the Mount which is Jesus' basic but stretching teaching for disciples.

Before considering The Lord's Prayer in some detail, it is important to pause at the very first phrase, for it importantly describes the One to whom Jesus prays: 'Our Father.' By beginning in this way, Jesus not only shows that his deity is the God of the Old Testament (Pannenberg 159), but, more notably, that his praying is rooted in his self-understanding of sonship, which was not just a cerebral and theoretical knowledge, but his experience (Dunn, "Prayer" 619). Jesus uses the language of intimacy and relationship (Coggan 21). It reflects Jesus' address elsewhere (e.g. Mark 14:36) to God as *Abba*, which is the relational word that a child, both young and old, would use of and to their father (Talmud, cited in Jeremias 59, and still used by children in near-eastern cultures today – E. Peterson 170). Jeremias believes that what is new here can be summarized in this one word: *Abba* (Jeremias 81). This calling of God as 'Father' is the unanimous testimony of all four gospels (Jeremias 108) with *Abba* being recognised by Paul in Romans 8 as the distinctive cry of the disciple, not just in Jesus' day but also today (Barth, *Prayer* 119). Jesus is showing that God is not an impersonal force, and prayer is not a formula or abstract technique; rather God and prayer are personal (E. Peterson 169).

As he looked at the detail of The Lord's Prayer, Karl Barth considered this prayer of Jesus to offer a theology of prayer. He saw it as structured around praying six petitions, in two sets of three: 1a) the honour of God; 1b) the reign of God, and 1c) the

will of God. This is then followed by: 2a) daily bread; 2b) forgiveness of sin, and 2c) protection from evil (*Prayer* 26-31).

1a) The Honour of God

The petition 'hallowed be your name' reflects Jesus' understanding that God's name – his very identity and the nature of his being – is holy. The declaration of God's holiness affirms his distinctiveness and otherness (E. Peterson 171). Barth sees this opening to The Lord's Prayer as a reflection of Jesus' 'zeal for the honour of God' (*Prayer* 122) which should be foremost in the prayers of God's people.

1b) The Reign of God

Jesus then prays 'your kingdom come.' This cry for the kingdom is at the heart of all petition (Grenz, *Prayer* 71) and as such it is the prayer of the church (Coggan 25). Jesus prays that God's sovereignty will be manifested (Coggan 25) and his righteousness revealed (Barth, *Prayer* 124). It is a thoroughly eschatological prayer, reaching beyond the confines of this age, with a strongly future emphasis enshrined in the prayer (Dunn, "Prayer" 621).

1c) The will of God

Jesus continues his prayer, elaborating on the second petition, asking that his *Abba's* 'will be done on earth as in heaven.' This is a prayer for transformation, implying that God's perfect will is not done on earth (Dunn, "Prayer" 621) but should be. As Jesus seeks to help answer this prayer, so he aims to do God's will. From a young age, he had known that he was not to fulfil his own agenda, but to be about his own Father's business (Luke 2:49). Three years after praying for God's will to be done, Jesus prayed the same prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:42) as he contemplated his forthcoming painful death. As to where he had learned this prayer, Coggan, for one, thinks he learned it from his mother, Mary, who as a young woman similarly prayed for God's will to be done in and through her (Luke 1:38) (26).

2a) Daily Bread

Now the emphasis changes. Instead of focusing on God, Jesus tells his disciples to focus on their own needs. The focus moves from adoration to petition (Coggan 31). The next phrase is a prayer for provision, with an emphasis on the body (E. Peterson 182) for humans are flesh-and-blood creatures. This is a prayer demonstrating dependence, not just occasionally, but 'daily' (Coggan 31). Disciples need God's help 'each day' with resources 'from beyond the constraints of the present' (Dunn, "Prayer" 622), trusting that God is able to provide sufficiently for each day.

2b) Forgiveness of Sin

The prayer then focusses, not on the body, but on the soul, asking for forgiveness. 'Sin' is the generic word for 'all that is wrong in the world and in me' (E. Peterson 185) and it pollutes, hence this cry for forgiveness. This part of the prayer is clearly linked to the next stanza, which says 'as we forgive those who sin against us,' showing that sin is not an abstract concept but has much to do with personal relationships that need putting right (Coggan 33). Dunn thinks this request, that God should measure his forgiveness in accordance with the forgiveness extended to others, is 'one of the most frightening' prayers ever (Dunn, "Prayer" 622). It is a reminder of how Jesus values human relationships.

2c) Protection from Evil

The final clause is 'lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil' and acknowledges the presence of evil in the world. It might rightly be translated the 'evil one' (Coggan 35), recognizing even more overtly the personal nature of evil. It is a cry for deliverance and help, recognizing human weakness and the fragility of life (Dunn, "Prayer" 623).

E. Peterson makes the fascinating observation that despite being asked, Jesus does not actually teach about prayer when he gives The Lord's Prayer. Instead he prays with us. He shows disciples what and how to pray, through practice (189). Each verb is an imperative. It is a call to action, which suggests that Jesus is a great advocate for contextual training. This prayer should and has had a profound effect on the church, so much so that Barth says that 'the first and basic act of theological work is prayer' (*Prayer* 103); Dunn says that 'the church can be defined as the community that prays The Lord's Prayer' ("Prayer" 624).

2) **Jesus Prays in Thanksgiving**: Matt. 11:25-26 (parallel in Luke 10:21)

> **25** At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. **26** Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

This prayer of Jesus is presented as spontaneous and from the heart, in the context of John the Baptist's misunderstanding of who Jesus is, and various villages rejecting Jesus' ministry. It is a prayer of thanksgiving of Jesus to his Father. It is notably positive and contented when Jesus might be excused, in the circumstances, for feeling low, which E. Peterson sees as providing great insight into the character and praying of Jesus. It shows that he is still able to give thanks even in unfavourable conditions. Jesus does not minimize these conditions, yet neither do they stop him from being thankful (E. Peterson 197-203). Coggan agrees, noting that in this short prayer, Christ addresses God twice as 'Father,' demonstrating the intimacy and security of their relationship (42). Jesus also shows his understanding that there is no intellectual favouritism with God, and that he values childlikeness.

This thankfulness of Jesus is basic to Christ's radical reinvention of prayer, based on his close familial relationship with his Father. Here Jesus demonstrates a way of living and praying that, according to Jeremias, is 'dominated by thanksgiving' (78).

3) **Jesus Prays in Anticipation of the End**: John 12:27-28

> **27** "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. **28** Father, glorify your name!"
>
> Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Jesus has reached the moment of greatest testing and anxiety. He is under pressure. Rather than questioning his Father or running from him, he turns to him in prayer and addresses him. His transparency before God is compelling, recognising his

desire to pray for deliverance from the forthcoming ordeal which he knows is coming. Instead he prays for God to be glorified through all that unfolds. This echoes Jesus' words in The Lord's Prayer, for God's will to be done (Coggan 59). The result is an affirming and ratifying voice from his Father. It is the only prayer of Jesus in which we hear the Father speak.

In this prayer Jesus prays for God's glory. He wants God's 'name' – that is, all God is – to be praised, exalted, and magnified. E. Peterson notes that all three tenses are used in this prayer (211): glory in the *past* ('I have glorified it'); glory in the *present* ('glorify your name') and glory in the *future* ('I will glorify it.'). As a result, Jesus is caught up in the magnificent praise of the eternal Father. It is therefore both a humble and a majestic prayer. It is the visionary prayer of a suffering servant – indeed of *the* Suffering Servant.

4) **Jesus Prays For Us**: John 17

> **9** I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.'
> **20** "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message…'

Jesus is coming to the end of his public ministry. In fact he only has a few hours to live. He is in prayer. However, he is not praying for himself, but rather for his friends, his disciples. David Chyträus (1531-1600) named this Jesus' 'High Priestly Prayer' (qtd. in Keener, "Jesus Prays"). It is the longest prayer recorded of Jesus, and as such a glimpse is given into his conversational style of praying. E. Peterson recognises that the reader is invited to active listening as Jesus, under great pressure, once again prays to his 'Father' (John 17:1) (217).

This prayer is full of many things that Jesus prays for his present and future disciples. Coggan notes three features that stand out about this rich 'High Priestly' prayer of Jesus (62-70). First, Jesus prays for protection for them (vv.11,15). Second, Jesus prays for joy for them (v.13). Third, he prays for unity amongst them (vv.20-23). All these are for the sake of mission ('that the world may know…' v.23) and for the glory of God (v.24). This prayer gives us great insight into Jesus' intercessory cry for his disciples and future church.

5) **Jesus Prays the Agony of Gethsemane**: Matt. 26:29, 41-42

> **29** 'I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'
> **41** "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." **42** He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

In this prayer, Jesus holds before his Father the cup of suffering that he does not want, but from which he knows he must drink if he is to fulfil his mission. As in his other

prayers, it is again directed to his Father, and as such it is close and particularly personal, moving from 'Our Father' of Matthew 6 now to 'My Father' (Coggan 45).

Jesus knows his time is short, yet he still prays. Jesus also knows his destiny: that on the other side of his suffering, he will be with his Father in the fulness of God's kingdom. Now at the end of Jesus' public ministry, E. Peterson notes how he selects prayer-words he has taught his followers at the start of his ministry, using two key phrases from The Lord's Prayer. So he prays for the Father's 'will to be done' (Lord's Prayer 1c), and that they would not 'fall into temptation' and evil (Lord's Prayer 2c). This shows that Jesus is genuinely living and praying The Lord's Prayer, even in these difficult and uncertain days.

This prayer displays the true humanity of Jesus (Coggan 45), showing that he not only appeared to be like a human being, but he *was* like a human being, going through genuine struggles as every person does. It also shows Christ's willingness to obey his Father, trusting that following his will is always the best way.

6) **Jesus Prays from the Cross**: The 7 Last Words of Jesus.

a) "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34; Matt. 27:46)

b) "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)

c) "Today you will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43)

d) "Into your hands I commit my spirit." (Luke 23:46)

e) "Woman, behold your son." (John 19:26-27)

f) "I thirst." (John 19:28)

g) "It is finished." (John 19:30)

These are Jesus's dying words. They display the prayerfulness of Jesus and show that he 'prayed through the darkness of death' (Webb). They bear his soul, showing him to be a man who, even in agony, was in conversation with his Father, seeking to do his Father's will, and bringing his Father glory.

Three of these phrases ('Father, forgive,' 'My God, my God,' and 'Into your hands') are all prayers intentionally directed to his Father. 'It is finished' is a proclamation both to his Father and to all, that his redemptive work is complete. The other three sets of words ('This day,' 'Woman, behold,' and 'I thirst') are not prayers directed to his Father, but are nevertheless prayerful words spoken to people around him as he died: to the thief on the cross, as he offers him future hope; to his mother, offering her a new home with John; and to those who crucified him, asking for his thirst to be quenched.

a) When Jesus prays 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' he is praying the prayer of dereliction. He feels abandoned and alone. In reciting these words from Psalm 22, Jesus is inhabiting Scripture and plumbing its very depths. Despite feeling isolated, he keeps trusting and he keeps praying (E. Peterson 245).

b) The prayer 'Father forgive them' shows his generous nature towards those who

are killing him. He has taught his disciples to love their enemies, and now he is modelling this to them (Ellicott, *Luke* 384-85). His death is unjust, and yet he extends grace, giving his executioners the benefit of the doubt saying 'they know not what they do.' Such is the depth and reality of his forgiveness.

c) Jesus' answer to the criminal, that he will be with him in paradise, is a promise of heaven. These words leave many questions unanswered, but show Christ's grace extending to this criminal, and that life beyond the grave is not distant in the future, but a real and available promise for 'today,' with E. Peterson noting the words reflecting Jesus' understanding that 'eternity is not perpetual future but perpetual presence' (250).

d) When Jesus prays 'Into your hands I commend my spirit,' he is placing himself in his Father's hands. This was not a prayer of defeat or of giving up, but one of victory, of entering into the work of salvation he has won (E. Peterson 251). Jesus knows that although they can kill his body, that which is central to him will live on into eternity.

e) Jesus talks with his mother, saying 'Woman, behold your son' and in doing so reveals that she has a new family. Not only is Jesus making sure she is taken care of, but he is also showing that his mind and heart are for others, even in the naked shame and physical agonies of crucifixion. He wants the best for everyone, wanting all people to be in a family. This is true not just of Mary, but of all Jesus' disciples, as the church, which is the new family, is soon to be born (E. Peterson 255).

f) 'I thirst' is a one-word pronouncement that expresses physical agony. Whether this is a prayer to his Father, a cry to the people around him, or just a general cry from his heart to anyone and everyone, is not fully clear. What is apparent is that the juices of life are draining out of Jesus. His body is weakening, closing down and dying (Ellicott, *John* 390). Coggan sees further meaning here, with Jesus thirsting to do his Father's will, and perhaps 'yearning for the souls of men' to have life (Coggan 72).

g) Jesus' final prayer on the cross is 'It is finished!' It parallels the words of Genesis 1, where God finished his good creation. Perhaps this is one reason why the early Christians later called the day Jesus died 'Good Friday,' as post-resurrection they saw that his death was not bad but good, bringing new life and new creation into being (2 Cor. 5:17). This definitive prayer, more than any other, shows that Jesus' praying does not simply display his piety; rather, Jesus' prayers were intwined with his actions, bringing salvation (Smalley 60).

These six 'prayers' of Jesus provide great insight into the personal prayer life of Jesus. They tell much of the radical nature of 1) his rhythms, 2) his content, 3) his practices, and 4) his understanding of prayer.

Rhythms of Jesus' Prayers

The following five features stand out about Jesus' rhythms of prayer. They summarise *when* he prayed, *how long* he prayed for, and *on what occasions*.

First, Jesus prayed formally three times per day, like all devout Jews (Jeremias 17). This rhythm of prayer would have punctuated his day, reminding him of God's continued presence and of his dependence on him (John 5:19) (Carson, *John* 250-51). Jesus also prayed weekly in the Synagogue on the Sabbath (Dunn, "Prayer" 618).

Second, Jesus also prayed early in the morning (Jeremias 72). Often, he would do this before daybreak and on his own (Mark 1:35). He valued solitude and silence, and would often do this outdoors, sometimes in the starkness of the wilderness (Hooker and Young 76) and also amongst the beauty of creation (Matt. 14:23) (Hauerwas 140).

Third, Jesus sometimes prayed at night, and even through the night (Torrey ch.X; Jeremias 75). This usually happened when he had something particular to consider or when he was troubled (Luke 6:12; Matt. 26:36).

Fourth, Jesus sometimes prayed spontaneously (Matt. 11:25), often in praise and thanksgiving to his Father (Jeremias 76).

Fifth, Jesus prayed when under pressure, and when he felt vulnerable. Dunn particularly recognises this, noting that The Lord's Prayer itself is an example of 'conscious and confessed human weakness' ("Prayer" 623). Jesus prayed all sorts of prayers, including thanksgiving and petitionary prayers, not just when life was going well, but especially when life was tough. He prayed often at the difficult times in his life (Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 20-21) (Matt. 11:26; John 12:27-28; Matt. 26:41-42).

Content of Jesus' Prayers

The following ten key themes emerged from our study of the content of Jesus' prayers. These describe *who* he prayed for and *what* he prayed about.

First, *adoration.* Jesus offered prayers of worship, honouring the majesty and holiness of God (Matt. 6:9) (France, *Matthew* 134).

Second, *Kingdom*. Jesus taught and modelled the cry for God's future reign to be realised in the present (Matt. 6:10) (Dunn, "Prayer" 621).

Third, *will*. Jesus prayed and sought the will of God above all things (Matt. 6:10; 26:42). To pray for this, according to Hauerwas, 'is to pray that our wills be schooled to desire that God's will be done' (78)

Fourth, *provision*. Jesus prayed for daily needs (Matt. 6:11). This is a thoroughly practical prayer, praying for what is needful 'for the coming day' (France, *Matthew* 135).

Fifth, *forgiveness*. Jesus taught his disciples to pray for forgiveness, believing that sin was a 'debt owed to God' (Hagner 150) and that, in response, disciples should be people who forgave others (Matt. 6:12).

Sixth, *protection.* Jesus prayed for protection from the reality of evil (Matt. 6:13; John. 17:15) which Carson shows is almost certainly a reference to the devil (*John* 565).

Seventh, *thanksgiving*. Jesus prayed thanksgiving prayers to his Father many times, for many things (Matt. 11:25) (Hagner 318).

Eighth, petition. Jesus often prayed for others (John 17). J. C. Ryle sees here a 'pattern of the intercession which the Son, as a high priest, is always carrying on for us' (Ryle 324).

Ninth, healing. Jesus taught his disciples that physical healing and spiritual deliverance were actualised by prayer (Matt. 17:21) and through his prayers and proclamations, healing became central to his ministry, affirming his mission (Luke 7:22) (Morris 156).

Tenth, *glory*. Jesus prayed that the glory, honour, and praise would go to God (John 12:28) with some manuscripts adding a doxology to the end of The Lord's Prayer (after Matt. 6:13).

These ten themes were central to the praying of Jesus and understandably had a marked effect on his disciples who followed him. They could be categorised into four main areas of prayer: **adoration** (giving worship to God and wanting to see him glorified); **confession** (apologising to God and asking for forgiveness); **thanksgiving** (praising him for his great acts); and **petition** (asking for his help for ourselves, which is often called 'supplication,' and praying for others, which is often called 'intercession').

The gospel writers do not suggest that Jesus' prayers contain all types of prayer (E. Peterson 270), but they do tell us much about the prayer life of Jesus, that 'he was most recognisable when he was praying' (Webb) and that Jesus regarded prayer 'as of first importance' (Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 16). Followers of Jesus after him prayed not only to copy Jesus, but also to join with him, showing their continued dependence on him and his Father (187).

Practices of Jesus' Prayers

As well as being shaped by the content of Jesus' prayers, his disciples were also highly influenced by his practices of prayer. His practices included *his postures, his manner* of prayer, his *style* of praying, and the *people* with whom he shared his praying. A number of features stand out about Jesus' prayer practices.

1) **Postures.** Jesus prayed using various postures.
    a) At his transfiguration, Jesus stood and prayed (Luke 9:28-32).
    b) At other times, Jesus used his eyes to look up to heaven as he prayed (John 17:1). William Temple sees this as a sign of obedient trust (308).
    c) Jesus sometimes knelt in prayer (Luke 22:41) and even prostrated himself, by
    lying face down (Matt. 26:38-39). For R. T. France, this 'posture indicates the strength of the emotion which leads to prayer' (France, *Matthew* 373).
    d) Before his ascension, Jesus raised his arms as he prayed for and blessed his
    Disciples (Luke 24:50). Howard I. Marshall sees this as a priestly gesture, modelling 'the raising of the priest's hands and the worship and praise of the people' (*Luke* 908-09).

    Jesus felt at liberty to use his body to aid and express his prayers.

2) **Manner.** Jesus prayed out loud as well as sometimes silently. A number of biblical references depict him as praying out loud, in what Sylvia Miller-Hardie calls 'public prayer' (4) (John 11:41, 12:27-28, 17), but Jesus also prayed quietly and sometimes silently too (Luke 9:18) (Marshall 366).

Jesus prayed vernacularly. While he would have used the more formal language of Hebrew as he prayed the traditional liturgical prayers, he prayed using his heart-language of Aramaic when praying spontaneously. Dunn recognises this, saying that his *Abba* prayer is not just a theological assertion, but rather emerges in Jesus' own experience of prayer (Dunn, *Prayer* 619).

Jesus prayed simply. His recorded prayers are normally not complex, showing that God welcomes childlike praying (Matt. 11:25-26) and the prayers of those 'whom the world regards as insignificant' (France, *Matthew* 198).

Jesus prayed humbly. He taught and modelled that disciples should never show off in prayer (Matt. 6:5-8) or be arrogant. Rather, true prayer showed dependency on God (John 12:27-28) and was a sign of 'humble, unpretentious, unconditional trust' (Dunn, "Prayer" 623) (Luke 18:9-14).

Jesus prayed persistently. He taught his disciples to keep going, and not give up in prayer (Luke 18:1) and no doubt modelled this in his life. According to Marshall, Jewish teaching in general rejected the ideal of perpetual prayer' but Jesus disagreed, with 'the thought here being of continual prayer, rather than continuous prayer' (671).

Jesus prayed authoritatively. While continuing to pray in the manner noted above, Jesus many times turned his prayers into prophetic declarations, proclaiming peace to storms (Mark 4:35-41), and healing to sick and diseased bodies (Mark 5:1-43) with remarkable effect (Hooker 150).

3) Style & People. Jesus approached God in a style believing he had access to his Father in prayer, rather like a child coming happily before a parent (Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 21-22). This reflected his deep understanding of sonship, that he was valued and welcomed in his Father's presence. He prayed from the security of a loved relationship. This allowed Jesus to not confine prayer only to the three formal times of Jewish prayer, but to be prayerful at all times, knowing that his Father was with him and heard him (7 Words on Cross).

Jesus prayed with fasting, that is, mixing his prayers with the decision not to eat. He deliberately made his body hungry so he hungered for God. He taught his disciples to fast in this way, and saw it as part of basic discipleship training (Matt. 6:16; France 137).

Jesus prayed on his own and also corporately with others. He urged his disciples to go 'into their closet' and pray (Matt. 6:6), which most scholars understand to mean finding space to be alone (Jones 43.) He also prayed when his disciples were with him (John 11:41, 12:25), seeking as Marshall says, 'to draw his hearers into the intimacy of Jesus' own relationship with the Father' (*John* 418).

Understandings of Jesus' Prayers

Jesus had a unique understanding of prayer. He prayed for three major reasons.

First, Jesus prayed because his prayers were **foundational t**o his life and ministry. Mark Jones is clear that Jesus was not just setting an example, but rather Jesus prayed because he needed to. As the incarnate Son, he made himself dependent on the Holy Spirit. The theology of Puritan divine John Owen (1616-1683) believed that Christ performed miracles, not so much because he was divine, but in the power of the Spirit, Jones applies this idea to Jesus' praying. Jones argues that Jesus chose to be dependent on God, and therefore prayer became foundational to Jesus' life as the obedient servant king (23-24). In doing this, he was mirroring good discipleship practice to his followers although he did not pray primarily for that purpose; instead, Jesus prayed because of need. For Jones, Jesus prayed because prayer was basic to his life and ministry as the obedient servant-king.

A second reason why Jesus prayed is that Jesus' prayers were **connectional,** connecting him with the Trinity. This is less about need and more about desire. Jesus wanted to pray, because it was through prayer that he particularly shared in fellowship with his Father and the Spirit. This joining in love and adoration, in friendship and communion, took place through prayer (E. Peterson 160). An example of this may well be seen in Mark 1:35 when Jesus, after a busy day's ministry wakes early next day and 'while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.' In his commentary on this passage, Bishop Ellicott says that Jesus did this that 'he might hold communion with his Father' (*Mark* 17). He prayed for the purpose of intimacy and relationship, because for Jesus, prayer was connectional.

A third reason why Jesus prayed was because his prayers were **transformational**. As he prayed, things changed. As Smalley argues, Jesus' prayers released the power of the Spirit, bringing the reign of God's kingdom (64). This brought forgiveness and freedom to people, as well as kindness and care. It brought the kind of transformation that

Isaiah prophesied in Chapter 61, which Jesus cites in his manifesto when he preaches in Nazareth (Luke 4:14ff). The gospels have many examples of this kind of kingdom transformation that emerges from prayer, beginning with Jesus' baptism, for 'as he was praying heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him' and then 'a voice came from heaven' from his Father, affirming him (Luke 3:21-22). Luke in particular stresses that this encounter took place while Jesus was at prayer (Marshall 152). Another would be in Luke 5:16 where Luke tells his audience that 'Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed,' and then immediately tells a story of healing and forgiveness, which took place because 'the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal those who were ill' (5:17). The fact that Jesus is empowered to heal, having just prayed, is telling. So a third reason why Jesus prayed was because he believed prayer to be transformative.

If these three reasons for prayer helpfully summarise *why* Jesus prayed, and if Barth is right that The Lord's Prayer encapsulates the essence of Jesus' radical new teaching on prayer (*Prayer* 17), then the themes of The Lord's Prayer are clearly well represented in this three-fold understanding. Indeed, the six phrases of The Lord's Prayer correspond well with this understanding.

First, 1a and 2c relate to prayer being **connectional**. Jesus comes to his Father in prayer and worships him, praying for the *honour of God* (1a). As he adores him and draws close in fellowship, so he knows the security of being God's Son and being part of his family. Praying for *protection from evil* (2c) flows naturally from this, for darkness is not meant to have fellowship with light (as the apostle Paul recognises in 2 Cor. 6:14). This explains how Jesus can pray to his Father in John 17, both that the disciples are 'yours' and therefore connected with God (v.9), but also 'protected from the evil one' (v.15).

Second, 1b and 2b correspond to prayer being **transformational**. Jesus prays for the *reign of God* (1b) to come, bringing repentance and renewal. Praying for this naturally corresponds with praying for forgiveness. While the church and the New Testament proclaim that Jesus never sinned (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22) Jesus certainly needed to forgive those who sinned against him. Jesus knew that forgiveness was given and received in prayer. This explains why healing and forgiveness sometimes go together in Jesus' ministry (Lk. 5:17-39).

Third, 1c and 2a relate to prayer being **foundational**. Jesus prays for God's will to be done not just in heaven, but here on earth. In praying this, he is submitting himself to obediently follow God's purposes. As he willing does this, he trusts that provision follows purpose, for God looks after those who seek his will and his plans. Jesus taught this explicitly in Matt. 6:25-34, telling his followers not to worry about the basic things in life; instead they should 'seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.'

Jesus' three-fold understanding of prayer, and its relationship to The Lord's Prayer, is diagrammatically represented in Figure 1 below.

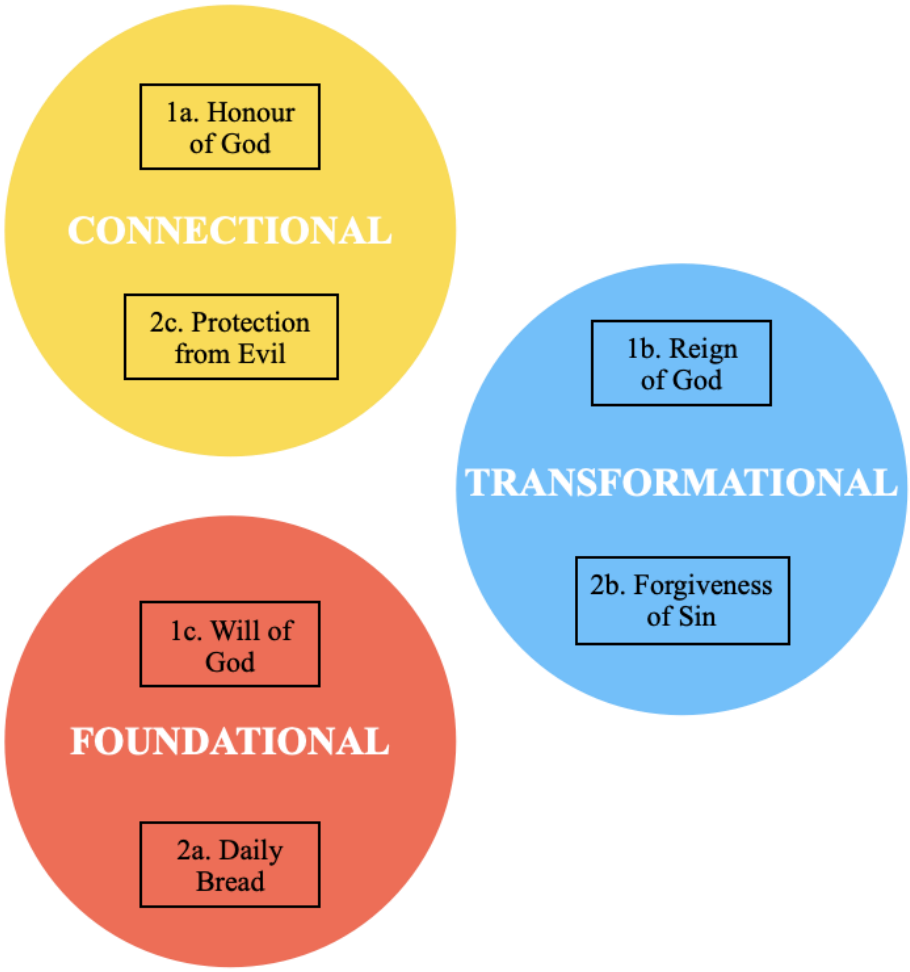

Figure 1. Jesus: understandings of prayer

These three key reasons for prayer, evidenced in The Lord's Prayer, were central to Jesus's understanding of prayer, and he passed them on to his followers. He taught them to pray, and showed them how a prayerful life and a praying community were central to being God's missional people in the world.

Coggan and others think Jesus learned to pray like this partly from his mother, Mary of Nazareth (26), who played a significant role not only in the upbringing of Jesus, but also in the life of the early church. This section now turns to her as a further biblical example of a praying movement leader.

Mary of Nazareth

Mary of Nazareth was a first-century woman from Nazareth in Galilee, Israel (Luke 1:26) (Graef vii). She became the wife of Joseph and the mother of Jesus (Matt. 1:24-25). No records exist regarding her birth and little is known of her early history. John 19:25 states that she had a sister, whom Jerome later identifies as the same Mary of Clopas named in John 19 (341). Luke states that she was related to Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist (Luke 1:36). Church Fathers, such as Gregory of Nanzianzen,

believed her to be of a Levitical family, descended from Aaron (I.1.18). In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas taught that Mary's father was from the tribe of Judah, and her mother from the tribe of Levi (Thomas IIIa, q.31, a2) which perhaps explains why the genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke's Gospel are different: Matthew's relates to Joseph, while Luke's genealogy relates to Mary's family (Strauss ch14.).

Mary was involved in the whole of Jesus' earthly life and ministry (Rotelle 17). Jesus was conceived in her; she carried him in her womb; she gave birth to him; she parented him with Joseph, who may have died early in the marriage; she followed Jesus during his public ministry; she saw him die, and Luke describes her in *Acts* as with the group of disciples praying after his ascension. Although the Bible does not explicitly mention her after that, she likely played a significant role in the early church until her death (Farrell 40). Whether she lived for just a few years or many is unknown.

Luke's Gospel references Mary by name fourteen times, whereas Matthew names her on six occasions, and Mark just once. John's Gospel mentions her at two events, although on both occasions, she is simply described as 'the mother of Jesus.' Mary of Nazareth also appears in the Pentecost narrative in Acts 1:14. Revelation 12:1, 5-6 is a possible reference to her as 'the woman clothed with the sun' who gives birth to a special child (Graef 28). A few scholars, such as Chuck Missler, think she may be 'the chosen lady' to whom John wrote his second letter - 2 John.

Mary of Nazareth was not only the mother of Jesus, but also of the wider (so-called) 'holy family.' According to Matthew 13:55-56 and Mark 6:3 and 15:40-47 Jesus was part of a family with four other brothers - named James, Joses, Judas, and Simon. Mark says Jesus also had some sisters, although only Salome is named (Mark 15:40, 16:1). Stark thinks some of these family members travelled with Jesus (60) as Paul perhaps suggests in 1 Corinthians 9:5. Richard Bauckham says that members of Jesus' family were counted as equal to the apostles, and remained well known and active in the early church with James, Jesus' brother, taking leadership at the beginning. The exact role that Mary had in the holy family and amongst the first disciples after Pentecost is unclear.

Macquarrie is right that the Bible has a somewhat meagre amount of helpful historical information about Mary compared to Jesus (Mary 29), and even less regarding her spirituality. Nevertheless, there is sufficient for us to ask the same questions of Mary's prayer life that was asked of her son, Jesus Christ, namely: when, what, how, and why did she pray?

Rhythms of Mary's Prayers

As she considers *when* Mary prays, Farrell identifies 'two powerful prayer moments' in Mary's life (Farrell 40): the wedding at Cana (John 4) and Mary's silent prayer of agony at the cross (John 19). Farrell, however, goes on to concede that Mary's presence and prayer at the Church's Pentecost awakening (in Acts 1:14) was also important. Others, such as Fournier think that most events recorded in the Bible relating to Mary help us understand her prayer life, because rather than being someone who prayed sometimes, she was in fact 'a woman of prayer, and prayer had prepared her to respond to God with a surrendered spirit. Prayer had paved the way for her life of humility and service' (Fournier 9). As such, the Bible describes her praying at the following times:

1) When called by God. Mary's 'fiat,' which is Latin for 'let it be done' (Luke 1:38), was her response to God's call that she should be the mother of his Son. This moment of 'annunciation' was delivered by the angel Gabriel, and caused a reaction in prayer. Her prayer was a declaration. It was a prayer of surrender to the plan of God. It mirrors The Lord's Prayer of her son, Jesus, who taught his disciples to pray 'your will be done on earth as in heaven' (Matt. 6:10) and Christ's prayer of submission in Gethsemane (Luke 2:42). As already noted, Jesus may have learned this prayer from his mother (Coggan 26). Before his ascension, Jesus had called his followers to pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5), so for them to see Mary obediently waiting in prayer, with the other disciples, is not surprising (Acts 1:4-5) for that same Spirit. Prayer was therefore part of Mary's response to the call of God, which is why Jack Green describes Mary as 'the model disciple' ("Introduction" 1).

2) When encountering the Holy Spirit. After the Annunciation, Mary visited her pregnant relative, Elizabeth, and, on greeting her, Elizabeth's baby leapt in the womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:39ff). Mary's response again was prayer and praise, in what is often called the Magnificat (Luke 1:46ff). Given that Mary was found praying in the Upper Room before Pentecost, she highly likely was also one of the disciples who not only were filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, but also then spilled out onto the streets, 'declaring the wonders of God' in prayer and praise (Acts 2:11) (Graef 27). Encountering the Holy Spirit and prayer went together for Mary.

3) When in need. The wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11) had a desperate need for wine. Mary was present with Jesus and his disciples, and she asked for Jesus' help. Even though her initial request for more wine seems to have been refused, Mary 'trusts in her Son even though she does not quite understand his words' (Graef 19).

4) When fearful or apprehensive. At the Annunciation, Mary was no doubt uncertain about what was to come, but she nevertheless prayed a prayer of surrender to God's will. Graef compares her to Gideon in the Old Testament, who was given a formidable task to perform for God, that would have stirred up some anxiety (8). Mary again prayed when under pressure, when she stood near the cross and watched Jesus die. John 19 describes her conversing with her son as he hung on the cross, with Jesus handing Mary's care over to John, his beloved disciple. Carson recognises that Roman Catholic scholars have reversed this, seeing John as the idealization of all true disciples and Mary as the mother of the church (*John* 617).

5) When significant births take place. Bertrand Buby notes that Mary was present at the birth of Jesus and at the birth of the Church (Buby 91). She was almost undoubtedly present at the birth of John the Baptist, arriving at Elizabeth's house 6 months or more into Elizabeth's pregnancy, and then staying for three months (Luke 1:56). At all these significant birth events, she was praying and prayerful.

Content of Mary's Prayers

When it comes to the content of Mary's prayers, scholars have sought to understand for *whom*, and for *what* Mary prayed.

1) For herself. Mary was not uncomfortable praying for herself. At the Annunciation, she prayed for herself, that God's will would be done in her life. The Magnificat, her great prayer of praise, was initially about her, for it began: 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour' (Luke 1:46-47). As she 'pondered in her heart' after the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:19), this was no doubt a time of

reflection and contemplation, for she 'needed time to assimilate the tremendous supernatural experience that had come to her' (Graef 17). Her musings would have been about the divine Son she had borne, but also, no doubt, about herself and her role in the future.

2) For others. Mary probably prayed for others on many occasions, although the explicit evidence is thin. One known example relates to the presentation of Christ at the temple (Luke 2:22ff). This was when Mary and her husband Joseph encountered Simeon and Anna, who themselves prayed and prophesied over the child. The presentation of Jesus was not just a dead ritual, but a highly symbolic and prayerful ceremony, giving thanks for the safe delivery and 'consecrating to the Lord' their 'first-born child' (Luke 2:23). This was a time when Mary would have prayed for Jesus.

Scholars have also sought to discover what kind of things did Mary prayed for.

1) God's will to be done. Mary's fiat of Luke 1:38 is a prayer for God's will to be done. It is a prayer of submission, noted by the ARCIC (Anglicans and Roman Catholics International Commission) Agreed Statement as supremely important for God's church, for 'Mary's *fiat* can be seen as the supreme instance of a believer's "Amen" in response to the "Yes" of God' (ARCIC 6).

2) For God's kingdom to come. In the Magnificat, Mary prays that the humble will be lifted, the hungry filled, and the rich sent empty away. This mirrors Hannah's song in 1 Samuel 2:1-10, but 'broadening its scope so Mary speaks for all the poor and the oppressed who long for God's reign of justice' (ARCIC 16). It is also remarkably similar in content to Jesus' so-called *kingdom manifesto* (France, "Future" 55) recorded in Luke 4:18-19, citing Isaiah 61:1-2. It reflects Mary's desire for God's just reign to come here on earth as in heaven.

3) For God to be praised. As well as being a declaration of kingdom justice, the Magnificat is also a prayer of strong praise, as Mary declares: 'My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour' (Luke 1:46). This is about giving glory to God, both in words and in action. It is the sign of someone, according to Fournier, 'living the surrendered life' (front cover).

4) For the Holy Spirit to come. After the ascension of Jesus, Mary, with the other disciples, obeyed Jesus' call to wait and pray in the Upper Room (Acts 1:4-5, 14). We assume she prayed for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to fall on the disciples, empowering them for mission, as Jesus had said. While Graef is right that the naming of Mary as being present in the Upper Room 'is a very modest mention,' nevertheless she played her part in praying for the Spirit to come, and together with the others, this prayer was answered on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

Practices of Mary's Prayers

Consideration of Mary's practices of prayers seeks to understand how she prayed. This includes the *postures and manner* of her prayers. It also addresses the style of her praying, and *with whom* she prayed.

Stark evidence on this, plus a little from the few Bible references, and from background cultural research, are helpful here.

1) Postures. The Bible does not divulge what prayer postures Mary prayed in her private or public prayers. Like other Jewish people of her day, she would have been involved in weekly public worship in the synagogue, or the Temple if they lived near enough, as well as 'private prayer at home' (Phillips 32). Likely, she would have prayed

using a mixture of postures not dissimilar to those noted in our analysis of Jesus, which probably included standing, sitting, kneeling, prostrating, raising hands, and lifting the eyes up to heaven (Calabro 560, 567). Christopher Rowland also mentions that family prayer in the home would have involved welcoming the Sabbath by lighting a 'sabbath light' as well as various rites connected with the sabbath meal (50).

2) Manner.

a) Mary probably formally.

The only recorded prayer of Mary is the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55), which is rather formal in manner. It is carefully constructed and liturgical, like a hymn (Marshall 82). It lends itself well to more formal worship, which is why it is often used in liturgical contexts today.

b) Other manners

Like Jesus, Mary probably also prayed to God both informally and simply, but this is not known for sure. She certainly prayed from a disposition of humility, for the Magnificat is very clear about that (Luke 1:48). Given that Mary was in the Upper Room before Pentecost, joining with others 'together constantly in prayer' (Acts 1:14), speculatively she was someone who had already learned to persevere in prayer.

3) Style and People.

a) Like Jesus, Mary may have prayed vernacularly.

Aramaic was quite widespread in Jerusalem and in much of Israel at the time of Jesus (Safrai 226), and so probably Mary, like her son Jesus, spoke Aramaic, possibly as her main language in personal conversation. The Jewish scholar Joseph Yahalom agrees, saying that Aramaic was the language used 'in the informal prayers of the simpler Jews' (33), so Mary probably prayed in the vernacular. Unfortunately, this conjecture cannot indeed be proven.

b) Like Jesus, Mary may have prayed aloud as well as sometimes silently.

Praying aloud was the usual manner of prayer in the ancient world, including the ancient Near East (Van Der Horst, Abstract); so Mary likely prayed in this way, although Scripture has no direct reference to her doing so.

c) Like Jesus, Mary may have prayed with fasting.

Brandon Walker has shown that fasting was 'a common ritual practice among Jews and early Christians' (44), and so Mary likely fasted as part of her personal and public devotion, but scholars today cannot be certain. Interestingly, the Islamic tradition is adamant that Mary fasted, with Mary saying in the Qur'an: 'I have vowed to the All-merciful a fast, and today I will not speak to any man' (19:23b-26, cited in Jalil 76).

d) Like Jesus, Mary prayed authoritatively.

The Magnificat is a prayer of kingdom intent. It was not just prayed but declared! The language and style of the prayer means that it would be hard to pray timidly, with the emotive context suggesting that it would probably have been prayed with heart and enthusiasm (Luke 1:39-45) (Morris 84).

e*) Like Jesus, Mary prayed on her own and also corporately with others.*

Mary's prayer at the Annunciation is evidence of her praying on her own. Her praying with others in the Upper Room at Pentecost (Acts 1:14), is an example of her praying corporately (Stott 53).

Jack Green noted one further prayer style that Mary practiced, which is that:

f) Mary prayed reflectively.

Green describes Mary 'pondering and wondering' ("Part 1" 2). In Luke 1 and 2, for example, Mary 'wondered' at the angel's greeting (1:29); then she 'pondered in her heart' after the visit of the shepherds (2:19); then she 'marvelled' at the word Simeon spoke about her son (2:33), before she 'treasured in her heart' the things Jesus was doing as he grew and matured (2:51). This is 'praying' says Green ("Part 1" 2) – praying emotively and using the affections: as Mary pondered, wondered, marvelled, and treasured. They are all examples of her praying from 'the heart.'

Understandings of Mary's Prayers

Having considered the rhythms, content and practices of Mary's praying, this study now considers why Mary prayed this way.

The amount of evidence relating to Mary's praying is small, and so finding out her reasons is difficult with any degree of certainty. However, using the schema adopted for the prayer-life of Jesus can lead to some tentative suggestions.

As a Jewish woman, brought up within the life and worship of Jewish culture, with public worship and prayer shaped around the local synagogue and national temple in Jerusalem, Mary's praying likely was **foundational** to her life. Her initial response to the fiat from the angel was not fear, but faith. Rather than feeling perturbed, she prayed. The shared ARCIC document of Anglicans and Catholics both agree, saying that Mary's praying was 'an obedient response' to God's Word (ARCIC 7). Fournier is also clear that she did not prayerfully obey God from a place of worry, but because prayer was a daily obedient practice that she continued into old age.

Second, Mary prayed for **connectional** reasons, wanting to adore God and draw close to him. Green recognises this, seeing her as someone who sought to live close to God and who had 'an interior union with God' ("Part 1" 2). If this is correct, then she was present in the Upper Room before Pentecost, not just as 'Jesus' mother' but in her own right as a disciple who had a history of deep communion with God.

Third, Mary prayed for **transformational** reasons. She prayed because she knew that prayer changed things, and that the history-makers were people of prayer. Buby speaks of this, noticing that Luke's gospel account, which has the bulk of references to Mary, was written with the intent of showing that prayer was the means by which God directs the course of holy history (98). Mary seemed to know this, was part of it, and modelled it to others, through her prayerful life.

Therefore, Mary's prayer-life was rich and broad. Fournier describes it as 'a pattern of prayer and song' that reveals 'the fabric of her entire life' (xiii). With prayer being a sign of true discipleship, Mary becomes 'the model disciple' (Green, "Introduction" 3) for the church of her day and for today (Farrell 42). This is why Buby calls her a model of *ecclesia-orans*, that is, exemplifying *a praying church* (Buby 39,98). Not only that, Mary also can be seen a role model for leaders too, particularly female leaders, especially if she was a leader in the early church, which is hinted at in the New Testament and in church history, so much so that Arthur David Canales calls her 'a leader in the community' (4).

Mary was present throughout the life and ministry of Jesus. No one knew Jesus better than her, so she would have been perfect for leadership in the first church. Mary was also present at all the key salvation-history events of Jesus, and of his church: at Jesus's birth, as well as his death, resurrection, and ascension; and at the birth of the

church at Pentecost. Her presence at Pentecost is particularly significant because it suggests her role in the church and in God's purposes did not stop with the death of Jesus, but extended into the life of the early church (Shoemaker 39). Finally, if she was 'the chosen lady' of 2 John, who seems to have some esteemed leadership role in her church community, then perhaps she influenced the early Christian movement more than many realise. If she did, she did so as a leader who prayed.

Acts, Epistles, and the Later New Testament

Mary, and the first disciples were transformed by their relationship with Jesus and by the events at Pentecost. The age of the Spirit had begun (F. F. Bruce "Holy Spirit" 166).

Luke, the writer of Acts, is clear that the first consequence of Pentecost, was the church. The Spirit falls, the kingdom comes, and the church is birthed. This church was birthed in prayer (Acts 1:14) and from the start that church was a praying church (Acts 2:42). Coggan's analysis of the praying of this church described in Acts, is that we overhear 'the Church at work' (75), for prayer was a central and unifying feature of the activities of the first believers. The corporate praying of these initial Christians, over time soon led to a multiplying movement of missional disciples, committed to evangelism and church planting. An examination of the corporate prayer of this movement asks the same four questions asked of Jesus and Mary's praying, namely: when, what, how and why did they pray.

Corporate Rhythm of Early Church Prayers

An analysis of the regularity of the praying of the early church helps understand for how long, and on what occasions they prayed. As these are not matters that the New Testament specifically addresses, the evidence is sparse so scholars have to glean data mainly from Luke's *Acts of the Apostles,* the epistles, and *The Book of Revelation.*

In terms of regularity, these sources do not give details of their daily or weekly or monthly pattern of prayer. Neither do they tell how long they prayed. However it seems that, like their master Jesus, their rhythm of prayer was both formal and informal, with them probably praying at set times and spontaneously in 'the temple courts' and 'in their homes' (Acts 2:46) (Wilkins 943).

The church, at least initially, continued to follow the Jewish daily pattern of prayer that Jesus followed (Martin, "Early Church" 11) with the start of Acts 3 recording Peter and John 'going up to the temple at the time of prayer – at three in the afternoon' (Acts 3:1). They joined in with the corporate rhythm of prayer of the local community. In his *Bible Background* commentary, Craig Keener notes that it was as they were going to these prayers that the met a lame beggar who was healed in the name of Jesus, showing a link between prayer and kingdom transformation ("Background" 326).

The next chapter of *Acts* reports a very different kind of prayer taking place, something much more spontaneous (Wilkins 944). Luke says that because of this incident, the preaching opportunity that came from it, and the people who put their faith in Christ in response, Peter and John were brought before the Jewish leaders to explain their actions. This they did, resulting in them being told not to teach in the name of Jesus. Luke then writes: 'On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. When they heard this,

they raised their voices together in prayer to God' (Acts 4:23-24). This spontaneous, corporate prayer is described in some detail below.

While the occasions of prayer are hard to decipher, instances of the church praying are clearly seen when: in worship (Acts 13:2-3); at the end of a meeting (Acts 20:36); under pressure of persecution (Acts 4:24ff); and when imprisoned together (Acts 16:25). Most importantly, prayer was central to their life and something they probably did regularly, and to which they gave much time (Wilkins 944). Luke describes the life of the church in Acts 2:42-47 and says that 'they devoted themselves … to prayer.' That suggests prayer was not just an occasional practice or a solemn religious rite, but something they were passionately committed to (Turner 72) and regularly practiced (Keener, "Acts" 1011).

Corporate Content of Early Church Prayers

They prayed for themselves (Acts 4:29), especially when they had a need. They also prayed for others (1 Tim. 2:1-2) (Fee "Timothy" 62-3). When considering what they prayed for, Wilkins notes four categories of New Testament prayer: petition, worship, thanksgiving, and conversation (942-43).

1) Petition. The disciples who were part of the first Christian movement prayed for all sorts of circumstances and situations (e.g. Acts 6:6, 8:15), including James in his epistle urging disciples to particularly pray for wisdom (1:5-8), personal needs (4:1-2), and for healing (5:13-18), with the Greek word *proseuchomai* being an ancient Greek technical term for invoking a deity, often used to describe such prayer (Wilkins 942).

2) Worship. The prayerful worship in *The Book of Revelation* was an inspiration for the first Christians and probably provided something of 'a foretaste of heaven' (Keener, "Background" 739). Examples of prayer (Rev. 4:10) showed reverence (*proskyneo*), gave glory (*doxazo*), offered praise (*aineo*), and involved the singing of hymns (*hymneo*).

3) Thanksgiving. This thankfulness *(eucharisteo)* was expressed through sharing testimony and remembering God's answers to their prayers (Acts 28:15; Rev. 11:17). The Lord's Supper was a particular and important example of this, with some parts of the church later giving it the name 'eucharist,' which is derived from the Greek word *eucharistia*, meaning thanksgiving (Wilkins 943).

4) Conversation. Wilkins described prayer in Acts 'as a dignified conversation' with God (943). Even at a set time of prayer, such as when Peter prayed at noon in Acts 10:9-10, he was speaking in conversation with the risen Christ. On reflection, while praying in a conversational manner is an important aspect of prayer of the early church, in this study it is listed more as a 'practice' of prayer (see next section) rather than part of the 'content' of prayer.

5) Confession. In addition to Wilkins' list, one further item of prayer 'content' observed in this literature review of prayer in the early church is 'confession' prayer, that is saying sorry to God. The apostle John's clear teaching about confession in 1 John 1:5-10 shows that this was important to John, a key leader in the church, and to the communities to which he was writing (Marshall, "Epistles" 113). James similarly encourages believers to 'confess your sins to each other and pray' (Jas. 5:16) which adds further weight to confession being important to the content of corporate prayer of the early church (D. H. Williams 77, 151).

Corporate Practices of Early Church Prayers

The early church practiced prayer together in a number of ways. An analysis of their practices aims to discover the posture and manner of their praying, as well as the styles of prayer and with whom they prayed.

1) Posture and manner. The first Christians used their bodies in prayer, which included lifting hands (1 Tim. 2:8). According to Fee, hand-lifting was 'the assumed posture of prayer in both Judaism and early Christianity' ("Timothy" 71). If modelling posture in the Book of Revelation, they would also kneel or prostrate themselves in prayer and adoration (Rev. 4:10, 5:8,14, 7:11, 11:16, 19:4). Origen, writing in the early third century, gives us a glimpse into the postures of prayer in his church in Alexandria, when he writes:

> While there are many ways of bodily deportment [in prayer], there can be no doubt that the position of extending one's hands and elevating the eyes is to be preferred above all others; for the position taken by the body is thus symbolic of the qualities proper to the soul in the acts of praying. Thus we say should be, except under particular circumstances, the normal position taken. Circumstances can permit us to pray with propriety while sitting - for example because of some serious foot ailment. (Origen 131).

2) Styles. Ralph Martin, who has written extensively on worship and prayer in New Testament times, has shown how these early disciples prayed using not just speech but also song (Eph. 5:19-21) (Martin "Aspects" 6), with many praying using the gift of tongues, which most see as an unlearned prayer language given by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:10, 14:1-5).

According to W. Hunter, they would have used liturgy, or written hymns, some of which is probably found in various epistles, such as Romans 11:33-36 and Philippians 2:6-11 (730). In their liturgy, they would have used The Lord's Prayer (Wilkins 947). This is known from the Didache, an early Christian worship document dated about 100AD, or perhaps earlier (O'Loughlin). They possibly used The Lord's Prayer from the earliest days of the church. 'Come Lord Jesus' (Rev. 22:20) was an important prayer used in *The Book of Revelation* and may also have been prayed by the first Christians from an early date (Keener, "Background" 777).

They sometimes used declaratory prayers when they prayed, which some scholars call 'wish prayers' (Wiles 22 ; Rom. 15:5-6; 1 Pet. 1:2). They also used doxologies (1 Pet. 5:11; 2 Pet. 3:8) (Grudem 199).

Finally people fasted as part of their praying (Wilkins 947). How often or for how long they fasted is not known, but this seems to have been a common practice (Acts 9:9; Acts 13:2; Acts 14:23; 1 Cor. 7:5), carried on from the discipleship teaching that Jesus gave (Matt. 6:16).

Corporate Understandings of Early Church Prayers

The movement that Jesus began, which continued after his death and resurrection, was a praying movement. This study of their praying now turns to their understandings of prayer, seeking to ask why they prayed.

New Testament scholars and church historians have no consensus as to why the first Christians prayed. If leaders influence organisations and movements, as this study is proposing, seeing if the same three-fold schema discerned for Jesus applies to the movement he founded, of which Mary was a part, is not illogical. This study will analyse their corporate praying, then, based upon the early church's understanding of prayer as foundational, connectional, and transformational.

First, then, the early church prayed together because they considered prayer to be **foundational** to their lives. The church at Pentecost had been birthed in prayer (Acts 1-2). Prayer was one of its distinguishing characteristics and one of the basic things they did when they met (Acts 2:42) (Wilkins 941). Prayer, in some form, is taking place, encouraged or assumed, on most pages of the New Testament. If you take prayer away, these people being 'church' is hard to imagine That is why the apostle Paul tells the church in Colosse to 'devote yourselves to pray' (Col. 4:2). McKnight, commenting on Colossians 4:2 recognises this, saying 'We need to guard against driving this summons to prayer into the private life; the context of our unit is surrounded by ecclesial concerns enough to think Paul intends this to be just as much corporate prayer' (*Colossians* 369-70). Prayer is what they did, and they did it together.

Second, the first Christian movement prayed because they believed that prayer was **connectional**. It created a relational link between them and God. Cullmann notes that Jesus promised his presence when two or three gather for prayer (18) and that 'God wants a bond to be maintained with them through their thanksgiving and praise, and especially through their intercession' (20). This bond comes through prayer. When they prayed, they believed they were communicating with the God who loved them and had saved them, in and through Jesus Christ. Christ was key, and what is seen in these first believers, which is different to the praying seen in the Old Testament, is how central Jesus becomes, not just to their evangelism and mission, but to their praying (Turner 73-74). Jesus became not only their *model* for prayer but their *focus* of prayer. Coggan notes that, when Stephen was praying as he was being martyred, he remarkably addressed his prayer to Jesus, showing not only his belief in the divinity of Christ, but also that the prayer can be addressed to him (80). Clowney describes this helpfully when he says that, according to the New Testament, Christ 'comes as Lord to receive prayer' but he also 'comes as Servant to offer prayer' (22). This is important, with Paul in Romans clearly stating that the ascended and exalted Christ now 'makes intercession for us' (Rom. 8:34) and the writer to the Hebrews agreeing (Heb. 7:25).

Third, these Christians prayed together because they thought it was **transformational**, bringing great benefits to them and others. They considered prayer to be effective and worthy of perseverance (D. Peterson 100-01). Alan Kreider thinks they prayed because they believed in the power of prayer. They sincerely thought it 'actually makes a difference' (210-11). Frances Young similarly describes how 'the power of miracles' was important and that 'effective prayer' played a part in seeing supernatural change (Hooker and Young 44-45). They believed that as they prayed, so the Spirit came and God's kingdom work took place and his mission was advanced. This missionary zeal drove the church and especially its leaders, inspiring their prayer and their actions. This is why Paul tells the believers in Colosse to pray that God would 'open a door' for the gospel (Col. 4:3), and why he urges his protegee and young leader Timothy in Ephesus to ensure that 'first of all … petitions, intercession and thanksgiving be made' (1 Tim. 2:1).

David Peterson sees prayer as 'central to Paul's theology of mission' (100), with Grenz reflecting that 'The devotion to prayer that characterized the early community was modelled by its leaders' (*Prayer* 2).

In conclusion, analysis of biblical foundations shows prayer to be crucial to the life of both Jesus and Mary, and also to Jesus' disciples and the first Christians amongst whom Mary was probably an important movement leader. Prayer was so important that the first Christian leaders were leaders in prayer. This dissertation now builds on this biblical understanding of prayer, seeking to discover how the study of theology has understood prayer.

Theological Foundations

Theology is thinking about questions raised by and about religions (Ford 3). The word 'theology' derives from the Greek word *theos,* meaning 'god' and *logia,* meaning 'word' or 'reasoning.' As such, theology is the study of God. Theology and prayer are closely linked for, as Grenz says, 'by its very nature, prayer is a theological act' (*Prayer* 43).

If prayer really is conversation with God, then prayer and theology are intricately linked. Indeed, when people pray, they are doing theology. Whether they realise it or not, they are engaging in a profoundly theological process, presupposing particular views about God (Cullmann 6). The first theological foundation, for the purposes of this study, is the very nature of the trinitarian God proclaimed and worshipped by the Christian church and described in Christian theology.

Prayer and the Trinity of God

Christian theology is based on the nature of the God who has revealed himself as a Trinity. Karl Barth said that this doctrine of the Trinity 'is what basically distinguishes the Christian doctrine of God as Christian … in contrast to all other possible doctrines of God or concepts of revelation' (*Dogmatics* 301). The triune God exists as one, in a relational communion of three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is distinct and yet in intimate communion, working together, conversing together, in a fellowship of love and unity. That means that prayer is 'the language of the Trinity' (E. Peterson 165).

Christians believe that through faith in Christ and baptism into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19) they 'enter into the life of the Trinity and are graciously included as partners' (Seamands 12). When Christians pray, they enter into a relationship of the heart (Saliers 29), of communion and friendship 'already going on within the communion of God's being' (Fiddes 123). They welcome the presence of a God who himself welcomes them. As such, they participate in the very life of God as they become immersed in the community of the godhead. Thomas A. Langford was one of the first theologians to link prayer with trinitarian theology, saying that 'prayer might be called the believer's participation in the active communion of the Son with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit' (Langford 256).

This 'eternal love affair' (Moltmann 59) of the Trinity is close and joyful, as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live in caring community with each other. The love they share, though, is not just intimate; it is also self-emptying ('kenotic;' Phil. 2:7) (Fee, *Philippians* 210) and sacrificial, with the cross of Jesus Christ at the very centre

(Moltmann 83). So, when Christians pray, they enter into this relational community of self-giving. God gives himself to them, and they are invited to do the same, surrendering in prayer. As such, prayer becomes an act of deep devotion and reverential humility.

To understand the very nature of God as Trinity in this way profoundly affects people's living, working, and especially their praying. No longer is theology just conceptual and abstract but profoundly relational and real. God invites us to join him in prayer, so we come.

Prayer and the Kingdom of God

Prayer is not only an invitation into relationship with God; prayer is also a call to participate in God's kingdom.

The kingdom of God is widely recognized by theologians as the central motif of Jesus (G.E. Ladd 45ff). Also called the 'kingdom of heaven' in Matthew's gospel, the kingdom of God is God's 'divine government' (France, *Government* 105). It is God's rule and reign, which he initiated in Christ and is fully experienced in heaven. Indeed, in Christ God comes as King. As previously observed, Jesus taught his followers to pray that God's kingdom would come 'on earth at it is in heaven' (Matt. 6:10). This side of eternity always has more of God's kingdom to come. G.E. Ladd described this in terms of an 'eschatological dualism' between 'the now and not yet of the kingdom' (64), as God's kingdom has partly but not fully come. This means that when Christians pray, they are calling to God to bring his kingdom, which explains why Grenz subtitled his important book on prayer *The Cry of the Kingdom*, because for Grenz, 'Ultimately, all prayer is a cry for the kingdom' (Grenz, *Prayer* 71).

So prayer is asking for God's kingdom to come. Followers of Jesus can pray boldly because of the presence of what Grenz calls 'the two great eschatological signposts: the resurrection of Jesus and the presence of the Holy Spirit' (Grenz, *Praye*r 26). As they pray, they enter into a battle with Satan, and ask for God to push back the powers of darkness and advance the kingdom of light (Grenz, *Prayer* 18), using the name of Jesus (John 14:13, 16:24; Jas. 5:14) and sharing in Jesus' certainty of being heard (Grenz, *Prayer* 22; Barth, *Prayer* 13). Praying for God's kingdom to come is therefore a powerful eschatological activity. In prayer, people join with Christ in seeking his kingdom and play a part in bringing in the new age into being. As such prayer is one of the best and most hopeful activities for the Christian (T. Wright, *Surprised* 205)

Prayer and the Sovereignty of God

While prayer is good, it also stretches, raising various theological questions, including how human prayer influences the plans and purposes of God. A variety of opinions have been proposed on this matter throughout church history. This is an important theological issue, with the answer normally reflecting the theological stance of the one supplying the answer.

At the Calvinist pole of the theological spectrum are those who strongly emphasise the sovereignty of God. At the extreme end of this perspective, theologians would say that God's will is pre-determined and his sovereignty cannot be overruled. As such, humans and their prayers can never influence the will of God. Prayer only changes us, but not God. This is the view, for example, of David Willis, who writes that 'Prayer does not change things. Prayer changes people who change things' (120). For most people, though, such a view is not satisfactory, as it a) does not do justice to the biblical revelation, which seems to suggest that God not only listens but responds to prayer; b)

suggests that prayer is not effectual and is essentially a waste of time; c) does not reflect church history, where many have taught and given witness to the fact that prayer changes things, and d) does not chime with experience, where many so-called 'coincidences' seem to happen when people pray, which was the experience of William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury during the Second World War, who famously said 'When I pray, coincidences happen, and when I don't, they don't' (Temple, widely attributed, unknown).

At the other pole of the theological spectrum – the Arminian end – are those who stress that God has given humanity free-will, and that people can effect change in the world in all sorts of ways, including through their prayers. Followers of Jesus have been given authority by Christ to 'move mountains' and influence the world (Mark 11:23-24). At the far end of this perspective, supported by many advocates of process theology, would be those who say that God has not made up his mind on many things (Suchocki 34). However, the problem with such a view is that a) the biblical revelation speaks of predestination and of God having a will; b) if God's mind can be changed by humanity, is God really all-powerful and sovereign?; c) church history has many examples of Christians who prayed for history to change, and it did not; d) experience suggests that when people ask for things in prayer, that much of the time those prayers are not answered.

So this theological dilemma has no definitive solution, but as seen in this research project, growing Christian movements seem to be led by those who believe that prayer is important and that, somehow, it makes a difference. Similarly, respected theologians such as Karl Barth think that there are good theological reasons for believing that prayer is effectual, with Barth saying that God 'alters his intentions and follows the bent of our prayers' (*Prayer* 14). So a middle approach between the two poles makes sense theologically, as well as historically and experientially. Such an approach is helpfully found in twentieth century lay theologian C. S. Lewis. Lewis stands back and considers the eternal nature of God, existing outside of human time. This God sees and hears our prayers and they influence his decision-making. While the event has already been decided at the beginning of time, one of the things taken into account in deciding it, 'may be this very prayer we are now offering' (Lewis 53-54). Grenz agrees, saying that 'the Bible repeatedly emphasizes the role of human action in effecting God's purposes' (*Prayer* 51).

All this means that prayer is central to theology. Our prayers are influenced by the nature of God, and they influence the plans of God. Prayer, then is a thoroughly theological act, with prayer standing at the heart of Christian theology. Barth is right that 'The first and basic act of theological work is prayer' (*Prayer* 103). Indeed prayer is not an *aspect* of theology but is *intrinsic* to the very nature of the trinitarian God, who invites women and men into a relationship of prayer with him. Don E. Saliers sums this up so well, saying 'Theology begins and ends in prayer' (69).

With this theological understanding of prayer, rooted in the bible, this dissertation now wants to discover whether history shows that prayer continued to be important in Christian movements and their leaders. Careful study and synthesis therefore follow of two significant renewal leaders from church history, to see what can be discovered about their prayer life and the praying of the movements they led.

Historical Foundations

In order to gain a historical perspective, an extensive literature review was undertaken on the prayer life of a male and female leader who played significant roles in a renewal movement of their day. Inspired by the examples of Jesus, and Mary of Nazareth, and stirred by Grenz's view that 'Throughout church history an awakening to prayer among the people of God has constituted the key to church renewal' (*Prayer* 4), Aidan (c. 590–651) and Hilda (c. 614-680) were chosen. Although they lived some one thousand four hundred years ago, they highly impacted the North of England, the focus area of RQ #3 in this study.

Renewed interest in Northern saints began in 1892 when the then Bishop of Durham, Joseph Barber Lightfoot, wrote a book on historical leaders who had shaped the church in his region, with chapters devoted to both Aidan and Hilda respectively, whom he identified as significant among the Celtic saints. 'Celtic' was a term which had come into use during the previous century to describe a group of languages (Morse), but since Victorian times it had been more widely applied (Wakefield, "Myths" 191). Since Lightfoot, interest in the Celtic Church has grown considerably, with many seeing it offering a timely and prophetic model for contemporary spirituality (de Waal; Simpson *Three Saints*; Davies and O'Loughlin) and mission (Garlick; Mitton; Finney; G. Hunter; Simpson, *Aidan*). The lives of Aidan and Hilda have been increasingly examined, although nothing of substance has been written solely on their praying. Therefore, after a brief introduction to each character, this study will focus in detail on their prayer lives. In particular, I will consider the rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of the prayers of these two important leaders of the Celtic Christian movement.

Celtic Christianity is a broad term that describes a church movement that grew and developed in Northern Europe, especially in the early Middle Ages. In Britain, it was the expression of the Christian faith that was already present before Pope Gregory sent Augustine of Canterbury in 596 on a mission to convert the nation. The Celtic faith especially grew in the North of England after the Irish monks of the monastery of Iona, established by Columba, sent missionaries to English island of Lindisfarne around AD634, to establish a similar mission base. Many distinguish Celtic Christianity from Roman Christianity (von Padberg; G. Hunter). Their differences are perhaps most starkly expressed by Magnusson who describes Celtic monks as living in poverty, being unworldly, valuing humility, ministering to ordinary people, and hoping to be followed; while in contrast Roman monks lived well, were worldly, paraded pomp, were monarchs of their diocese, and expected to be obeyed (Magnusson). Even though some now think this contrast is vastly overstated, reflecting much historical reconstruction and revisionism (Wakefield, "Myths"; Stanford 109), spirituality and mission certainly differed which came to a head in the famous Synod of Whitby of 664 over the dating of Easter, with the Roman gaining favour, as described by the key historian of this period, Bede (Bede III.25).

Bede and Historical Sources

The writings of Venerable Bede are this study's primary source not only for the early history of the English church, but particularly for material on the praying of Aidan and Hilda and their communities. Bede wrote *A History of the English Church and*

People in AD731. It was a masterful and pioneering work for its time (M. P. Brown 3), with Bede quoting over one hundred authors, including writers who were not Christians, as well as books on science and Greek classical literature (Finney 61). He states at the beginning how he gathered his sources and that he had sought to present an accurate record (Bede "Preface"). As such Finney describes Bede as 'more learned in computation than any other scholar of his day' (17), and Fletcher that he is 'widely regarded as one of the greatest historians who has ever lived' (170). While Bede is willing to criticize – recalling on at least three occasions Aidan's 'inadequate knowledge' of the proper date for celebrating Easter (Bede III.3,17), nevertheless Bede's work is a piece of hagiography – that is, an account of saints that treats them with great reverence. While this respect is noble, this means that the work has its limitations (Fletcher 171; Yorke 19ff). In particular, Bede was restricted in vision, being a supporter of Roman Christianity, thus bringing a bias when analysing the success of the Anglo-Saxon mission (Thacker 137). Stephanie Hollis and others after her have also criticized Bede for having 'marginalized women' (Hollis 1992; Simpson, *Aidan* 86) although Jo Ann McNamara questions her evidence (1994). Clearly, Bede was not a modern historian, but for his time his research methods were exemplary and encyclopaedic (M. P. Brown 4). Aware of these weaknesses, this project still looks positively on Bede and his writings. He is the main source from which we construct our history.

A few other historical sources are also available, including *Vita S. Cuthberti,* written about 700 on the life of St. Cuthbert, giving some insights into the monastic prayer life in Lindisfarne, as well as Nennius' *History of the Britons,* written about 828, although the earliest extant copy dates from after the eleventh Century and its reliability is questioned by many (e.g. Dumville). Nennius' short work is nevertheless important in that, despite its brevity, it does not contradict Bede and actually suggests, even more than Bede, that it was the Celtic, rather the Roman missionaries who were responsible for the success of the movement of Christian mission in Northumbria. Nennius does not, however mention either Aidan or Hilda by name.

Further literature substantiates Bede's writings, including a few small references to Hilda in the late eight/early ninth century work *The Old English Martyrology* (Rauer) and in *The Life of Wilfrid*, written by Stephanus probably in the early eighth century (Colgrave). The *Lindisfarne Gospels*, which is an illuminated gospel book completed in Lindisfarne around AD 715 and now housed in the British Library in London, gives helpful insight into monastic life at the time. Archaeological evidence also enables scholars to reconstruct, with a reasonable degree of authenticity, a picture of ecclesial life in seventh century Northern England. These are the main sources upon which scholars rely, enabling this review to describe and analyse, with much confidence, the prayer life of Aidan and Hilda.

Aidan

Bede provides a vivid pen-portrait of Aidan (Yorke 19), describing his arrival in the North East of England with twelve men, having just been consecrated as a bishop (Bede III.5) in AD 635 (Garlick 44). Aidan was an Irish monk, probably about 45 years old and not yet versed in the Saxon tongue. The team came from Iona, on the east coast of what now called Scotland. Aidan came at the request of King Oswald and set up his monastery on the small island of Lindisfarne, close to Oswald's royal coastal city of

Bamburgh (Bede III.5). Lindisfarne became the headquarters from which Aidan and his followers set out to convert the people of the region to faith in Christ. Lindisfarne, often known as 'Holy Island' became the mission base (Simpson, *Aidan* 41) which, over time, produced a significant renewal movement resulting in many people in the North of England choosing to follow Christ. This movement was of such significance that Lightfoot is willing to state that 'not Augustine, but Aidan, is the true apostle of England' (9).

Aidan was not the leader of the first apostolic team sent from Iona, but the second. The first team had been led by a monk called Corman, who had returned to Iona in 634 after seeing little fruit for his labour, concluding that the North of England was inhabited by 'an ungovernable people of an obstinate and barbarious temperament' (Bede III.5). However, Simpson notes that within only 'two decades of Aidan's death, Bede could record "Where-ever a missionary brother went, he was joyfully received by all"' (*Aidan* 16). Such was the impact of this renewal movement, led by the second team leader, Aidan.

Lightfoot suggests the reason for Aidan's success was partly due to his kind and saintly character (17). Simpson also describes Aidan as having both emotional intelligence and discretion (*Aidan* 137). However a key factor was that Aidan employed a 'bottom-up' rather than top-down approach to mission (Simpson, *Aidan* 7), which was a very different missional approach to the Roman clerics before him. Rather than imposing the faith, Aidan listened to people and then fed them with 'the milk of simpler teaching' (Bede III.5). This was remarkable given that, in the early days at least, Aidan could not speak the English language and was dependent on King Oswald to translate (Bede III.3). Growth came also partly due to his strategical approach, as he prioritized what today is described as evangelism, discipleship, developing leaders, and church planting – that is, starting new Christian communities (Adam, "Flame" 52; Simpson, *Aidan* 2016). Another possible factor behind the growth of the Celtic movement in the North of England was spearheaded by the monks at Lindisfarne, and that was their prayers, for behind this missional strategy was a deep spirituality - a pervasive 'prayerfulness … which shone forth' (Lightfoot 17). This literature review turns to this prayer, and particularly to Aidan's prayerfulness.

Bede is in no doubt that Aidan was a man of prayer, first introducing him as 'a man of outstanding gentleness, holiness, and moderation. He had a zeal in God…' (Bede III.3). This holiness and zeal was evidenced in lifestyle and prayer (Mitton 111), which is why Bede goes on to describe him as someone who, when dining with the king 'left as soon as possible to read or pray' (III.5).

Rhythms of Aidan's prayers

A consideration of the rhythm of Aidan's prayers involves asking questions such as when he prayed, for how long, and on what occasions.

Aidan prayed regularly and daily (Bede III.5). Brown describes how 'time was set aside each day for personal prayer and meditative private reading of Scripture (*lectio divina*)' (Brown 7). Simpson expands on this, saying that Aidan, like monastics everywhere, taught the value of praying at various times in the day 'marked by the sun,' which Simpson sees as 'relaxing into the rhythms that God has put within creation and within us' (*Aidan* 103). Learning to echo the patterns of creation in prayer was important for the Celtic saints who came to the North of England from Iona. This would have

included Aidan, so much so that Simpson describes how he would have perceived 'creation as a sacrament' (*Aidan* 48). Choosing to live and set up the monastic community on the beautiful but barren island of Lindisfarne would in itself have influenced Aidan's prayer life, with access to the island being dependent on the daily tidal rhythm. Bede describes this in his *Ecclesiastical History*, writing: 'As the tide ebbs and flows, this place is surrounded by sea twice a day like an island, and twice a day the sand dries and joins it to the mainland' (III.3).

Timings of prayer. Aidan had a pattern of prayer that he had learned in Ireland in the Celtic community in which he was discipled, based on the Rule of Columba from Iona (Adam, *Flame* 31, 82) - with a 'rule' being a pattern or rhythm of prayer and devotion. Accepting the Rule of Columba (Lightfoot 46), his pattern of daily public and personal prayer was, according to Barbara Yorke, repeated 'on rising and when going to bed' (225) with a particular focus during holy weeks. A late eighth or early ninth century document called the *Rule of Columba* survives, describing some of Columba's advice to hermits. If this document is authentic and its teaching had been known to Aidan, then he would likely have sought to apply its guidance in his own prayer life and in the monastery at Lindisfarne. It particularly urges 'three labours a day: prayer, work and reading,' as well as constant prayers for those who trouble you; fervour in singing the office for the dead as if every faithful dead was a particular friend of yours; hymns for souls to be sung standing; vigils to be constant from eve to eve under the direction of another person (Columba, *Rule*). Whether Aidan adopted the Columban rule in its entirety, his pattern of prayer was certainly both personal *and* corporate, with much personal praying done corporately, in community (Finney 140).

As well as praying regularly at set times, Aidan also sought to pray *continually*. He was a prayerful man (Lightfoot 17), displaying 'self-discipline and continence' (Bede III.5) in manner and no doubt in prayer. The monastery that he established in Lindisfarne became 'a place where nature, work and prayer interwove' (Celtic Saints 12) and this, according to Mitton, was to a large extent due to his authenticity and 'the kind of Christian spirituality and witness he modelled' (109).

Occasions of prayer. History shows that Aidan prayed both *privately* and *publicly*. His personal prayer was central to his discipleship, so much so that Aidan devoted significant time to being alone, praying *privately*. As well as praying in the monastery at Lindisfarne, he also liked to go to the uninhabited nearby Farne Island, to enable him sometimes to fully retreat from the bustle of monastic life on Lindisfarne, for private prayer and reflection (Simpson, *Aidan* 98; Adam, *Saints* 49). Simpson speculates that he 'learned the ways of monastic withdrawal' early in life in Ireland, where hermits had lived for a number of generations, and who themselves may have learned to pray in this way from the Desert Fathers of the third and fourth centuries (Simpson, *Aidan* 99-101).

Aidan also prayed *publicly* – both with people on the road whom he met on his missionary travels, but also in the monastery in the regular services which were part of the daily rhythm of prayer of the community (Simpson, *Aidan*103). The community initially included twelve young apprentice monks whom Aidan trained to continue the work and prayer he initiated (Bede III.26). Thomas Merton links the prayer of Aidan and the rules of the community he established to other rules, such as the Rule of Benedict

(Merton, *Climate*) and sees this rule as central to the creation of what he calls 'the climate of prayer' that Aidan and others fostered in their monastic communities.

Content of Aidan's prayers

This section now looks into whom Aidan prayed for and what he prayed about.

Focus for prayer. When it comes to examining whom Aidan prayed for, especially when he was on retreat on Farne Island, he likely prayed for himself (Adam, *Saints* 49). He also prayed with and for his community (Adam, *Flame* 52). He also prayed for those in need (Garlick 45), the king, and for anyone and everyone he met (Bede III.5). David Adam, perhaps using a little imagination, says that while out walking, 'whenever he met someone on the way he asked if they were Christian. If they were, he would say, "Let us pray together." If they were not, he would ask them, "Why not?"' (Adam, *Saints* 49).

Issues for prayer. Aidan would pray about many issues. Four stand out as significant.

First, Aidan prayed *adoration prayers*. He would often express devotion to God by using the Psalter, but he did this not just by saying the Psalms, but by singing them (Garrick 45), allowing the songs to stir his heart to give God glory.

Second, Aidan's personal prayers included prayers of *confession.* Such prayers would have been part of the regular praying of Aidan, with both Yorke and Stancliffe describing how private confession and repeated penance to a priest were important in the early medieval world and would have been central to Aidan's spirituality (Yorke 229; Stancliffe 79).

Third, *thanksgiving prayers* were important to Aidan. He regularly recited Scripture, especially the Psalms (Bede III.5), which included many words of thanksgiving. He also mentored King Oswald who, Bede says, spent time early each morning in 'prayer and thanksgiving to God' (Bede III.13), and Oswald likely learned this from Aidan.

Fourth, prayers of *petition* were prayed, with Mitton saying that Aidan and his monastery 'saw themselves as having an intercessory responsibility for the nation' (Mitton 28).

Forms of prayer. As Aidan petitioned God, a number of forms of prayer can be recognised, with three being specifically mentioned by Bede: *blessing prayers*, *warfare prayers*, and *kingdom prayers.*

First, Aidan prayed *blessing prayers.* Bede recounts an incident involving a priest called Utta, who took the arduous journey to Kent in order to return with Eanfled, daughter of Kent king Edwin, as a wife for King Owsy. Before he travelled, Bede prayed for Utta. We are not told what kind of prayers he prayed, except that Aidan 'blessed them and commended them to God' (III.15). This priestly ministry of blessing in prayer seems to be something Aidan undertook gladly and kindly. As seen below, blessing prayers often involved raising of, or laying on of hands, as well as using other physical aids such as oil.

Second, Aidan's praying included *warfare prayers.* According to J. Robert Wright, members of religious communities of royal foundation were free from military service to the king so they could wage 'heavenly warfare' in prayer (78). This matches Bede's description of Aidan praying, with scholars such as Julia Barrow seeing Bede's interpretation of history reflecting a particular theology of spiritual warfare, achieved

through godly kingship and the prayers of the saints (Barrow). For example, on one occasion when Aidan was on Farne Island, taking a prayer retreat, Aidan saw smoke rising from Bamburgh Castle in the distance, and he knew that the royal city was under attack by neighbouring pagan king and enemy, Penda. Aidan responded in passionate prayer, praying: 'Lord, see what evil Penda does!' (Bede III.16). This short prayer is the only extant record of words used by Aidan in prayer. Although brief, they express much about Aidan's prayer life. No theological reflection on this prayer has been discovered through literature review, so these brief summary reflections are unique to this dissertation.

a) Aidan calls God 'Lord.' This shows that Aidan knew he was a man under authority – that he served under and prayed to the Most High God. In praying to the 'Lord' he may have been simply praying to 'the LORD' – that is, Yahweh, the trinitarian God of the Bible, although he was probably more specifically praying to the Lord Jesus – one of whose titles is 'Lord' (Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:11).

b) Aidan invites God to 'see' – to observe and take note - of the situation. He uses the verb in the imperative, declaring, and inviting God to focus on this situation. This declaratory word is key to the warfare element of this prayer, and shows that Aidan believed he was fighting using very different weapons to Penda (Eph. 6:10-12).

c) Aidan asks God to recognise 'the evil that Penda does' and respond. The inference is that Aidan is asking God not just to take note, but to *act* against evil. Aidan realizes that spiritual warfare takes place in the context of prayer (Simpson, *Aidan* 98), and picks up one of the final stanzas of The Lord's Prayer*:* 'deliver us from evil' (Matt. 6:13). This one example of Aidan's praying shows that the growth of the renewal movement under Aidan's leadership involved the pushing back of forces of darkness, and that praying warfare prayers played an important function in that (Adam, *Flame* 54).

Bede says that Aidan's prayer was heard, with the result that 'the wind shifted away from the city, and drove back the flames on to those who had kindled them' so 'they abandoned their assault' (Bede III.16).

Third, Aidan interceded by praying *kingdom prayers.* He loved to pray that God's kingdom would become established - in people's hearts and, as a result, physically in their everyday lives (G. Hunter ch.2). As we have seen, he would pray while he walked. As he met people on the way, he would talk with them, and often pray with them (Adam, *Saints* 49). If they were not believers, he would invite them to follow Jesus and mark it in the physical act of baptism (Bede III.5). He taught that this kingdom should be seen in the way people lived: in how they worked, ate, cared, journeyed, and celebrated (Mitton ch.10). This he modelled at the monastery in Lindisfarne, as it is well expressed in pictorial form in the Lindisfarne Gospels, which include artistic scenes from everyday life, with nature scenes appearing in the midst of the text. The prayers of the faith would often be expressed in very tangible, and often physical ways – through making things, and building things – like churches in villages, and monasteries in key centres (Garlick 45).

Practices of Aidan's Prayers

The reader of Bede gains a sense that Aidan loved to pray. It was what he did, and it spilled out and influenced others. This next section looks into how Aidan prayed, examining his postures and manner of prayer, his styles of prayer and for whom he prayed.

Postures and manner. Three postures of prayer are noted.

First, Aidan prayed by *using his body*. He sometimes raised his hands in petition (Bede III.16) and perhaps like King Oswald, whom he encouraged and instructed, he may also have held his palms upwards and open before God in prayer (Bede III.13). King Oswald would also kneel sometimes in prayer (Bede III.2), and we know from the Lindisfarne Gospels and from elsewhere in Bede that kneeling was a common posture for prayer at the time. Even with no specific references to Aidan kneeling in prayer, given Mitton's comments that for most Celtic Christians, 'prayer was often quite physical' (29), kneeling highly likely was an important prayer posture used by Aidan.

Second, Aidan prayed *while walking.* This is one of a number of prayer postures he used. His prayers were not limited to the indoors – to his room, or to chapel – but were freely prayed outdoors too. As his feet touched the ground, he earthed his prayers in the land (Adam, *Flame* 61). While there is no specific record that he saw prayer walking as a form of spiritual warfare, Mitton thinks this likely, as Aidan claimed territory for Christ as he and his team went out to spread the gospel (Mitton 29). Garlick says that as Aidan and his colleagues walked, they would sing psalms, talk about what they had read in the Bible, and help those in need (45). Simpson sees this prayer walking as pilgrimage-like, reflecting something of a disciple's walk with Christ (*Aidan* 23).

Third, Aidan also prayed by *using his senses.* The occasion of Penda's siege of Bamburgh is a case in point, where Aidan used his *sense of sight* to assist his prayers, for as he 'saw the column of smoke and flame' from the city, he then 'raised his eyes to heaven' … and called on God to similarly 'see what evil Penda does!' (Bede III.16). He also used his *sense of hearing* to listen to people before he prayed, asking people he met as he travelled if they were Christians, and depending on their answer, he would pray and reply in a way that encouraged them, without hostility (Adam, *Saints* 49). Aidan would have used the *sense of touch* in blessing, for it was common practice then, as today, to bless by laying on hands (Bede III.15). No doubt *taste* and possibly *smell* would also have been employed as he shared the sacraments of bread and wine (Bede III.3) and prayerfully celebrated the sacrificial death of Christ with his fellow monks.

Style. Aidan used a variety of styles of praying. These, according to Mitton ranged from 'formal prayer' to 'more spontaneous charismatic prayer' (29). Ten are noted.

First, Aidan often prayed by *speaking words.* Given that prayer is conversation with God, this is not a surprise, but nevertheless it is important to record. The incident on Farne Island noted above illustrates this, where Bede describes Aidan 'saying … "Lord, see what evil Penda does!"' (Bede III.16). Clearly words were used, and Aidan expressed them in prayer to God. He likely prayed in the vernacular, speaking his personal prayers to God in his native Irish tongue, which we know was not the language of the English people (Bede, III.3). This is not to say that Aidan never used a different language, or that he always prayed out loud. He may well have spent much time in quiet contemplation, especially during his many hours and sometimes days that he spent in solitary prayer, with Bede's recollection of him 'meditating' (Bede III.5) perhaps suggesting this, but there is no overt record of him praying in silence. However, his use of words is recorded. He was pleased to speak his prayers.

Second, Aidan liked *singing songs.* As well as speaking his prayers, Aidan would sing them. This would have often taken place in the regular worship services but also, as noted by Garlick, as they walked together on the road (45).

Third, Aidan prayed *with the Bible.* Bede describes him prayerfully reflecting on Scripture (III.5) which may have happened by using a physical Bible in front of him but also through memory, while travelling with his missionary companions. They would recite Scripture, particularly the Psalms (Bede III.5), which they probably knew by memory, and would turn them into prayer. We are not told how this learning of Scripture took place, but Kendall speculates that it partly took place through repetitive use in liturgical worship and prayer, but also through rote learning as part of monastic study (99). The purpose of such learning was clearly not just to gain knowledge but to assist in prayer (Adam, *Saints* 34).

Fourth, Aidan prayed *while celebrating Holy Communion.* The regular sharing of bread and wine was central to monastic life. King Oswald's request to the monks of Iona in 635 was for them to send them 'a bishop' who would help his people 'receive the blessings of the Christian faith and the sacraments' (Bede III.3) and they sent Aidan, so assumption is made by Cunningham that regular reception of Holy Communion was a significant prayer practice of the Lindisfarne clergy, including Aidan (79).

Fifth, Aidan's praying included *prophetic prayers.* He prophesied, with sadness, the soon-to-come death of King Oswin (Bede III.14), and when he prayed with a priest called Utta Aidan he received a prophetic word for him. However, rather than being a simple word of encouragement, the message was predictive, telling Utta: 'When you set sail, you will encounter a storm and contrary winds…' followed by clear instruction on what to do to counter it (Bede III.15). Bede recognizes this as prophecy, stating: 'So it came about that the man of God through the spirit of prophecy both foretold the storm and, although absent, calmed its fury' (Bede III.15).

Sixth, Aidan prayed *as he fasted.* Bede describes him fasting two days per week on a Wednesday and Friday 'except for the fifty days after Easter' (III.5). Adam and Simpson also recognize that he would have fasted at other times too, including the preparation for the building of Lindisfarne's monastery and as a means of cleansing the land (Adam, *Flame* 52; Simpson, *Aidan* 53). Fletcher mentions that Aidan's disciple, Cedd (sometimes known as Chad) did just this, purifying the site of the monastery at Lastingham 'by means of a rigorous Lenten fast' (Fletcher 168) - a practice he probably learned from his master, Aidan.

Seventh, Aidan prayed *using holy oil.* When he prayed and prophesied over Utta before his journey south to collect a bride for King Oswy, Aidan gave him some holy oil to pour into the sea to calm the storm (Bede III.15). This shows not only that Bede believed that oil could be used in prayer but that he himself used it, as he had a supply readily available to give to Utta.

Eighth, Aidan prayed by *using his emotions.* On at least one occasion, the record indicates that Aidan prayed 'with tears' (Bede III.16), which shows that he prayed from the heart. Prayer was not a dispassionate pastime, but rather something emotive, involving the affections (Simpson, *Aidan* 137).

Ninth, Aidan prayed *imaginatively.* Aidan and his contemporaries used all the resources around them to pray creatively and imaginatively (Hunter, *Celtic* 36). Ian Bradley especially recognises this creative trait not just in Aidan but in Celtic Christianity

in general, saying that 'Celtic Christianity was rooted even more in the imagination than the intellect' (84). One fascinating suggestion, made by Michelle Brown in Robert Beckford's 2009 TV show 'Christianity: A History – Dark Ages' is that the so-called 'carpet page' of the Lindisfarne Gospels reflects the use of prayer mats in the monastic community, sharing rituals not only with the churches of the Middle East but also with Islam (Beckford, *Dark Ages*, broadcast 23 Jan 2009). This concurs with the view that Celtic Christianity reflected older versions of Christian culture developed in Asian centres that had not yet been touched by the recent Roman revision in Europe (Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon*; Ellison; Denison 21). If M. Brown is correct that prayer mats were used at Lindisfarne, then Aidan possibly introduced them and used one in his own prayers.

Tenth, Aidan prayed *through his lifestyle.* He sought for his life to be an offering of prayer to God. Bede presents Aidan as a selfless man of genuine 'holiness' (Bede III.3), 'particularly endowed with the grace of discretion, the mother of all virtues … [and] other virtues as well' (Bede III.5). He especially cared for the poor and even bought slaves in order to set them free, some of whom became his disciples and were later ordained (Bede III.5).

This range of prayer styles was unusually broad and, according to Mitton is 'worthy of the admiration of Christians of every tradition' for perhaps more than any other church, they reflect Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians to 'pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers' (Eph. 6:18) (Mitton 25).

People. The final consideration with regard to Aidan's prayer practices is who he prayed with. The answer, it seems, is similar to who he prayed *for*, for Aidan seemed to be content to pray with anyone and everyone. In fact, he probably would rarely pray *for* someone when he could pray in-person *with* them. We know from Bede, for example, that Aidan prayed with those who were going on a difficult journey (III.15) and that he 'prayed with' his fellow clerics (III.5).

Understandings of Aidan's Prayers

Despite coming to England for the sake of reaching out to others in mission, Aidan devoted much of his time and energy to prayer and so this study now turns to the question of why Aidan pray in these ways, seeking to grasp his understanding of prayer. Having reviewed the reasons noted by scholars, they will be summarised by using the same 3-fold framework noted in the biblical foundations section above, recognising that Aidan - like Jesus, Mary and the first disciples of the early church - considered prayer to be foundational, connectional, and transformational.

First, Aidan believed prayer to be **foundational** to his life. As a creature praying to his Creator, so his rhythms of prayer flowed with the rhythms of creation (Simpson, *Aidan* 103). His praying was natural with his prayerfulness reflecting a humble recognition of his need of God (Lightfoot 17). The good desire of Aidan's prayers matches the virtuous character of his life (Garlick 47). Aidan, no doubt, had his weaknesses and imperfections, but nevertheless he was a man of simplicity and integrity, who sought to model what he taught, founding his life on prayer. This authenticity is both compelling and impactful (Mitton Ch.10).

Second, Aidan prayed because prayer was **connectional** - connecting him with God. This is why he devoted so much time and energy to prayer. G. Hunter recognises this as important to Aidan and indeed the lives of the other Celtic saints of his day who, contrary to the Roman church that emphasised the transcendence of God, instead

emphasised God's immanence (77). This holy man of vision and strategy clearly felt that living a life of prayer was important and strategic (Simpson, *Aidan* 103), allowing him to have 'an ongoing internal conversation' with God (G. Hunter 97).

Third, Aidan knew that prayer was **transformational**. Things changed as he and his disciples co-laboured with God in prayer, and God's mission advanced. Aidan's prayers showed that he did not think he could achieve this mission on his own. He needed God's help for this mission, which is one of the main reasons he prayed (Lightfoot 17). Indeed, many of Aidan's prayers were answered, and changed situations. He believed that God answered prayer. According to Mitton, it was not just Aidan's gentle personality but also his 'spirituality' that was 'the key to the mission' (111). He believed that his prayers influenced the mission and ultimately the growth of the movement (Adam, *Flame* 50)

Aidan's Praying and his Movement's Growth

Clearly, then, Aidan was not just a man of mission, but also a man of personal prayer. It is of interest to know if this prayer translated into the movement he began, and the extent to which Aidan's prayer contributed to the growth of the renewal movement he initiated and oversaw.

Research shows that the monastic community and subsequent renewal movement which Aidan began was, like its founder, marked by prayer. In the same way that Aidan exhibited a disciplined and devoted spirituality, so Sarah Foot has written about 'the austerity and frugality of the community' of the Northumbrian Church that emerged (57). Nonetheless, it was also imaginative and joyful (Bradley 98), marked by storytelling and poetry, music, and the visual arts. Hunter describes this as a 'more right-brained approach' to faith, spirituality, evangelism, and mission (68). This was modelled for them by their founder, Aidan, as he established Lindisfarne not just as a prayer and mission base, but as 'a training ground for Anglo-Saxon recruits' (Stancliffe 79). He knew he needed to train others not just in mission and evangelism, but in spirituality and prayer. That is why he set up a training school which, according to Mitton, was 'the first theological college in England' (112).

In this context of learning, the corporate rhythms, content, and practices of prayer were likely similar to that of Aidan himself. Simpson and Adam have suggested that these patterns of prayer that came to Lindisfarne from Ireland were perhaps rooted in the rules and teachings of Basil and Cassian (Simpson, *Aidan* 97; Adam, *Flame* 31). These rules were probably not yet written down and formalized (Simpson, *Aidan* 96) and neither was the Lindisfarne pattern of corporate prayer described systematically by Bede, so scholars surmise that the shape of prayer created by Aidan for the community was similar or identical to that of Iona (Simpson, *Aidan* 97). Even if we are not fully sure of its corporate rhythms and content and practices, Aidan's spirituality certainly spilled out and influenced others. In III.5 of his *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede describes Aidan praying and then states: 'Many devout men and women of that day were inspired to follow his example.'

Although he was the leader of the community, Aidan was not present at every service or time of prayer, for he spent extensive time in solitude, especially on Farne Island (Bede III.16; Simpson, *Aidan* 98). Neither Bede, nor any Aidan scholar since, has suggested that every member of the Lindisfarne community was required to take so much

time for solitude and contemplation, although some likely did, as they fashioned their life on their great founder (Mitton 109).

Aidan's example was one reason why those in his community and beyond prayed, modelling themselves on him (Mitton 109). No doubt other reasons existed as to why the community prayed together as they did, although Bede supplies no evidence of a particular corporate understanding of prayer. The reasons why the community at Lindisfarne prayed together were possibly, perhaps even likely, the same as those of Aidan himself, were that his community considered prayer to be foundational, connectional, and transformational.

The movement led by Aidan grew significantly, impacting individuals, families, communities, and the region as missionaries went out from Lindisfarne to evangelise and plant churches in Northumbria and the North of England (Hunter 26; Lightfoot 9-11). The legacy he left is a testimony not just to Aidan's personality, gifts, and dedication, but to the power of prayer (Lightfoot 17).

One person, influenced by the prayerful Aidan, was a woman who went on to play a significant leadership role in shaping the growing Celtic movement, so much so that Bede praises her 'more than any other woman in his history' (McCarty 9). Her name was Hilda.

Hilda

Hilda, sometimes known as Hild, was born in AD 614 to a royal family, being the great-niece of King Edwin (Fletcher 182). Her life is divided into two almost equal halves. Little is known about the first 33 years, except that she was brought up in Edwin's court in her early years after her father was poisoned. Hilda was well educated and highly influenced by the Roman Bishop Paulinus of York. She was baptised in 627 at the age of thirteen in the newly built church in York, alongside King Edwin, although six years later she fled to Kent with her mother after Edwin was killed in battle. When she was 33, Bede tells us that instead of joining her sister at a French abbey, Hilda chose to answer a call from Aidan and returned to Northumbria to live there as a nun to assist in the mission to the North. She continued in holy orders until her death at the age of 66 (Bede IV.23). Historians have speculated about her life before then, with some, such as Denison, suggesting that she had previously been married and became a widow after her husband, perhaps a nobleman in Edwin's court, was killed alongside his king (Denison 20; McCarty 6; Simpson, *Hilda* 31). Having experienced much tragic loss of close family in the battles of life, Hilda chose to live differently and, according to Lightfoot, 'her warfare was peacefulness' (Lightfoot 62) as she became 'dedicated … in the monastic life' (Bede IV.23).

Hilda moved north in 647 to work with Aidan, who 'often used to visit her … and offer thoughtful guidance' (Bede IV.23). Simpson hints at a somewhat controlling agenda on the part of Aidan, with him seeing her as key to making his vision a reality (Simpson, *Hilda* 47, 51), while Hollis and others recognize the huge autonomy Hilda was given (Hollis 256; Bauer 20) as she was encouraged to establish monastic mission-centres across the North. The Celtic church was much more accepting of female leadership than the Roman church (Simpson, *Hilda* ch.8). Hilda rose to the challenge and became an outstanding leader in the church at this time, so much so that Bishop Lightfoot named

her, alongside Oswald and Aidan, as one of three people who 'stand out conspicuously in the first planting' of the Northern church (Lightfoot 63).

Like Aidan, who pioneered the monastery at Lindisfarne, Hilda began by starting a new community north of Lindisfarne at a location 'on the north bank of the River Wear' (Bede IV.23) which scholars think is now Monkwearmouth (Simpson, *Hilda* 51). But Hilda soon moved on to a second location to lead the community in 'Herutue' which today is known as Hartlepool. This monastery had been established by Heiu – who had been the first nun in the North (Bede IV.23). After a short spell there, Hilda went to lead another already-established monastery in 'Kaelcacaestir' – probably Tadcaster (Sherley-Price 246), developing there a more disciplined rhythm of prayer and worship (Bede IV.23). She was clearly a leader skilled at both pioneering and revitalising, and in time moved to 'Streansaeshalch,' now known as Whitby, to start and lead a new monastery. This was a double-monastery where both men and women worked and prayed together, a model introduced from Gaul. It was unusual for Hilda, being a woman, to be responsible for both the women and the men but it seems she did this well (Ellison 7). The monastery at Whitby was 'Hilda's great life work' (Simpson, *Hilda* 58) and it became the setting for the famous Synod of Whitby in AD 664 which committed Britain to a Roman, rather than Celtic Christian future (Hunter 29). From Whitby, Hilda planted further daughter houses in places such as 'Hackness' (Bede IV, 23). At all these communities, Hilda was the leader – the abbess – and according to Lightfoot became 'the chief educator of the northern church in this its earliest stage' (63). The monasteries she led, especially the community at Whitby, became training centres, as she identified, trained, and released leaders, many of whom went on to become clergy and at least five became bishops. Through Hilda, the abbey at Whitby truly became a 'nursery of bishops' (Stenton, "Place-Name" 79).

In this great pioneering work across the North of England undertaken by Hilda, the prayerful Aidan was 'her chief adviser' until his death (Lightfoot 65). According to Simpson, Hilda established each monastery 'in an atmosphere of prayer' (Simpson, *Way* 90). The following section now will consider the rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of Hilda's praying , in turn, recognising that the data 'we have of Hilda is brief, [although] it is believable' (Bauer 15).

Rhythms of Hilda's Prayers

This analysis of the rhythms of Hilda's praying addresses questions such as: when Hilda prayed, at what times, and on what occasions.

Bede does not give any detailed answers to these questions, but he does say that, in her monasteries, Hilda established what he called 'the regular life' (IV.23), which scholars see as describing a lifestyle of worship, based around regular times and seasons of prayer (Simpson, *Hilda* 53). What happened at Hackness, the sister monastery, probably happened at Whitby and all the monastic communities she established, which included a 'bell that used to wake and call them to prayer' (Bede IV.23) at night and early in the morning. This prayer at the beginning and end of each day framed the day in addition to other regular times too - both times for personal and corporate prayer (Yorke 225). Like Aidan, Hilda prayed both *privately* and *publicly*. Foot notes this dual aspect of Hilda's praying (Foot 64) and it is evidenced in the final days of her life, as Bede describes the mix of her private devotion and praying with the community (Bede IV.23). Arthur Holder recognizes that part of Bede's admiration for her was because she imitated

the example of the 'primitive church' from Acts 2 (150) who, amongst other things, met privately in homes and publicly in the temple courts (Acts 2:46).

Hunter describes life in Celtic monasteries as based on 'frequent imaginative prayer in all settings' (Hunter 36). As 'the great Abbess Hild dominated the whole life of a large congregation of men and women' (Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon* 162), so she would have modelled this regular rhythm of daily prayer to the people under her charge.

Like Bishop Aidan, Hilda would have also sought to be prayerful in all contexts, with prayer not just being an occasional practice but more a way of life. Bauer describes this life lived by Hilda as marked by 'devotion, grace, prudence and holiness' (22). This 'greatest of all the English abbesses' (Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon* 119) was gifted not just in leadership, influence, and intellect, but in creating 'an atmosphere of prayer' (Simpson, *Way* 90), and a disciplined Rule of Life (Simpson, *Hilda* 53). She modelled and nurtured the Celtic way of mission and prayer, described by Macquarrie as 'God-intoxicated … embraced on all sides by the divine Being' (*Paths* 155-56). This prayerful life would have impacted others, as she went out from Lindisfarne and established new monastic communities, beginning in Monkwearmouth where she developed 'a small band of women who lived a life of prayer and work' (Simpson, *Hilda* 51).

Content of Hilda's Prayers

So Hilda was committed to a lifestyle of prayer. Turning to the content of her prayers, this study now seeks to discover whom she prayed for and what did she prayed about.

Bede does not tell us whom Hilda prayed for, and neither does he record even one specific example of her praying, for his writing of her is more general. Nevertheless, scholars are able to discern that, like her mentor Aidan, she prayed for many people and situations, with Simpson proposing that 'she learned the prayer of the heart and the ascetic practices of those who lived close to God, nature and the people' (Simpson, *Hilda* 52).

The things she prayed about fall into four categories: adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and petition.

First, like Aidan, Hilda's praying included *adoration prayers.* In every monastery she began or revitalised, she would 'establish a regular observance' guided by 'Bishop Aidan and other devout men' (Bede IV.23). This life of worship that she modelled and led was central to her life and was not just established on strict discipline but, according to Bede, was based on 'love,' with Bede stating that that those who knew her admired not just her service to God but her 'love of God's service' (IV.23).

Second, Hilda regularly prayed *confession prayers* to God. While Bede makes no specific mention of Hilda confessing her sins, according to Yorke 'penance and expiation of sin' was important in the Celtic church, with sins being 'privately confessed to a priest' (228-29). Scholars do not know how this exactly worked for Hilda, a lay leader, but nevertheless penance, private prayer, and fasting for sin 'were expected' of all (Yorke 256), and so prayers of confession no doubt played a part in Hilda's spirituality.

Third, *thanksgiving prayers* were also important to Hilda. Bede's helpful account of her final days before death show this, describing how while suffering from severe abdominal pain 'she never ceased to give thanks to her Maker' (IV.23), with Simpson noting that 'she chose to praise God to her last' (*Hilda* 104). This thankfulness was

central to her life, with Bede saying that those under her care were 'taught … to render thanks to him faithfully' in sickness and in health (IV.23).

Fourth, Hilda prayed *petition prayer*s. As part of the rhythm of prayer which she established in the various monasteries, she highly likely prayed The Lord's Prayer each day - especially as The Lord's Prayer had by then been translated into Old English for use by locals and those in monasteries (Yorke 173). The Lord's Prayer includes prayer for daily bread (provision) and deliverance from evil (protection). Her petitions would probably have included praying many other matters too, including praying good things for her community and its life and mission. Hilda was not a priest or bishop, and so her authority, as Yorke notes, was limited and she would not have formally blessed the community as Bishop Aidan did (Yorke 247). However Yorke also says that despite these limitations, Hilda had much autonomy, and so she likely would have prayed for God's 'blessing' on the community in the wider sense of supporting, upholding, and encouraging them through her prayers and action. This was key to her abbess function and her role as 'Mother Hilda' (Ellison 7).

Practices of Hilda's Prayers

Consideration will next be given to Hilda's practices of prayer, examining the postures and manner of her prayers, her styles of prayer, and for whom she prayed.

When it comes to the posture and manner of Hilda's praying, Bede does not supply us with any specific information. However, given that Aidan often used his body in prayer - probably standing, sitting, kneeling, raising hands, and more - his mentee Hilda, likely did the same (Simpson, *Hilda* 97), although this cannot be proved. This is all the more likely, given Mitton's view that prayer, for the Celtic saints, 'was often quite physical. People would pray as they walked. Crossing yourself was a regular part of prayer, as was the drawing of an imaginary circle around you in one of the encircling prayers. Some prayer seems to have been very energetic' (Mitton 29).

Hilda's style of prayer was also quite diverse, with this research recognising at least eight kinds of praying.

First, Hilda prayed by *speaking words.* At the monastery in Hackness, and no doubt elsewhere too, they would 'recite the psalter' as part of their prayer and worship, using words to offer praise and supplication. Being Abbess, Hilda would have often led this, as part of the 'apprenticeship in prayer' (Simpson, *Hilda* 75) that members of the community received.

Second, Hilda probably prayed, like Aidan, by *singing songs.* Bede tells us that a man named Caedmon had a dream where he met a man who encouraged him to sing, despite Caedmon's feeling of inadequacy. When he shared this dream with the Abbess, she gave him some Scripture to turn to song, which he did skilfully, resulting in him being invited to join the monastic community and become a leader in worship. Hilda recognised the value of sung prayer (Bede IV.24), and so, presumably, she also sang, certainly in her public devotions but perhaps in her private prayers too.

Third, Hilda prayed *with the Bible.* After her baptism, she began to learn Latin, the language they used for the Bible and the liturgical prayers. Adam thinks this was the start of her habit of meditating daily on the Scriptures, which she continued throughout her life (Adam *Flame* 30). Her devotion to Scripture is mentioned a number of times by Bede who, for example, wrote that 'Those under her direction were required to make a thorough study of the Scriptures' (IV.23). Bede also mentions that one of the clergy she

trained, named Oftfor, 'devoted himself to reading and applying the Scriptures' (IV.23). This section earlier noted Hilda's encouragement of Caedmon to shape sung worship around the words of Scripture (Bede IV.24). Bauer summarises this well when she says that 'Hilda drew on the Scriptures' (20).

Fourth, Hilda's praying probably included *prophetic prayers.* Bede describes how, during Hilda's infancy, her mother dreamt of a 'most precious necklace' glowing under her garment. 'It seemed to shine forth with such a blaze of light that it filled all Britain with the glory of its brilliance.' The necklace, according to Bede, represented Hilda, because her life 'was an example of the works of light' (IV.23). Hilda likely was the source of this story, thus showing her appreciation of prophetic insight. This raises the question of whether prophecy was a gift she sought and used for herself, especially as she observed it in her mentor Aidan. Hints are found of such prophetic praying in the story of Caedmon - the man who in a dream felt called by God to sing and was given words and tunes - for Hilda listened and discerned regarding 'the quality and origin' of the dream and song (Bede IV.24).

Fifth, Hilda likely prayed *warfare prayers.* Like Aidan, she would have claimed and cleansed the ground before the founding of each monastery, recognizing the spiritual battle they were in (Adam, *Flame* 61). Ellison goes further, suggesting that in founding her monasteries, Hilda knew that through 'intercession … in Northumbria … "a heavenly struggle was to take the place of war"' (7).

Sixth, Hilda prayed *while receiving Holy Communion.* This was important for Hilda, and for others, with Bauer arguing that the abbey in Whitby provided sacraments not just for the monastic community but for the local people, with the monastery acting rather like a modern-day parish (22). After her baptism in the first York Minster, Hilda probably took Communion regularly throughout her life, although the clearest evidence for this is in her final hours, where Bede states that 'she received the Viaticum of Holy Communion' before encouraging the community and breathing her last (Bede IV.23).

Seventh, she likely *prayed imaginatively.* She encouraged creative learning and writing at her monasteries, with excavations at Whitby unearthing many styli, that would probably have been used to produce some of the extraordinary manuscripts, some of which survive from other monasteries (Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon* 191). Such commitment to creativity came at a cost, with Finney noting grumbles in the margins of the manuscripts stating "I am cold and tired' (62).

Eighth, Hilda, like Aidan, probably prayed *through her lifestyle,* wanting her life to be an offering of prayer to God. Fletcher questions the austerity of life in Hilda's monasteries, suggesting 'inmates lived in some style and comfort,' and that they were 'impeccably aristocratic' and for 'nice girls, of good family, gently nurtured, not lacking in social graces' (Fletcher 186-87). While Hilda was truly of royal heritage, most scholars disagree with Fletcher, describing life on the east coast of Yorkshire as far from cosy, with Hilda's monasteries being basic, austere, and frugal (Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon* 119; Foot 59). Bede seems to agree, seeing Hilda as a woman who in choosing the monastic life had given up most of her royal privileges (IV.23). She was a highly capable and prayerful leader, being 'a woman devoted to God' (Bede III.25).

Understandings of Hilda's Prayers

Finally this study of Hilda's praying explores her understanding of prayer. This section seeks to examine why she Hilda prayed as she did, exploring her reasons for

prayer. As the evidence is reviewed, the three-fold schema noted in the understandings of prayer by Jesus, Mary, and Aidan seems again helpful, which proposes that Hilda prayed because she understood prayer to be foundational, connectional, and transformational.

First, for Hilda, prayer was **foundational** to her life. Ellison notes that when Hilda led the Hartlepool monastery for nine years, she 'always engaged in establishing observance of the rule of religious life' (6). The use of the word 'always' shows that living prayerfully was something she did regularly and persistently. Prayer was basic and central to her life.

Second, Hilda prayed because it was through prayer that a **connectional** relationship with God was established and maintained. As she prayed, Hilda drew close to God. Foot recognises this as an important motive for all monastic praying, saying that 'The quest for spiritual perfection was the ultimate goal of the monastic life' and was sought 'through corporate worship (and shared sacrament), private prayer, and contemplation' (64).

Third, Hilda prayed because she believed that prayer was **transformational**. This can be asserted with a strong degree of certainty, although no direct evidence fully supports this assertion. However, much indirect data support this understanding. For example, Mitton comments that surrounding this prayerful pioneering leader, 'stories of miraculous healings abounded all around her' (50). Wakefield describes Hilda as having an 'embodied spirituality' ("Myths" 198) which expressed itself through the integration of prayer and work. As Hilda prayed and worked, and worked and prayed, so she believed that change would come, and so it did. The work grew. Monasteries were established, leaders were trained and sent out, and communities were transformed by the good news of Jesus, with the monastic centres acting rather like *resource churches* today, out of which leaders would be sent to pioneer a new community (Thorpe; Porter, *Overflow*. All this change was birthed in prayer, for Hilda and her communities highly likely believed that prayer was transformative.

Hilda's Praying and Her Movement's Growth

Hilda was a pioneering, apostolic movement leader of the Northern Church in seventh century England. She founded and revitalised missional monastic communities, training men and women to reach out with the love of God in word and action. The monastery at Whitby, in particular, became a key Northern strategic training centre and was indeed 'an extraordinary community' where 'the clerics were deemed no more important than the lay people' (Simpson, *Hilda* 50). The fact that the monastery under Hilda's charge was chosen in AD 664 as the site for a significant synod, attended by kings and bishops 'is testimony to her stature in the kingdom' (Bauer 23). Not only that, but Hilda herself presided over the synod, and, in so doing, she "assumed a prestige usually reserved for bishops" (McNamara 127).

Mother Hilda was a disciple of Jesus who taught and nurtured those in her charge from a life rooted in prayer. That is why Simpson says that 'Simply sharing the life of Hilda's community was an apprenticeship in prayer,' as well as in hospitality, learning, and outreach, 'all grounded in a Rule of Life' (*Hilda* 75). This rule of life shaped the community - their rhythm, content, and practices of prayer, and no doubt their understandings of prayer too. As with Aidan, the patterns of corporate prayer were likely similar to the personal patterns of Hilda.

Although Hilda outlived Aidan, the two worked together for a few initial years before Aidan's death in AD 651. They worked for the same big vision, but with different roles and spheres of influence. Both were church planters and movement leaders. Both had a passion for mission, and for training new leaders, as well as a commitment to prayer and deep spirituality – a potent mix!

Aidan and Hilda lived in difficult days with disunity amongst the different ethnic groups, and war was common. Yet, the expanding Northern monastery movement was different, for these communities which they led were generally peaceful and united centres, proclaiming a reconciling gospel of peace. Sickness and suffering were also common, with the Yellow Plague being a major killer in the year 664 (Ellison 22). In contrast, the monastic communities offered prayer for healing and practical care, demonstrating a kind gospel by generously supporting those in need. Social differences outside of church life were also enormous, with there often being a stark contrast in status between royalty and everyone else, and yet in Hilda's monasteries, 'no one there was rich, and none poor, for they had all things common' (St Hild of Whitby). The fact that Aidan and Hilda were from very different social backgrounds (Simpson, *Hilda* 47), and that the royal Hilda served the non-royal Aidan, was testimony to the unifying power of the gospel of Christ.

This era in which Hilda and Aidan lived is traditionally called the 'Dark Ages' but still much growth, development, and advancement took place in the church, as well as in wider society. The monasteries in particular grew into centres of creativity and culture, of learning and light. In fact, these monasteries were like 'minsters' (Blair), becoming catalysts for the emergence of towns and parishes, which soon evolved around them (Bauer 22). All these tell us that the church was there first (Lightfoot 15). The Celtic church brought hope and community. Aidan and Hilda and the communities they founded brought 'an explosion of missionary endeavour, scholarship, poetry and prayer which illuminated the so-called Dark Ages' (Finney 133). Perhaps Beckford is right, then, that the pre-medieval years should not be described as the Dark Ages (Beckford film) and instead find a better and more accurate description. One suggestion would be to borrow the term used to describe *The Lindisfarne Gospels,* and call this period the 'Illumined Ages.'

Social Science Foundations

Looking back at history, and looking around today, prayer is at the heart of the human story (Greig 120). There are very few periods in the history of nations, or of the world, that have been marked by prayerlessness. According to Mauss, prayer is an eminently 'social fact' (1919) which is why prayer is now deemed worthy of study in the world of social sciences.

The social sciences are a relatively new strand of education. The term was first used in 1824 by William Thompson (275), with this branch of academia aiming to objectively study and understand human behaviour. Since the mid-twentieth century the social sciences have generally come to mean the disciplines which analyse human society and culture (Sharpes 6). Given that most people pray, so prayer is, understandably, an area of social science study. Having said this, social science study on prayer is still considered by some to be in its infancy (Jackson and Hodge Abstract). This dissertation noted earlier that some used to consider prayer to be a purely personal matter that was of

no academic interest, while others were unsure which branch of the social sciences it should be placed, causing some to question whether prayer was something that psychologists, anthropologists, or sociologists should study. Today things are different, with most social scientists seeing he answer, most probably, is that prayer as something worthy to be studied by all those fields of social science, and more.

The social scientist brings a difference in perspective when it comes to analysing prayer. This is well summarised by Kevin Ladd, who says: 'For theologians and practitioners, prayer is a devotional act that seeks to link human and supernatural experiences. For scientists, prayer is a human behavior to be understood in light of its effects on the subjects and their surroundings' (K. Ladd 5). This study recognises the importance of the growing field of social science research on prayer and how this helps to understand its human dimensions. In order to keep the scope of this study manageable, the social science aspect of this literature review focussed first on social science understandings of prayer, second on recognising the importance of the social context when it comes to prayer, and third on the social dynamics of movements and their leaders.

Social Science Understanding of Prayer

Many see the scientific study of prayer advancing in 1918 when Friedrich Heiler, a historian of religion (Jonquière 1), produced a phenomenology of prayer which included six types of praying: primitive, ritual, Greek cultural, philosophical, mystical, and prophetic. Heiler proposed that there was a progression or maturing of prayer in the one who prays, as they move from primitive to prophetic (R. Williams 330). Analysing Heiler from a philosophical perspective, Williams views these typologies as provisional and culture-dependent, and advises that there is nothing to be gained from such 'parcelling out' (334-35).

Sociologists, according to Carlo Genova, see prayer as 'a social practice' which means it is both 'a physical and mental activity' (16) which involves a variety of components, including particular forms, themes, contents, referrents, objectives, and even addressees (Woodhead 215).

Biological studies have attempted to explain prayer in terms of a genetic predisposition in the brain (Persinger; Hamer 2004), but according to Farneth, Gross, and Schnable, these have little to offer cross-disciplinary studies of prayer (Gross 42). Others have explored connections between religious experience and cognitive brain function (Newberg et al. 2006). Some have considered prayer to relate to altered states of mind such as trances, hallucinations, and even seizures (Persinger; Saver and Rabin; Taves), with different patterns of brain activity recognised by Lutz (2008) during active, rather than passive meditation (Lutz). Andrew Newberg et al. (2006) discovered that people speaking in tongues showed decreased activity in the frontal lobe but no change in the parietal lobe. Some, such as Nina P. Azari et al., have shown that aspects of prayer can be learned, with studies showing the significance of recalling psalms in old age (e.g. Psalm 23 – Azari et al. 2001). According to Farneth, Gross, and Schnable, the basic claim of studies in the cognitive science of religion is that prayer is made possible by a collection of mental processes that are not unique to religious thought (Gross 43).

The idea of prayerfulness, which has been recognised in this study, is also an area of growing interest to social scientists such as anthropologists. However, those who have begun to research this area often focus on the outcomes of prayer, rather than the prayer

itself (Gross 8, 16). Anthropologists similarly concentrate mainly on the social dimensions of prayer, and often like to consider it by perceiving it in categories, such as religion, magic, and science (Howell and Paris).

Social science research on prayer is, therefore, a fascinating area of research which is of great value and worthy of recognition. It can provide helpful insight into the human practice of prayer, but as a predominantly secular discipline, it offers limited help in understanding the spiritual dynamics and understandings of prayer that are at the heart of the kind of biblical, theological, and historical analysis this study has undertaken.

Social Context of Prayer

When it comes to analysing prayer, sociologists tell us that the social contexts of prayer really matter (Gross 47). These contexts include both the wider *cultural* context of the day as well as the *local setting* in which prayer takes place. This literature review will concentrate mainly here on the broader *cultural* context.

Culture, in which everyone lives, is constantly changing and evolving. The world of 2022 - the year this study has been completed - is very different to the cultural context of 1969 into which I was born. My primary and secondary school tuition took place in the latter days of an education system which still, just, reflected a western Enlightenment worldview. That means it was founded on a modernist epistemology based on reason, empiricism, and the accumulation of knowledge. Those days are now all but gone. From the 1960s things began to change, and certainly around 1990 cultural analysts tell us that we began to enter into a post-modern era which was soon dominated by the online world of the internet and social media. Some, such as Greg Henriques are beginning to call the present era 'the metamodern period' (2020). Truth is now seen as much more relative, texts are deconstructed, experience is highly valued, story is prized, and people can construct their own identities (Butler; Brown, *Postmodernism*). In particular, history has been re-examined and often reconstructed, and religious observance and practice too (Clark), resulting in large numbers of people in the west leaving the mainline churches and increasing numbers declaring themselves to be of no faith. The western world and many of its people have become increasingly secular - that is, disconnected from faith and religion - during this cultural shift from modernity into postmodernity, so much so that since the early 1970s, western culture has become increasingly described as 'post-Christian' (Hertel and Nelson 409), with social historian Callum Brown declaring, in the title of his 2001 book, '*The Death of Christian Britain'* (*Death*).

Sociologists, such as Steve Bruce have argued for a connection between economic and social modernisation and the decline in church attendance (1996). This so-called 'secularisation thesis' has been popular since it was espoused by Harvey Cox in his classic text *The Secular City* in 1965, and it sees the decline of Christianity in the West as all but inevitable (4, 21) as religious pluralism - the acceptance of more than one religious truth - necessarily undermines the plausibility of them all. We now live in what Charles Taylor calls *'A Secular Age'* (2007) and, so the 'secularisation thesis' goes, we need to get used to it.

However, things are not quite that simple, with Grace Davie noting in 1992 that Britain was marked by 'believing without belonging' (*Religion* 93). Then in 2002, Davie said that sociologists needed to recognise the important contribution of scholars who had shown huge variations in religious adherence in differing western contexts, with Davie concluding that 'there is nothing inevitable about the secularisation process' (Davie

Europe 16). Davie's conclusions have been strengthened by Goodhew (2012) and Garnett et al. who conclude that 'Christian Britain is not dead' (293). Stark, looking at the west as a whole, agrees (369-85). This is particularly true when surveys are done about prayer, with one of the most recent showing that young people in the UK were twice as likely as older people to pray regularly, with fifty one percent of 18 to 34-year-olds polled by Savanta ComRes saying they pray at least once a month, compared with twenty four percent of those aged 55 and over. This survey also found forty nine percent of the younger age group attend a place of worship every month, compared with sixteen percent of over-55s (Farley).

This, then, is the complex western social context in which prayer research was undertaken in 2021/2022. The aim was to examine the prayer life of leaders of Christian movements, and the praying of the movements they lead. Before that could be done, it was necessary to understand of the nature of these movements and the role of leadership in them.

Movements and their Leaders

Social scientists have defined movements in a variety of ways. Sociologists often refer to '*social* movements' which normally emerge in a climate of tension or conflict of some sort. Mario Diani, for example, helpfully defines these social movements as 'informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in political or cultural conflicts, on the basis of shared collective identities' (Abstract). For the purposes of this study, the kind of movements being explored are different; they are distinctly Christian movements with the 'conflict' being less political or cultural, and more spiritual, against 'the forces of darkness' (Eph. 6:12). Therefore, a different definition is probably required. This is partly found in the work of sociologists L. P. Gerlack and V. H. Hine, who say that a movement is 'a group of people who are organized for, ideologically motivated by, and committed to a purpose which implements some form of personal or social change' (370). Further sociological insight is discerned in the much-neglected work of Anthony Wallace, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, who wrote a significant paper in 1956 entitled "Revitalization Movements." While the language and some of the content of that paper are now somewhat dated, its main ideas are of huge help to the student of movements, especially Christian movements, and so some space is devoted below to Wallace's pioneering work.

Wallace observed that most movements of cultural change are 'characterized by a uniform process' which he called "revitalization" (264). He defined a revitalization movement as 'a deliberate, organised, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture' (265). Agreeing with the work of Margaret Mede, he said that 'cultures *can* change within one generation' and 'the process by which such transformations occur is the revitalization process' (265). Wallace recognised that revitalization is a broad term that 'denotes a very large class of phenomena … recurrent in human history' (267) which includes religious movements. Indeed, he said that 'Both Christianity and Mohammedanism, and possibly Buddhism as well, originated in revitalization movements' (267).

Wallace then made a fascinating observation about religious movements, that would include the movements led by Jesus and Mary, and Aidan and Hilda - noted above. He said:

> In fact, it can be argued that all organized religions are relics of old revitalization movements, surviving in routinized form in stabilized cultures, and that religious phenomena per se originated … in the revitalization process - i.e., in visions of a new way of life by individuals under extreme stress. (268)

Having described these revitalizing movements, Wallace then recognised the importance of leaders, who pioneer and lead the revitalization process. He saw them normally receiving visionary 'personality transformation dreams' (271) that they then share with others, as they gather disciples to communicate the 'good word' (273). Wallace said that 'Max Weber's concept of "charismatic leadership" well describes the type of leader-follower relationship characteristic of revitalization movement organisations' (qtd. in Wallace 273).

Since Wallace wrote in the 1950s, both business studies and leadership studies have grown and developed as social sciences. The research of Jim Collins, who bridges both disciplines, has shed further insight on the role of the 'charismatic leader' in an organisation. Collins (*Good to Great*) showed that leaders of successful organisations, who are outstanding in their field, have two key characteristics. Not that they are necessarily extravert or gregarious in character; instead, they display a 'personal humility' plus a disciplined 'professional will.' They are fully committed to their cause which manifests itself in their lifestyle and habits, and they do not see the achievements of the organisation as solely due to their making but instead give praise to colleagues (Collins, *Good to Great*). Collins considers these two characteristics to be true of leaders in all outstanding organisations, not just in business, but in the social and non-profit sectors, including the church (Collins, *Social Sectors*).

When Wallace wrote in the 1950s, he did not speak of the role of prayer, but he did reference 'religion.' Wallace was a social scientist who understood Christian movements, recognised their formation, their similarities with other movements, and the important role of leadership. That is why the concluding summary of Wallace's 1956 article appears as Appendix C at the end of this dissertation. Although writing nearly seventy-five years ago, he was an early social science pioneer who brought insight into the human dimensions of cultural movements and recognised the importance of leaders in shaping them.

Missiological Foundations

The discipline of missiology also relates to Christian movements and the role of leadership, for missiology is a multi-disciplinary approach, embracing aspects of the social sciences, such as anthropology and sociology, but also including theology, biblical studies, history, linguistic studies, and more (Missiology journal, About). Missiology is a growing discipline in academia, with some, such as Karl Rahner famously describing missions 'as the mother of all theology' (widely attributed; qtd Bevans 22) - for missions came first, and theological reflection second. When the study of missiology is added to the other foundations of this study, helpful insights broaden the background understanding of RQ #1, about the praying of movement leaders and of RQ #2 about the praying of their movements. Missiology is also the main discipline that reflects on the

practice of church planting, which is at the heart of RQ #3. Therefore, this literature review now turns to missiologists, before finally, and briefly, considering the literature behind this project's research design.

Missiology and Movements

Movement analyst and missiologist Steve Addison thinks, like social scientists, that defining a movement is important. For Addison, 'movements are informal groupings of people and organizations pursuing a common cause' (*World* 27). Bevins agrees, saying a movement is 'a large group of people who are committed to the same cause' (*Marks* 27). Rather than giving them the name 'revitalising' (like Wallace), Snyder calls growing church movements 'renewal' movements, redefining them as 'a sociologically and theologically definable religious resurgence' which arises within historic Christianity and impacts and benefits the wider church (34). The phrase 'renewal movement' which appears in the purpose statement of this project has its origins in Snyder. J.R. Woodward and Dan White, Jr. agree with Snyder, recognising this benefit, not just to be for the sake of the church and its people, but for its mission in the world (19-20). Gerlack and Hine also note three key aspects of movements: considering them to be about *People, Power and Change*, for movements are about people working together in mission to do something powerful that brings change.

Change is key to movements. Missiologists understand this. They see that movements are transformational, with Addison saying: 'For better or worse, movements create and remake the world we live in,' which is why he then says 'If we want to change the world, we must understand movements' (*Pioneering* 15).

Addison, Bevins, and Garrison are all missiologists who help explain movements by describing their key characteristics. These 'marks' of renewal movements are all expressed slightly differently by each. Addison, for example, names five marks: 1) white-hot faith; 2) commitment to a cause; 3) contagious relationships; 4) rapid mobilization; 5) adaptive methods (*Pioneering* 16). Bringing a historical perspective through his particular analysis of the Wesleyan movement, Bevins lists six marks of a movement: 1) changed lives; 2) contagious faith; 3) Holy Spirit; 4) discipleship systems; 5) apostolic leadership, and 6) organic multiplication (*Marks* 39-43). Garrison applies the idea of movement more specifically to *church planting* - which is central to the research in this project - and in doing so lists ten characteristics he observes in every church planting movement. They are: 1) extraordinary prayer; 2) abundant evangelism; 3) intentional planting of reproducing churches; 4) the authority of God's word; 5) local leadership; 6) lay leadership; 7) house churches; 8) churches planting churches; 9) rapid reproduction; 10) healthy churches (172-77). Despite differences, Addison, Bevins, and Garrison clearly have much overlap, and, after due consideration, this study has synthesised their combined marks down to three, which are here described as 'attributes' of movements. The first two are characteristics that relate to all movements. The last is an additional attribute that is essential to *renewal* movements, and especially church planting movements.

First, a movement has **life** , and this life is **dynamic** and **reproducing**. It has momentum and growth. Often this growth is organic and multiplicatory (Hirsch 219, 250). People are joining the cause. The word is spreading. Often this growth starts small and takes time. As such, it can be easily overlooked. This is described by Kreider as a 'patient ferment' (2016).

Second, a movement has **leadership**, and this leadership is **committed** and **pioneering**. Movements are usually led by leaders who are devoted to the cause and give their all (Hirsch 222). This is the thesis behind Addison's book *Pioneering Movements.* These leaders are also innovative, thinking of fresh ways to see the mission of the movement advance. In the world of business, such leaders are sometimes called 'entrepreneurs' (Collins and Lazier 3); in church circles these leaders are often described as 'apostolic' (Bevins, *Marks* 42; Addison, *Pioneering* 12).

Third, **prayer** is embedded in renewal movements, particularly church planting movements, and this prayer is **passionate** and **unrelenting**. It is vibrant and often fervent, earnest, and dedicated. It emerges from the zealous faith of the followers, and it is regular and persistent. For Garrison, it is the first and most important mark of a church planting movement (172-77). While neither Addison nor Bevins mentions prayer in their list of movement marks, Bevins mentions it as a key characteristic of the Wesleyan movement (Bevins, *Marks* 26), and a more careful reading of both Bevins and Addison shows prayer to be an assumed practice behind all the others, with prayer mentioned by them both *within* their analysis (Addison, *Change* 46; Addison, *Pioneering* 54, 84; Addison, *Rise and Fall* 61; Bevins, *Marks* 47, 183).

Table 1 below shows how these three essential attributes of renewal/ church planting movements bring together virtually all the marks of Addison, Bevins, and Garrison.

	Addison (A1-A5)	**Bevins** (B1-6)	**Garrison** (G1-G10)
The **LIFE** of movements is **dynamic** and **reproducing**	**A1**: white-hot faith **A3**: contagious relationships **A4**: rapid mobilization	**B1**: changed lives **B2**: contagious faith **B3**: Holy Spirit **B4**: discipleship systems **B6**: organic multiplication	**G2**: abundant evangelism **G3**: intentional planting of reproducing churches **G8**: churches planting churches **G9**: rapid reproduction **G10**: healthy churches
The **LEADERSHIP** of movements is **committed** and **pioneering**	**A2**: committed to cause **A5**: adaptive methods	**B5**: apostolic leadership	**G5**: local leadership **G6**: lay leadership **G7**: house churches
The **PRAYER o**f movements is **passionate** and **unrelenting**			**G1**: extraordinary prayer

Table 1. Synthesis of attributes of Church Planting Movements

One 'mark' excluded from this synthesis is Garrison's fourth mark of a movement (G4): 'the authority of God's word.' This commitment to theological orthodoxy is no doubt important, and yet there are many churches who value the authority of Scripture

but are not part of a growing church planting movement. As such, this slippage, while recognised, does not undermine this synthesis of church planting movement attributes.

Addison, Bevins and Garrison would most likely affirm this synthesis, and as such it is presented in simple form below in Figure 2, as a clear and memorable summary of essential attributes of movements.

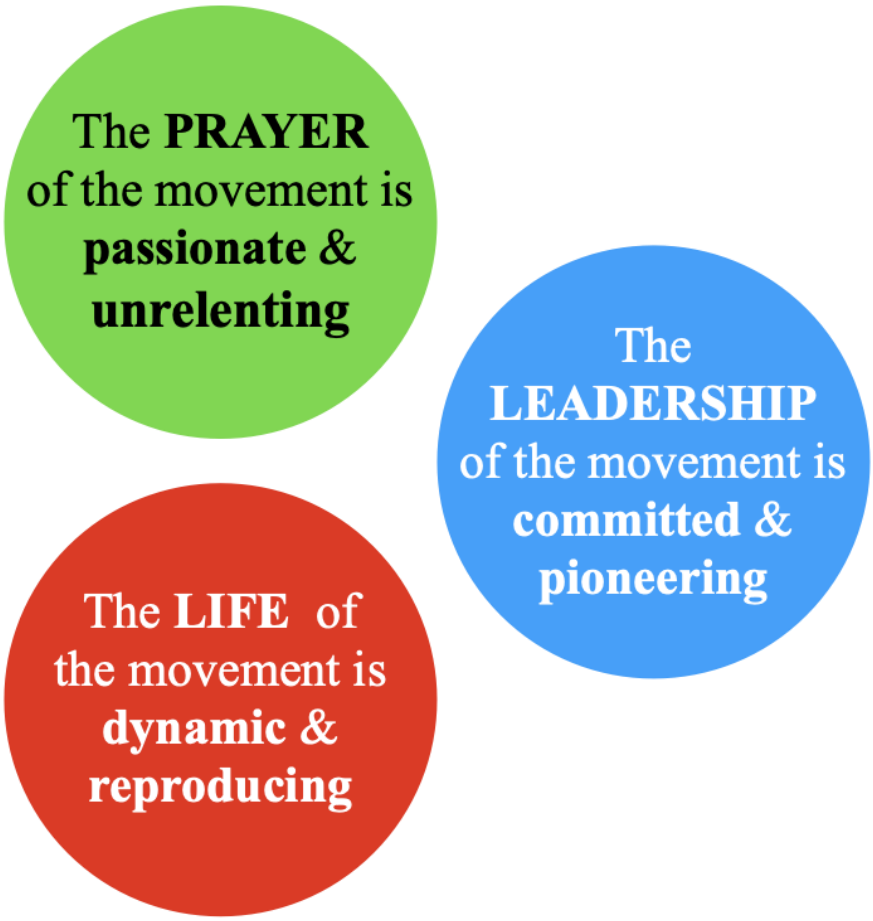

Figure 2. Three essential attributes of Church Planting Movements

If the above synthesis is correct, and prayer is an essential component of renewal movements, then the fact that prayer is the central matter being researched in this project is a matter of importance. If the statement that leaders play an essential role in pioneering and sustaining movements is also accurate, then the *leader's* prayer life that is being researched here is pertinent, before considering the corporate prayer that takes place in the movement. These matters relate closely to RQ #1 and RQ #2.

The third research question (RQ #3) asks how this personal and corporate prayer should inform the praying of church planting leaders in the North of England, and so the final part of this literature review will take note of relevant works in the missiological field of church planting.

Missiology and Church Planting

Church planting can simply be defined as starting new churches (Lings and Murray 2003). I prefer the fuller visionary definition of Bevins, who says that church planting is 'joining God's mission to plant and multiply disciple-making churches in every context' (*Revolution*" loc. 52). Timothy Tennent agrees, saying church planting is 'evangelism in community' and discipleship is 'the organic process of helping others become and be disciples of Christ' (qtd. in Bevins lecture, source unknown).

Church planting is highly missiological; as new churches are formed, the mission of God (the *missio dei*) advances, and new missional communities are formed. As such, church planting is also deeply ecclesiological, for planting churches is at the heart of what it means to be 'church.'

A vast and growing library of missiological literature has been produced on church planting. For the purposes of this literature review, the works of three key church planting missiologists are noted, which have emerged in recent years from western church contexts. These three scholars helpfully address some of the issues that are faced by church planters in the western context today, especially those in the North of England, who are considered in RQ #3.

The first important missiologist is Timothy Keller. In his book *Center Church* Keller articulates a missiological vision for church planting, organised around three key components: gospel-centered ministry, city-centered ministry, and movement-centered ministry. While his aim was to produce a book that should result in successful church planting, the book is also a masterful description of Keller's philosophy of ministry and as such is transferrable to non-church planting contexts too. The book has a number of unique aspects. These include a helpful suggestion that 'success' should not be measured by growth, or by faithfulness, but 'fruitfulness' (13); a thoughtful theology of 'city' which encourages positive engagement – which means being appreciative where possible while being prepared to challenge (Chapters 11-14); and a strong proposal regarding the need for renewal and revival in our cities, as the gospel is properly contextualized (Chapters 7-10). Keller bases his arguments on many sources, notably Edmund Clowney's *The Church*, Richard Lovelace's *Dynamic of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal*, as well as a number of works by Don Carson. Keller also relies on a breadth of evangelical divines, missiologists, and historians, including John Calvin, Martin Lloyd-Jones, Lyle Schaller, Lesslie Newbigin, Michael Green, and Mark Noll.

A second important church planting missiologist is actually a pair of scholars – Craig Ott and Gene Wilson – who together wrote *Global Church Planting*. Subtitled 'Best Practices for Multiplication,' this work offers a comprehensive biblical foundation for church planting mixed with practical wisdom and insight. Less theological than Keller, it is more of a 'how to' manual, showing how churches were planted in New Testament times, and sharing best practices from church planting today. Ott and Wilson describe three types of church planter: the *pastoral* church planter, the *catalytic* church planter, and the *apostolic* church planter. They consider the *apostolic* planter to be the most effective, and 'the most likely to lead to reproduction and multiplication' (Ott and Wilson 77). The main role of such a leader is to raise up other leaders. This is one of the unique contributions of this book. They are also keen to show that the biblical framework

for church planting does not begin with Acts or Paul, but with Jesus (Ott and Wilson 40). Ott and Wilson are well-researched and rely on a number of sources, including Rick Warren (who wrote the Foreword), Roland Allen, and David Garrison.

The third missiologist is the British church leader Ric Thorpe. In his *Resource Churches*, written in 2021 mainly for the British context, and with the Church of England particularly in mind, Thorpe addresses what it means for *resource churches* to exist in cities and regions. Resource churches are churches with a 'giving mentality' (Puffett and Faulkner 24), but also key to their existence, according to Thorpe, is having a mandate to regularly plant churches that plant churches, playing a part in the bigger aim of creating a multiplying movement of church planting (190). Filled with practical advice and based on biblical examples, in *Resource Churches* Thorpe provides a visionary model for church planting in the contemporary western context, where planting is not just about starting new churches but also includes restarting old churches.

These three missiological thinkers – Keller, Ott and Wilson, and Thorpe – not only share a passion to understand the nature of church planting, but they also all recognise the important role of prayer in church planting. Keller mentions prayer on many occasions in *Center Church*, inspired by the example of Jonathan Edwards and his 'extraordinary prayer' (loc. 1993). Keller writes of 'frontline prayer' (loc. 1997); of 'persistent prayer' loc. 2006); about The Lord's Prayer (loc. 10054); and of the need for a 'prayer movement uniting churches across traditions in visionary intercession for the city' (loc. 11667). Ott and Wilson specifically name the importance of 'corporate prayer' (180) and 'regular prayer' (298), describing prayer as 'the driving and sustaining force behind church-planting ventures' (181). They also make this unequivocal statement: 'Research on one hundred effective church planters by Dick Grady and Glenn Kendall (1992) found that prayer is the number-one factor for success in church planting' (qtd. in Ott and Wilson 309). This matches with Garrison's choice of naming prayer as the first mark of a genuine church planting movement. Ric Thorpe also mentions prayer regularly throughout *Resource Churches*. He describes how 'a foundation of prayer' is important (98) and that prayer is needed 'through each stage' of planting (107). The book urges planters to 'found your vision in prayer' (125), says that 'change starts with prayer,' and 'prayer changes things' (100). Thorpe urges planting leaders to be 'prayerful' (138), be 'a person of prayer' (219), and that prayer should go alongside action (177).

All this is convincing evidence that best practice for church planters includes prayer. The literature studied showed that both individual and corporate prayers were important for the mission of the church, not just in the past, but in the present and into the future. As such, undertaking contemporary research on the prayer life of movement leaders, and the praying of their movements, is a subject of great interest and of immense value.

Research Design Literature

In preparation for the pre-intervention prayer research, Tim Sensing's *Qualitative Research* assisted the research design. His outline of a multi-methods approach to action research projects helpfully guided the prayer research undertaken. Sensing's methods encouraged researchers not just to understand the evidence but also to use that understanding to implement change (63). Central to Sensing's method is the avoidance of a single or dual approach and instead the employment of a three-pronged, triangulation

design in order to gain a 'thicker' interpretation (72). Norman Denzin explains triangulation in greater detail, describing 'the logic of triangulation' and recognising four types: 1) data triangulation, using different kinds of data or records; 2) investigator triangulation, comparing notes with other researchers; 3) theory triangulation, using a variety of interpretative perspectives, and 4) methodological triangulation, using multiple methods to study a single issue of problem (ch.12). The research undertaken in this study was a form of methodological triangulation.

Randolph's advice on how to write a high-quality dissertation literature review was also useful, helping decide not only what type of literature review to undertake but also linking the review to the research questions (Randolph). Randolph's section describing 'Mistakes Commonly Made in Reviewing Research Literature' was particularly useful, helping avoid multiple pitfalls!

Having considered the research design literature, a pre-interventionist approach was taken in this project. Potential participants were identified for the research and gathered data through background research, survey, and interview. The background research and interviews were almost exclusively qualitative in nature. The survey provided mixed data, mainly qualitative but partly quantitative in nature. As such, this research was mainly qualitative and partly quantitative in design.

Summary of Literature

This long chapter of literature review provides the foundations for the prayer research undertaken. Prayer has been defined as 'a conversation with God', using the ancient definition of Clement of Alexandria (c.AD150-215; Clement 534).

Some of the key **biblical** foundations of prayer have been discussed, recognising how the Old Testament describes humanity as made for communion with God, created in his image. Despite being marred by sin, such longing is still intrinsic to human nature, which is why there is a strong desire to 'call on the name of the Lord.' Turning to the New Testament, Jesus Christ was studied as the first (and most outstanding) biblical renewal leader, followed by Mary of Nazareth, his mother. Jesus' praying was seen to be radical and new, being formal and informal, as he invited people to call God *Abba* (Jeremias 11) with access granted through his death and resurrection. The Lord's Prayer was particularly highlighted as central to Christian prayer, with Karl Barth seeing it as encompassing a rich theology of prayer (*Prayer* 22ff.). The analysis of the praying of Jesus and Mary looked through the lens of the research questions, seeking to discover their rhythms, content, practices, and understandings. Jesus' understandings of prayer, and those of Mary and the early Christian movement that emerged, were summarised in three words: that they saw prayer as *foundational, connectional,* and *transformational*.

The literature review has shown that when people pray, they engage in a thoroughly **theological** process. Prayer has strong theological foundations, based in the relational community of the Trinity, and is an invitation to participate in the kingdom of God. C. S. Lewis has helped show that when we pray, we influence the plans of God while not violating the sovereignty of God.

When describing the **historical** foundations to this project, two historical renewal leaders were examined: Aidan and Hilda. Their praying was found, like that of Jesus and Mary, to be *foundational, connectional,* and *transformational*. Based on the evidence of Bede and the studies of various historians, this project's analysis is possibly the most

comprehensive published study undertaken on the spirituality of Aidan and Hilda - these important leaders of the Celtic church - who established monasteries across the North of England as mission bases for evangelism and church planting.

The **social science** foundations of prayer were then explored, recognising prayer to be a 'social phenomenon' (Mauss 27) and a common human 'social practice' (Genova 16). Sociological analysis from S. Bruce , Davie, and Brown shed helpful light on the present western cultural context of increasing secularism, and post-/meta-modernism, while Goodhew, Garnett, and Stark were amongst those who recognise that religion is far from dead in the west, with surveys showing that young people are now praying more than their parents and grandparents. This is the context in which this project's prayer research was undertaken to answer RQ #1 & RQ #2, and it is the context into which RQ #3 is to be applied.

Anthony Wallace's significant sociological study of the revitalising nature of movements and the importance of their leaders was also highlighted, before turning to explore the **missiological** foundations of movements of change in the church. Snyder's description of such movements as 'renewal' movements was recognised to have influenced the purpose statement of this project. The desire behind much church planting is to create this kind of renewal movement. Addison, Bevins, and Garrison have all provided a list of 'marks' of renewal movements, which this literature survey synthesised into three key attributes of renewal movements: 1) the *life* of the movement is dynamic and reproducing; 2) the *leadership* of the movement is committed and pioneering, and 3) the *prayer* of the movement is passionate and unrelenting. This study may be first to integrate the work of these three missiologists in this way. Three further texts by Western church planting leaders (Tim Keller; Craig Ott and Gene Wilson, and Ric Thorpe) reiterated that prayer was always essential to church planting success.

Finally, this literature review described works which informed the research design of the prayer research to be undertaken.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

In this chapter, I show how the research questions guided the methodology of my research as part of the nature and purpose of the project. I describe the shared ministry context of the west in the third decade of the twenty-first century, which applies to all participants, as well as the cultural context of the North of England. Criteria for selecting the participants are explained. Ethical considerations are also considered. The type of instrumentation is described, along with expert reviews, and how the research design is reliable and valid. Finally, I explain how research data was collected and analysed.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

This research project sought to describe the prayer life of leaders of growing renewal movements and the corporate prayer life of their movement. My purpose was to identify the *personal* rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer of Western movement leaders, and the *corporate* rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer of the movements they lead, and to take note of any relationship between the two, in order to inform the personal and corporate prayer of church planting leaders in the North of England.

This research was pre-interventionist. Both time constraints and Covid-19 restrictions did not allow me to become a co-participant in the movements I wanted to research. I also did not need to set up an intervention – an action – to fulfil the purpose of this project, because the praying that I wanted to analyse was already happening. Instead, I identified potential participants for the research and gathered data through background research, survey, and interview. I wanted to understand the prayer life of each movement leader. In particular, I wanted to discover when, what, how, and why they pray. I wanted to understand the nature of the prayers, as well as their motives for prayer and what they thought were its effects. Further, I wanted to ask similar questions on a corporate level about the movement they lead, and then finally to consider, in the light of the results, what might be the best prayer practices for church planting leaders in the North of England.

I used a Mixed Methods design of qualitative and quantitative research, using three forms of instrumentation: background research (mainly qualitative), a survey (mainly qualitative, but partly quantitative), and interview (qualitative). I used clearly defined protocols for each. Details of these instruments and protocols are found in the Appendixes.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this project's research methodology and data analysis.
Research Question #1: What are the personal rhythms, content, practices and understandings of prayer, of western movement leaders?
Research Question #2: What are the corporate rhythms, content, practices and understandings of prayer, of the movements they lead?
Research Question #3: How should this personal and corporate prayer inform the praying of church planting leaders in the North of England?

RQ #1. What are the personal rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer, of western movement leaders?

In order to answer Research Question #1 (RQ #1), I chiefly used a pre-prepared and self-administered survey. I considered this to be the best instrument because it would produce helpful qualitative data about the prayer-life of the participants, as well as some quantitative measurements too which could be compared and analysed. While I wanted to know about the participants' corporate praying – that is, their praying with others, I realised that much of my research was about their personal praying – that is, about what and how they prayed on their own before God. This could not be observed. It required them to give me the information and so it would best come via a survey, for 'Self-Administered Surveys' (sometimes known and described as self-reporting instrumentation) are best for investigating attitudes, opinions, and behaviours that are not usually observable (Nardi). Question 2 of the survey addressed the rhythm of their personal praying, question 3 the content of their personal praying, and question 4 the practices of their personal praying. I hoped that data received through questions 2, 3 and 4 would produce both quantitative and qualitive results. Question 5 of the survey addressed their understandings of personal praying and so was more of a qualitative tool. The portions of the protocol that relate to this instrument are found at Research Instrument #1.

RQ #2. What are the corporate rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer, of the movements they lead?

The instrument used to answer Research Question #2 (RQ #2) was mainly the same pre-prepared and self-administered survey as used for RQ #1. While the corporate prayer gatherings of each movement were potentially observable, such research was not possible during the Covid-19 lockdown, and so this instrument was the best means of gathering such descriptive information. Question 6 of the survey addressed the rhythm of the movement's corporate praying, question 7 the content of their corporate praying, and question 8 the practices of their corporate praying. As in RQ #1, I anticipated that these questions would produce qualitive and quantitative results. Question 9, however, addressed their understandings of corporate praying, and Question 10 asked for the leaders' opinion on the influence of their prayers on the movement. Both these questions were, therefore, qualitative in approach. Questions 9 and 10 were further discussed in the follow-up Interview. The portions of the protocol that relate to this instrument are mainly found at Research Instrument #1, and partly in Research Instrument #2.

RQ #3. How should this prayer inform the personal and corporate praying of church planting leaders in the North of England?

Research Question #3 (RQ #3) was investigated only in the follow-up Interview. The interview was conducted using the Zoom platform. I recognized that some leaders might not initially feel they have anything to contribute to this question, especially if their ministry context was outside of the North of England. However, I expected that they may have helpful opinions on how leaders shape organizations and that, in an interview, they might be willing to tease out some general principles and good practice that they might recommend to Northern church planting leaders. To gather this information might require

more explanation than could be given in a survey, which is why an interview was chosen. The portions of the protocol that relate to this instrument are found at Research Instrument #2.

Ministry Context

The ministry context of all participants was 'the West,' that is in the United Kingdom, Europe, North America, and Australasia. This vast geographical area is sometimes known as the Occident and is the cultural context relevant to this research project. While some think that the very notion of a 'Western culture' is a fallacy due to the historic and cultural differences across the region and its ever-evolving culture personality and values (Appiah), nevertheless most cultural commentators recognise that every culture has its own characteristics, summarised by Newbigin as the sum total of ways of living developed by a group of human being and handed on from generation to generation (Newbigin 3). Those living in Western culture particularly share a present-day context of mass media, of radio, television, and film developed in the twentieth century, and, since the 1990s, the internet. The west has a vast intellectual, religious, and cultural heritage, partly shaped by religion (especially Christianity); philosophy, with deep Graeco-Roman roots; politics and war. These and other factors combine to create what some sociologists describe as a particular 'western mindset,' as opposed to an eastern or any other sort of mindset (Yilmazçoban). In this western context, the church in general is seen to be in decline, whereas in non-western contexts the church is generally growing (Earls).

The hope of this research was that church planting leaders in the North of England could apply lessons learned. The North of England is a particular area within 'the West.' It shares much of the cultural heritage of the rest of England, although not entirely. Its early Christian roots are much more Celtic than the south (Garlick; Finney). While it has a number of towns and cities established in Roman times, most grew to significance during the nineteenth century industrial revolution, with many conurbations still known for their working-class (red-collar) values. In geography, it is more hilly than the south and its climate cooler and wetter. People from the North speak with a different accent (with multiple Northern dialects) and tend to be known for their directness in conversation. Despite these differences, the North is part of England, shares many of the attitudes of the rest of the nation and of Britain, of Europe (S. Bruce, *British Gods*; C. Brown, *Death*) and of other western contexts (Bruce 1996).

The North of England has low church-going statistics. Church-going has normally been lower in urban contexts in the UK, despite revivals often establishing significant centres there in the past (Randall), and the North has many industrial cities. The North also has much folk religion and, over the last century, nominalism has been strong (Wakefield, *Northern*). Davie's description of people 'believing without belonging' is an apt summary (Davie, *Religion*).

I recognized that while most of my participants would not come from, or reside in, the North of England, it was best for them to reside in the West in order for me to be confident that research results might apply. Renewal leaders from a non-Western context, for example, would be interesting to study but to include non-Western participants would have added layers of cultural complexity and might have meant that conclusions did not apply in the North of England. G. Davie has shown how the people of 'Europe' and, to

some extent, other western nations, are sociologically different to the rest of the world, and have been responding differently to the Christian gospel (*Europe*). This, therefore, narrowed my selection of participants.

Participants

The participants in this study were carefully selected. They needed to align with the purpose statement and be relevant and helpful to the research. As such, care was taken with regard to selection. Ethical considerations were also taken seriously.

Criteria for Selection

I decided to restrict my research to participants from the West, in order to reflect the ministry context of RQ #3. Participants were therefore selected from the UK, Europe, North America, and Australasia. I also chose leaders. I wanted to understand the prayer life of leaders, wanting to see how this central aspect of their lives shaped not only them but their organisation. These leaders also needed to be people leading or significantly influencing a movement. I was not just looking for local church leaders but for people who had responsibility for a growing network of Christian communities which were multiplying and impacting an increasing number of settings. I also wanted to research women as well as men. I was interested to compare and contrast their praying and their motivations for prayer.

Description of Participants

I knew that the number of renewal movement leaders who fitted the above criteria was relatively small, especially in the UK. Despite most being male, I planned that at least one third of participants should be women in this project. This was partly because little research presently exists in this field regarding women, but more importantly I hoped that such research might be an encouragement and inspiration for future generations of female leaders of renewal movements.

Most leaders of renewal movements would not be young. Nevertheless, I did not select participants on the basis of age, but rather on experience and present role. In the end, they represented a variety of ages from 30s to 70s (Figure 4).

I sought to select leaders representing a breadth of ethnicity, aware however that the statistics from the most recent (2011) census showed that eighty six percent of England and Wales were ethnically white, with all but six percent being classed as ‘British’ – what traditionally has been called ‘Anglo-Saxon’ (Office of National Statistics 2022). Reliable ethnical statistics based on similar criteria do not exist across Europe or the western world, and the situation is fast changing with significant migration into Europe taking place over the last ten to twenty years. Nevertheless, I recognized that the majority of participants, being Western, would probably be ethnically white.

I did not select participants on the basis of denominational allegiance, educational background, material wealth, or season in life, or any other criteria, although a background question was asked about their denomination or stream, in case this yielded any interesting data regarding denominational prayer-culture.

Having established the kind of participants I wanted to research, I compiled an initial list of names who fitted the criteria. I then shared the list with Ric Thorpe, Bishop of Islington, the Church of England’s bishop for church planting. Of all the people I know, Ric probably has the best knowledge of, and connections with, western renewal leaders. Ric suggested a few further names I had not considered. Based on Ric’s suggestions, the list of

potential participants was amended, ready for them to be contacted. I also consulted with Christian Selvaratnam, Director of Church Planting at St Hild College, who has good knowledge of renewal leaders, before finalising my list.

I chose twenty participants (P1-20) and invited them to take part in the research, in the hope that at least ten would agree. Ten agreed.

Of the ten renewal leaders who agreed to participate:

i) I chose P3 because they lead a growing and significant church planting movement in the North of England.

ii) I chose P5 because they lead a growing and significant movement of church planting in the United Kingdom and beyond.

iii) I chose P7 because they lead a growing movement of churches and church plants in the United Kingdom that originated in the United States.

iv) I chose P8 because they lead a growing and significant church planting movement in the North of England and have sought to gather other church planters in the region for training and encouragement.

v) I chose P9 because they lead a fast growing national movement of church planting in their denomination.

vi) I chose P12 because they lead a growing and significant church planting movement in the south of England and beyond.

vii) I chose P13 because they lead a growing movement, resourcing churches, resource churches, and movements for discipleship and church planting in the United Kingdom and United States.

viii) I chose P16 because they have helped plant thousands of churches, mainly in the United States, but now globally, including mainly western contexts.

ix) I chose P19 because they lead a growing renewal movement, based on continual prayer, that is catalysing a surge in renewal, discipleship, and church planting in Germany and beyond into other European nations.

x) I chose P20 because they lead a growing movement of church planting in their denomination in Australasia.

Ethical Considerations

Potential participants were informed of the nature of the study through an informed consent email. The informed consent email also included an abstract of the project. It explained that participants would be invited to complete a *Prayer Survey* that would take around 20-25 minutes to complete. It also explained that some participants would be invited to take part in a further twenty-minute interview arranged at a mutually agreed time. A copy of informed consent documents is attached at Appendix B.

In order to protect confidentiality, no names, roles, individually identifying information or any other distinguishing characteristics of individual participants are reported in the study. If referencing a particular person is needed, he/she has been anonymised in such a way that they cannot be identified. Raw data, including transcripts of interviews, will never be shared or disseminated. As a result, no participant can be identified in this dissertation.

The investigator shared significant findings from his research in a colloquium with DMin cohort colleagues and ATS faculty on Asbury's Kentucky campus. The investigator also shared, and will continue to share, pertinent results in a variety of settings, but only

research findings have been or will be shared; no raw data, including audio files or interviews notes was or will ever be dispersed.

Electronic data was securely stored on a password-protected computer. Only the investigator had access to the files on the computer. This included audio files. Any hardcopy data was kept in a locked setting and has subsequently been destroyed. All electronic data was deleted completely, and any hardcopy data was shredded within one year after the conclusion of the research project, except where permission was given to store data for up to three years for the purpose of any subsequent book.

Instrumentation

The data collected in this research was gathered using a mixed methods approach, using three particular instruments.

In this dissertation, the main instrument used to gather the data and information for Research Question #1 (RQ #1) is described as the *Prayer Survey.* For RQ #1, the type of instrument used is categorized as a 'survey.' It was not a standardized survey but, rather, I carefully and thoughtfully designed it. It was used to research the personal rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer in western renewal movement leaders. The kind of data lent itself to an instrument that was mainly qualitative but could also generate quantitative results, and so a survey was the tool fit for purpose. After contacting each renewal movement leader and receiving their consent to be part of the research, participants received the Prayer Survey by email to complete.

The primary instrument used to gather the data and information for Research Question #2 (RQ #2) was the same 'survey' used for RQ #1. It was not a standardized survey but, rather, I carefully and thoughtfully designed it. It was used to discover not only the corporate nature of prayer in their movement, but why the movement prayed in this way. As such, I was exploring how renewal movement leaders saw their prayers contributing to the development of the renewal movement. The opinions sought required a qualitative instrument and a survey was a simple and helpful research tool for this.

In this dissertation, the main instrument used to gather the data and information for Research Question #3 (RQ #3) is described as the *Prayer Interview.* For RQ #3, the type of instrument used is categorized as an 'interview'. It was not a standardized interview, but rather it was semi-structured and I carefully and thoughtfully designed it. It was used to find out how the personal prayer of renewal movement leaders and the corporate prayer of their movement should inform the praying of church planting leaders in the North of England. The answers given necessitated a quantitative instrument and an interview was the best tool for this. Having received the Prayer Survey from participants, the interview took place by the Zoom platform and was designed not only to give more information on RQ #1 and RQ #2, but also to particularly answer RQ #3. After pleasant introductions, the interview began with the researcher asking further questions about the leader's prayer life, and that of their movement/ organisation, before asking about the role of leadership and their influence on the movement/organisation. I wanted to know if there were transferrable principles or practices of prayer that could be applied to church planting leaders in the North of England, who were similarly seeking to see a renewal movement develop. Finally, opportunity was given to clarify or follow up anything of relevance from the responses in the Prayer Survey or to ask questions about the Prayer Research as a whole.

I considered other research instruments for this project, and used background research, which provided some further information for RQ #1 and RQ #2. The background research attempted to discover what are sometimes called 'source documents' (Sensing 135) and involved gathering as much relevant data as I could on each leader and their movement. Given that the researcher had limited time, two to three hours were typically assigned to this for each participant. This background research involved internet searches on them and their movement, seeking to gather writings, blogs, social media posts and any material of relevance to the research questions. Time did not allow listening to online sermons.

If Covid-19 restrictions had not been in place, and time had allowed, I would have valued spending time in each movement setting or headquarters, either producing Field Notes and/or preparing a number of in-depth Case Studies. I might also have gathered some Focus Groups to discuss prayer in each movement, in order to compare and contrast those results with the prayer life of the leader. However such instruments were not possible, so I settled on the less time-consuming but nevertheless reliable tools of a) background research, b) survey, and c) interview, and sought to prepare those appropriately and well.

Expert Review

I considered doing a formal Pilot Test of the Prayer Survey and Prayer Interview, but on reflection I considered it best to receive some informal feedback from family and friends before putting it to an Expert Review. The Expert Review consisted of three people: 1) the researcher's supervisor, Dr. Winfield Bevins, Director of Church Planting at Asbury Theological Seminary; 2) Dr. Ellen Marmon, Director of DMin Program at Asbury Theological Seminary, plus 3) Dr. Christian Selvaratnam, Director of Church Planting and Revitalisation at St Hild College, UK. Dr Selvaratnam was not only a colleague of the researcher but also has a background similar to many of the participants while not himself being a participant in this particular research. The three members of the Expert Review were each asked about the instruments chosen, about alignment with the purpose statement and research questions, about the quality of the protocols and then particularly whether the questions were appropriate and/or needed adjusting.

After feedback from the Expert Review, the first instrument was amended, to ask participants:

- their age, rather than age profile;
- to describe their gender, rather than ask a binary question about sex;
- to ask about denominational affiliation;
- to request retention of data for up to three years, should a subsequent book be produced from the research;
- to broaden questions 2 and 6, on 'rhythms' of prayer from 'On a typical day, when do you pray?' to 'When do you pray?' with guidance then given to included details of set times in a typical day, week, month, or year.

The second instrument was also amended, in order to:

- ask participants first about their prayer life, and leaving questions about the Survey until later;
- sharpen the 3 main areas of questioning, around a) their prayer life, b) prayer and their movement, and c) leadership;

- ask a question about how they learned to pray, and who or what experiences formed their convictions and methods of prayer;
- ask about how they would pray if they wanted to see a 'movement' of church planting in the North of England, rather than just planting 'resource churches,' as had been originally asked;
- ask a final question, rather than simply as a prompt: 'is there anything else you would like to add?'

After initial submission to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), some further minor amendments were made before final IRB approval, namely:

a) amending the Survey Invitation Letter to Participants to include a question which states: 'If you would like to take part in this study but think you may require permission from a person or Board who oversees you, please email me at (my.email) with their contact details and I will first seek their approval.'

b) amending the survey, inviting participants to share their name, so they could be subsequently contacted for interview.

c) amending the Survey Invitation Letter to replace the word "happy" with "willing" to participate in the research.

d) amending the Survey Invitation Letter to add that although there is minimal risk that Zoom will be breached, the researcher cannot guarantee confidentiality.

I am confident of the manner and mode of testing the research methodology.

Reliability and Validity of Project Design

In order to pursue consistency and accuracy in the research of this project, the researcher followed the protocols approved by the IRB.

The data was then analysed to find common themes and redundancies as the practitioners described the way they prayed and why. Commonalities in their responses were collected under four headings, including "common rhythms," "common content," "common practices," and "common understandings."

The use of a survey as the initial instrument in this project allowed for gathering of mainly qualitative but also quantitative data. After the completion of the Prayer Survey, semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with participants. The Prayer Interviews allowed for friendly conversation and for various matters to be followed up in more detail. Sensing sees much benefit in interviews, recognising that this kind of 'qualitative research produces culturally specific and contextually rich data' (58). Seidman agrees, stating that 'the case can be made (that) in some research situations the in-depth interview, as the primary and perhaps singular method of investigation, is most appropriate' (6).

Finally, synthesis of the data with the literature review enabled recommendations to be made to church planting leaders in the North of England about how they might pray.

Data Collection

The type of research in this project was pre-interventionist. This project measures and describes the personal prayer life of renewal movement leaders and the corporate prayer life of the movement they lead. It is descriptive, analytical, and synthetic, in order to discover good and best practices. It did not require any intervention or post-intervention.

The undertaking of this research involved a fourteen-stage process.

1) I clarified that the purpose statement and three research questions were correct and fit for the purpose. They were.

2) I identified the type of participants required. They were movement leaders, working in the west, aiming for at least one-third to be female.

3) I decided which research instruments would best provide the data required and then designed the instruments. For this prayer research, the instruments chosen were a) background research, b) a survey, and c) an interview.

4) I completed the training and all the documentation needed, ready for IRB approval, which included undergoing *Protecting Human Research Participants* training, as well as creating a Confidentiality Agreement Form and preparing correspondence with the participants.

5) I put my research documents to an Expert Review Panel for comment and criticism.

6) I applied for and, after suitable amendments, received IRB approval to undertake the research.

7) I identified the participants. For this project, twenty participants were chosen.

8) I invited the participants to take part in the research. Ten responded and completed the on-line survey.

9) I undertook background research on the participants, compiling data into a document for each participant.

10) I invited the participants to take part in a follow-up interview. Seven agreed.

11) The interviews took place, on Zoom, with the audio part recorded and securely saved.

12) The audio recordings were transcribed into written form.

13) All the research data was collected together, namely: a) the background research data, b) the survey results, and c) the transcripts of the interviews.

14) The research data was then read and re-read on multiple occasions. Common themes were identified and coded, ready for data analysis. Four separate Coding documents were produced, one identifying "Common Rhythms" (e.g., CR1, CR2, CR3, etc.); another identifying "Common Content," (e.g., CC1, CC2, CC3, etc.); a third identifying "Common Practices" (e.g. CP1, CP2, CP3, etc.); and a fourth identifying "Common Understandings" (e.g. CU1, CU2, CU3).

This project was an example of pre-interventionist research, which was mainly qualitative but partly quantitative in nature. Qualitative research helps understand 'the social world of experience' (Sensing 57). Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln describe qualitative research as 'multi-method in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter' (*Handbook* 4).

Data Analysis

The aim of the analysis was to provide a 'thick description' (Geertz 178) of the praying of the movement leaders and their movements. Guided by Sensing's triangulation, I used the tools of a) background research, discovering source documents; b) survey; and c) interview (ch. 7). Patterns, themes and categories emerged relating to the purpose of the research which required analysis and interpretation.

Data analysis took place by creating a Data Analysis document. This document synthesised the coding data from a) the background research, b) the survey, and c) the interview of each participant (if they were interviewed) down the vertical 'y' axis. Columns were created across the horizontal 'x' axis representing codified Common Rhythms (CR), Common Content (CC), Common Practices (CP), and Common Understandings (CU) of prayer. For ease of identification, *personal* rhythms, content and practices were presented in black script, while *corporate* rhythms, content and practices were presented in red script. Common understandings of prayer were identical for both *personal* and *corporate* prayer, so these were left in black.

Areas of slippage and silence were considered and noted. Finally, although some quantitative data revealed fascinating results, I took care not to draw overly prescriptive conclusions, recognising that the study was producing 'generalizations from particular instances employed in the analysis' (Sensing 199) and that the project results were interpretations of the data.

After full analysis of the data was complete, notable findings and results were observed and written up in Chapter 4 of this dissertation, addressing all three research questions, and especially RQ #1 and RQ #2. When combined with the findings from the literature review, all three research questions, and especially RQ #3 were then addressed in Chapter 5, offering best practices of prayer for church planting leaders in the North of England.

CHAPTER 4
EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter describes the results of this mainly qualitative research undertaken on prayer. It considers, in turn, the three research questions, and examines the data revealed from the three angles of vision employed. Driven by the research questions, and having collected and analysed the data, findings are presented in meaningful categories, themes, and patterns in order to help interpretation. Evidence from each category is presented, aided by various tables and figures, visually depicting the data. Occasional comments are made on matters of interest, especially taking note of common patterns, silence, and slippage. Common patterns are particularly discovered through noting the percentage of participants who comment on a theme. Matters of silence refer to what is left unsaid. Slippage relates to evidence not congruent with the emerging patterns.

At the end of each research question, a summary of the data is presented. The chapter ends with a short Summary of Major Findings, recognising five key discoveries from the data.

Participants

Ten participants were directly involved in this research. Twenty movement leaders were initially selected and invited to take part in this prayer research, with ten responding that they were willing to participate. All ten participants were significantly involved in the leadership of western movements. All ten participants were leaders who had not only helped plant one church, but were now involved leading movements of churches – that is, planting churches that plant churches. All ten participants were from the west – that is, residing in Europe, North America or Australasia. In fact six were from the United Kingdom, two from the United States of America, one from Germany and one from Australia.

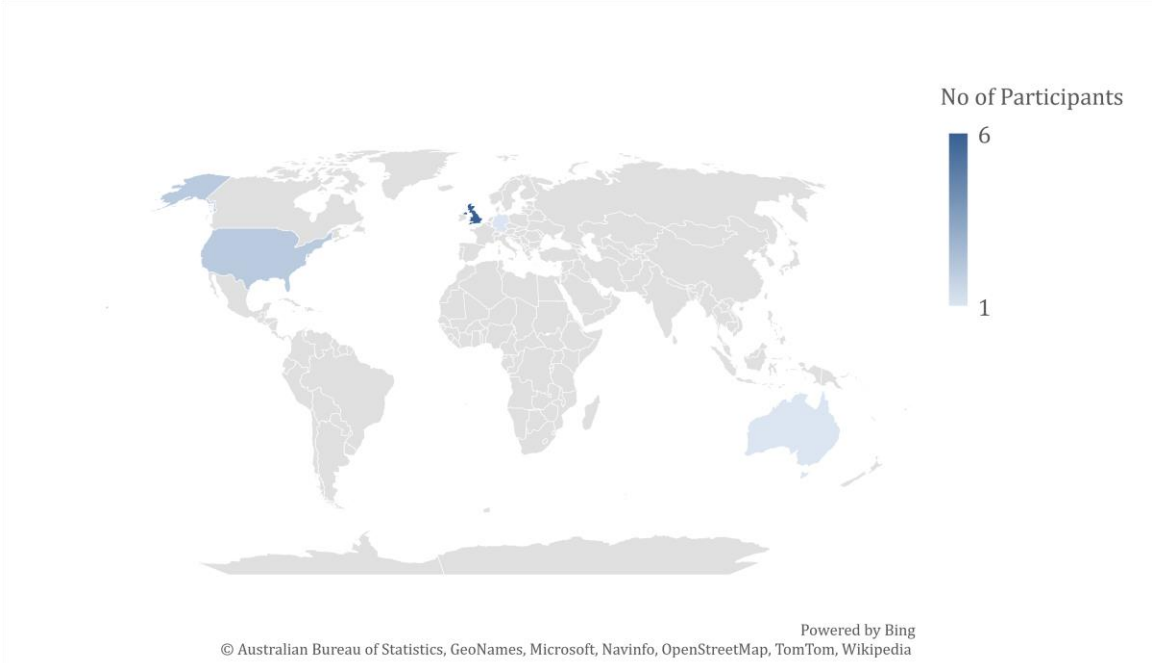

Figure 3. Movement Leaders: Location in West

All ten participants represent a range of ages from 38 years to 74 years. One was aged 31-40 years; two were aged 41-50 years; four were aged 51-60 years; two were 61-70 years, and one was 71-80 years. This is expressed diagrammatically in Figure 4 below.

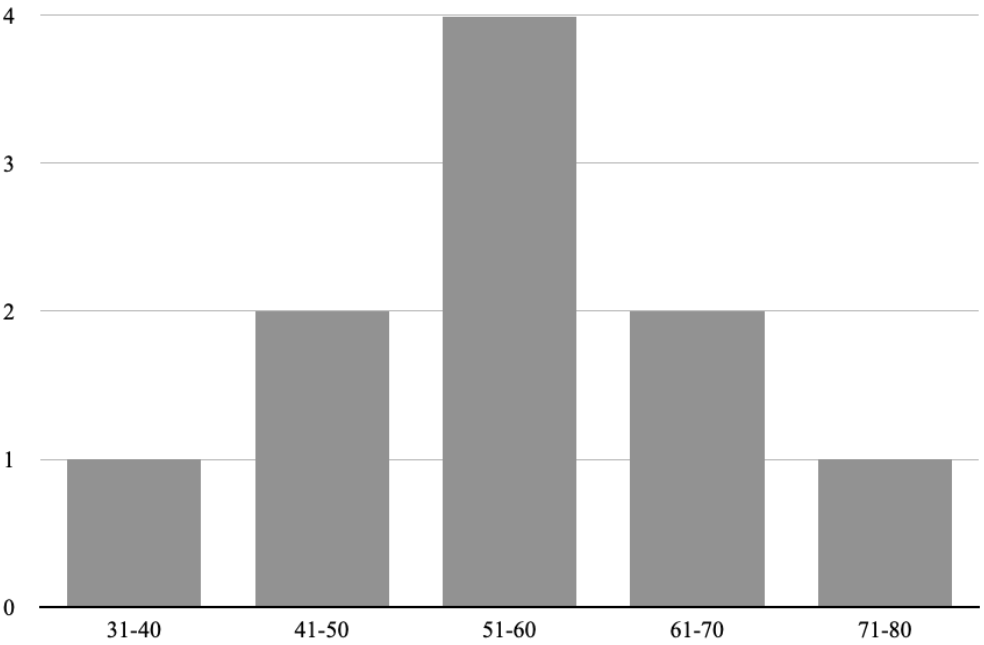

Figure 4. Movement Leaders: Age Profile

While more than one third of the twenty leaders invited to take part in the research were female, three of the ten (just under one third) of those who agreed to participate were female. The gender split of participants therefore was: seven male (seventy percent) and three female (thirty percent), and all participants have been anonymised.

Research Question #1: Description of Evidence

Research Question 1 (RQ #1) asked: **What are the rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer, of western movement leaders?** The evidence shedding light on this question is explored in 4 parts, by commenting on 1) the common rhythms, 2) the common content, 3) the common practices, and 4) the common understandings of personal prayer of the western renewal movement leaders.

The tools used to collect the evidence for this question were: a) the initial background research undertaken on each of the 10 participants, b) the survey undertaken by each of the 10 participants, and c) the interview undertaken on 7 of the 10 participants. This means that three angles of vision were in view, creating a strong case for trustworthiness (Sensing 75-76).

Rhythms of Personal Prayer

The first aspect of RQ #1 addressed in this research aimed to discover the personal **rhythms** of the prayer of the participants. The study wanted to find out when they prayed, for how long, and on what occasions.

Daily Prayer.

This research showed that one hundred percent of participants set aside time for personal prayer every day. Every person who took part in the research said that they prayed daily.

In reply to the survey question 'When do you pray?' one said 'daily.' Another was also typical in their survey response, saying: I pray 'daily alone 7-8am Mon-Fri' and '8-9am Sat-Sun.' A further respondent said 'every morning,' and yet another was similar: 'Every morning, first thing as I wake after Bible study and some devotional reading: 30 mins prayer.' One leader also described it as 'daily. It is a daily rich dependence on God.'

All the movement leaders who participated in this research described how they set aside personal time for prayer each day. For them, daily prayer was a core daily activity.

Time(s) of Prayer.

a) **Mornings.** When it comes to when they pray, this research showed that 7 of the 10 respondents set aside time for personal prayer early in the morning, as soon as they awoke. It was their first activity when they got up, with a typical response being: 'as a rule first thing in the morning.' Another similarly said they awake early to 'pray from 6 till 7am' each day. It seemed important to them that prayer was the first activity of the day. It was about starting well and, as one participant said, 'talking with my Father in heaven. It's a daily intimate walk, and out of that comes many God-moments which have shaped my life.' In background research, I discovered that one movement leader was inspired by the example of the Anglican evangelical leader John Stott. When Stott died in 2012, they had written some reflections on his life, and commented that 'He was a man of prayer, who would begin each day with an individual greeting to the Father, to His Son, and to the Holy Spirit.' For some, including one particular respondent, prayer was what they did even before they got out of bed, for when they were asked in the survey 'When

do you pray?' their response was 'I wake and usually have an awareness of God's presence.' Rather than being an activity, it was a state of mind. This will be considered in more detail below in the examination of what participants said about being prayerful.

Of the remaining three respondents, despite not saying prayer was the first activity they did, they all nevertheless said that they take time for individual prayer *in the morning*. As such, all ten participants set aside time for personal prayer, not just daily, but particularly in the morning. One described their personal praying as 'daily on the way to work.' A number of the participants called this prayer time their 'Quiet Time,' with one, for example, describing how their 'convictions of prayer' had been formed 'primarily from the discipline of having a daily quiet time.' Another similarly said their personal prayer was grounded 'in my own quiet times.'

Many of the participants also described a daily pattern of praying that went beyond 'the Quiet Time' or the mornings, to include other times of day when they prayed. Some used these times for different kinds of prayer, as we shall see.

b) **Evenings.** Twenty percent of participants also prayed personal prayers in the evenings, with one describing taking time each evening for 'evening prayer.' Another also responded in their survey that, 'in the evenings after dark … I pray very specifically regarding many regular needs.' A further thirty percent particularly set aside time *at bedtime* for prayer, with a respondent saying they prayed 'for a set time to end my day in conversation with Jesus.' One leader's survey response included 'gratitude, at end of day.' Another described this in more detail as something done probably with their spouse, saying in the interview that 'we do the "where did we meet God today?" and "where did we miss God today?" type of reflection.' For them, and for 6 of the 10 respondents, this meant they not only began the day with prayer, but they also intentionally ended the day in prayer. One participant summarised this well when they said, 'we top and tail the day in prayer.' Twenty percent also described praying *at night*. This included a leader who in their survey wrote that they sometimes pray 'when I awaken in the middle of the night and sleep escapes me. I consider it a call to pray and I usually allow the Spirit to bring before my mind things and people that may need my intercession.' Another similarly said in interview 'I've been woken in the middle of the night by God, with a deep conviction to prayer. And I know I just need to pray.'

c) **Lunchtime.** Twenty percent of participants also described personal prayer at lunchtime. One said they used lunchtime for 'reflecting on the Psalms' and taking 'some time out to reflect and thank God.' Another said in their survey response that they set aside time, once per week, for 'a further hour (of prayer) in the middle of the day, fasting lunch.' Yet another prayed in the 'afternoon on a Monday for an hour each week'

These weekly lunchtime prayers are evidence that 3 of the 10 participants not only had a *daily* pattern of personal prayer, but a *weekly* pattern of personal prayer too. As well as the leader who takes an extra hour for prayer once per week at lunchtime, plus the other who prays especially on Monday lunchtimes, yet another said they prayed 'more on a Wednesday.' Many more – indeed ninety percent – join in with the corporate prayers of their church or movement, as we shall see in more detail as we examine RQ #2. A weekly pattern of personal prayer is therefore important to almost all of the movement leaders researched, but only thirty percent see it as significant for their personal praying.

d) **Monthly.** Thirty percent of participants also had a regular *monthly* rhythm of personal prayer. One leader, for example, described in their survey how they join with their staff for a 'staff prayer morning every month.' Another prayed 'with their prayer partners one evening per month,' as well as with their church at a monthly 'church prayer meeting.'

e) **Seasonally.** Twenty percent of respondents said they prayed seasonally, which for the purposes of this research is defined as a few regular times per year. One movement leader said at interview that they 'have creative space six times per year - built into the diary' for special personal prayer. Another wrote in the survey of taking time '3 or 4 x per year' to travel and pray.

f) **Annually.** Twenty percent also had an annual personal pattern, with a further twenty percent committed to the corporate yearly *Thy Kingdom Come* prayer initiative, and others meeting with people in their movement for an annual time of prayer and fasting. One respondent spent time describing these gatherings as key times when they would meet 'for two days,' having 'two hours of prayer, then fifteen minutes break, then two hours of prayer' and so on.

These rhythms of prayer are expressed pictorially in Figure 5 below, including a section marked 'continually' - which is about seeking to be prayerful throughout the day. This is explained in more detail in the coming section.

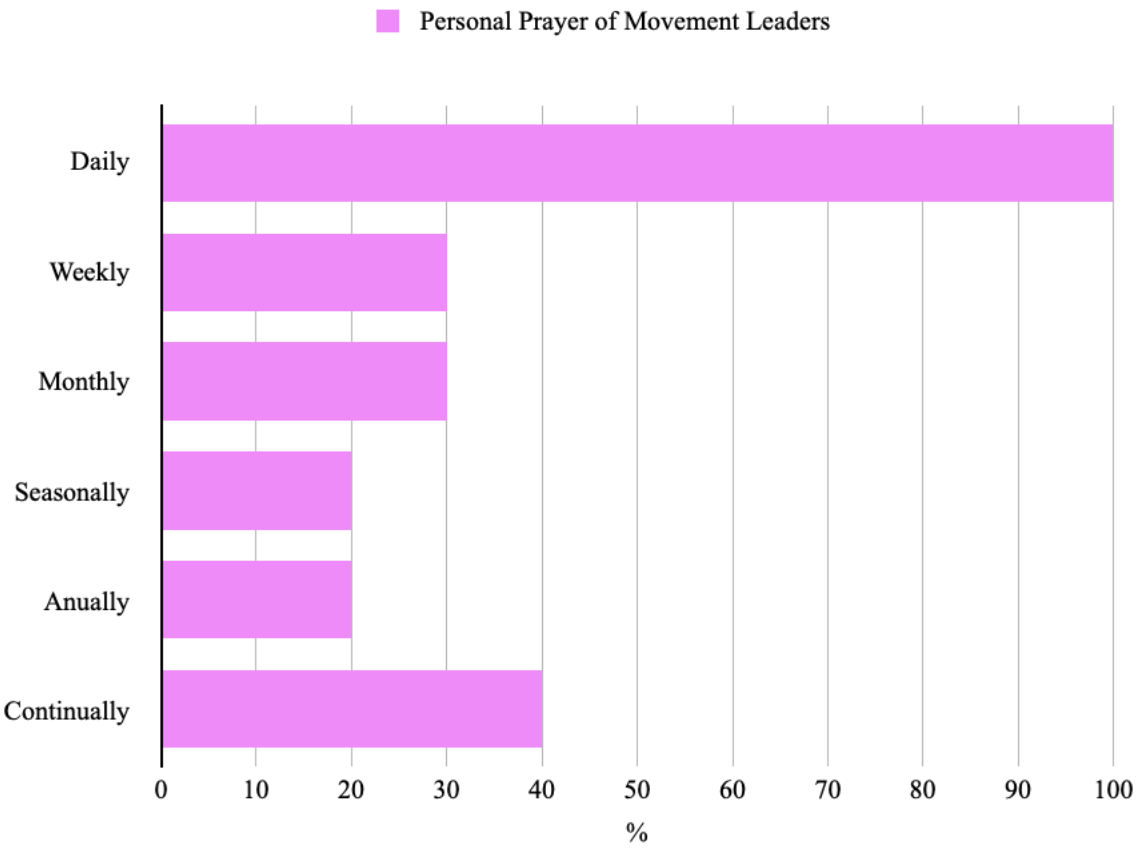

Figure 5. Movement Leaders personal prayer: Common Rhythms

Length of Prayer.

a) **Persevering.** In the survey, participants were asked about the length of time they spent praying. Forty percent of participants described persevering in prayer on a regular basis for a long time. One described how the leaders of their movement had met regularly together to pray 'for over thirty years.' Another spoke of the importance of keeping going in prayer and action. For them, the amount of prayer was not what counted, but that they kept praying and persevering in mission. At interview, one movement leader described it like filling a huge hole, saying: 'we're just pouring in the Spirit and it's just filling this reservoir. It's just [like] filling a massive hole… And then we'll start to see it bursting over and then there'll be life, but you've got to fill that hole.'

b) **Spontaneously.** As well as describing set times of prayer, one participant described praying spontaneous personal prayers during the day. This might be brief, even just for a few moments, usually in response to a need or particular situation. They explained that 'it is common for me to call out to him for help' during a normal day. Sometimes 'when I hear a siren or see in the news some tragedy, I pray.' As shall be seen when RQ #2 is considered, a number of those taking part in this research do this when with others, with one leader saying at interview: 'In the middle of meetings I will sometimes say, "let's just pause a moment, and let's pray.' This kind of spontaneity is difficult to measure in terms of time engaged.

c) **Amount of Time.** When it comes to the actual amount of time spent in prayer, eighty percent of participants said something about the amount of time they spent in prayer. However, this information is difficult to interpret, as some described the total time they spent praying each day, while others put a time figure against particular times of prayer. What is clear is that the figures vary considerably. For the purposes of this research, I will describe praying for up to an hour as a *short* length of time; praying for 1-4 hours as a *medium* length of time and 4-24 hours as a *long* length of time.

No participant described praying for a *long* period of time in their personal prayer. Two participants described praying in personal prayer for a *medium* amount of time. One of these said they devoted between 2-4 hours per day to personal prayer, before engaging in any corporate prayer or further ministry. That figure is not unrealistic, given the movement they lead is primarily a prayer movement. Another described spending 1-2 hours in prayer on a daily basis. The remainder pray in *short* segments of time. Up to 15 minutes was mentioned by thirty percent of respondents; half an hour, by forty percent of participants, and an hour by a further forty percent of the leaders, with a number also praying for different lengths of time at different times of day.

What seems clear is that the movement leaders involved in this research spent varying amounts of time in personal prayer, with this time being mainly *short* – up to 1 hour. A few prayed for a *medium* amount of time, and none for a *long* time. This is reflected and summarised in Figure 6 below.

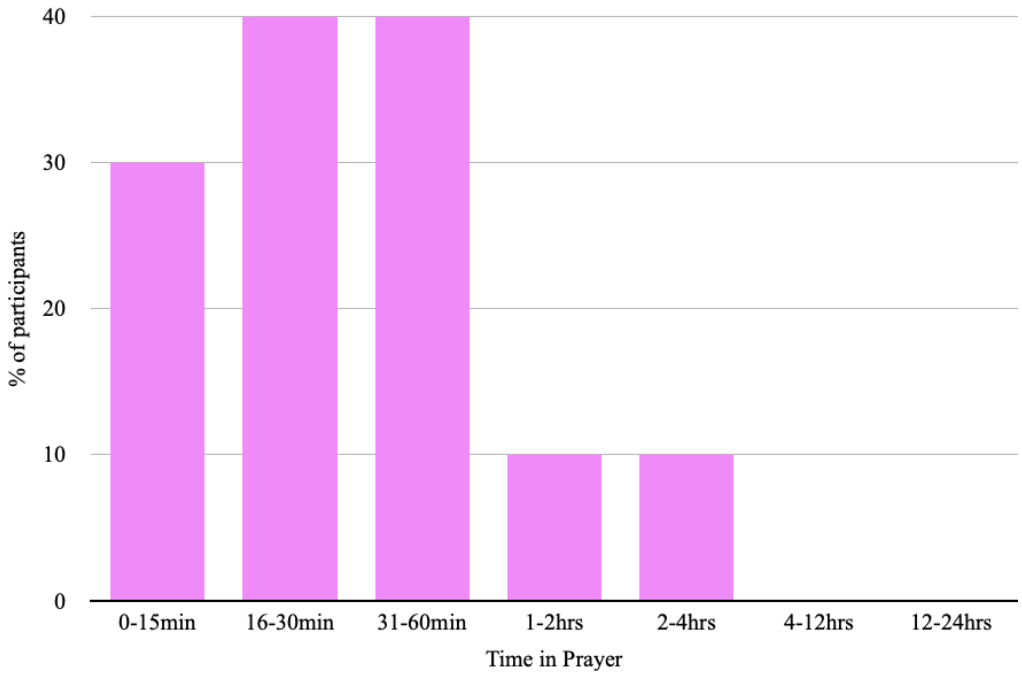

Figure 6. Movement Leader personal prayer: Time Engagement

Occasions of Prayer.

a) Personal Prayer. All (one hundred percent) of the movement leaders who participated in this research devoted time each day to *personal* prayer, just between them and God. No others were involved. As we shall see, different leaders did a variety of things during these personal prayer times. One leader said this was mainly about 'personal intercession,' while another in interview described this as 'just me really seeking a sense of the presence of the Spirit of God in the regular rhythms of my life.' What is noteworthy here is that they all spent time daily in *personal* prayer.

b) Prayer Meetings. Beyond this personal prayer, ninety percent of participants also attended regular prayer meetings, with thirty percent listing these not as examples of *corporate* prayer, but of their *personal* prayer life, with ten percent also saying they prayed personal prayers during staff and/or governance meetings. Forty percent of participants prayed personal prayers in and during regular meetings too. This praying was shared praying - praying corporate prayers within the life of their community and movement, and so this will be particularly examined in more detail as we look at RQ #2 below.

c) Other Occasions. A variety of other occasions for prayer were noted by participants. While not all will be commented on here, two are noteworthy. First, fifty percent of participants said they prayed personally while travelling. Second, twenty percent of participants said they prayed personal prayers before a meal. This does not mean that the other fifty percent did *not* pray while travelling or that eighty percent choose *not* to pray when they eat. Arguments from silence are not strong. What it does perhaps show though, is that a significant number of respondents either did not see these as part of their personal prayers, or that when they thought about prayer, they tended to

categorise it into their personal quiet times, or corporate prayer meetings, so anything outside of that was then forgotten.

d) Prayerfulness. Finally, when considering the regularity of prayer of these leaders, some spoke of praying for much of the time. This does not mean they spent their whole time in prayer meetings, but rather they were learning to cultivate prayerfulness. Forty percent of respondents expressed this in some way, seeing it as an aspect of their personal prayer. One, for example, said that they were seeking to live 'a prayerful life.' Another expressed this by describing prayer not so much as something they did, but something that took place 'regularly throughout my day.' At interview, they said that books such as Brother Lawrence's *The Practice of the Presence of God* had helped them become more prayerful and how recently they had been 'calling Jesus to mind one second of every minute of every day.' When one leader said that prayer was part of their 'discipleship' they were, it seems, trying to say something important about their ongoing following of Jesus, hour after hour and day after day. This kind of praying cannot be quantified. Rather than being people who pray now and then, this was about becoming a praying people. A people marked by prayer. This was mentioned as important by forty percent of participants.

Common Rhythms (CR) of Personal Prayer: Statistical Summary

This is a summary of the research findings on personal common rhythms:

- One hundred percent of participants spent time in personal prayer every day.
- One hundred percent set aside time for this in the morning, with seventy percent first thing, and thirty percent soon after.
- Twenty percent of participants also took time for personal prayer at lunchtime.
- Ten percent of participants also took time for personal prayer in the afternoon.
- Twenty percent of participants also took time for personal prayer in the evening.
- Thirty percent of participants also took time for personal prayer at bedtime.
- Twenty percent of participants also took time for personal prayer regularly during the night.
- Thirty percent of participants had a weekly rhythm of personal prayer.
- Thirty percent of participants had a monthly rhythm of personal prayer.
- Twenty percent of participants had an annual rhythm of personal prayer.
- Forty percent of participants described persevering in prayer on a regular basis for a long time.
- Ten percent of participants described praying spontaneous prayers during the day.
- Eighty percent of participants described how long they prayed for: with 1 giving 2-4 hours per day, and 2 spending up to 2 hours. Some spent more than that, on an occasional basis when at a prayer conference or during a special 24/7 prayer gathering. The remainder prayed in segments of up to 15 minutes, half an hour, and an hour, with a number praying for different lengths of time at different times of day.
- Thirty percent of participants saw their attendance at prayer meetings as part of their personal prayer.
- Ten percent of participants prayed personal prayers during staff and/or governance meetings.

- Forty percent of participants prayed personal prayers in and during regular meetings.
- Fifty percent of participants prayed personally while traveling.
- Twenty percent of participants said they prayed personal prayers before a meal.
- Forty percent of participants spoke of seeking to live a prayerful life.

Content of Personal Prayer

The second aspect of RQ #1 addressed in this research aimed to discover the **content** of the personal prayer of the participants. The project sought to find out *who* they prayed for and *what* they prayed about.

Focus for Prayer.

a) For Themselves. This research showed that the focus area most commonly prayed for by the participants was themselves, with ninety percent saying that when they pray, they prayed for themselves. One leader's survey response was typical: when asked in Survey Q10 'What do you pray about?' they answered 'People: myself…' Another similarly responded: 'I pray for myself,' before then describing the kind of things they pray about. One participant spoke of carrying a short list of important things they are praying for, and that 'one or two might be personal.' Another wrote: 'I pray with specific intercession for my own life.' This research shows, then, that almost all participants - 9 out of 10 - spent time daily in supplication - interceding for themselves. Possibly, the actual figure for this was one hundred percent. The one respondent who did not mention praying for themselves only completed the survey and was therefore not interviewed, and so it was not possible to follow up this matter with them for further clarification.

b) For Family and Friends. The next most common focus area, highlighting *whom* participants prayed for, was family and friends. Seventy percent of participants said this. Some grouped 'family' and 'friends' together, with one saying in their survey response that they prayed for 'family, friends.' Others linked them closely to themselves, stating they prayed for 'myself, family, friends.' Others separated them, with another saying they pray for 'family and loved ones,' and another still saying they pray 'for family: specific and general blessing.' One leader became more personal explaining that '3x a week I watch grandkids and hold them and pray for them while they fall asleep.' Praying for their family and the next generations was important to these leaders.

c) For Their Church. Sixty percent of participants said they prayed for their church. When asked in the survey 'Who do you pray for?' many, such as one movement leader responded 'congregation,' while another expanded slightly by stating 'leaders, staff, church.' 'Staff team and elders' was the response of yet another. The respondent who described having a few things written on a list replied 'one or two of them will be church things.' One respondent similarly said they prayed for 'the hopes and plans for church and its mission,' but then went on to broaden their definition of church beyond their locality, stating that they also prayed for 'the suffering church' which was taken to mean the persecuted church outside of the western world.

d) For Their Movement. Forty percent of respondents said that in their personal prayers, they also prayed not just for the church fellowship they attended, but for the movement they oversaw. One expressed this succinctly in their survey response, stating: 'I pray every day for churches in my network.' Another similarly wrote of 'prayer for network: staff, impact, funding.' A further leader said they prayed for 'movement

partners in church planting' with another similarly describing themselves 'praying for the movement: wellbeing of national leaders; protection of sacred trust God has given us.'

While sixty percent of these movement leaders prayed for their church, only forty percent said they prayed regularly for their network or movement. This is surprising if accurate, given the research cohort were not just *local* church leaders but *movement* leaders. Possibly, when participants said they were praying for 'their church,' they also meant their network/ denomination/ movement of churches, rather than the local church. If that is the case, then little or nothing should be made of any potential church/movement discrepancy.

e) For Local Community. This research shows that participants also prayed specifically for their local community, especially with others. However, only one participant said they did this as part of their personal prayers. That was the participant who said, 'when I hear a siren … I pray.' That leader expressed in some detail the kind of things they prayed for, and this will be seen more fully as common prayer practices are considered in the next section. Many of these things were for their locality, including businesses and particular individuals. Others also spoke of praying for their local community but did so when gathered with others in corporate prayer, as we shall see when we examine RQ #2.

f) For Nation and World. Participants also said they prayed for their nation, but only one explicitly said they prayed for the nation in their *personal* prayers. That person said it was a priority for their individual prayers, and this was after having a particular God-encounter and feeling called to pray for the nation. They described this in the interview as 'a national, apostolic, prophetic anointing' and since then they have 'taken prayer more seriously when I'm praying for the nation.'

As well as the one respondent who said they prayed for their nation, another said they pray for 'world' issues in their personal prayers. Given that many churches use the word 'world' as a broad term for matters beyond the church - with the liturgy of the Church of England, for example, encouraging its participants to 'pray for the church and the world' - the additional respondent might possibly include *national* issues as well as *international* matters in their prayers for the *world.* If this is the case, then 2 out of 10 respondents pray regularly for national, and 1 for international, issues in their personal praying.

g) For Unbelievers. Forty percent of participants also said they prayed in their personal prayers specifically for people who were not yet believers. When asked in the survey 'Who do you pray for?' one clearly stated: 'unbelievers.' Another said they prayed by name for 'people to come to Christ.' A third said 'three people to come to Christ,' and a fourth that they prayed for the 'salvation of lost people.'

In sum, we see that these movement leaders prayed for a variety of people and contexts. Figures 7a and 7b below express something of this, with Figure 7a showing a Word Cloud representation of key words used from one piece of evidence, Q10 of the written survey. Figure 7b is broader, showing in pie-chart form areas of focus in the personal prayer of the movement leaders. As well as praying for themselves, they also prayed for a breadth of people and contexts.

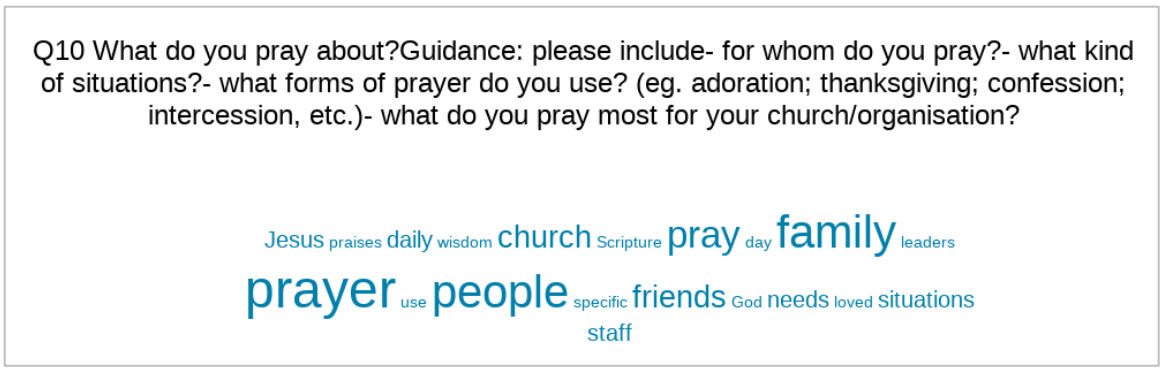

Figure 7a. Movement Leaders personal prayer: Word Cloud of Survey Q10 regarding Common Content Areas of Focus

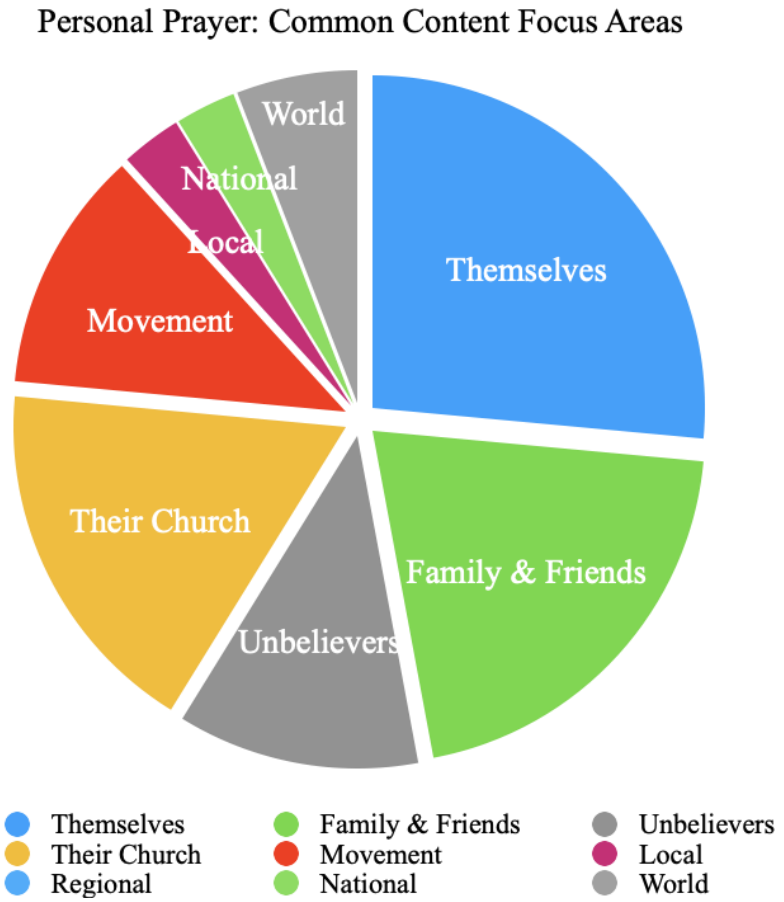

Figure 7b. Movement Leaders personal prayer: Common Content Areas of Focus

Issues for Prayer.

When it comes to the kind of things that these participants prayed about in their personal prayer, the research revealed some interesting data. One was that all ten respondents (one hundred percent) prayed prayers of petition.

a) Petition. The most common content of prayer that one hundred percent of participants shared, was that they all petitioned God. Everyone spent some of their personal prayer time asking God for his help. Their personal praying covered many matters. Fourteen areas of both personal and corporate petition are highlighted in this study. Here, with RQ #1 under consideration, are some of the ways the movement leaders interceded, taking note of common content.

First, *health and healing*. Sixty percent of participants said they prayed for this. Some described this as 'healing' prayer, while others talked of praying for 'health issues,' for 'bodies healed,' for 'infertility or sickness' and for 'miracles of healing'.

Second, *worries and problems*. Seventy percent of leaders said they prayed about this, with some becoming quite open and vulnerable, with one saying they particularly interceded 'when I'm really worried about something.' Another talked in the interview of 'pouring out my heart, with all the stuff weighing me down.' Yet another described praying for 'insolvable problems.' Some described interceding for others in this way – with one saying they pray for 'those in a crisis' and another for those 'who struggle with … problems.'

Third, *growth and expansion.* Some thirty percent particularly mentioned that they pray for growth and expansion of their movement, with twenty percent naming in the survey that 'church planting' was something they especially prayed for in the personal prayers. Background research on one movement leader showed them also regularly praying for the 'guidance of the Holy Spirit for evangelism and church planting' in their movement.

Fourth, *passion for evangelism and Jesus*. Thirty percent of movement leaders said they prayed about this in their personal praying. In the response to survey Q10, one wrote that they prayed to be 'passionate about evangelism.' Another said they prayed for a 'greater love for Jesus,' and yet another said they prayed that 'I would share the kindness of Jesus in significant ways.'

Fifth, *envisioning and strategy*. One participant (ten percent) mentioned that they prayed about this in their personal praying, saying that in their daily prayers they have some key thing they prayed for, and often they were 'visionary things.'

Sixth, *resources*. Forty percent said they explicitly prayed in their personal praying for resources, with thirty percent specifically saying they prayed for financial provision. One named this simply as praying for 'finances;' another for 'financial woes' and yet another described praying 'at times of financial need.'

Seventh, *filling of the Holy Spirit.* This was partly for others, but also for themselves. Sixty percent of leaders said they prayed for this in their personal prayers. Examples include one who said they regularly prayed prayers for 'the congregation to be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Another in the survey said they prayed for their congregation to know 'the power of the Holy Spirit (and) greater love for Jesus.' In background research one described how they prayed for I 'to receive the Holy Spirit.'

Eighth, *prayer for revival*. Twenty percent of participants mentioned this. One, in response to survey Q10, listed this alongside church planting, saying they prayed for 'revival, church planting.' Another, telling a story at the interview of changed lives, said that preceding the transformation had been prayer 'that God would bring revival' to hearts.

Ninth, half of the respondents – fifty percent – also prayed personal prayers for *deliverance from, or protection from evil*. This was described in a variety of ways. Some said they prayed for 'protection' while others used language of 'deliverance of the demonic;' 'demons sent packing' and prayers to 'discharge demons.' One said 'I tear down demonic strongholds that hold authority over a city and return authority to the people of God in that place.'

Tenth, *poverty and social action*. Twenty percent of respondents said something about this as being important in their personal praying. One mentioned praying for 'people in difficult situations' and then particularly named 'e.g. refugees' in their survey response. Another said that they prayed for 'ministry to the poor and broken' in their personal prayer times.

Eleventh, *justice issues*. Interestingly only one (ten percent) said they prayed regularly for justice issues and none (zero percent) for ecological matters. Given that these matters are seen by most major denominations as part of mission, these silences are noteworthy.

Twelfth, *relationships and unity amongst people.* Twenty percent of participants mentioned this. One particularly mentioned that they pray for 'people struggling in marriages.' Another wrote that they prayed for people 'who struggle with' various issues, especially 'relationship problems.'

Thirteenth, *wise thinking and decision-making*. Sixty percent of participants also said their petitions included prayers for this. It was described in a variety of ways, including: praying 'for wisdom – I have to pray that one a lot;' prayer when 'making decisions,' and prayer 'in my work … for guidance, wisdom, provision and empowerment.'

Fourteenth, and finally, *character issues.* One participant (ten percent) mentioned this in their response to Q10 of the survey, saying they prayed 'for myself' and then the first thing they listed was 'character.' Others may also pray similarly, with a number saying they prayed for 'strength' which could mean strength to love, or to persevere, or perhaps to be patient – all of which are mainly areas of character.

Finally on personal petitionary prayers, one movement leader described four things they prayed about for others. In doing so, they picked up some of the key ways that those interviewed said they interceded, petitioning to God for others. This leader explained it like this: 'Intercession – quite a disciplined list where I at least pray 4 things: 1) I bless people; 2) Pray for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit for them; 3) protection for them and their family; 4) that God's kingdom will come in a greater way.'

These intercessory matters, about which movement leaders prayed, can be summarised and visualised diagrammatically. One way of doing this is through a bar chart, which is found below as Figure 8, showing the data discovered.

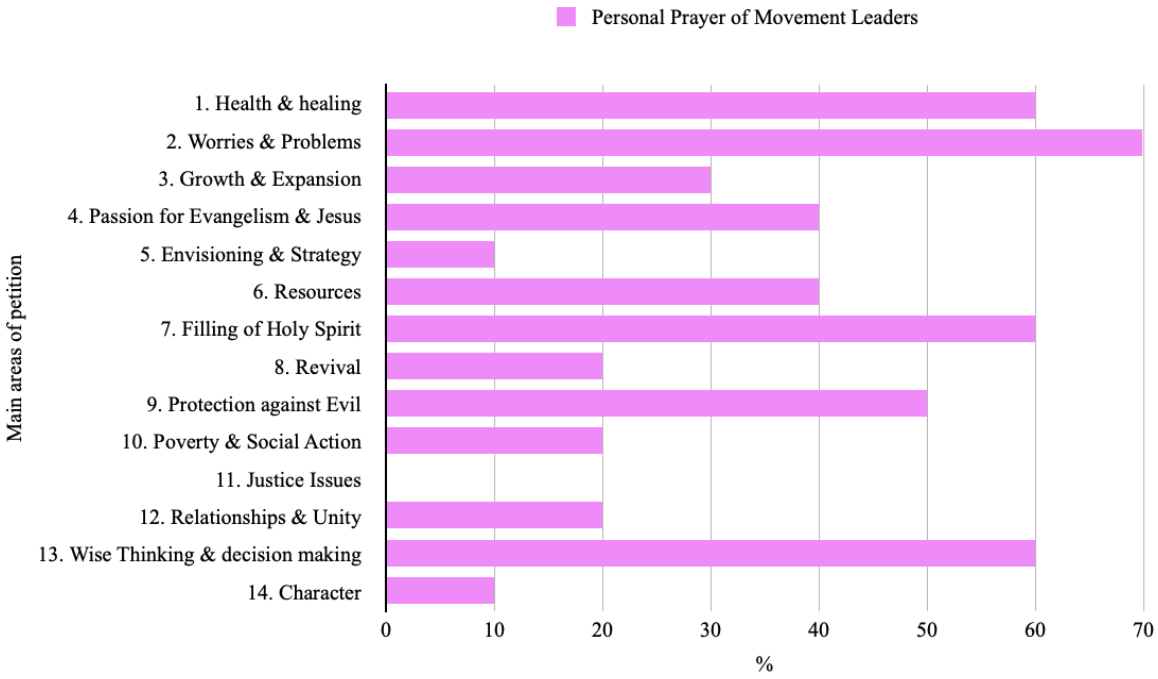

Figure 8. Movement Leaders personal prayer: Comment Content of Petitionary Prayer

b) Thanksgiving and Praise. When participants were asked in Q10 of the survey about their personal praying, and in particular 'What do you pray about?' Sixty percent replied that they prayed thanksgiving and praise prayers. While some drew a distinction between thanksgiving and praise – with *thanksgiving* focussing on the good things God does, and *praise* being grateful for who God is (Grace) – this research places them together, for that is what most people did in practice. One leader gave a typical response saying their prayers included a 'mixture of praise, thanks.' Another wrote that their early morning prayers 'begin with … thanksgiving' and also 'at lunchtime we take some time to reflect and thank God.' One respondent expressed this more fully, saying that their prayers were 'Mainly thanksgiving. I guess I live in a constant sense of incredulity and deep gratitude!" Some began their praying with praise and thanksgiving, with one describing an App they used to give shape to their praying which, after beginning with 'pause' soon flowed into 'praise.' One movement leader wrote that they began their prayers by praying 'in tongues for the first few minutes' and then 'I give thanks. I find three things a day to give thanks for.' Another said that they prayed 'practical thank-yous' although they did not explain what that meant. Perhaps it meant praying for opportunities to express thanks to God through tangible actions throughout the day.

c) Confession. Another aspect of prayer highlighted in this research was the importance of saying sorry to God, in confession. Fifty percent of participants said they regularly prayed personal confession prayers. When asked in the survey 'What do you pray about?' one simply said 'confession.' Another went further saying that in personal prayer, 'I will often confess before praying for a list of situations.' The participant, who described using an App to guide their prayers, similarly said that after they praised God, they then 'confess' before interceding. Another said that 'confession is a skill that improves with practice.'

d) Adoration. Finally, thirty percent of participants described praying adoration prayers. These were devotional prayers of worship that may be said or sung (Common Practices below). They were not petitionary (asking God) or confessional (saying sorry to God) or thanksgiving prayers (thanking God). They were simply prayers of love. One participant described praying in this way, saying 'I begin with worship (and) adoration.' Some said they had learned this from others, with one stating that as a child 'we learned about … adoration' but 'I hadn't really, in those younger days, experienced the joy of prayer' until now. Now prayer is a matter of 'intimacy. And I often just describe that as holding a regular and steady conversation with Jesus.'

This research shows, then, that while the personal praying of western movement leaders had much common content, it also had some variation, and that the only common form of prayer, shared by all the movement leaders, was petition, as is seen in Figure 9 below.

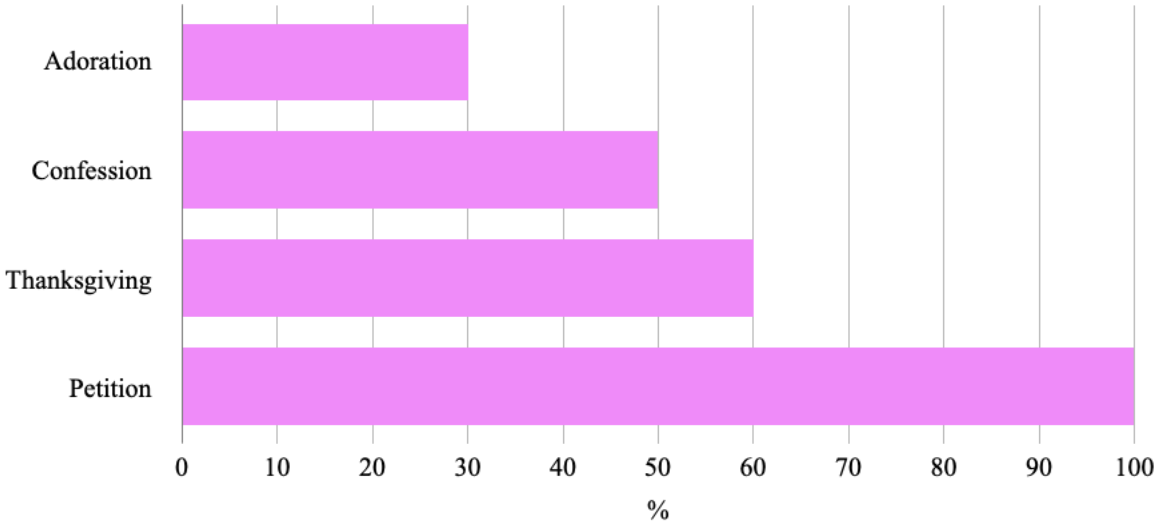

Figure 9. Movement Leaders personal prayer: Common Content of Prayer

Common Content (CC) of Personal Prayer: Statistical Summary

This is a summary of the research findings on personal common content:

- Ninety percent of participants prayed for themselves in their personal prayer.
- Sixty percent of participants prayed for their church and its people in their personal prayer.
- Seventy percent of participants prayed for family and friends in their personal prayer.
- Forty percent of participants prayed for their movement in their personal prayer.
- Forty percent of participants prayed for people who are not yet believers.
- Ten percent of participants prayed for their local community in their personal prayer.

- Ten percent of participants prayed for their nation in their personal prayer.
- Twenty percent of participants prayed for international issues.
- Ten percent prayed regularly for justice issues and zero percent for ecological matters in their personal prayers.
- One hundred percent of participants petitioned God, interceding for others in their personal prayers. Of those, the majority of prayers were for worries and problems (seventy percent), filling of the Holy Spirit (sixty percent), healing (sixty percent), wise thinking and decision-making (sixty percent), and deliverance from evil (fifty percent). Thirty percent also prayed for growth and expansion of the movement, and forty percent for resource provision.
- Sixty percent of participants prayed thanksgiving and praise prayers in their personal prayers.
- Fifty percent of participants prayed confession prayers in their personal prayers.
- Thirty percent of participants prayed adoration prayers in their personal prayers.

Practices of Personal Prayer

The third aspect of RQ #1 addressed in this research aimed to discover the **practices** of the personal prayer of the participants. The study wanted to find out their *postures and manner* of prayer, their *style* of prayer and the *people* they pray with.

Postures and Manner of Prayer.

The movement leaders researched used a variety of postures and manners of personal prayer.

a) Sitting. The most popular posture of personal prayer, used by sixty percent of participants was *sitting*. When asked 'How do you pray?' one spoke for many when they said, 'usually seated.' Another said they prayed 'sometimes prostrate but most commonly sat.' A further leader similarly said 'sitting - early in the morning,' and another also said 'usually sitting.'

b) Walking. The next most popular posture mentioned was *walking*, with fifty `percent saying they regularly walked while practicing personal prayer. In their survey response, one participant explained this simply by adding 'walking' to their 'usual' posture of sitting. They went on to describe how 'twice per week' they would 'walk and pray for 30 minutes.' Another said they 'regularly walk and while I do I talk with God often.' A further respondent writing in their survey response wrote that they valued 'prayer walking,' and at the interview they said more, explaining that most mornings, as part of their prayer time, they would 'head outside and walk for about 20 minutes to half an hour to pray.' One movement leader also incorporated walking into their daily morning prayer routine, describing how they would 'pray for 30 minutes every morning on a walk.' This participant was particularly passionate about prayer walking at interview, telling me they had been inspired to continue with this, having recently read Jon Tyson's book *Sacred Roots.* Bringing a different take on prayer walking, one respondent described how five years previously, they had undertaken a long prayer pilgrimage, journeying from Winchester to Oxford to York to walk and pray.

c) Kneeling. After walking, the next most popular prayer posture was *kneeling*, with thirty percent saying they knelt in prayer regularly. One leader described themself as 'often kneeling at the side of my bed.' More detail was described by a respondent who

said that, 'In the evening, after dark, I have a prayer space I retreat to for conversations with God and to pray very specifically regarding many regular needs.' In this place, they said that 'I get on my knees' and pray. In the survey, one of the participants similarly responded to the question of posture by saying, 'I pray walking, sitting, kneeling.' Kneeling is usually a posture associated with humility and submission.

d) High Energy. One participant (ten percent) said they liked to pray personal prayers with *high energy* in their personal praying. This leader described their praying as 'wrestling in prayer.' Others found this sense of movement and energy especially helpful and important when praying with others, as we shall see below when we explore RQ #2.

e) With drink. Thirty percent mentioned that they often had a drink in hand – often coffee or tea - when in personal prayer. Twenty percent said they valued 'stillness' as a posture of personal praying, and also twenty percent said they liked to pray with faith and expectation, with one participant in the survey citing '1 Tim. 2:1-4: expecting that God will intervene.' Another said that their discoveries about prayer had been helpful and 'made me expectant.' None (zero percent) said that, in personal prayer, they pray 'standing.'

f) Variety. Finally, when it comes to posture, one leader admitted that posture 'varies with seasons of life' and another said that there are 'a combination of tools.'

These figures have been compiled into Table 2 below, to show the variety of prayer postures described by participants.

	3	5	7	8	9	12	13	16	19	20	%
Sit	X	X	X		X	X	X				60
Stand											0
Kneel		X					X	X			30
Walk	X	X				X	X	X			50
Prostrate		X									10
Stillness				X				X			20
In bed				X							10
In shower				X							10
With hot drink				X	X	X					30
Near window					X						10
In church					X						10
On zoom											0
Faith & expectation					X		X				20
High Energy					X						10
Flexible		X			X		X				30

Table 2. Personal Prayer Postures of Movement Leaders

There was no common posture of personal prayer among those researched. This variety will be seen even more clearly as consideration is now given to the *styles* of prayer being employed by the movement leaders.

Styles of Prayer.

This research shows that the practices of prayer of the movement leaders can be categorised into 12 common styles. These are now looked at in turn below.

a) Words. Forming words and expressing them to God was a style of prayer mentioned by at least fifty percent of respondents. This was discovered by analysing all comments made about their personal prayer, from the background research, survey and interview. The other fifty percent of participants also likely formed words some of the time when they prayed personally, given the kinds of prayers they described praying. However, none of these other fifty percent said they actually formed *words* when they prayed, so it cannot be assumed.

In fact, only one participant in this research spoke explicitly about how they used words in prayer, in the context of an interview conversation about prayer walking. When asked what they did when they prayer walked and if they prayed out loud, they responded: 'I wouldn't usually. I would usually consciously say to myself, "right, I'm going to pray," and [then] I'd have a conversation in my head,' which I presumed was with God in prayer. This participant was the only one to articulate a clear distinction between praying *spoken* words and praying *unspoken* words ('in my head'). The evidence from many respondents, as noted, is unclear as to what they were doing inside their minds and with their voices. I wanted to know if they were speaking words or unspoken word. Or perhaps they were not speaking words at all. Or maybe they were thinking their prayers, without fully articulating them. Or perhaps they were doing something else. This research shows that most participants did pray using words of some sort – for example, as they sang – but when they were praying other kinds of prayers, the evidence presented leaves an uncertainty as to whether words were used.

The survey response of one leader, describing their prayer walking, exposes the issue well. This is how they described, in writing, what they did: 'I regularly walk and while I do I talk with God often.' What this doesn't say is what kind of talking is involved, and whether this prayer was spoken out loud, or not. Given the word 'talk' is used, this research assumes that a prayer was formed and spoken, probably out loud, although it is possible it was prayed in the participant's mind but not verbally spoken. Not being able to distinguish the difference is a weakness of this research. Despite this, the evidence still shows that at least fifty percent of participants formed words in personal prayer, and then prayed them to God.

b) Singing and Music. Thirty percent of participants also sang or used music as part of their personal praying. While one chose to mention that they 'don't really sing or listen to much worship music,' for at least three others, this was important in their own personal praying. When asked 'How do you pray' as Q11 in the personal prayer section of the survey, one said 'sometimes singing.' Another said 'often with singing' and yet another wrote: 'I like to put worship music on' which later was expanded to 'loud worship music.' This desire to worship and praise God in songs links to the common

desire of sixty percent of participants to thank and praise God, and to at least thirty percent to adore him, that we recognised above.

c) Prophetic listening. Prophetic listening to God in personal prayer was the second most common style of prayer practice, mentioned by seventy percent of respondents. One said that when they prayed, 'I consciously listen as well.' Another said 'I pray with listening prayer.' One particular movement leader shared openly at the interview how they had been on a journey of learning to listen to God, not being naturally charismatic in theology or character. Now, they said, 'God speaks to me' and 'I feel like I have pictures and visions … I pray for people and have words, and that kind of stiff … I was a late bloomer!' For some, these times of listening to God and allowing him to speak had been foundational moments, shaping their lives. One participant described in some detail at the interview how Christ had spoken to them in the context of some God-encounters, while praying. They explained how their 'call to become a Christian was a full-on vision of the cross while driving to work.' Then 'my call to ministry was walking out of the bathroom into the bedroom of our house and God in the bedroom, in a kind of crawl-on-your-face-to-bed, the presence-of-God-is-here call!' Further, their call to their present role 'was a very significant dream with angels in it.' It seems that for these participants, the practice of offering human words in prayer can become a context for hearing divine words in prayer.

d) Liturgy. A further style of prayer, used by thirty percent of movement leaders in their personal prayers, was liturgy - that is, praying pre-prepared prayers. One spoke at interview of the value of 'Morning and Evening Prayer liturgy'. Another said in the survey that they 'occasionally (use) liturgy' in their personal praying. Others were more specific, naming certain set prayers they would pray, with one describing their use of the 'Jesus Prayer' - which is 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' Another mentioned praying the phrase 'Your Kingdom Come' over people and situations, picking up the central words that Jesus taught his disciples to pray, taken from The Lord's Prayer. Interestingly, no participant mentioned that they regularly used or prayed The Lord's Prayer as a means of prayer. Perhaps some did use it, but forgot to mention it, which might be the case for those who were Anglican, with it being an important text in Anglican spirituality. Nevertheless, the fact that no respondent mentioned it stood out.

e) Testimony. Thirty percent of participants said that testimony played a role in their personal praying. One leader told me a number of stories at the interview of things that happened in their life as they prayed, which shaped their practice and understanding of prayer. Each of these stories, they described as 'a testimony.' Another shared something that happened recently, describing how they had prayed for good weather for a family wedding reception, which they had set up outdoors, despite a terrible storm being forecast as the day approached. They told me: 'We got out of church. We'd prayed already into it. And we got down to the grassy area, and within ten minutes the wind dropped and it was perfect and still for the night. Unheard of! Unheard of!!' A third respondent wrote in their survey that 'I like prayers being answered' but they also reflected that 'I've learned to trust God with outcomes.'

f) Silence. Sixty percent of participants mentioned silence as a style of personal prayer, when asked 'How do you pray?' Responses included: 'in silence' and 'in quiet.' One respondent said more, explaining that after 'worship, adoration and thanksgiving I

have a period of silence and reflection.' Another said that, before interceding, they 'then quieten down to pray.' Only one said that 'my main method of prayer is silent,' with the rest listing silence amongst other styles of prayer also. None of the participants defined what they meant by silent prayer, and so is not clear from the evidence what they were doing when they prayed in this way. Possibly, they were forming words but not speaking them, as noted in the commentary on *Words,* above. However, for many today, silent prayer means resting in God's presence and not using any words (Porter, *Prayer* 125). Perhaps this is what the participants meant by silent prayer. The evidence is unclear and further follow-up work would be needed to uncover this. Despite this, perhaps this lack of clarity is not crucial, given the perspective of one of the participants who, it was discovered in background research, had written on this very theme saying: 'In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart.'

g) Fasting. When it comes to *styles* of prayer - that is, what, practically, people do when they give time to personal prayer - the most common practice commented on by most participants was fasting, with eighty percent saying that fasting played a part in their prayers. When asked in the survey 'How do you pray?' fasting was mentioned by most. Some said that fasting was a regular rhythm of their personal spirituality, with one stating 'I fast Fridays till 5pm.' Another agreed, writing 'Fasting 1x per week.' Yet another saw the value of this practice, but their rhythm was less frequent, with them saying that 'I fast (1-2 x a year) as the Lord leads.' This corresponded with some other survey responses, with one writing: 'fasting (infrequent),' another saying they engage in 'fasting on occasion and when constrained by the Spirit,' and yet another responding with: 'fasting more seasonal.' This participant said more at the interview, explaining that 'sometimes I go through seasons where I fast for particular things and situations and breakthrough.' For this movement leader, fasting was often for a purpose - with an end-goal in mind. The role of fasting in the corporate prayer of the movements is later considered. Finally, one respondent became somewhat reflective when considering fasting, saying 'fasting is important, but I am not good at it.' The fact that fasting was the most common personal prayer practice was a surprise, raising questions about whether this also corresponded to the movements they led, which we shall see when we consider RQ #2 below.

h) Tongues. Another style of prayer practice, normally prayed out loud, was mentioned by fifty percent of respondents. It was praying in tongues. Praying in tongues, as noted in Chapter 2, is praying using an unlearned prayer language that most followers of Jesus believe has been given as a gift by the Holy Spirit. One participant said that, after reading Scripture in their house and reflecting on it, they would then go outside and walk and pray, and the first thing they would do as they walk is 'pray in tongues for the first few minutes' before 'then giving thanks.' Others, when asked in the survey 'How do you pray?' responded 'praying in tongues' or 'occasionally tongues.' Two mentioned tongues alongside singing, with one writing in their survey response: 'sometimes singing or in tongues.' This response may also mean that they not only spoke in tongues, but sang in tongues. Another was clearer, saying that when they play 'loud worship music … I'll sing in tongues.' The other forty percent were silent on praying in tongues. This could be because it is a form of prayer they rarely use, or perhaps never use. Some theological debate still occurs on this matter, with some questioning whether the gift is still available for followers of Jesus, and also if it is, if it is available to all, or just to some (MacArthur).

i) Lists. Some leaders said they used lists to help with prayer. Forty percent of participants mentioned this. One, for example, described praying through 'a list of situations and people in my care.' Another used their list to pray for unbelievers, saying: 'I have a list of people who don't yet know Christ that I and my disciples are interceding God for their salvation daily.' A further respondent explained in the survey that when it came to intercession they had 'quite a disciplined list' to aid prayer.

j) Reading Scripture. Another common style of personal prayer was prayerfully reading and reflecting on Scripture, with sixty percent of respondents saying that they used this practice as a means of devotion. One spoke for many when they said: 'I anchor my prayers in Scripture.' Another respondent went into more detail, saying, 'I read a psalm, a bit of the Old Testament and/or New.' Reading the Bible was important to one particular leader who said at the interview: 'my prayers are very much linked to reading the Scripture,' and in the survey that: 'I sense God speaking through the Scriptures regularly.' This suggests a highly relational reading of the Bible, with an expectation that God communicates.

k) Praying Scripture. When it comes to the use of prayer and using Scripture, the dynamics however were not just one-way, for one participant explained that they 'read Scripture and pray Scripture.' This suggested that as God spoke through his word, so they then turned his word back into prayer. It is as if the word that God had sent out in written form was returned to him in prayer form. At least two of the ten participants (twenty percent) described something of this, with one saying in the survey that they enjoyed 'taking a Scripture and using it as a model for prayer.'

l) Journaling. Finally, forty percent of respondents said they journaled their personal prayers. This suggests that they either wrote their prayers in a written journal, or they wrote and reflected about their praying in their journal. One participant did not think to mention journaling in their survey response, but when asked at the interview if they had a preferred style of praying said: 'I often write prayers in a journal and have done that for years. And I still do that. I do that every week at least.' Another said 'I journal. I normally write a verse or two which strikes me in my journal, and I write out a prayer round it.' This disciplined approach was picked up by one participant in particular, who wrote in their survey response that 'Every single morning for 30 years I have written prayers in my journal.' Others however were silent about journaling, apart from one who reflected in their survey response with honesty, saying: 'I'm not very good at keeping lists and journals.'

People and Prayer.

The final personal prayer practice observed, was *who* the participants prayed with. This is about the people with whom they shared their praying. This will be considered further in RQ #2 when examining the corporate prayer of the movements, for all one hundred percent of spoke of praying with others and engaging in corporate prayer. However, this research showed that the line between personal and corporate prayer was not sharp, because seventy percent of participants described the importance of praying with a few others when asked questions about their *personal* prayer, rather than about their movement's corporate prayer. For example, one leader, when asked about their *personal* praying, said they 'enjoy praying with others … [it's] often easier.' Upon reviewing the evidence, it seems likely that when some participants prayed with a few

others, it felt like *personal* prayer, not corporate prayer. That is why something about this is included now, as part of RQ #1.

a) Praying with One Person. Forty percent of participants said that praying with one another person was valuable to their personal praying. One respondent described a situation when 'I was prayed for by someone who was praying about me experiencing God. And I was just flooded with the love of God in a way that totally changed and healed me, and charged me for decades.' They went on to say that this one-with-one prayer had 'changed my heart.' Another described regular prayer 'with their spouse' as an important part of their personal prayer. Praying with spouses may have been significant for even more, with one participant describing some of their daily rhythm of prayer in the plural. For example, they said that as last thing at night 'we pray.'

b) Personal Prayer with Others. Thirty percent of participants also spoke of the value of others personally praying with them, especially in a small group, perhaps of two people. In many churches, this is called receiving 'prayer ministry' (S. Millar 1999). One movement leader said that 'there have been some key things God has said to me … often in the context of prayer ministry.' Another said that most of the significant prophetic words they had received in life had come this way. Rather than coming from their own personal prayer times, it was these 'prophetic words that people have given me, rather than the ones I hear directly' that were formative. One respondent in the interview described a time when they were younger, when they were unsure of what direction to go, being faced with various options. They said they had shared their situation with many friends who all said they would pray, 'but none of them actually prayed with me.' They then shared with a pastor friend who 'immediately prayed with me. And the very next day I went to Brooklyn Tabernacle and *really* had a sense of the Spirit of God speaking to me about the direction for the next chapter of my life… And I think that particular moment felt like a testimony to the response of God to meet us in response to the act of *prayer*… of two of us agreeing together. It felt very significant to me.' This act of being prayed *with* by a small group of others should not be overlooked as a practice of *personal* prayer that is significant to a third of participants.

In sum, the study discovered a number of common prayer practices by analysing the personal praying of these movement leaders. These are diagrammatically expressed in Figures 10a and 10b. Figure 10a is a Word Cloud digest of key-word responses from Q11 of the written survey, asking the movement leaders about their personal praying and in particular, 'How do you pray?' The words 'fasting' and 'others' clearly stand out here. Figure 10b is a pie-chart representing a broader perspective of all three angles of vision, showing the weighted variation of these personal prayer practices.

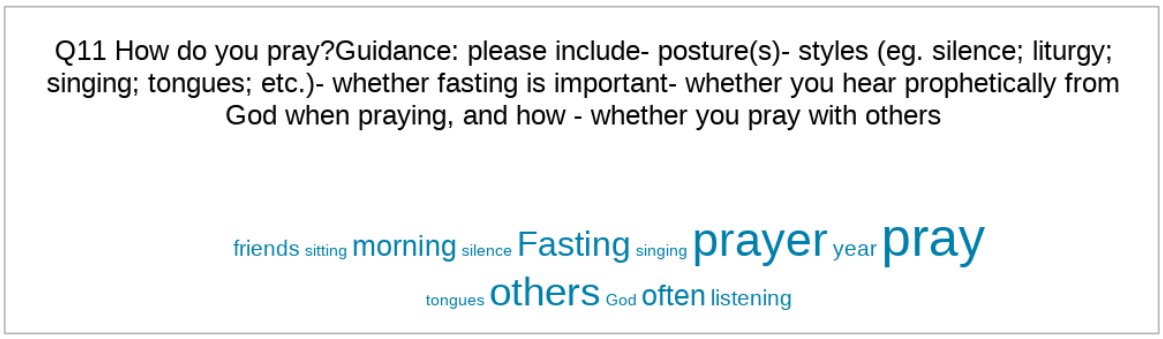

Figure 10a. Movement Leaders personal prayer: Word Cloud of Survey Q11 regarding Common Practices of Prayer

Figure 10b. Movement Leaders personal prayer: Common Practices of Prayer

Common Practices (CP) of Personal Prayer: Statistical Summary

This is a summary of the research findings on personal common practices:

- Sixty percent of participants sat in personal prayer.
- Fifty percent of participants walked regularly in personal prayer.
- Thirty percent knelt regularly in personal prayer.
- Thirty percent had a hot drink in hand or nearby when in personal prayer.

- Twenty percent valued stillness in personal prayer.
- Ten percent prayed with high energy in personal prayer.
- Zero percent stood up regularly when in personal prayer.
- Eighty percent fasted as part of their personal prayers.
- Seventy percent listened to God in their personal prayers.
- Sixty percent read and reflected on Scripture in the context of their personal prayers.
- Sixty percent used silence as part of their personal prayers.
- Fifty percent formed words and offered them to God in their personal prayers.
- Fifty percent spoke or sang in tongues in their personal prayers.
- Forty percent used lists to help them in their personal prayers.
- Forty percent journaled regularly as part of their personal prayers.
- Thirty percent used singing and music in their personal prayers.
- Thirty percent used some form of liturgy to assist their personal prayers.
- Thirty percent used testimony in some form in their personal prayers.
- Twenty percent turned Scripture into prayer in their personal prayers.
- Forty percent valued praying with others in personal prayer.
- Thirty percent spoke of the value of personal prayer ministry.

Understandings of Personal Prayer

The fourth aspect of RQ #1 addressed in this research aimed to discover the **understandings** of the *personal* prayer of the participants. The aim was to find out the main reasons *why* these movement leaders prayed their personal prayers. The same question, about understandings of prayer, was asked as part of RQ #2, seeking to discover why they prayed *corporate* prayer. Having reviewed the responses to both questions, it became apparent that the data for both was virtually identical. In fact, a number of the respondents, when asked in the survey why their *movement* prayed as they did, responded by writing: 'same as individual.' In the light of this, the understandings of *personal* and *corporate* prayer are presented together, towards the end of the analysis of RQ #2 below.

Research Question #2: Description of Evidence

Research Question #2 (RQ #2) asked: **What are the rhythms, content, practices and understandings of prayer, of the movements they (i.e. the western movement leaders) lead?** Like RQ #1 the evidence shedding light on this question is explored in 4 parts, by commenting on 1) the common rhythms, 2) the common content, 3) the common practices, and 4) the common understandings of the corporate prayer of the movements led by the participants.

The tools used to collect the evidence for this question were, as in RQ #1: a) the initial background research undertaken on each of the 10 participants; b) the survey undertaken by each of the 10 participants; and c) the interview undertaken on 7 of the 10 participants. As such, three angles of vision are considered.

Rhythms of Corporate Prayer

The first aspect of RQ #2 addressed in this research aimed to discover the corporate **rhythms** of the prayer of the movements. I wanted to find out *when* they prayed, for *how long* and on *what* occasions.

Times of Prayer.

a) Weekly. This research showed that most of the movements studied, indeed ninety percent, gathered to pray together weekly. This did not mean that everyone from the movement prayed together each week. That would be logistically impossible. It meant that churches and communities within the movement met together to pray on a weekly basis. One participant demonstrated this in their response to the survey question 'When does your church/organisation pray?' They simply wrote: 'every week.' A number of other leaders also mentioned weekly prayer with staff, with replies including: 'on Tuesday staff gatherings;' 'on Wednesdays together' (with staff); 'weekly with staff;' 'at weekly staff meetings.' One described in their survey how they used a weekly rhythm in order to 'pray with network colleagues weekly for region and situations.' With ninety percent of respondents mentioning this weekly gathering of corporate prayer, it was by far the most popular frequency of meeting. This contrasts with the personal praying of the movement leaders themselves, with only thirty percent saying they had a weekly rhythm of praying. In fact, it is possible that all one hundred percent of the movements prayed weekly, for the one participant who did not mention a weekly rhythm nevertheless said that in their movement 'our churches are spread all over the world so I can't answer for them. Many will have regular prayer meetings.'

b) Annually. After meeting weekly, the next most common frequency of meeting was annually, with forty percent of movements gathering to pray in this way. One survey response simply said: 'Annual *Thy Kingdom Come'* - referring to ten days of prayer from Ascension Day to Pentecost, which began in the Church of England in 2016, and is now popular among many churches and movements. A number of respondents mentioned *Thy Kingdom Come* as providing an annual focus of prayer for their movements. Others spoke of an 'annual prayer day.' One particularly linked the annual prayer gathering to fasting, saying in their survey that they had a 'corporate fast, usually annually.' Another said in their survey response that their movement had a 'leadership team annual retreat where we only have 2 things on the agenda: 1) listen to God, pray, talk about what he's telling us; 2) have fun together.' Yet another described in helpful detail what they did when they gathered at these annual prayer events, saying that these annual prayer gatherings were 'the most important thing' they did. They described them as 'shaping moments in my *personal* walk with God, but also in terms of the movement.' This corporate figure of forty percent for annual prayer of the movements contrasted with a personal figure of twenty percent for movement leaders.

c) Daily. The next most popular frequency of meeting was daily, with thirty percent of respondents saying that churches in their movement gathered each day to pray. This is in marked contrast to the data relating to the personal prayer of the movement leaders, with all one hundred percent of leaders saying they prayed daily, as seen in the commentary on RQ #1.

In terms of corporate prayer, one participant, for example, said 'We pray daily at the beginning of each working day.' Another said they met 'every morning' and a third said in the survey response that they prayed together 'Daily.' These daily meetings were,

unsurprisingly, short in nature, as noted in more detail below, but for these participants, they were nevertheless important. Two of the three spoke of meeting online for this, with one saying 'We pray on-line at our desks.' This digital ability to meet together to pray, despite not all being physically present, is relatively new and became popular in response to the Covid-19 crisis which began in March 2020 when much of the world, especially people in the west, experienced significant periods of forced lock-down in their homes. One participant said, 'since lockdown started, every morning from 8 o'clock until twenty-past/half-past, somebody from our community goes online and leads a devotional which other people join in with.' They went on to describe how 'up to 200' people joined with this online daily prayer gathering.

d) Monthly. Twenty percent of the movement leaders said that their churches gathered monthly to pray, compared with thirty percent for the personal prayer of the movement leaders. For one, this was a regular 'monthly prayer meeting,' and for another, this was centred around receiving Holy Communion at 'a monthly eucharist.'

e) Continually. Interestingly, thirty percent of the movement leaders also said their movements were praying continually - that is, all or most of the time. The figure for the movement leaders was not dissimilar - at forty percent. This was expressed by one movement leader by saying that the people of their movement were praying 'all over the world at every hour.' They went on to say that 'every house church in our movement devotes at least one third of its time to praying together for any and all needs brought to light.' Praying for one-third of the time is a significant commitment. Another respondent was the leader of a movement centred around prayer, who spoke of the movement's 'daily prayer life,' of Christ as 'worthy to be worshipped day and night,' and that they 'think it is important that prayer be non-stop, 24-hours a day.' Yet another participant expressed it like this, saying: 'one of the things that's becoming increasingly known about our team is that we pray throughout the day - consistently, immediately, attentively.' One further respondent aspired to this, strongly encouraging as much prayer as possible, although they did not say that their movement was praying all the time. Rather, they urged everyone to pray 'on all occasions' and to 'pray, pray, pray!'

These common rhythms of corporate prayer of the movements can be compared and contrasted with the common rhythms of personal prayer of the leaders, and presented in graphic form below, in Figure 11, showing amongst other things that movements pray weekly and the leaders pray daily.

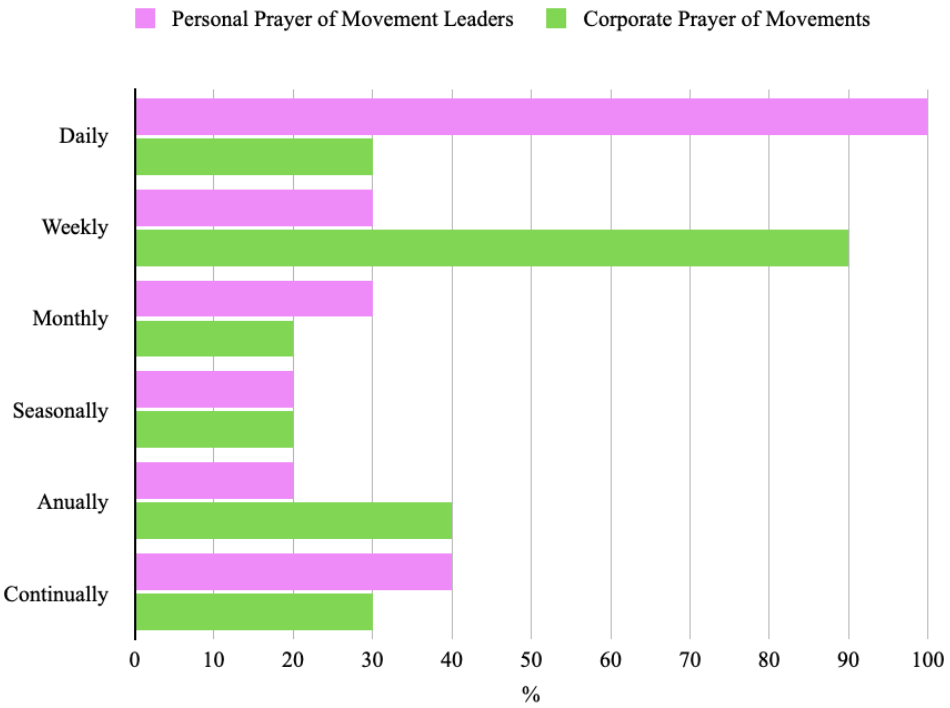

Figure 11. Personal & Corporate Prayer: Common Rhythms

Length of Prayer.

When it comes to the length of time that the people and churches of these movements gathered to pray, the data varied greatly. Two of the respondents did not give any data here and others gave little, so the evidence is presented tentatively. As in RQ #1, for the purposes of this research, prayer for up to an hour is described as a *short* length of time; praying for 1-4 hours as a *medium* length of time and 4-24 hours as a *long* length of time.

a) Long Time. The most common length of time to meet for corporate prayer, noted by thirty percent of respondents, was *a long length of time*: for 12-24 hours together. This was for regular meetings that took place infrequently, perhaps seasonally such as annual gatherings. For example, one spoke of '24-7 prayer rooms' during *Thy Kingdom Come* - urging people to pray during that season for many hours. Another said that twice a year they had a '24-7 Prayer Week' where they encouraged the church to pray together. One leader spoke of gathering with other senior leaders in their movement for a day of prayer, describing '2 hours of prayer, then 15 minutes break, then 2 hours of prayer,' which this research categorises in the 4-12 hour category. A third leader, as seen above, encouraged constant prayer in their movement, which at times involved small numbers, and at other times large gatherings 'singing songs to God all night.' None (zero percent) of the movement leaders spoke of them praying for 12-24 hours in purely personal prayer.

b) Medium Time. No movement leader (zero percent) said their movement prayed for *a medium length of time* – i.e. between 1-4 hours.

c) Short Time. Although movements do not pray for a medium length, the evidence shows that they do pray for *short lengths of time*. In fact, twenty percent of movement leaders said they prayed together regularly for just 0-15 minutes. This compares with thirty percent for the movement leaders in their personal prayer. This was normally for regular prayer meetings. An example of this was seen in the survey response of one leader, who said that they prayed 'daily with team 9-9.15am,' and another writing that they prayed the 'Daily Office Morning and Night (15 mins).'

A further twenty percent of the movements prayed for 16-30 minutes, compared with forty percent for movement leaders in their personal prayer. One participant described this as 'at weekly staff meetings (30 mins).' Another wrote in the survey response: 'Staff: 3x/week staff prayers, intercession for 30 mins.'

A further twenty percent prayed together for 31-60 minutes, in contrast to forty percent of movement leaders in their personal prayer. This was described by one leader as a 'church prayer meeting (1 hr).' Another wrote in their survey response: 'staff prayer meeting every week for one hour.'

Figure 12 below summarises the time engaged in prayer by both the movements and the movement leaders. It clearly shows that churches in the movements researched in this study pray for *short* amounts of times in regular meetings, and for *long* periods of time in larger infrequent gatherings, but none for a *medium* length of time. However, the personal praying of movement leaders is different. They tend to pray mainly for *short* periods, with a few for *medium* lengths of time, but none for a *long* period of time.

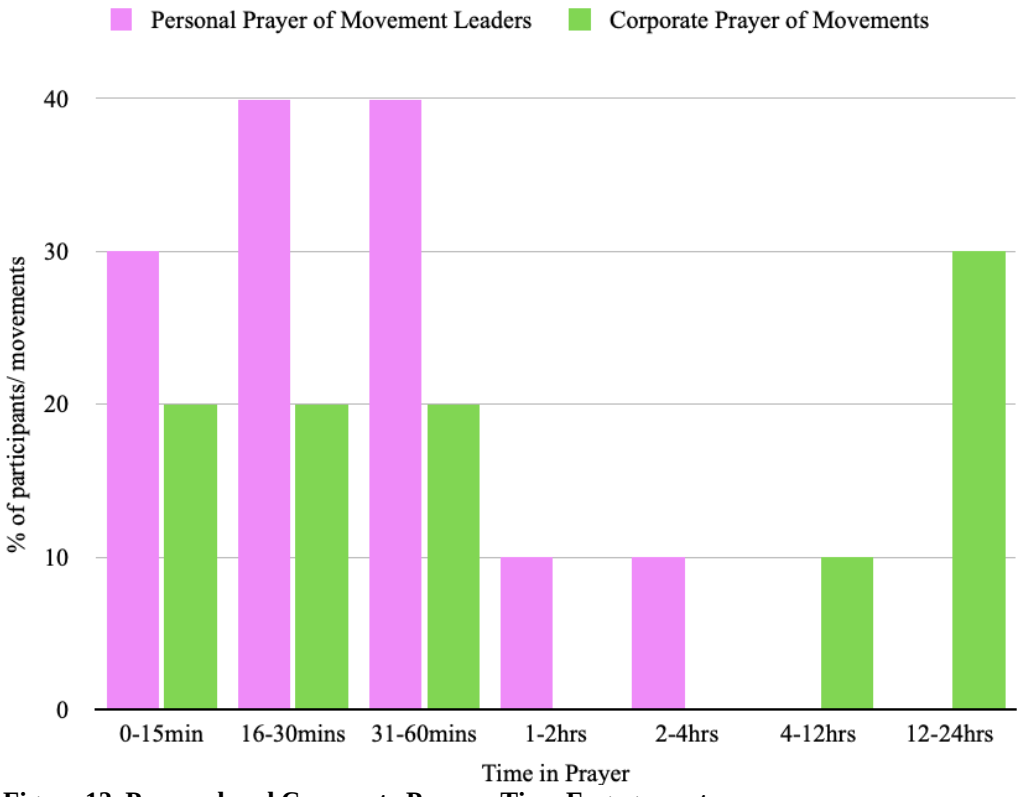

Figure 12. Personal and Corporate Prayer: Time Engagement

Occasions of Prayer.

a) Prayer meetings. When it comes to occasions of prayer, ninety percent of the movements prayed together in organised prayer meetings. Some examples of this have been seen already, especially when leaders were asked in Q13 of the survey: 'When does your church/organisation pray?' Further responses included: 'regular prayer meetings;' 'daily prayer meeting;' 'prayer meeting' and 'praying together.'

b) Other meetings. Fifty percent of the movement leaders also said they prayed together in other meetings. This is similar to the forty percent of movement leaders who said they prayed personal prayers in other meetings. One leader, for example, wrote that 'at various other meetings we start and pray, or stop to pray regularly.' Another said they prayed together 'at the beginning of most meetings.' Yet another said in the interview, 'at the beginning of most meetings I will pray.' One participant similarly commented in their survey response that corporate prayer is 'part of almost every meeting or gathering.' Another said 'we pray probably in 2 out of 3 meetings' noting that 'we are more a praying people now than when I took over leadership.'

c) Staff and Governance Meetings. Forty percent of the movements prayed together in staff and/or governance meetings. This compares with just ten percent of movement leaders mentioning that prayer in that context was significant to their personal rhythm of prayer. Sometimes this was at the beginning and end, but often it was more than that, as the following two examples show. One respondent said: 'Even in our governance meetings, we don't just do the perfunctory prayer at the start of the meeting… often we'll be in some challenging issue, and someone round the table will just say, "hey, I think we should pray about that" and so we stop and we pray over the issue.' Another respondent explained in some detail at the interview how this worked, for example, in a finance meeting: 'It is not uncommon to not just open the meeting in prayer, but to say, "hey, before we open the budgets, x - our Finance Director - just spend a little bit of time setting our hearts into the presence of God before we begin." So, it's not just a cursory: "Dear Jesus, we pray that our budgets would be blessed." It's "Holy and awesome God in who the presence of eternity dwells…!" We pray expectantly and regularly. If there's a decision and I don't know the wisest course forward, I'll just stop and we'll pray "Holy Spirit, reveal wisdom to us" and if we don't feel a sense of that revelation, we'll often set that decision aside until we have a sense of how the Spirit is leading.' This revealed leaders who believed that they should pray about every aspect of life of their movement.

d) Worship Services. Twenty percent of leaders also said their movements prayed together in worship services, compared with ten percent of movement leaders who said this was important to their personal rhythm of prayer. This was expressed in the survey responses, with one saying their movement prayed together 'during services' and another 'in church services.' The expectation was that this figure would be one hundred percent, as most Christian communities pray at some point in their public worship. Perhaps the number is small due to it being so obvious that most leaders forgot to mention it.

Twenty percent of the movements also said they prayed together before worship services and other events, with one saying they prayed 'before services' and also 'with teams before events.' Another said, 'before Sunday sessions.' This figure is also somewhat low, perhaps for similar reasons to those mentioned above for worship

services. The figure for the individual prayers of movement leaders was identical at twenty percent.

Common Rhythms of Corporate Prayer: Statistical Summary

This is a summary of the research findings on corporate common rhythms:

- Ninety percent of the movements gathered to pray weekly (RQ #1: Thirty percent).
- Thirty percent of the movements gathered to pray daily (RQ #1: One hundred percent).
- Forty percent of the movements gathered to pray annually (RQ #1: Twenty percent).
- Twenty percent of the movements gathered to pray monthly (RQ #1: Thirty percent).
- Thirty percent of the movements prayed continually (RQ #1: Forty percent).
- When they gathered, thirty percent of the movements spent 12-24 hours together, in prayer (RQ #1: Zero percent).
- When they gathered, twenty percent of the movements prayed for 0-15 minutes (RQ #1: Thirty percent).
- When they gathered, twenty percent of the movements prayed for 16-30 minutes (RQ #1: Forty percent).
- When they gathered, twenty percent of the movements prayed for 31-60 minutes (RQ #1: Forty percent).
- Ninety percent of the movements prayed together in organised prayer meetings (RQ #1: Thirty percent).
- Fifty percent of the movements prayed together in other meetings (RQ #1: Forty percent).
- Forty percent of the movements prayed together in staff and/or governance meetings (RQ #1: Ten percent).
- Twenty percent of the movements prayed together in worship services (RQ #1: Ten percent).
- Twenty percent of the movements prayed together before worship services and other events (RQ #1: Twenty percent).

Content of Corporate Prayer

The second aspect of RQ #2 addressed in this research aimed to discover the **content** of the corporate prayer of the movements. The intention was to find out *who* they prayed for and *what* they prayed about.

Focus for Prayer.

This research showed there were a number of common contents of prayer across the movements led by the participants.

a) For unbelievers. Sixty percent of movement leaders said their churches prayed for unbelievers when they gathered for corporate prayer. This was the most common focus for prayer among the movements researched, compared with forty percent of the movement leaders themselves saying this was an important focus for their personal praying. One leader said that, in their movement, ‘most prayer is for the lost,’ showing that this was the primary focus of their movement’s corporate praying. Another

participant wrote in their survey response that they prayed together 'for souls to be saved,' and yet another talked about corporate prayer for 'repentance and prayer for those outside church.' One mentioned with excitement at the interview that they were praying for 'an event next year which will be the biggest [evangelistic] outreach for a generation' in their city. In another interview, one leader said that recently, 'in our offices every day we prayed' for some local teenagers and then 'two of them received Christ.' Some, including the movement led by one of those surveyed, said they prayed specifically 'for a person of peace' and for that person 'to come to faith and a chain reaction to begin' as their friends and family became followers of Jesus.

b) For movement and people. The next most common area of corporate content across the movements, which was named by forty percent of movement leaders, was that their churches prayed for the movement and its people. Similarly, forty percent of movement leaders said this focus was also important to their personal prayer. Some expressed this succinctly in their survey response, with one writing that they prayed 'for our churches,' another 'for and with church leaders,' and yet another that they prayed together 'for the network and for situations.' One participant gave a description at the interview of how this kind of prayer happened during a prayer meeting, by saying: 'we would literally go through parts of the movement, whether it's the care of the churches, the training, whether it's youth, whether it's outreach … and then pray into it.'

c) For local issues. Forty percent of movement leaders said their churches also prayed for local issues when they gathered for corporate prayer. The kind of issues were no doubt pertinent to the particular church in their context at the time. This was noted in the survey responses, with one leader saying that they prayed together for 'local issues' and two writing that they prayed 'for the city' or 'for our city.' At the interview, one movement leader said that when they gathered corporately for prayer, 'we really go after some things. It's basically praying for the city.' The fact that the churches were part of a larger network and/or movement clearly did not stop many of them still having a local focus. However, it seems praying for local matters was a less important focus for the personal praying of the movement leaders, with only ten percent mentioning praying for their locality when on their own.

d) For national issues. Thirty percent of movement leaders then said that their churches prayed also for national issues when they gathered for corporate prayer. This contrasted with ten percent of movement leaders in their personal prayers. 'We pray for the nation' was how one leader, at the interview, described the corporate praying of their movement. Another talked of praying for their country, saying it was 'deeply divided.' Yet another said in their survey that they prayed 'for the nation and its leaders.' In background research, another described the importance of corporate prayer 'for the nation.'

e) For world issues. Thirty percent of movement leaders also said that their churches prayed for international and world issues when they gathered for corporate prayer, which was not dissimilar to the twenty percent figure for the movement leaders themselves. In their survey, one respondent said that they prayed together about 'global issues.' Another wrote that their churches prayed about 'international crises.' One other leader said they prayed corporately 'for the nations.'

f) For regional issues. Then twenty percent of movement leaders said that their churches prayed regionally when they gathered for corporate prayer. One participant said in their survey response that they sometimes would 'gather thousands to cry for revival in our region.' Another leader described his movement praying for a geographical area or region, and explained how this might happen, with someone at their large annual gathering sensing, for example, 'a prophetic burden for (the city of x) or for an area' and then they would gather 'in groups' to pray. None of the movement leaders mentioned that praying for their region played a part in their personal praying.

The movements researched had a number of key focus areas when they prayed, with the most important being for people who did not yet follow Jesus. Figures 13a below expresses something of this, showing a Word Cloud representation of key words used from one piece of evidence, Q14 of the written survey.

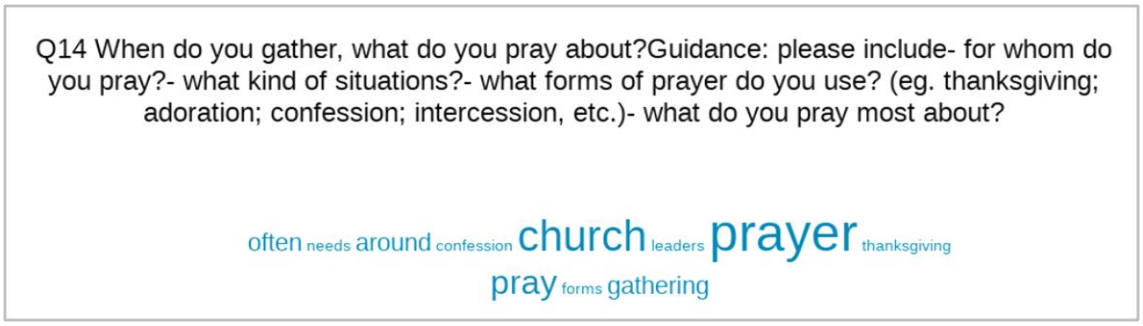

Figure 13a. Movements corporate prayer: Word Cloud of Survey Q14 regarding Common Content Areas of Focus

Figure 13b below gives a wider perspective, showing in pie-chart form the common content areas of focus in both the *personal* praying of the movement leaders, and the *corporate* praying of the movement. The corporate gatherings have a greater emphasis on praying for unbelievers, as well as for matters in the local community, region, nation, and world. They also had no praying for 'themselves' or 'friends and family' in the corporate gathering.

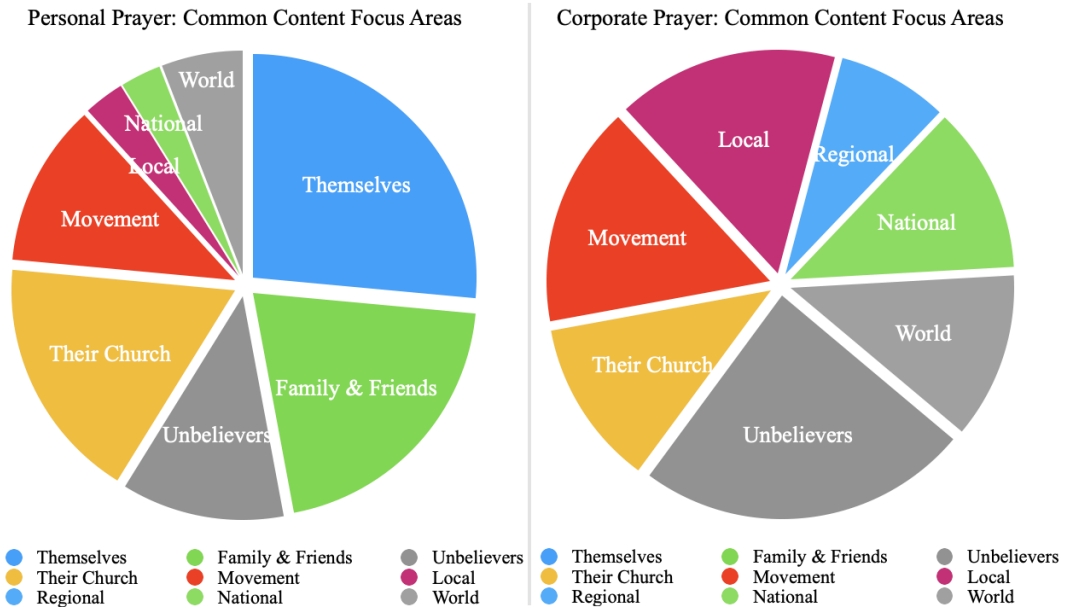

Figure 13b. Personal & corporate prayer: Common Content Areas of Focus

Issues for Prayer.

When it came to issues about which they prayed, the data showed that the movements, like their leaders, prayed prayers of petition, thanksgiving, confession, and adoration, considering petition last.

a) Praise and thanksgiving. A smaller but still significant figure of movement leaders – sixty percent – said their churches thanked and praised God when they gathered for corporate prayer. In reply to survey Q14, asking 'When you gather, what do you pray about?' one respondent wrote that their 'prayer gatherings focus around a combination of praise (celebrating the good gifts of God) and petition.' A second participant said, 'we share praise reports regularly.' A third wrote: 'we mostly use free prayer of thanksgiving.' A fourth mentioned, 'praise, petition, naming our areas of joy in Christ.' In background research, one leader had written about prayer in their movement, encouraging everyone to 'sing a psalm, praise God!' Background research on a different movement had also shown that their leader had said of their movement that 'we praise God in the middle of every circumstance' and that 'thanksgiving and praise well up spontaneously out of a heart that has learned to perceive beauty.' Someone who visited one of the movements had described 'a brief time of thanksgiving' which included God being 'thanked for the beautiful weather.' Like petition, this response, at sixty percent, was identical to that of the movement leaders when commenting on their personal prayer.

b) Confession. Thirty percent of movement leaders said their churches confessed sin when they gathered for corporate prayer. This contrasted with fifty percent of leaders saying confession was an important component of their personal praying. In their survey response, one leader said that in their movement, 'every week our church asks: does anyone have … sins to confess?' Background research of one leader showed them saying how 'they'll meet together to confess any sins.' That same leader said in their survey response that their 'Daily Prayer liturgy' included 'intercessions for our context, also gratitude' and that their movement included 'a lot of intercession and some

thanksgiving.' Research into another movement showed that 'people can confess whatever they like' and 'people might say. "God, I'm sorry I was mean to so and so today."' A further response from another participant linked confession with worship, as they responded to the survey saying that their corporate 'prayer revolves around worship, confession and the hopes and plans for the church and its mission.' Significantly for this respondent, confession was named after worship, perhaps reflecting in that movement the notion that having worshipped the Lord for his wonder and power, they then confessed their sins, recognising how far they had fallen short of him.

c) Worship and adoration. Twenty percent of movement leaders said their churches also spent time in worship and **a**doration when they gathered for corporate prayer, compared with thirty percent of movement leaders in their personal prayer. 'Worship and pray. Worship and pray' was how one leader expressed it. Another included worship as an important component of their prayer meetings, saying that when they met together to pray, it involved 'worship, (prayer) ministry, prophetic, intercession.'

This emphasis given to each of these four areas of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and petition when the movements gather, is not dissimilar to that expressed by the movement leaders in their personal praying. That is demonstrated relatively clearly in Figure 14 below.

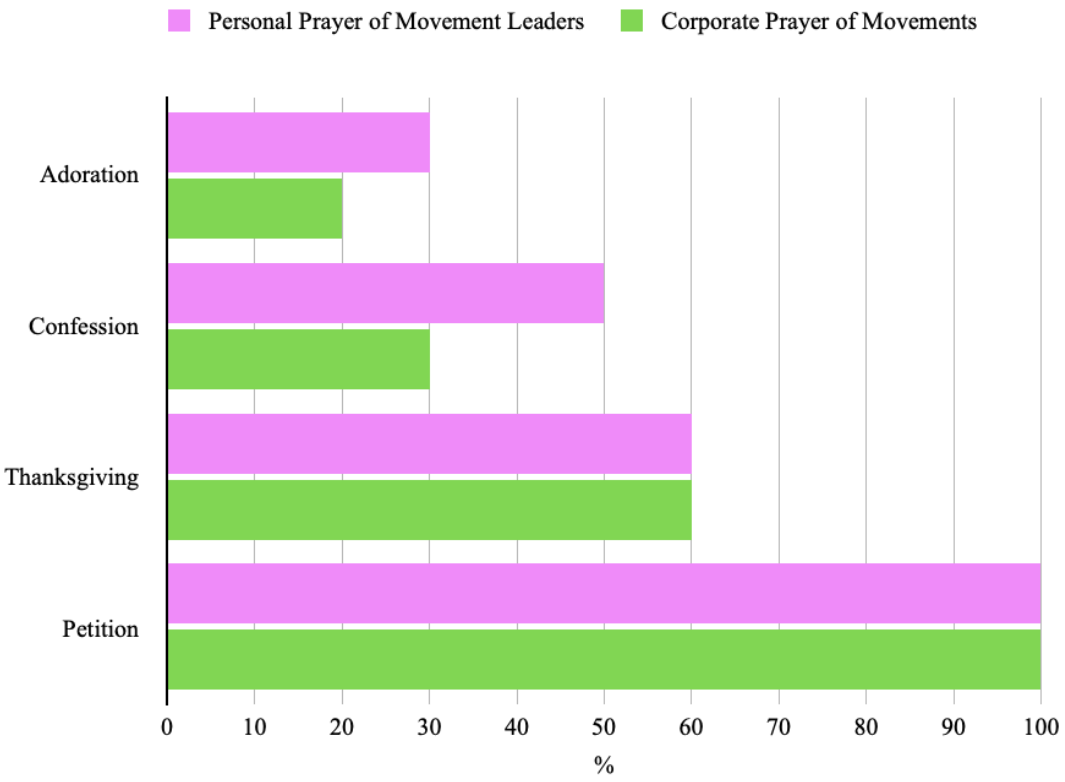

Figure 14. Personal and corporate prayer: Common Content of Prayer

d) Petition. One hundred percent of movement leaders said that their churches petitioned God when they gathered for corporate prayer. Previously, evidence relating to RQ #1 also revealed that one hundred percent of movement leaders also petitioned God in their personal praying too. Corporate petition - often named as 'intercession' - was either mentioned explicitly or by inference by participants, as they described issues for which they interceded. The explicit evidence was expressed in phrases such as 'staff intercession;' holding 'intercessory prayer meetings and conferences;' saying they 'are interceding daily;' and writing in the survey response that their movement participated in 'a lot of intercession.' As well as this, one respondent described something they called 'frontier prayer' which is what they do when 'we're really pushing out on things.' So petition was by far the most common form of corporate prayer in all the movements, with movement leaders saying that when their churches petitioned God, they prayed about a variety of issues. Twelve stood out as significant.

First, *health and healing*. This was the most common matter about which the movements prayed, with sixty percent of movement leaders saying the churches in their movement prayed about this. The figure for the personal prayer of movement leaders was identical, at sixty percent. When asked in the survey, 'When you gather, what do you pray about?' one respondent said 'bodies healed' and another 'for healing.' Yet another, in background research, said that the people of their movement should be praying 'for boldness to heal the sick' and for the Lord 'to heal and perform signs and wonders.' In their survey response, one participant said 'we ask for healing.'

Second, *worries and problems*, which was noted by fifty percent of participants. Seventy percent of movement leaders had said this was important in their personal praying. Prayer for worries and problems was expressed in a variety of ways. One was by using the word 'wisdom' which normally means wise planning and action. A number of respondents used this word, with one saying their movement prayed for 'wisdom' and another for 'wisdom from heaven.' Someone else said 'we'll pray "Holy Spirit, reveal wisdom to us.' They then said more about what they meant, writing of how they seek 'a sense of the Spirit in major decisions and ordinary daily moments.' Another similar word used was 'guidance,' which this study took to mean guidance in decisions. One participant expressed this by saying 'we pray for guidance.' Another, in background research, encouraged their movement to be regularly 'seeking God's direction.' A different respondent also said in their survey response that when they prayed together, they 'share prayer needs' which suggest praying for things that are difficult or troubling.

Third, *growth and expansion*, which forty percent of leaders said was important to their corporate praying. This is not a dissimilar figure to that relating to the data for the personal prayer of the renewal leaders, with thirty percent of them mentioning this as important. One leader described this focus of corporate prayer in their survey answer as praying for the 'hope and plans for the church and its mission.' Another talked of praying together 'when beginning something new.' Perhaps this was part of what the respondent had meant when they said that they were praying 'frontier prayers' as they prepared to move into new territory. This growth specifically included 'church planting' in responses from two participants, with one of the movement leaders encouraging their leaders to be praying for 'guidance of the Holy Spirit for evangelism and church planting' and a further saying that 'when starting a new church we listen to God and pray.'

Fourth, *passion for evangelism and Jesus*, which was mentioned by forty percent of respondents. This compares with thirty percent of movement leaders praying for this in their personal prayers. One leader spoke about this, saying their movement prayed 'for boldness to preach the word,' while another prayed for 'gospel preached.' A further participant said their movement prayed for 'joy in Christ.'

Fifth, *envisioning and strategy* was mentioned by thirty percent of leaders as a focus for their corporate praying, compared with ten percent in their personal prayers. This aspect of prayer became apparent in some of the responses to Q14 of the survey, with comments such as 'We pray about all the activities we are involved in' including 'our strategy, for help to see it accomplished.' Another wrote: 'for clarity, wisdom, vision' and a further leader simply said that they prayed for 'our strategy.'

Sixth, thirty percent of movement leaders said their movement prayed for *resources,* compared with forty percent saying they prayed for this in their personal praying. One participant said in background research that their movement must unashamedly pray 'for finances,' and wrote in their survey response that 'we pray for funding.' Another spoke of praying for finances and God's provision when they met with their finance director. The survey response of another leader said: 'we ask for… miraculous provision.'

Seventh, *filling of the Holy Spirit*. Twenty percent of movement leaders said the churches in their movement prayed about this, compared with sixty percent of leaders saying they prayed for this in their personal prayers. In background research, one movement leader encouraged the people in their movement to 'drink deeply in God.' Another said they prayed for the 'guidance of the Holy Spirit.'

Eighth, *revival*. This was mentioned by twenty percent of respondents as important in their corporate praying, with twenty percent also saying it was part of their personal praying too. As seen above, one leader mentioned how their movement had recently gathered 'thousands to cry out for revival in our region.' One other leader at the interview said that they would love to pray even more for revival when their movement gathers, saying 'Let's pray for thousands of people to be turning to Jesus in (our region).' Further comment will be made about praying for revival when we consider RQ #3 below and the hope behind a movement of church planting in the region of the North of England.

Ninth, *protection against evil*. Twenty percent of movement leaders referenced this as a focus of their movement's corporate prayer. However, in their personal praying, fifty percent of leaders mentioned this. One leader, in the background research, encouraged their movement to be praying that 'Satan's kingdom is shaken.' Another, responding to the survey question said that their movement prayed that 'demons [be] sent packing.'

Tenth, *poverty and social action issues.* Interestingly, only one respondent (ten percent) mentioned this, saying their movement prayed for 'social transformation.' This contrasted with twenty percent of movement leaders saying they prayed about this in their personal praying.

Eleventh, *justice issues*. Similar to social action issues, just one (ten percent) of the participants said that their movements prayed for this, with the one respondent saying they prayed 'for revival, justice and integrity.' This contrasted with none of the movement leaders saying that this was part of their personal praying.

Twelfth, *relationships and unity*. Again, only one respondent (ten percent) spoke of this as a matter for corporate prayer, saying that they prayed for 'marriages.' This contrasted with twenty percent of movement leaders mentioning this as a focus of their personal prayers.

Thirteenth, *wise thinking and decision-making*. Forty percent of participants said their movements prayed about this. This compared with sixty percent of the movement leaders, who said this was an aspect of their personal praying. Evidence for this was seen in a number of ways. One was at the interview, with a leader saying that 'when we're making decisions [we] intentionally pray.' Another, also at the interview said that 'we pray … if there's a decision.' One leader talked about people in their movement prayer walking 'with their eyes and hearts seeking God's direction.'

Fourteenth, and finally, *character issues*. Ten percent of respondents mentioned this as important in the corporate prayer of their movement. In Q14 of the survey, one participant responded by saying that they pray for things like 'justice, integrity.' More information on this would have been helpful, to discover whether this related to the corporate character of the participant's nation, or whether they prayed for integrity in the lives of people with a national profile, like politicians, business leaders, or others, but this was not followed up at the interview. Further evidence precludes knowing what was meant.

In sum, the corporate praying of these ten movements covered many matters. Their shared top priority was, like the movement leaders, for health and healing matters, closely followed by particular issues of worry or concern, with evangelism and growth and expansion of the movement - especially through church planting - not far behind. This is diagrammatically presented in Figure 15 below.

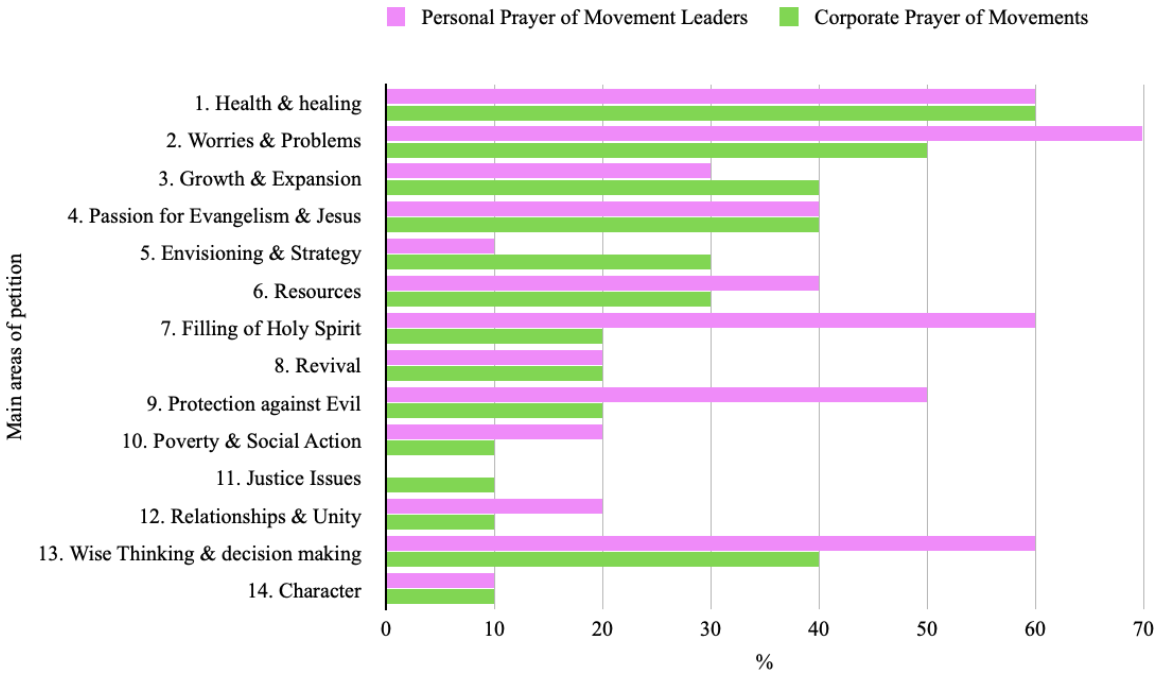

Figure 15. Personal and corporate prayer: Common Content of Petitionary Prayer

Common Content (CC) of Corporate Prayer: Statistical Summary

This is a summary of the research findings on corporate common content:

- Sixty percent of movement leaders said their churches prayed for unbelievers when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Forty percent).
- Forty percent of movement leaders said their churches prayed for the movement and its people when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Forty percent).
- Forty percent of movement leaders said their churches prayed for local issues when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Ten percent).
- Thirty percent of movement leaders said their churches prayed for national issues when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Ten percent).
- Thirty percent of movement leaders said their churches prayed for international/world issues when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Twenty percent).
- Twenty percent of movement leaders said their churches prayed for regional issues when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Zero percent).
- One hundred percent of movement leaders said their churches petitioned God when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: One hundred percent).
- Sixty percent of movement leaders said their churches thanked and praise God when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Sixty percent).
- Thirty percent of movement leaders said their churches confessed sin when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Fifty percent).
- Twenty percent of movement leaders said their churches spent time in adoration when they gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Thirty percent).
- When they interceded, movement leaders said their churches prayed about: health and healing (Sixty percent - cf. RQ #1: Sixty percent); worries and problems (Fifty percent - cf. RQ #1: Seventy percent); growth and expansion (Forty percent - cf. RQ #1: Thirty percent) including church planting (Twenty percent - Cf. RQ #1: Twenty percent); passion for evangelism and Jesus (Forty percent - cf. RQ #1: Thirty percent); envisioning and strategy (Thirty percent - cf. RQ #1: Twenty percent); resources (Thirty percent - cf. RQ #1: Twenty percent); filling of the Holy Spirit (Twenty percent - cf. RQ #1: Sixty percent); revival (Twenty percent - cf. RQ #1: Twenty percent); protection against evil (Twenty percent - cf. RQ #1: Fifty percent); poverty and social action issues (Ten percent - cf. RQ #1: Twenty percent); justice issues (Ten percent - cf. RQ #1: Zero percent); relationships and unity (Ten percent - cf. RQ #1: Twenty percent).

Practices of Corporate Prayer

The third aspect of RQ #2 addressed in this research aimed to discover the **practices** of the corporate prayer of the participants. The aim was to discover their *postures and manner* of prayer, their *style* of prayer, and the *people* they pray with.

Postures and Manner of Prayer.

It was discovered that the churches in the movements researched used a variety of postures and manners of personal prayer.

a) Sitting. Forty percent of movement leaders said their churches *sat* when they gathered for corporate prayer. This contrasts with sixty percent of movement leaders saying that they prayed their personal prayers sitting down. When asked in Q15 of the survey 'When you gather, how do you pray?' one participant replied 'sit,' and another 'sitting.' Another mentioned 'seated in a circle,' and similarly a further leader said 'we sit in [a] circle and share prayer needs.'

b) Standing. Conversely thirty percent of movement leaders said their churches *Stand* when gathered for corporate prayer. In the survey response, one participant simply said: 'stand' and another 'standing.' A third said 'standing up' as one style of praying. None (zero percent) said they stand all the time, and none of the movement leaders mentioned standing up as a posture they used in their personal praying.

c) High energy. Twenty percent of movement leaders also said their churches pray with *high energy* when gathered for corporate prayer. This compares with ten percent of the movement leaders when it comes to their personal praying. One participant particularly spoke of this in their survey response, saying their movement prays with 'high energy: lots of praise and worship.' We have already seen how one respondent said that 'we share praise reports' at their corporate gatherings, creating a sense of vitality and excitement.

d) Walking. Twenty percent of movement leaders said their churches *walk* in corporate prayer. This is significantly less than the fifty percent figure for the personal prayer of the movement leaders themselves. One movement leader explained that this was especially important in the early stages of church planting, saying, for example, that if they were to start a church in a particular city 'our two workers will walk the streets of (that city) in prayer.' 'Prayer walking' was also a practice mentioned by another movement leader as an important means of corporate prayer.

e) With faith and expectation. Ten percent of movement leaders said their churches pray *with faith and expectation* when gathered for corporate prayer. This contrasts with twenty percent for their personal praying. This corporate expression was described in the survey response by one participant by saying that their movement 'pray with faith and expectation.'

f) Stillness. Ten percent of movement leaders said their churches spend time in *stillness* in corporate prayer. This compares with twenty percent in the personal praying of the leaders. One leader especially highlighted this corporate practice, referring to 'the stillness of prayer' when they gather.

In sum, the churches of these movements prayed using a variety of postures and manners. No one stood out as particularly crucial, and many seemed to use different postures even in the same gathering, with some placing them together in their survey responses. An example is found in one respondent who wrote in their survey response: 'sitting or standing,' and another who said: 'sit, kneel or stand.'

Style of Prayer.

a) Words. One hundred percent of movement leaders said their churches used formed words when gathered for corporate prayer. This is a marked contrast to the data revealed in RQ #1, which showed only fifty percent clearly saying they prayed in this way in their personal praying. Respondents described this corporate formation and speaking of words in prayer in a number of ways. Two explicitly said that their movement prayed 'aloud' or 'out loud,' with a third saying they sometimes prayed

'Korean style all out loud.' Another said 'we expect and encourage prophecy and capture words spoken.' Two others spoke of 'prophetic words.' One participant said in their survey response that people shared 'testimony,' which no doubt involved the formation of words. Yet another said of their daily corporate prayer that 'if there's a musician we sing' - which would no doubt involve words. While there is a place for silent corporate prayer, as seen below, forming and speaking words, which were then shared in petition, or praise or in other forms, were important and commonly shared practices in all the movements researched in this study.

b) Singing and Music. Seventy percent of movement leaders said their churches sang or used music when gathered for corporate prayer. This contrasted with just thirty percent of movement leaders who said it was important in their personal prayers. Some examples of this were noted above, having recognised one leader saying that 'if there is a musician we will sing.' Further evidence for singing and using music in prayer was found in data extracted from the survey response to the question: 'When you gather, how do you pray?' Three leaders said: 'singing' and a fourth responded with 'sing.' A fifth said 'sung worship.' When one said 'lots of worship and praise' this is taken to mean much singing.

c) Prophetic listening. Seventy percent of movement leaders said their churches listened to God when gathered for corporate prayer. Interestingly, seventy percent of movement leaders also said this was important to their personal praying. This prophetic aspect of prayer came across in a number of ways. It was described by one leader as someone speaking words 'sounding like the voice of God to me.' Another said 'we expect prophecy and capture words to record and weigh' while yet another told a story of how God had clearly 'spoken to us and guided us' during a corporate prayer walk, releasing prophetic 'words', and as a result they 'acted on this and it was exactly what was needed.' One said that 'prophecy is important to build up' and then explained at the interview how their movement has 'a daily pray meeting … that's been prophetically led.' They said that this was important for they wanted to be 'hearing God. What does he want to say?' Background research on one movement and their leader discovered that they encouraged their movement to 'just listen for what the Spirit has to say.' 'Prophecy,' said a further movement leader, was a common practice in their corporate praying, describing how they took 'time to hear and share anything prophetic.' That participant went on to reflect that 'we have a rich heritage of the prophetic.'

d) Liturgy. Sixty percent of movement leaders also said that their churches used liturgy when gathered for corporate prayer. This compares with only thirty percent of movement leaders saying they used liturgy in their personal prayers. Praying corporate liturgy was mentioned in the survey response of two respondents who, when asked how their movement prays, simply wrote: 'liturgy.' Another spoke of the benefits of praying 'Morning and Evening Prayer liturgy with others.' Two participants also spoke of how they used the phrase 'Your Kingdom come' in their corporate praying. This phrase from The Lord's Prayer of Jesus was more than a name for a prayer initiative. It was a simple form of liturgy, used by people in their movements. This liturgical praying suggests that the leaders saw some perceived benefit, when gathering for corporate prayer, in saying the same prayers together at the same time.

e) Testimony. Fifty percent of movement leaders then said their churches shared testimony when gathered for corporate prayer. This compared with thirty percent of movement leaders saying that hearing and remembering testimony and praying in the light of it, was important in their personal prayers. Evidence of corporate testimony was seen in the survey responses. One responded to the question, 'How do you pray?' by simply writing: 'testimony.' Another said: 'testimony and celebration.' One leader said more, writing that in their prayer gatherings 'we encourage testimony of relevant topics.' Another said that every week they ask, 'does anyone have any praises?' Yet another explained that in their prayer meetings, 'we have feedback about what God's doing. Testimony. Then worship. Ministry. Lots of prophetic - for people, but more for what God's doing.'

f) Silence. Fifty percent of movement leaders said their churches used silence when gathered for corporate prayer. As seen in RQ #1, a similar figure of sixty percent of movement leaders said they used silence in their personal praying. Data for silence was seen in the survey responses with a number of leaders, stating 'silence' or 'in silence' as one of their corporate prayer practices. One placed this silence amongst a mix of habits, saying that when they prayed together, they 'shout, sing, pray in tongues, silence.' The background data on one participant noted that they had written about the importance of silence in corporate prayer, saying: 'Do you cultivate silence? … Without silence life becomes flat and the colours dull.'

g) Fasting. Forty percent of movement leaders said their churches fasted when gathered for corporate prayer. This is much lower than the figure relating to the personal prayer of the movement leaders, where eighty percent said fasting was one of their prayer practices. When, in the corporate prayer section of the survey, the question 'How do you pray?' was asked, one respondent wrote: 'corporate fast usually annually.' Another talked at the interview about their 'Friday fasting.' One of the movement leaders had written books on the importance of 'a lifestyle characterised by prayer and fasting' which the researcher had previously read, with various quotations incorporated into the background research. This leader taught the people of their movement 'that fasting generates hunger' - but not just physical hunger, for most importantly 'fasting makes you hungry for God and sensitive to him.'

One of the leaders of a different movement went into further detail at the interview about fasting, saying that 'fasting plays an important part in the movement' for they follow a 'regular rhythm of prayer and fasting' when they meet. When asked how this worked, they explained that 'some would go completely without food' whereas others treated it more lightly. They would always 'finish with a meal.' They were then asked why they fasted? The reply was 'because it's biblical, and we fast because by setting aside that time, we're saying to God, "you're more important than the daily feeding of our body" … There's a humility in fasting which I find really important for spiritual leadership.' Finally, one participant said in their survey response about their movement's corporate praying, that 'we do not fast together, although we should!'

According to the data for fasting both in the personal praying of the movement leaders as well as in the praying of the movements, fasting is a common practice for all (one hundred percent). Either the leader or the movement fasts, making it the most common *combined* practice.

h) Tongues. Twenty percent of movement leaders then said their churches spoke or sang in tongues when gathered for corporate prayer. This is a significantly smaller figure than the fifty percent of leaders who said praying or singing in tongues was important for their personal praying. In the survey about their movement's corporate prayer, one leader described them sometimes 'speaking in tongues.' Another participant included tongues in their list of corporate prayer practices, which included 'shout, sing, pray in tongues, silence.' One participant also said that when they met together they prayed 'in the Spirit' which some, especially those from a Pentecostal background, would see as a reference to speaking in tongues. Praying 'in the Spirit' is mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 6:18, and following F. F. Bruce and others can be taken to be a broad category of praying that can include, but is greater than, speaking in tongues (*Ephesians* 411). Because of its breadth of meaning, this study does not categorise this comment about praying 'in the Spirit' as a reference to praying in tongues.

i) Lists. Twenty percent of movement leaders said their churches used a list of prayer points when gathered for corporate prayer. This contrasted with the forty percent of movement leaders who had a list to aid their personal praying. One said that in their monthly corporate gatherings, 'I have on the back of an envelope, a few things to pray for.' The other, while not explicitly mentioning a list, spoke of the need for preparation and focus, saying that when their movement met for prayer, 'we try to have a few topics to stick to.'

j) Reading Scripture. When it came to reading Scripture, only one leader (ten percent) mentioned this as something done in the context of corporate prayer, describing 'reading the word, prayer; reading the word, [and] prayer' being the rhythm of their leaders' gathering. This small figure of ten percent contrasted with sixty percent of movement leaders who said this was important to their personal praying. This does not mean that Scripture was not used when the churches of these movements gathered for prayer, but possibly shows that it was used differently - perhaps less devotionally and reflectively. That might explain why most leaders failed to mention it in relation to corporate prayer.

k) Praying Scripture. Another movement leader said their churches turned Scripture into prayer when gathered for corporate prayer. However, only one (ten percent) said this, compared with twenty percent of leaders saying they do this in their personal prayers. The one who provided data for this talked of a time when they had sensed God speak to them from an obscure passage of Scripture. They said that having felt God speak to them from an obscure passage of Scripture, the following week 'someone came' to their festival and 'prayed that exact passage of Scripture over me.' This is a description of reading Scripture and then turning it into prayer.

l) Journaling. Finally, no participant (zero percent) referred to journaling as a corporate practice of prayer. This was seemingly a purely personal prayer practice.

In the light of all this, the data seems to show that the comment made by one of the leaders in the survey, about the content of corporate prayer, is correct: 'there is no correct form of prayer.'

People and Prayer.

The final practice of corporate prayer that was observed related to *the people* involved in the praying. While commentary could be made on minor details, two main matters stood out: one relating to prayer leaders, and the other to prayer ministry.

a) Leadership. The first relates to *leadership*. The data showed that forty percent of movement leaders said that their churches were guided by a Prayer Leader when they gathered for corporate prayer. This meant that somebody was in charge of leading the meeting in order to guide the praying. Obviously, no comparable figure for personal prayer is found! Evidence for this corporate leadership in prayer was seen, for example, in the response of one participant, who said that their prayer meetings were 'led from the front in sections, with prayer points and ideas.' Another described this kind of prayer as 'front-led prayer.' One respondent spoke of sharing out the leadership responsibility of prayer meetings, so that they were 'led by staff on a rota,' with another saying at interview that 'I intentionally get other people to lead' prayer meetings, in order to train up others. As their movement has grown, that particular respondent also said that they now 'have someone responsible for prayer' having 'employed a prayer leader.'

b) Prayer Ministry. The second matter, relating to people, involved *prayer ministry* - that is, praying with up to two people with, and for, each other. This was a common practice for twenty percent of movements, compared with thirty percent of leaders, as seen when considering RQ #1. The data for corporate prayer showed that one movement liked to gather 'in group huddles to pray in this way for one another.' Another wrote of 'ministry' in their survey response, which in their evangelical charismatic tradition normally is shorthand for 'prayer ministry.' As seen when looking at RQ #1, some leaders saw prayer ministry feeding them personally, and so the data was included in their personal praying. Others, as here, saw it as more of a corporate way of praying. That is why the data appears in both RQ #1 and RQ #2.

In sum, the study discovered a number of common prayer practices by analysing the corporate praying of these movements. These are diagrammatically expressed in Figures 16a and 16b. Figure 16a is a Word Cloud digest of key-word responses from Q15 of the written survey, asking the movement leaders about their personal praying and in particular, 'How do you pray?' with various key words standing out. Figure 16b is in pie-chart form, and represents the broader perspective of all three angles of vision, showing the weighted variation of these personal prayer practices.

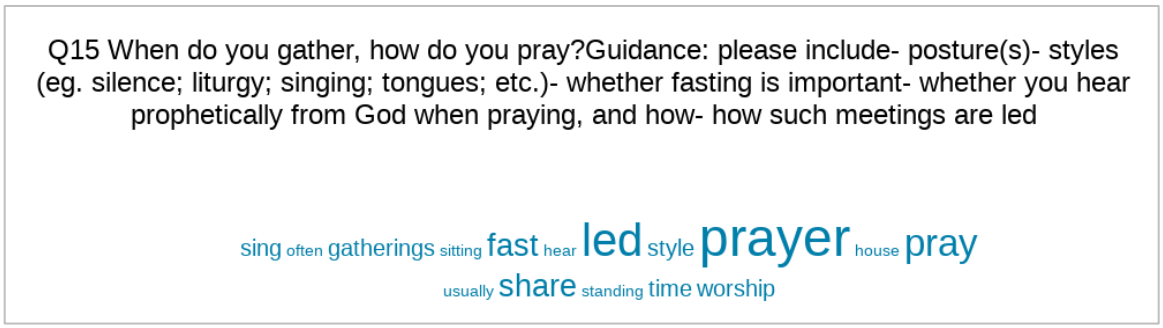

Figure 16a. Personal and corporate prayer: Word Cloud of Survey Q15 regarding Common Practices

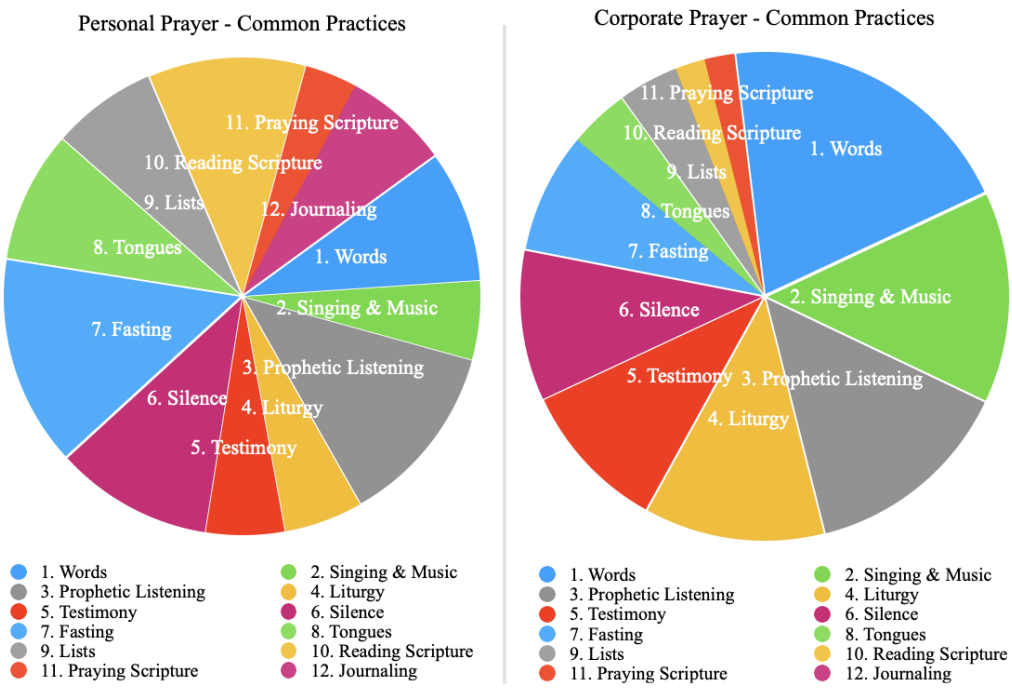

Figure 16b. Personal and corporate prayer: Common Practices

Common Practices (CP) of Corporate Prayer: Statistical Summary

This is a summary of the research findings on corporate common practices:

- Forty percent of movement leaders said their churches sat when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Sixty percent).
- Thirty percent of movement leaders said their churches stood when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Zero percent).
- Twenty percent of movement leaders said their churches prayed with high energy when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Ten percent).
- Twenty percent of movement leaders said their churches walked in corporate prayer (RQ #1: Fifty percent).
- Ten percent of movement leaders said their churches prayed with faith and expectation when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Twenty percent).
- Ten percent of movement leaders said their churches spent time in stillness in corporate prayer (RQ #1: Twenty percent).
- One hundred percent of movement leaders said their churches used formed words when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Fifty percent).
- Seventy percent of movement leaders said their churches sang or used music when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Thirty percent).
- Seventy percent of movement leaders said their churches listened to God when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Seventy percent).

- Sixty percent of movement leaders said their churches used liturgy when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1:Thirty percent).
- Fifty percent of movement leaders said their churches shared testimony when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1:Thirty percent).
- Fifty percent of movement leaders said their churches used silence when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Sixty percent).
- Forty percent of movement leaders said their churches fasted when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Eighty percent).
- Twenty percent of movement leaders said their churches spoke or sang in tongues when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Fifty percent).
- Twenty percent of movement leaders said their churches used a list of prayer points when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Forty percent).
- Ten percent of movement leaders said their churches turned Scripture into prayer when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Twenty percent).
- Forty percent of movement leaders said their churches were guided by a Prayer Leader when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Zero percent).
- Twenty percent of movement leaders said prayer ministry was helpful when gathered for corporate prayer (RQ #1: Thirty percent).

Understandings of Personal and Corporate Prayer

The fourth aspect of RQ #2 addressed in this research aimed to discover the **understandings** of the *corporate* prayer of the movements led by the ten leaders. The intent was to find out the main reasons *why* these movements prayed as they did. The same question, about **understandings** of prayer, was initially asked as part of RQ #1 above, but discussion about the evidence was delayed, recognising that the responses to both questions were virtually identical and so would be best presented together, at the end of RQ #2. That evidence is now provided.

In essence, the movement leaders had six reasons why they and their movements prayed as they did. These reasons partly emerged from the survey, where each was asked why they and their movements prayed, but data was also partly revealed from the background research and the interview. Thus, all three angles of vision were utilised. The information is expressed now by describing what the participants thought prayer was and therefore what it does.

According to the movement leaders researched, they considered both personal and corporate prayer to be: a) simple; b) difficult, and c) learned, and also d) foundational; e) connectional, and f) transformational. Each of these is considered in turn.

a) Prayer is simple. First, forty percent of participants expressed, in some way, that prayer was simple. For most of these, it was a simple conversation with Jesus, and as such it was an elementary and natural thing to converse with the one you follow. This was perhaps best summarised by a participant who at the start of interview described 'prayer as conversation,' saying 'I often just describe that as holding a regular and steady constant conversation with Jesus.' Having been brought up in a church-going family with parents who were disciplined about prayer, they went on to say 'I think the human heart longs for Christ' outlining how their journey with Jesus had changed, so that 'while I had the frameworks for prayer, and I understood the different forms of prayer, I think I did it more from a moralistic sense, understanding theologically the concepts of the gospel,

rather than having them take root in my heart.' Explaining this further, they said: 'I think back over my younger years of prayer and it feels as though I didn't even know what it was to pray at all.' They went on to describe how today they see prayer as intricately linked with the journey of relationship with Jesus, saying 'Our journey is with Jesus, isn't it? We love him so much *now* that it felt like nothing *then,* compared to where we are now.'

Another leader placed prayer alongside eating, as something simple and basic to living. When they summarised what their movement was about, they said, in a somewhat understated way, 'we're a community of prayer and hospitality, so our focus is on giving hospitality to people and having a bit of prayer.'

The movement led by one leader who was interviewed had been started by another, and was now led by them. They described their first encounter with the founding leader. 'I can remember when x first invited me to be a leader of sorts, and invited me into (their) home. And I thought: "this is a moment to ask questions. To receive teaching." All we did in those 4 or 5 hours, was pray. When I say "all we did," x would intersperse it with a cup of tea, or a Scripture.' Clearly for that leader, they soon learned that prayer was essential to the movement, but also that it was natural, normal conversation with the Lord. They went on to say how this had 'shaped my life. I think as I lead a movement of churches, if you were to ask them, they would say … that the most important thing is that we gather to pray.'

One participant also described prayer as an art, saying 'prayer is an art form - a highly demanding art form. Part of what makes art art, is that it is a massive waste of time. Art that can be endlessly beautiful, but less endlessly demanding, challenging.' They said this particularly of intercessionary petition, noting that 'intercession is an art form to be learned' - but they could also have said this about other forms of prayer too. Seeing prayer as 'art' is helpful for at least two reasons. First, many artists and designers say that *simplicity* is central to art. That is why this comment on the art of prayer is included at this juncture of this dissertation (e.g., Hills). Second, the same artists and designers normally say that simplicity is not easy, which reveals a second thing that the movement leaders considered prayer to be, and that is 'difficult.'

b) Prayer is difficult. It is noteworthy that sixty percent of participants said, somewhere in the research, that prayer was difficult. One respondent, who was a great believer in the power of prayer and who shared stories of answered prayer at the interview also said, 'in a way it's confusing, it's foggy and misty, and I trust him on the journey. And we end up in a place of clarity.' This was particularly the case when it came to prophetic prayer, and sensing God's voice, which this leader described as 'mirky a lot of the time. The way I hear God is often mirky. I'm just trying to trust that I *think* I'm hearing him, and so I say, "OK Lord, I *think* you're saying this" *(laughter).*' Another wrote in the survey response that sometimes prayers are 'answered in a way I had not thought [which is] humbling.' A further participant recognised this, writing of unanswered prayer as 'the mystery of prayer.'

Perhaps most telling was that many of the leaders said how they found prayer personally difficult. Indeed forty percent said this. Interestingly none said this in the initial survey but only as they opened up and described their prayer life at interview. One leader, who devoted much time and energy to personal and corporate prayer, said that prayer is 'the continual struggle of my spiritual life.' They said how they longed 'to

spend more undistracted focussed time in prayer, rather than rely on the grace of God, and the prayer-shield of great intercessors.' Another shared how they felt when God did amazing things in and through their movement, saying that when 'something supernatural has happened … I think about my paucity of prayer, and just think: 'God is so gracious' because he's filled the gap.' The leader of a growing movement, marked by much prayer, spoke of how pausing to pray was so difficult for them, because 'I'm an activist, and so prayer doesn't come naturally to me… I want to get out and do things.' A further leader spoke at the interview of how they loved to learn about prayer, saying 'I try to read a book on prayer regularly, and you always end up thinking I should pray more.'

c) Prayer is learned. A third reason why movement leaders and their movement prayed, was because they had learned to do so, having the value of prayer modelled to them by others. Indeed eighty percent of respondents referenced this in their data. For some, this learning of prayer took place through mentors or role-models, with 6 of the 8 leaders who talked of learning to pray mentioning this. For example, in their survey response, one respondent said, with regard to prayer, that 'as a teenager I came to faith through Youth for Christ and I was discipled in that.' At the interview, another leader spoke very clearly of how 'I was mentored' in prayer. They named the person who, when they were a new Christian, helped them grow in prayer, Scripture, and evangelism, describing how they were told: '"If you get up in the morning and come to my house, we're going to read the Bible together." And I would go and, as much as shifts allowed it, I would go to (their) house early in the morning and we would read through Proverbs and Psalms … If it was the 11th we'd read Proverbs 11 and Psalm 11, and then we'd talk about it, pray about it, pray together and sometimes we'd go for a walk in the hills around (the locality) and pray over the place… (X) was an older (person) who basically mentored me.' Another said something similar at interview, explaining that 'when I first came to faith, as a 19 year old, two people read Scripture and did Quiet Times with me, every day for 3 months. So that's where I learned it… I would just say it's caught from other leaders.' Others spoke of learning it by observation of other people and other movements. One leader, using military-style language to describe prayer for church plants, said that they had noticed that another movement 'have all these plants … and basically they send crack troops in, who basically pray for a year.' They went on to say 'And I think YWAM have been very good at that' too. One of the movement leaders, as noted above, learned to pray from the original founder of the movement. They spoke of how the founding leader 'modelled it' and how prayer in the movement is now 'modelled through me.'

The evidence also showed that while prayer was caught, it was also taught, and that teaching on prayer had influenced the leaders and their movements, with four of the eight respondents who talked of learning to pray mentioning this. For example, one leader said positively at interview that 'I've sat through thousands of teachings on prayer' and how it had helped and shaped their praying. Another, in background research, was seen on social media to promote and encourage prayer, and did so by referencing the teaching of Mark Batterson, a respected teacher on prayer, quoting him as saying: 'prayer is the difference between the best you can do and the best God can do.' This same leader talked at the interview of how the church and movement leader Jon Tyson had been so helpful to their movement, which was why they recently 'had Jon Tyson to talk on

prayer.' Another movement leader said to me at the interview that leaders must 'preach on prayer, because I think that stimulates prayer in church.'

Some of the leaders also spoke of how reading on prayer had helped them, with four of the eight leaders who spoke of learning to pray, mentioning this. One leader tried 'to read a book on prayer regularly.' In fact, when asked what or who had formed their convictions of prayer, their answer had been 'more by reading.' Another said at the interview that 'I've read books' on prayer. Also at interview, another respondent named particular books on prayer that had been helpful, such as '*The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence,' '*Letters to a Modern Mystic* by Frank Laubach,' 'Jon Tyson's *Sacred Roots,*' and works by 'Charles Spurgeon' as shaping their developing understanding and practice of prayer. This was the case with another movement leader who told me they had been helped by '*A Praying Life* and *J Curve* by Paul Miller,' and particularly by 'Andrew Murray …Tim Keller … and Philip Yancey.' One leader, also at interview, said that 'formative for me was Henri Nouwen's *From Solitude to Community to Ministry.* I read it about ten years ago.' They went on to say: 'it really blew me away… Basically it's a shortish treatise from him, from Luke 6, where he says that Jesus went up and spent some time in *solitude*, and that is to be with God, and God alone. And then [Jesus] came down the mountain and he picked his twelve. And that was his *community*, and he named them. And then he went out to do *ministry* and it says that "power went out from him" and he healed everybody.' They went on to say 'I feel like that's how it is. It's like if we're in solitude and spending time with the Lord, and we're in community with other people, loving them … then the life of ministry flows out of how we are and who we are... So often in my life I have gone and done the ministry, and got tired doing it. Then I've gone to the people to complain, "why have you not been helping me?" and gone to God and complained about the people. And it's like: that's the trap, which he defines so well for me of [practicing ministry] the wrong way round. The time with the Lord leads to time with others, which leads into a life, you trust, the Lord will use.'

Two of the eight leaders who spoke of learning to pray, said they had particularly learned to pray, by praying. One participant described how, early on in their ministry, they had been 'praying that God would bring revival to the heart of [some] … teenagers, who had no sense of the presence of God' and that 'God would break into their hearts and souls.' They then went on to describe how one of the 'leaders of the group was sitting on the stairs one night, and something just shifted in his spirit, that again felt to me like a response to prayer. One moment he was blaspheming the name of God, and then he began to weep, recognising that Christ had died for his sins, and publicly repented in front of his whole friendship group, which led to the repentance of six of his friends in quick succession. And I just remember sitting and watching the Holy Spirit bring repentance, conviction and salvation to this group … of young people. And it was like watching them walk from darkness to light, and recognising that it felt significantly a response to the prayers we had been praying for them.' When asked how that had affected their prayer life, the leader said: 'It's made me expectant that I want to come to God with the things in my life that are grey or confusing. And of course we're all learning in so many ways.' For this leader, they learned about prayer, by praying. Another leader described that their monthly prayer gathering 'is a sort-of school of prayer' where everyone learns to pray. It seems for many of these movement leaders, much learning has been done through continued praxis.

Given that the majority (eighty percent) of participants spoke of how prayer needed to be learned and modelled, it was not surprising that nearly all (seventy percent) also then said that prayer should be modelled by them – the senior leader. One said just that, that the prayer in their movement 'is modelled through me.' When asked at the interview how important it was that the leader was a leader in prayer, another said, 'I think it is vital.' A further respondent at interview said that 'for good and for bad … the church slightly takes on the personality of the leader' which was why they said 'I am the main prayer champion.' Yet another participant said they believed that an organisation 'becomes shaped by the life of the leader' and so 'in a public setting the character and the dynamic and the tone of the leader's prayer life I think sets both the release, the permission and the space for the team to know that prayer is of the highest priority.' Speaking of the role of prayer in pushing back powers of darkness, one leader said 'I think you've got to be the Christian who gets above [the spiritual oppression], in Christ's authority… You're meant to be above them, in Christ's authority.' A leader who described coming into the movement they now lead said this: 'The only thing the Lord said to me, as I arrived was that you have to lead in prayer.' I was not surprised, then, when one of the leaders who said they found prayer difficult, also said: 'If I really believed [prayer] is the most important thing that I can be doing, and in many ways I do, then my life should reflect that.'

We have seen, *practically speaking*, that for the participants of this research, prayer was simple, difficult, and learned. However, it was also three further things, which are less practical and more *theological*.

d) Prayer is foundational. Many of the participants considered prayer to be a simple conversation with God. Most however went further than this, saying that it was also foundational to their life of discipleship and leadership. This was because it helped them grow in listening, obedience, partnership, and dependency. That perhaps explains why all the leaders researched gave time every morning for personal prayer, and for corporate prayer during the week too, as seen in the analysis so far of RQ #1 and RQ #2. Prayer as a foundational, devotional, and missional practice, then, was a key reason why these leaders and their movements prayed.

Twenty percent of participants said that prayer helped them *listen to God*, and as such grounded and strengthened their life of discipleship. Evidence of this was noted while interviewing one movement leader, who spoke about the importance of what they called 'discerning prayer - God giving you insights, creativity, direction, that stuff [which] is critical to something growing.' It was also seen in the background research undertaken on the praying of one leader and their movement, which revealed them saying: 'those who listen well to God will find that God listens well to them.'

Thirty percent of the participants also said that, through prayer, they grew in *obedience to God.* For one leader, this was best expressed by saying that praying to God 'helps us to trust him.' Another wrote in their survey response that, when praying, 'my mind, emotion and will align with his will and kingdom' thus helping them obey. A further respondent also spoke of prayer causing people not just to 'hear from God directly' but also to 'obey him.'

Another good reason for praying, according to a number of participants, was to develop a greater sense of *partnership with God*. Forty percent of leaders mentioned this. One spoke about this at the interview, saying that, in prayer, 'there is definitely a

partnership which God has invited me into.' Another used the same partnership language when they wrote in their survey response that, in prayer, 'I partner with God, and take responsibility for what God has delegated to me.' Another leader described God 'pouring out the spirit of supplication and grace' upon people, so they can co-labour with him in prayer in order that he may 'accomplish great things.' Something very similar was said by a different movement leader, working in a contrasting part of the western world, as they said 'when God is about to do a new thing he sets his people praying.' For these movement leaders, prayer was about partnership with God.

A further good habit fostered by prayer, and noted by eighty percent of respondents, was that prayer helped strengthen *dependency on God*. This was partly because it revealed human weakness. One participant was pleased to admit this in interview, explaining that in hardship, they had cried out to God for help and that 'the prayer came out of desperation.' Another wrote in their survey that believers pray because they are weak, for it is 'not about strength.' One movement leader picked this up in the interview, by citing Charles Spurgeon's famous saying: 'I used to think I was too busy to pray and now I realise I'm too busy not to pray.' The result of all these, said forty percent of participants, was that prayer develops trust in God. One survey response said just this, recognising that praying to God 'helps us trust him.' Another movement leader, in their survey response, agreed, saying: 'prayer stops me panicking and worrying' and instead allowed them to live in dependence on God, knowing that 'ministry is to trust it will happen.' A settled resignation to the will of God came to the prayerful leader and movement, which was explained well by one respondent who said: 'when I pray in his name, I am accepting whatever the answer will be, even if it does not align with my own opinions and trust.'

So, according to the leaders and movements researched, prayer was foundational to discipleship and leadership. It helped them mature and live Christ-centred lives.

e) Prayer is connectional. Fifth, prayer was connectional. It linked those praying with the God to whom they prayed. All one hundred percent of those involved in this research spoke of this, expressing in some way that prayer was an invitation into an ever-deepening relationship with God. All responses noted here were more about *God*, rather than the person or people praying.

Some spoke of this in terms of the *presence of God.* One leader, when asked in Q12 of the survey 'why do you pray?' responded by writing that it caused them to 'become aware of God' and another that 'I feel closer to God.' Another leader said their movement prayed because 'God is present with us in a significant way,' suggesting that prayer was a response to the presence of God. As they prayed, they said that 'a spirit of prayer creates a culture of expectancy for the presence of God.'

Three participants (thirty percent) particularly spoke of prayer as powerful, relating to the *transcendence of God*, as this powerful God empowered his people. One respondent said that when they prayed, they were 'empowered to live and serve him.' Another urged their movement to pray knowing 'the power of prayer.' Yet another expressed it like this: 'I can hardly imagine how we could cope without the power of the prayers of the saints.'

At the same time, four participants (forty percent) also described prayer as a close and intimate experience. Here they described an appreciation of the *immanence of God.* One leader at the interview said that 'it's a daily intimate walk.' Another spoke at the

interview of 'prayer as intimacy.' In their survey response, yet another wrote that they prayed 'working from a place of rest, knowing that God is my Father, and from a place of gratitude.' In the later survey question, Q17, asking about why they prayed corporately, they said of prayer that 'it's about intimacy with him, not our strength.' That same participant also said at the interview that 'in my personal prayer … I'm reminded that God's heart is warmed towards me.' In their survey response another leader said that when they prayed, now they were 'no longer motivated by guilt; now I delight' in prayer. According to these movement leaders, in and through prayer they saw, and often encountered, both the transcendence and imminence of God.

Other responses to connecting with God in prayer were less about his presence but more about him *hearing their prayers*. Three participants (thirty percent) spoke of this, with two explaining it simply and starkly: they pray because 'God hears.' The third said, by way of background research, that those who pray 'will find God listens well to them.' Another said in their survey that they spent time in personal prayer because God particularly heard their individual prayers, but then they went on to say the same of the corporate prayers of their movement. Another similarly wrote in their survey response that 'there's power in collective prayer,' suggesting that something important was inherent in praying together in agreement on a matter. It was as if God particularly heard these corporate prayers.

In addition to this, fifty percent of participants said that they prayed because God *responded and answered*. Data showed that 'answered prayer' or 'God answers' was the survey response of a number of participants, when asked why they prayed. 'Answered prayer' was also the response one leader gave when asked the reason why they and their movements pray. Another expressed this as 'laying hold of God's willingness,' and yet another as being able to 'listen and move quickly to what he's saying' as God responded to their prayers.

A further connectional reason why movement leaders and their movements prayed, was so that *God may be glorified*. In some way, all one hundred percent of research participants said something about this. One leader referred to this in their survey response, saying that they prayed so that 'the Lord [is] glorified.' A number of respondents highlighted the praise of God which came from testimony of answered prayer, which is why one participant was adamant that 'testimony is vital.' Another leader explained this as 'we're wanting to be a movement of God, not a movement of man.' Linked to this was a sense that when people prayed, God's will was done and his sovereignty and kingship was recognised. This was reflected in the survey responses of a number of participants, with one writing that when their movement prayed, it 'reminds us God is in charge.' Another said something similar: that 'I am joining with his agenda.' One linked it to unanswered prayer, by saying, 'if God does everything you want, then He isn't God, you are.' Yet another expressed this missionally in terms of his prevenient grace, saying that when their movement prayed, it 'reminds us that God is already at work and we are simply invited to enter into the work.' The response of another movement leader was that 'when God is about to accomplish great things for His church, he will begin by remarkable [sic] pouring out the spirit of grace and supplication.' This participant was saying that when God wanted something good to happen, he helped his church to pray and the result was 'for God to be exalted,' which were the words used in

the survey response of another participant as a reason for prayer. A further leader simply said ‘celebration.’

Behind all this evidence was a clear sense that movement leaders believed their praying and the praying of their movements formed a relational connection with the true and living God, revealed in Christ. Prayer, however, did more than just this, due to one further reason why participants said they and their movements prayed. This was because prayer was transformational of circumstances.

f) Prayer is transformational. According to those who participated in this research, prayer advanced the kingdom of God and brought change. All one hundred percent of participants mentioned this. Of those one hundred percent, ninety percent mentioned that it especially changed people in many ways. At a basic level, some respondents described this by saying that ‘prayer changes things,’ with one leader saying this about both their individual prayer and their movement’s corporate prayer. It was one of the main reasons why they prayed.

Another said that through prayer, ‘I change,’ with a further leader saying ‘prayer changes me’ and yet another recognising that prayer ‘changes my heart first of all.’ This idea that ‘hearts change’ when people prayed was recognised by at least two respondents. ‘We pray to be changed and so the world changes’ is how a further leader explained it in their survey response. ‘Prayer changes the world’ were the words of the survey response of another. A further participant agreed, saying that when they prayed, ‘I am changed.’ This same leader was so committed to the positive change that came through prayer, that they went on to say in their survey response that ‘we believe prayer changes everything.’ This was articulated similarly by a further leader who said, ‘everything in life changes if we begin to pray in earnest.’ This transformation, according to the respondents, took place in lots of ways. One was through encouragement, with a participant saying that prayer changes and ‘encourages me.’ Later, they also said it ‘encourages my leaders.’ Another respondent agreed, saying that prayer was such ‘a huge encouragement.’ A further leader also said that as they prayed, they ‘receive courage’ and another that they ‘have guidance moments’ when they prayed. One participant said that through prayer, they ‘get insights and greater wisdom, some pictures and words.’ Another leader noticed that when they prayed ‘it grows my gift of faith,’ with yet another recognising that when they prayed, ‘faith levels raise’ in their movement. This was all part of the personal and corporate change that came through prayer.

Other transformational things that respondents said occurred through prayer were noted by this research. One was that it pushed back Satan and his demonic forces, frustrating his plans. Four leaders (forty percent) mentioned this, using a variety of language, but essentially, they all agreed that *spiritual warfare* happens through prayer. Some described this by saying ‘the enemy is affected, restrained and frustrated.’ Another used Harry Potter-type language in their survey response, describing prayer as ‘a defence against the dark arts,’ going on to say that ‘if I don’t pray I am a sitting duck for the enemy.’ This spiritual change that can take place through prayer was described by another leader who said that prayer ‘softens the ground’ and ‘changes the spiritual temperature’ of an area. Another described prayer ‘increasing the spiritual temperature and increasing the prayer life.’

The idea that prayer produced more prayer was an interesting idea, expressed by thirty percent of participants. One said that ‘answered prayer stirs me to pray more.’

Another noted that when they prayed and saw prayers answered, it 'encourages more prayers to be prayed.' A third said that as leader of their movement and as a leader of prayer, 'I am also releasing other people to pray more as well.' It seemed that a number of these movement leaders believed that prayer begets prayer.

Further phrases that were used by the participants about the transformational nature of prayer included the following: 'Prayer changes outcomes;' 'Situations change as I pray;' 'Prayer opens doors to us;' and 'Prayer solicits the kingdom of God.' Others spoke of praying 'to move obstacles;' to 'see the Lord breakthrough;' and 'for breakthrough.' For some, 'miracles of healing and people coming to faith' occurred due to prayer, while for others, prayer 'invites the supernatural to invade the natural' and 'praying with others does build unity.' One made the bold statement that 'prayer has created the impossible.'

If prayer really is transformational as all these leaders believed, then it is understandable why one said that, in their movement, they are 'trying to build a power-house of prayer.' Another said that 'God shapes the world by prayer' and a further participant cited John Wesley's statement that 'God does nothing but in answer to prayer.' All the leaders, to a greater or lesser extent, seemed to know much of this transformational nature of prayer, which was probably why one leader said that prayer will be 'the greatest legacy I leave behind.'

All this data on understandings of prayer can be expressed simply in diagrammatical form. This is represented in Figure 17 below, a bar-chart displaying these six key common understandings of prayer.

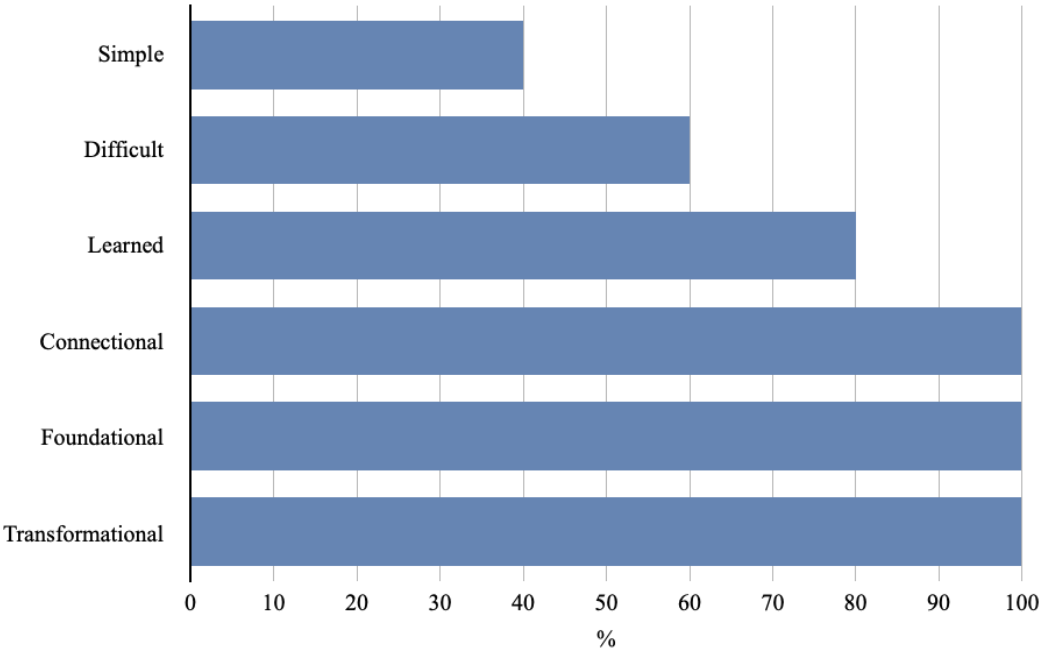

Figure 17. Personal and corporate prayer: Common Understandings

Common Understandings of Personal and Corporate Prayer: Statistical Summary

This is a summary of the research findings on personal and corporate common understandings:

- Forty percent of movement leaders said they and their movements prayed because prayer was *simple*.
- Sixty percent of movement leaders said they and their movements prayed because prayer was *difficult*.

  Forty percent of movement leaders said that prayer was personally difficult.
- Eighty percent of movement leaders said that prayer was *modelled* to them by others.

  Sixty percent learned through mentors.
  Forty percent learned through teaching.
  Forty percent learned through reading.
  Twenty percent learned through praying.
  Seventy percent said prayer in their movement should be modelled by the Senior Leader.
- One hundred percent of movement leaders said they and their movements prayed because prayer was *foundational* to life and ministry.

  Twenty percent said it helped them listen to God.
  Thirty percent said it helped them obey God.
  Forty percent said it helped them partner with God.
  Eighty percent said it helped them depend on God.
- One hundred percent of movement leaders said they and their movements prayed because prayer was *connectional* to God.

  Thirty percent said prayer was powerful.
  Forty percent said prayer was intimate.
  Fifty percent said God responded to and answered prayer.
  Eighty percent said God should be glorified through prayer.
- One hundred percent of movement leaders said that they and their leaders prayed because prayer was transformational.

  Ninety percent said it transformed people.
  Forty percent said it pushed back Satan
  Thirty percent said it released further prayer.

Research Question #3: Description of Evidence

Research Question 3 (RQ #3) asked: **How should this personal and corporate prayer inform the praying of church planting leaders in the North of England?**

The tools used to collect the evidence for this question were: a) the initial background research undertaken on each of the 10 participants, b) the survey undertaken by each of the 10 participants, and c) the interview undertaken on 7 of the 10 participants. However, given the specificity of RQ #3, both the background research and the survey that addressed this question had limited helpful direct evidence, so while all three angles of vision were employed, the interview provided the majority of the evidence, where a specific question was asked addressing RQ #3.

At the interview, all seven interviewees were asked, given their experience and understanding of prayer, what advice they would give to church planting leaders in the

North of England about prayer, in the hope of seeing a movement of church planting in the region. Analysis of those interviews shows that the movement leaders made three main suggestions, based around: 1) lead in prayer; 2) prioritise prayer, and 3) develop a strategy of prayer. Each of these are explored in turn.

Lead in Prayer

When respondents were asked what prayer advice they would give to church planting leaders in the North of England, in the hope of seeing a movement of church planting there, 3 of the 7 interviewees (forty three percent) advised that the church planting leaders should lead in prayer.

One leader felt that they were not qualified to advise, saying: 'I don't feel like I have any special wisdom on [prayer]' but then they immediately added: 'I think that it's something that I just have to *do*.' They had already said, a few moments before, that 'the only thing the Lord said to me, as I arrived, was that you have to lead in prayer.' So, perhaps without realising, they were advising leaders to lead in prayer.

Others were clearer about this and about how it should be done, recommending that leaders pray regularly and follow the direction of the Holy Spirit. One said that Northern leaders must 'follow him where-ever he is directing.' They then clarified this, sharing their insight like some kind of mantra, advising: 'it's prayer and follow the Spirit. Prayer and follow the Spirit.' Another expressed it in this way: 'I would be intentional in setting aside time to pray for the leading of the Spirit. Be intentional in creating spaces that enable the listening of the Holy Spirit in that space. And don't be concerned in that first setting of the size of the prayer meeting. So if that's two faithful individuals who are willing to pray together with you… set that time for prayer.'

One of the leaders who said that church planting leaders should lead in prayer also said they would recommend 'praying in the geographical locations where the Spirit of God is calling you, whether that's over the actual properties or cites or towns or roads or the villages. Just [be] walking in those geographical areas, seeking wisdom, clarity and breakthrough in those spaces.' This leader was an advocate of prayer walking - which was a popular means of prayer for our participants. However, the point made was less about prayer walking as a means of prayer and more about being focussed on the people and places to which God calls, to ensure the focus was Spirit-led and missional. Given that the geographical focus of RQ #3 is regional - on the North of England - that this focussed missional praying should be local and regional can be assumed.

As well as praying regularly and following this leading of the Spirit, two leaders inferred that it would be helpful for the wellbeing of any church - new or old - for the leader to pray for the people entrusted to their care. The respondent who felt they had little or no wisdom to share with others had already said this, commenting at the interview that 'people really like to know that I am praying for them.' Another, when asked about their leadership in prayer of their movement, had said of themselves and their spouse: 'if you were to speak to any of our leaders … I imagine the very first thing they'd say is that we know they're praying for us.' For some of these leaders, then, being a movement leader in prayer was not just about praying missionally but also praying pastorally.

To summarise this section, the research showed that 3 of the 7 leaders interviewed, when asked about praying for church planting in the North of England, advised that leaders should lead in prayer. However, when the 7 leaders interviewed had

previously been asked at interview how important it was that they were a leader in prayer for their movement, all seven answered that it *was* important. As noted in the analysis of RQ #1 and RQ #2, one said that prayer in their movement must be 'modelled through me.' Others said that it shows the team 'that prayer is the highest priority;' that 'it is vital,' and that it is 'my job.' So although only 3 of the 7 leaders specifically advised church planting leaders in the North of England to lead in prayer, the research actually shows that all 7 – i.e. one hundred percent of those interviewed - think that leaders should lead in prayer.

Prioritise Prayer

A second suggestion on how church planting leaders in the North of England might pray, in order to see a movement of church planting in the region, was that the church planting leaders should prioritise prayer, giving prayer their time and attention. Five of the seven people interviewed (seventy one percent) advised this.

One respondent talked of this in terms of prayer walking, giving this advice to Northern church planting leaders: 'What if you just spent half of your time just walking the streets and praying?' Their point was about prioritising prayer, for they went on to say this: 'because you say you're planting a church to reach (your area) but what you're actually spending most of your time and energy doing, is putting on another service.' So, for this leader, the advice was to prioritise prayer over starting a church or a church service. Another leader, recognising how easy it was to be distracted from prayer in the busyness of life and ministry, said that 'you've got to keep prayer central.' This conscious decision and practice of prioritising prayer was summarised well by one participant who said: 'If we could bring the church back to that deep commitment to prayer, and deep commitment to follow what the Spirit says, I think we could see a sea-change in our nation.'

Prioritising prayer in this way was seen in other suggestions made by participants. Two proposed having regular prayer meetings. One, who had advised that leaders should set aside time to pray - even with only two others - went on to say: 'consistently set aside time for prayer. I think that's at minimum a weekly meeting.' They suggested this turns into 'a core group' who 'set aside weekly a corporate time for prayer.' The other said this: 'Right in the planning stage, build in prayer… timetable it.' This suggestion of putting it in the diary, to ensure it happens, shows intentionality and commitment.

A further suggestion made, that would help prioritise prayer, was to identify intercessors who were especially gifted at praying and committed to intercession. This was advised by one respondent, who specifically said that Northern church planting leaders should 'identify the intercessors.' Earlier on at the interview, they had described how, 'when I meet intercessors, I draw them close, so I say, "can you help us intercede for this movement?"'

No interviewee (zero percent) suggested designating a Prayer Leader, despite a number saying they had done this to prioritise prayer in their movement. Also, none (zero percent) advised that some kind of prayer centre, or House of Prayer, be formed for the region, despite two of the participants - who were not interviewed - having historic involvement in such centres, with one saying in their survey that 'I did help found/lead a House of Prayer in my city for 15 years' and the other leading their movement today from such a 24/7 prayer centre.

Implement a Prayer Strategy

A third suggestion of how church planting leaders in the North of England might pray, in order to see a movement of church planting in the region, was that the church planting leaders should develop and implement a prayer strategy. Six of the seven interviewees (eighty six percent) advised this.

For one leader, leading a national movement of church planting in their nation, this was a basic and obvious thing to do. It was the first thing they said should happen: 'have a prayer strategy.' Another leader, who had a church planting strategy for their region said, slightly apologetically at interview, that 'I don't have a prayer strategy' for the region. After pausing they said to me, 'That's an interesting question *(Pause).* I'm thinking we *should* develop a prayer strategy for that, and maybe we should do that potentially in partnership with some other churches, and actually really intentionally do that, because I don't think we really *are* doing that.'

In terms of what such a strategy might look like, no respondent advocated any coherent strategy, but several ideas were generated that could together form such a strategy, and nine of these are as follows:

a) Big Picture. First, one leader mentioned praying for the big picture – for the region of the North of England – saying 'let's go big picture.' When pressed, they expressed it more fully like this: 'what I often find is that people are very limited in their prayers. So they're praying for the logistics of the event, or this, or that, or the other, and I'm saying to them, "let's pray for the big picture of this."' They then went on to say what praying for 'the big picture' of church planting in a region might look like, suggesting: 'Let's pray that actual lives are changed, communities are changed, we see the kingdom of God grow… [for] if logistics all go wrong and those things happen, that's fine.' They summarised this by saying: 'Let's keep it at that vision level, and not worry too much about all the detail, unless the Lord is laying something particular on your heart, in which case I'd go with that.'

b) Vibrant Churches. Second, that same movement leader went on to suggest that the praying should include prayers that each local community in a region has at least one missional church reaching out with the good news of Jesus. They expressed this succinctly by saying: 'Let's pray for vibrant churches in every community.'

c) Against roadblocks. Third, one leader suggested praying against roadblocks. Referring to their movement's planting experience, they said: 'I pray quite a lot at the moment for our next church plant, which has got some road blocks. So we [should] pray specifically for those road blocks' for the region. By 'roadblocks' it is assumed presumably they meant things that get in the way of the planting, which could be very different things depending on the type of plant, the community in which it is to be established, and whether there are any holdups either practically or denominationally.

d) For marginalised people.

Fourth, a leader with much church planting experience said that prayer should include praying for marginalised people. This is what they said: 'I would be encouraging church planters to be feeling the heartbeat of compassion for the North… I think I would be encouraging your church planters to hear God for the community which they want to serve, and to seek the poor. To seek those who are often overlooked when we're thinking about church planting.' They went on to reflect on how growth in their movement had often been 'where the middle classes were; where there were Christian groupings, and we

would gather Christians and therefore it was a success.' They suggested that future measurements of growth and church planting 'success' should reflect ministry in and among marginalised people, with 'success … reoriented towards those measurements.' They spoke with passion about this, urging: 'don't just assume it's white middle-class. Listen to the Spirit. It's good news to the poor. It *is* good news for the poor, so look for those.'

e) Reach individuals. Fifth, two participants mentioned praying to reach individual people with the gospel of Jesus. This was described by one leader like this: 'Get personal … get to know some people and think how desperately they need Jesus. Then … pray more.' Another leader spoke of the importance of 'praying for people of peace' - that is, people who are receptive to you and the good news of Jesus that you carry, as described by Jesus in Luke 10:6. Praying for particular people in this way would ensure that the leaders were themselves sharing their faith and seeing people become Christians, and also guard evangelism from being something just talked and prayed about, as the leaders engage with ordinary people in their communities.

f) With other churches and networks. Sixth, one leader suggested praying with other churches and networks. As a prayer strategy is formulated, they said 'maybe we should do that potentially in partnership with some other churches. and actually really intentionally do that, because I don't think we *are* doing that!'

g) Spiritual Warfare. Seventh, two leaders proposed that praying for the region should involve praying spiritual warfare prayers. One leader was especially insistent that this was crucial, if a movement of planting was to take root, saying: 'there are a few different ways I could say this, but I'll just say it the simplest way that comes to mind - engage in spiritual warfare for this. Believe that there is a battle that's taking place in the heavenlies, and that battle in the heavenlies will have an impact into the way God leads you forward. And so I would be calling in my prophetic friends … [who] are speaking forth and listening.' They went on to say how important this was for them and their movement, reflecting that 'in the last six months, every major spiritual breakthrough has a place of spiritual attack.' They then described several 'bizarre circumstances that happened,' concluding that 'any place where I'm breaking into new territory and winning souls for the kingdom, there'll be specific places of both personal and wider attack.' The need for prophetic prayer cover was, for them, crucial. The other leader, who spoke about spiritual warfare as central to seeing a movement of church planting in the North of England, said that they would recommend contesting with 'principalities and powers.' Earlier in the interview they had explained that they pray 'into the spiritual realm. Renouncing the powers of darkness. Telling the principalities and powers to come under Christ's Lordship, or depart in Jesus' name. That's one of my common prayers that I use quite often.' Later, when asked about praying for church planting in the North of England, they said how tough church planting was, describing some very difficult health issues that some of their young church planters had faced in their personal lives at the start of a recent plant, including Multiple Sclerosis, blindness, and testicular cancer. Their reflection was this: 'We're all smiling. And the guy who's lost his testicle has recovered totally, and he's had the chemo and the radio as well, and he's all good. But imagine if we hadn't prayed regularly?!'

One movement leader who was not interviewed said something very similar in their survey response. In fact, they wrote more in the survey on spiritual warfare than any

other participant, saying things like: 'My first step in starting a new church or training church planting in a new place is to put foot to ground, listen to God, and pray. I travel around the world (3-4xs/year), often with my prophetic partner, and we are always searching for demonic strongholds to tear down in prayer. We have done so all over the world.' Further on in the survey, they wrote: 'I tear down demonic strongholds that hold authority over a city and return authority to the people of God in that place (as led).' Later they added: 'I regularly find places where sinful decisions were made by powerful people in cooperation (knowingly or unknowingly) with demonic temptation and deception in order to gain personally. At such places and times, authority is turned over to the demonic in exchange for money, sex, or glory. I find that place, declare that transaction null and void because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and shut down that portal where the demonic gained access to a people. (you asked). What is shut on earth is shut in the heavenlies.'

h) For revival. Eighth, it was suggested by at least one leader, that if Northern church planters want to see a movement of planting then they should pray for revival. At the interview, they said: 'Let's pray for revival in the North. Let's pray for thousands of people to be turning to Jesus in the North!' A few others spoke similarly about revival, with one leader saying in their survey response that 'in recent years [we have] united with other churches to cry out for revival in (their region).' A further respondent, in the interview, said that they 'hold a loose but hopeful view of prayers of revival.' They went on to explain this further, saying: 'I believe that the Spirit of God desires that our hearts should be revived. I think I'm less concerned about the size of the scope or the emotion of what that looks like, but [I'm] also desiring that I would continue to see that kind of touch of the Spirit of God in the hearts and lives of individuals, and that they know his presence.' In essence, they recommend that leaders pray for a fresh outpouring of God's Spirit and for many hearts and lives to be revived.

i) Keep Persevering. Ninth, and finally, at least two participants said that Northern church planting leaders should pray to keep going in prayer and mission. One leader, as noted above, expressed this by saying: 'Get to know some people. Then … pray more.' This persevering prayer, praying again and again, was important to most of the leaders who participated in this research, being part of the diligent and ongoing disciplined work to which missional disciples are called. Without it, as one movement leader said at the interview, they and the work will struggle, for 'when I don't pray, I burn out.' Another leader picked up this need to keep going, by saying: 'Keep sowing.' They explained this further, by saying: 'have resilience to keep going, and to keep realising that something is happening in the spiritual realm that you cannot see, and have confidence.'

These three main recommendations are summarised and expressed pictorially in Figure 18 below.

Figure 18. Advice to church planters in North of England: Common Recommendations

Gender and Demographic Differences

Before presenting the Summary of Major Findings it is important to take note of any gender and demographic differences found in the research..

Gender Differences

Given that the sample of church planting leaders was small, at ten, and the number of female participants was just three, any conclusions drawn are highly provisional. After categorisation and coding had taken place, the *personal* common rhythms, content, practices, and understandings of prayer were examined by gender.

a) Women. No categories had data coming solely from all three female participants and none from males. Two categories had data coming from two female participants and no male respondents. These were both in *common content* of prayers:

- Two participants said they prayed for social action issues, and both of these were female.
- Two participants said they prayed for revival in their personal prayers, and both of these were female.

A few categories had only one respondent who supplied data coming from a female respondent. These are not noteworthy.

In some categories, all three female participants contributed data to which one or more male participant also provided further evidence. This includes:

In *common rhythms*:

- Three of the four participants who said they were prayerful were female (seventy five percent).

In *common content*:

- Three of the six participants who said they prayed personal prayers of praise and thanksgiving were female (fifty percent).
- Three of the six participants who said they prayed personal prayers of healing were female (fifty percent).
- Three of the seven participants who said they prayed personally for worries and problems were female (forty three percent).
- Three of the seven participants who said they prayed personally for friends and family were female (forty three percent).

In *common practices*:

- Three of the five participants who said they walked while praying their personal prayers were female (sixty percent).
- Three of the six participants who said they sit when praying their personal prayers were female (fifty percent).
- Three of the seven participants who said they prayed with others were female (forty three percent).
- Three of the eight participants who said they fasted in prayer were female (thirty eight percent).

In *common understandings*:

- Three of the five participants who said they prayed because God responds and answers prayer were female (sixty percent).

These matters are of marginal interest, and drawing firm conclusions from such a small sample would not be sensible.

b) Men. No categories had data came coming solely from all seven male participants and none from females. Some categories had data coming only from male participants.

In *common understandings*:

- Six participants said they found prayer difficult` and all were male.

This may be of interest. It raises questions, such as: Why did no women say prayer was difficult? Do women find prayer more natural and easy? Or were the female participants avoiding saying anything on this, for fear of looking weak, in a church planting context dominated by men? Or were the men generally more willing to be vulnerable? These are some of the questions left unanswered by this research.

In *common practices:*

- Four participants said they wrote lists to help them personally pray, and all were male.

In *common rhythms:*

- Three participants said they prayed personal prayers daily for 0-15 minutes, and all were male.
- Three participants said they prayed personal prayers during prayer meetings and all were male.

In *common practices:*

- Three participants said they prayed with a hot drink in hand, and all were male.

- Three participants said they blessed people, and all were male.
- Three participants said they prayed in the context of encounter, and all were male.

In *common rhythms:*

- Two participants said they prayed personal prayers at lunchtime, and both of these were male.
- Two participants said they prayed personal prayers at night, and both of these were male.
- Two participants said they prayed personal prayers seasonally, and both of these were male.

In *common content:*

- Two participants said they prayed personal prayers for disciples and workers, and both of these were male.
- Two participants said they prayed personal prayers for particular people and both of these were male.
- Two participants said they prayed personal prayers for relationships and unity and both of these were male.

In *common practices:*

- Two participants said they turned Scripture into prayer in their personal prayers, and both of these were male.
- Two participants said they rebuked Satan in their personal prayers, and both of these were male.
- Two participants said that dreams were part of their personal praying, and both of these were male.

In a few categories, only one respondent supplied data, which came from a male respondent. These are not noteworthy.

Other than raising questions about male, rather than female, respondents finding prayer difficult, little or no gender difference appeared in the findings of this research.

Demographic Differences

Also considered was whether any data difference between those of differing age demographics resulted. The analysed evidence showed no differences of significance.

Summary of Major Findings

This chapter has described the findings of the research, showing the evidence for each discovery. It has revealed much data. Amongst this detailed information, five major findings stand out as significant.

1. Rhythms of prayer: **Church planting movements are fuelled by regular rhythms of prayer.**

   Their leaders pray daily every morning, and the churches in their movements pray weekly, as part of an intentional rhythm of prayer.

2. Content of prayer: **Church planting movements are sustained by passionate petition.**

Their leaders and churches in their movement pray using various forms, particularly intercession, crying out to God for his kingdom to advance.

3. Practices of prayer: **Church planting movements are catalysed by faithful fasting.**

Their leaders and churches in their movement use a variety of prayer practices, particularly fasting from food.

4. Understandings of prayer: **Church planting movements are envisioned by a missional mindset.**

Their leaders and churches in their movement understand prayer to be central to discipleship and mission, seeing it as foundational, connectional, and transformative.

5. Recommendations for prayer: **Church planters in the North of England, who want to see a movement of planting, should a) lead in prayer, b) prioritise prayer, and c) implement a prayer strategy.**

CHAPTER 5
LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This final chapter concludes the project by synthesising the findings of the research, with some personal reflections. It explains the major findings and is supported by the literature review, aligning with the biblical, theological, historical, social science, and missiological framework of Chapter 2. This leads to some overall implications of this study, explaining how these findings will be used to aid church planting leaders in the North of England who are working and praying to see a movement of church planting emerge that brings significant spiritual and social transformation. The chapter includes a section on limitations, and some unexpected observations discovered during the course of the research, and it makes some final recommendations. It concludes with a postscript, reflecting on the research journey of this project.

Major Findings

First Finding

1. Rhythms of prayer: **Church planting movements are fuelled by regular rhythms of prayer.**

This research has shown that the leaders of growing church planting movements are praying people, and so are the movements they lead. Prayer is central to their spirituality and practiced regularly.

Field research observed that all the leaders (one hundred percent) prayed daily, everyone prayed. Not only that, but they all prayed in the morning. It was so central and important to their faith, that prayer was the initial thing that the majority (seventy percent) did as they began the day, with the remainder (thirty percent) praying at some point in the morning - the first part of the day. By beginning the day in this way, they demonstrated how significant and central prayer was to their lives. Secular journalist and writer Allan Jenkins has shown that what people do in the mornings, especially the first thing, not only shapes the rest of their day but often reveals what they think is important (Jenkins). Observations also showed that the movements these leaders led also prayed in a regular rhythm. This manifested itself in a variety of ways, but the most common and widespread, expressed in ninety percent of the movements researched, was a weekly rhythm of prayer. This regular rhythm was intentional and planned, revealing purpose and priorities. Its significance should not be overlooked.

Literature review of the seventh century renewal leaders Aidan and Hilda similarly showed them to be people who prayed daily, and particularly in the mornings. They prioritised prayer, embracing a pattern often called ‘a rule,’ which became a way of life to them (Lightfoot 46). This rule they passed on to those they trained and to the movement they created in the North of England, as they started new monasteries and churches. Regular daily prayer was essential to their way of life. Social science research from Collins has shown that a disciplined lifestyle is a key characteristic of leaders of successful organisations, which is then reflected in the people of the organisation and the way the organisation conducts itself (Collins and Lazier 155-56). This supports the

findings in the research, that the disciplined rhythms of movement leaders translate into the movements they lead.

The theological foundations explored in the literature review agreed, showing prayer not only to be a thoroughly theological practice but also revealing of theological priorities. That is why Karl Barth wrote that 'The first and basic act of theological work is prayer' (*Prayer* 103). Prayer is central to the Trinity and seen in the ongoing loving conversation within the Godhead. In Christ, people are welcomed into relationship with this Trinity and invited into a regular rhythm of prayer and into a prayerful life (Seamands 12). This is seen in the Bible, and especially in the life of the greatest renewal leader of all, Jesus Christ. Building on the Old Testament foundations of prayer, modelled and taught in the Law and Prophets, Jesus initiated a radical new way of praying that was intimate with his Father - the one he invited us to call *Abba* (Jeremias 81). This relationship was so fundamental to Jesus, that he awoke early to pray (Mark 1:35). He embraced daily rhythms of prayer, calling his followers to do the same, inviting them to pray The Lord's Prayer daily (Matt. 6:11) and, according to Luke, he taught his disciples to 'always pray and not give up' (Luke 18:1). His mother Mary, who after his death was a leader in the movement he founded, seems to have had a similar rhythm of prayer, and was involved in a disciplined rhythm of prayer prior to Pentecost (Acts 1:14). Missiological foundations concur that a disciplined rhythm of prayer is important in both the leaders of movements and in the movements themselves. Bevins shows this in his studies on John Wesley and the Methodist movement of the eighteenth century (Bevins, *Marks* 26), and Garrison similarly has noted the centrality of prayer in broader studies on characteristics of church planting movements (172-73).

In sum, this study has shown that movement leaders pray daily every morning, and the churches in their movements pray weekly, as part of an intentional rhythm of prayer which fuels the movement.

Second Finding

2. Content of prayer: **Church planting movements are sustained by passionate petition.**

Observations during field research showed that the leaders of church planting movements not only prayed regularly but also used a variety of forms, especially petition. While they prayed prayers of adoration and confession and thanksgiving, they all prayed petitionary prayers, crying out to God for various matters, including themselves (*supplication*) and for others (*intercession*). When they did so, they normally prayed with passionate commitment. One described this as praying 'with high energy' and it was sometimes noisy, while for others it involved silence and stillness; what they shared in common was an intentional petition-focus. One common feature of the movements studied is that they all (one hundred percent) prayed intercessory prayers - praying for others. The content of these intercessions, however, was varied, with no distinguishable common comment standing out as especially significant. Instead, they cried out to God for a variety of people, issues, and circumstances. This focussed intercession sustained them in their mission and ministry. Intercessory prayers were the most important thing that they prayed, as they asked God for his help.

These findings were supported by the historical foundations discovered in the literature review of the prayer-life of Aidan and Hilda. These two important Celtic saints

of Northern England prayed a variety of prayers, with petition and intercession being particularly important. Hilda, for example, knew that through 'intercession … in Northumbria … "a heavenly struggle was to take the place of war"' (Ellison 7), with Mitton saying that Aidan and his monastery 'saw themselves as having an intercessory responsibility for the nation' (28). The place of intercession in these seventh century monasteries was important, challenging the contemporary view of how monastic communities should pray. Thomas Merton, for example, argued last century that 'the true spirit of monastic prayer' is contemplative prayer (*Flourishes* 136), which suggests that monasteries should be quiet and even closed spaces for mystics, who are praying *for* the world, but at a distance *from* the world. Aidan and Hilda modelled something very different. Their praying was probably contemplative at times, but it was mainly petitionary and intercessory. It was much more rounded and rooted in real life issues and situations, prayed from a place of hands-on missional engagement. This kind of praying, according to George Hunter III, is praying 'with eyes open' (95).

From a social science perspective, sociologists Giordan and Woodhead have similarly recognised that intercession is a key form of prayer for many individuals and church communities, but that 'contents of prayer … differ considerably' (Woodhead 215).

Theologians of Christian prayer have also noted that while it might vary in content, intercession is normally central to prayer, with Saliers saying that 'Finally, though not exhaustively, prayer is intercession' (31). Widmer agrees, describing intercessory prayer as 'the most Christ-like prayers as they put the needs of others before our own' (529). Grenz's text *Prayer: The Cry for the Kingdom* was particularly helpful, showing that God invites his people to co-labour with him through prayer and action, with petition and intercession being at the heart of human prayer. As people do this, so they are praying for the kingdom of heaven to break into earth, which is why for Grenz, 'Ultimately, all prayer is a cry for the kingdom' (*Prayer* 71). The Bible provides much teaching on prayer, and many examples of prayer, with Jesus telling his followers to intercede for God's kingdom to 'come on earth, as it is in heaven' (Matt. 6: 10). Jesus prayed phrases from this all-embracing prayer throughout his life, especially during his passion - that is the time of his suffering before and during his crucifixion. He showed his followers that intercession is often prayed from a place of weakness (Dunn, "Prayer" 623). The Bible provides glimpses too of Mary praying and pondering and interceding, especially in her *Magnificat* prayer (Luke 1:46-56), as she prays with passion for God's kingdom to come, mirroring phrases from Isaiah 61, which Jesus then picked up in his kingdom manifesto in Luke 4. New Testament scholar David Peterson, looking through a Pauline lens, took note of 'the centrality of intercessory prayer to Paul's theology of mission' (100). Contemporary missiologists such as Steve Addison have also shown that movements today are characterised by people with 'white-hot faith (*Movements that Change* 35) who are committed to prayer and intercession (*Movements that Change* 26, 40, 46).

This study has found, then, that church planting movement leaders and churches in their movement pray using various forms, particularly intercession, crying out to God for his kingdom to advance.

Third Finding

3. Practices of prayer: **Church planting movements are catalysed by faithful fasting.**

The field research of this study showed that the leaders of planting movements used a variety of practices of prayer, as did their movements. When observing the leaders, the most common (eighty percent) was fasting. The other twenty percent who did not mention fasting as a *personal* practice mentioned it as a *corporate* practice of their movements, which means that fasting was a particularly important practice of all (one hundred percent) of the movements. For some, it was practiced much more regularly, and some more sporadically, but all mentioned it as being important. A variety of reasons were given for this, including: 'because it's biblical, and we fast because by setting aside that time, we're saying to God, "you're more important than the daily feeding of our body.'' The participant who made that comment went on to say that, 'There's a humility in fasting which I find really important for spiritual leadership.'

The historical data on Aidan and Hilda concurred with the field research, with Bede describing Aidan fasting two days per week on a Wednesday and Friday, 'except for the fifty days after Easter' (Bede III.5). While we have no explicit evidence of Hilda fasting, historians assume she did for, as Yorke says, private prayer and fasting for sin 'were expected' of all (256). Fasting is a discipline and living a disciplined life, as we have seen from the social science research of Collins, is a trait of exceptional leaders, and so unsurprisingly, this was a practice of most of the moment leaders researched, and of all the growing movements they were leading.

When analysing theological foundations, most theologians and devotional writers on fasting emphasise that fasting is not mechanical with results being guaranteed, and that like all forms of prayer, mystery is part of it (Chavda 41). Nevertheless, fasting has deep theological roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition and beyond (Dugan 539). Fasting is not rooted in a dualistic notion that feeding the body is bad, and feeding the soul is good. Rather, it recognises that learning to say 'no' to natural and God-given hunger-pangs trains our body for discipline (Porter, *Discipline* 24), and causes us to turn those hunger pangs into prayer. Fasting, then, becomes a holistic form of prayer so that, rather than denying the body, instead the hungering body becomes a means and channel of prayer. For this reason, theologian Scot McKnight calls fasting 'body plea' and a form of 'body prayer' (*Fasting* 49). Consideration of biblical foundations revealed that fasting was a common biblical practice of prayer. Jesus highlighted fasting as a basic practice for disciples, assuming that it was practiced by all his followers (Matt. 6:16). Jesus himself practiced fasting (Matt. 4:2); he saw fasting as catalytic, releasing power (Matt. 9:29). No hard evidence is available of Mary fasting, but it was a common practice amongst devout Jews (Walker 44), that continued in the early church (Acts 13:3). As she followed the teachings of Jesus, Mary likely practiced fasting as part of her spirituality. Missiological foundations show that fasting was for a time a neglected form of prayer in most of the western church, with Richard Foster saying he could not find one book written on the subject from 1861 to 1954 (47). It is now more widely practiced across churches in the East *and* West, and recognised by many church planters in the African continent as a key to releasing the power of God and so important in church planting (Akinade, Abstract).

In sum, this study has shown that church planting leaders and churches in their movement use a variety of prayer practices, particularly fasting from food, which is seen as a catalytic practice of prayer.

Fourth Finding

4. Understandings of prayer: **Church planting movements are envisioned by a missional mindset.**

The field research observations showed three main reasons why church planting leaders prayed the way they did: because they considered prayer to be foundational, connectional, and transformational. These are the understandings which envision people to pray for God's mission to advance. It was foundational in that they saw prayer to be central to who they were and what they did. Participants said it helped them grow in 'dependence on' God, in 'partnership with' God, in 'obedience to' God, and to 'listen to' God. It was a basic devotional and missional practice. It was also connectional, in that it caused leaders to 'become aware of God' and to 'feel closer to God.' One leader said that when the churches in their movement prayed 'God is present with us in a significant way.' It was also transformational, in that participants believed that their praying actually changed things. In fact, all those who took part in this research said that - all one hundred percent. This was well summarised in the reply of one movement leader, who said that 'we believe prayer changes everything.'

The literature review of the prayer understandings of Aidan and Hilda supported this three-fold understanding of prayer. Prayer was foundational for Aidan, with Lightfoot showing how his prayerfulness reflected a humble recognition of his need of God (17). Ellison has also shown how Hilda's prayer was basic to her spirituality and mission, for she 'always engaged in establishing observance of the rule of religious life' (6). It was connectional in that prayer enabled Aidan to have 'an ongoing internal conversation' with God (G. Hunter 97), and it was through prayer that Hilda felt close to God, aiding 'the quest for spiritual perfection' (Foot 64). Prayer was also transformational for Aidan, because through prayer he called on God for help (Lightfoot 17), believing it to be 'the key to the mission' (Mitton 111). For Hilda, as she lived a prayerful life, so 'stories of miraculous healings abounded all around her' (Mitton 50). In essence, they both believed prayer made a difference. The literature review of social science research on prayer showed that people still believe this today. That is why many pray and ask for prayer (ap Sion 172ff). Indeed, Kenneth Pargament has shown how belief in prayer can transform the activities of everyday life, charging them with meaning and increasing well-being (Pargament, 1997).

A very similar understanding of prayer was also evidenced in the literature review of prayer's theological foundations. The writings of C. S. Lewis were particularly helpful, especially his explanation that one can believe that prayer actually changes things, without compromising the sovereignty of God or the doctrine of the immutability of God - that is, God's unchanging nature. Lewis stood back and considered the eternal nature of God existing outside of human time. God sees and hears human prayers and they influence his decision-making. While the event has already been decided at the beginning of time, Lewis said that one of the things taken into account in deciding it, 'may be this very prayer we are now offering' (Lewis 53-54). Cullmann agrees, saying that 'God's freedom to hear prayers is built into his plan' (Cullmann 143). This understanding that

prayer actually makes a difference in the world concurs with the biblical foundations of prayer, which also shows prayer to be foundational, connectional, and transformational. Jesus modelled this understanding, showing that as the obedient servant king he needed to pray (Jones 23-24). Jesus' praying connected him with the other members of the Trinity (Seamands 152). Jesus' prayers were transformative, releasing the power of the Spirit and bringing the reign of God's kingdom (Smalley 64). Mary considered prayer to be foundational, praying as 'an obedient response' to God's Word (ARCIC 7). She also considered it to be connectional, providing her with 'an interior union with God' (Green, "Part 1" 2). In addition, prayer was transformational for Mary, providing the means by which God directed the course of holy history (Buby 98). Missiologists agree, seeing God's mission advancing when leaders and the people they lead believe that prayer is effectual. Garrison, for example, has noted this from his research of church planting movements. For Garrison, believing in the power of prayer is central to having a missional mindset (172-73).

In summary, renewal movement leaders and the churches of their movements understand prayer to be central to discipleship and mission, seeing it as foundational, connectional, and transformative. It is this understanding of prayer, combined with their hard work, that envisions the leaders and the movements they lead.

Fifth Finding

5. Recommendations for prayer: **Church planters in the North of England, who want to see a movement of planting, should a) lead in prayer, b) prioritise prayer, and c) implement a prayer strategy.**

This research project aimed to produce data to assist church planting leaders in the North of England. Today, an increasing number of leaders, including me, have begun to plant churches that plant churches. These leaders have a vision for renewal and plans for church planting which they hope will produce, over time and in the name of Christ, a movement of church planting in the region. Key recommendations to Northern church planting leaders are now shared, taking particular note of models of good practice, and prayer lessons learned.

Personal observations were revealing. The data resulting from the field research, evidenced through background research on the participants, their surveys, and especially through asking a particular question at the interview, revealed helpful information and provided three clear and simple recommendations.

The first was that church planting leaders should **lead in prayer.** Not only did a number of those surveyed recommend this, but also the research in general pointed to this, for this is what the leaders did. The fact that they all had a disciplined prayer life, with many seeking to be prayerful, praying regularly and in a variety of ways, petitioning God and fasting, and that they encouraged the people of the churches in their movements to pray, showed that church planting leaders need to do more than plant churches; they need to be people of prayer. One participant, leading a growing movement of planting, summarised this recommendation well at interview, saying 'I am the main prayer champion.'

The second recommendation was that church planting leaders should **prioritise prayer.** This is not easy, with many church planters recognising that they tend to be activists who like to get things done. Stopping to pray can sometimes feel counter-

intuitive and ‘a waste of time,’ but as one participant pointed out, prayer is - in a positive sense - ‘a massive waste of time’! This is a reminder to followers of Jesus and to leaders that the work is not dependent on them, but the Lord. As Psalm 127:1 says, ‘Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain.’ A number of participants recommended at interview that church planting leaders in the North of England, who want to see a movement of church planting, should prioritise prayer. This was well expressed by one leader who said: ‘you’ve got to keep prayer central’ and another who said that ‘prayer is of the highest priority.’

Prioritising prayer, then, leads naturally to the third recommendation for church planting leaders, and that is that they should **implement a prayer strategy**. This is about planning, scheduling, and organising prayer at a personal and corporate level, so it becomes central to strategy rather than an afterthought. A number of participants said this, with one suggesting that leaders should simply gather a few people to pray regularly for their region. In addition, nine suggestions were made about the kind of praying that should be undertaken that would strategically influence a region. These were:

1) praying visionary prayers (for the big picture)
2) praying for vibrant churches in every community
3) praying for roadblocks to shift
4) praying for marginalised people to find faith in Christ
5) praying to reach specific individuals
6) praying with other churches and networks
7) praying spiritual warfare prayers
8) praying for revival in the region
9) praying perseveringly

The participants also realised that followers of Jesus learn to pray by praying, and so believed that a prayer strategy would sharpen and develop over time. The most important thing was to pray. As one movement leader recommended: ‘pray, pray, pray!’

The literature review supported these three recommendations. Aidan and Hilda, although living in a very different cultural era in the North of England, were prayerful renewal movement leaders of their day. They were leaders in prayer, teaching their people to pray and modelling prayer to others. Not only did they introduce a rhythmic ‘rule’ of prayer in their monasteries, but Aidan also prayed while walking along the road, as he discussed the Psalms with colleagues, and as he met people (Bede III.5). They also prioritised prayer. Hilda exemplified this well when establishing a new monastery, for once a new site was found, rather than rushing in to get things started, she instead would claim and cleanse the ground, recognizing the spiritual battle they were in (Adam, *Flame* 61). Whether Aidan and Hilda had a clear prayer strategy is unclear. Perhaps they did, but Bede is silent on the matter. What is certain is that prayer was at the heart of their lives and the movements they led. They saw prayer as strategic and so urged their people to pray. Aidan and Hilda modelled what social science research on leadership demonstrates, which is that leaders influence organisations. Anthony Wallace’s 1956 paper on *Revitalisation* shows this, as does the work of organisational experts Collins and Lazier, who call the relationship between leaders and organisations ‘a multiplier effect,’ because ‘for better or worse - the tone you set at the top affects the behavior patterns of (your) people’ (39). Since 2002, Collins and Lazier have also shown that impactful

organisations are led by leaders with two particular traits: an indomitable will and a humble character (155-56). The participants in the field research, as well as Aidan and Hilda are examples of such leaders.

The theological foundations discussed in Chapter 2 also support these three recommendations. Theology, the study of God, is about human beings following the greatest leader of all - God - and his Son, Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit. While scholars such as Ayers recognise that more work needs to be done on the theology of leadership (27), theological studies on leadership would nevertheless recognise that God raises up human leaders who must lead their people well, prioritise well, and strategise well, and that would apply to prayer as much as any other leadership matter (Beeley 29). The biblical foundations strongly support these recommendations, with Jesus being the ultimate leader in prayer, so much so that his disciples asked him to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1). Jesus prioritised prayer (Mark 1:35) and so it seems did Mary (Luke 2:19; Acts 1:14). Whether or not they had a clearly defined prayer strategy is debatable. Some, such as Cronshaw might argue that The Lord's Prayer is not just a model for prayer (2017), or even a theology of prayer (Barth, *Prayer* 22ff) but is a strategy for prayer. When observing the biblical foundations - and particularly taking note of the master of prayer, Jesus Christ – clearly prayer is best strategized in the Bible by being a prayerful person (Webb). The missiological evidence agrees, with Garrison showing how important it is for movements and their leaders to pray - indeed it is of first priority (172-73) with Addison demonstrating that growing movements are led by apostolic leaders who lead, prioritise, and strategise (Addison, *Pioneering* 12), and that prayer is central to this. In particular Thorpe, who is leading a movement of church planting in the Church of England, urges leaders to build 'a foundation of prayer' (98), that prayer is needed 'through each stage' of planting (107) because 'prayer changes things' (100). He urges leaders to lead in prayer, placing prayer alongside action (177). Most importantly Thorpe says that a church planting leader should not just pray occasionally, but aspire to be 'a person of prayer' (219).

Ministry Implications of the Findings

These findings for church planting leaders in the North of England, who desire to see a movement of church planting in their region, have a number of implications, but the main and obvious one is that they should not just plant churches; they should also pray. This means that church planting on its own is not enough. Action and prayer go together. It means that church planting, like all forms of ministry, requires a spirituality. This spirituality is not 'tagged on' as an afterthought but integral to the process. In short, if leaders want to plant churches that plant churches, they need to become praying leaders.

The three-fold recommendations noted in the previous section are therefore important:

- leaders should lead in prayer,
- leaders should prioritise prayer, and
- leaders should implement a prayer strategy.

These three recommendations are simple; indeed, they are profound in their simplicity. However, to practice them is not easy and will require diligence, intent, and perseverance. As this happens, and others see that prayer is integral to this ministry, so others will also pray, with prayer then becoming embedded in their people and the

communities of the movement. This study has seen this in the movements examined in the field research of this project, as well as in the historical studies of Aidan and Hilda, and in the biblical examples of Mary and - most importantly - of Jesus, who modelled prayerful leadership like no other.

To keep prayer central to ministry in this way also requires a certain type of leader - the kind of leader who is passionate about planting and committed to it, but who also is humble. This humility is displayed not just by the value the leaders place on the people on team - although that is crucial - but also in the way they consistently call on the Lord in prayer and acknowledge their need of God to lead, empower, and equip the work. Jim Collins calls this kind of leader a *Level 5* leader. They are not only competent at the work (level 1), can work in a team (level 2), can manage a team (level 3), can lead teams of teams (level 4), but they also combine a 'paradoxical combination of personal humility and professional will' (*Good to Great* 20).

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation relates to the literature review. The biblical and historical foundations were grounded in two levels of literature: the first being historic texts, and the second being contemporary scholarly research. When examining the historic texts – for example, the gospel accounts written in the first century AD about Jesus and Mary, and Bede's work of the eighth century about Aidan and Hilda – the research questions asked of them in this project are not questions directly addressed in those historic texts. The gospel writers and Bede were mainly recording stories about the lives of people, rather than asking systematic questions about people's prayer lives. As such some of the questions asked in this research find no decisive answer in those historic texts. For example: the bible says nothing of the fasting of Mary of Nazareth. But this did not necessarily mean that Mary did not fast. It simply means that the Bible is silent on the matter. This is where the contemporary scholarship becomes important, for not only has it sought to already ask good research questions of the historic texts, but scholars often address the social background and the common practices of the day, and so a stronger answer to some of the questions can be given. Nevertheless, the scholarship has its limitations. For example, if we return to the question of whether Mary fasted, scholarship presumes that she probably did, as fasting was part of Jewish spirituality at the time. On the other hand, it is possible that she did not. Recognition that some of the scholarly research is speculation, based on best evidence at the time of writing, is important.

Second, this study assumes that the participants in the field research told the truth and gave an accurate account of their prayer lives and that of their movement. Possibly, their evidence was inaccurate or embellished or exaggerated. This could only be tested by finding further voices to comment on the research questions. To discover evidence of the personal prayer lives of the leaders would have not only been difficult but also time-consuming, with information probably only known by those close to them - perhaps a spouse if they were married - or trusted friends or colleagues. This information might at best have been hearsay, picked up by conversation with the leader. As such, I am content that talking to the leaders about their prayer lives was the best way to find out how they prayed. However, it to finding out more information about the praying *of their movements* by gathering further data from, for example, a senior colleague in the

movement, would have been quite possible. That way a wider perspective could have been provided and the accuracy tested of the answers given by the senior leader. This was not possible because of the additional time it would have added to the research, and also because Covid-19 restrictions would have made it more difficult.

Third, the size of the field study was small - with ten participants. Background research was undertaken on these ten movement leaders, and they completed an online survey. They were all invited to be interviewed, and seven responded. The findings of this research project then, are based on the evidence from that group. These findings are not invalidated by the size of the group for they are accurate reflections of the evidence discovered, but those findings would have been presented with even greater confidence if the research group had been, say, fifteen people, or twice as large, at twenty people.

Fourth, a number of questions were not asked in the survey or interview which, on reflection, would have been useful. For example, it would have been interesting to ask:

- How do you define prayer?
- What happens when you pray?

Given that fasting emerged as a core practice of prayer, it would have been good to ask:

- Tell us about your experience and understanding of fasting?

This dissertation has already noted that it would have been helpful to gain a greater understanding of how participants used words in prayer. Questions on this might have included:

- When you pray, how much prayer is spoken out loud? (0-100%)
- When you pray, do you sometimes pray words formed in your mind that are prayed silently to God? If so, how much? (0-100%)
- How much prayer is quiet, simply offering a person or situation to God without forming words? (0-100%)

If I were to do this research again, some or all of these matters would be included, either by asking direct questions, or by expanding the guidance notes to survey questions, such as Q11, which was about personal prayer and asked: ‘How do you pray?’ Having good answers to some or all of these further questions would have sharpened the field research.

Unexpected Observations

This study revealed seven surprising observations.

First, although I had expected that the movement leaders prayed daily, the discovery that they all prayed in the morning was surprising. While aware that many churches encourage followers of Jesus to pray in the morning, I also know that some these days teach people to understand their biorhythms and find the best time for them to pray in the day, which may be in the afternoon or evening (Gatta 158; Rumsey 462). So, discovering that all one hundred percent of the movement leaders researched prayed in the morning was not what was expected.

Second, I was unsure how important fasting would be as a common practice of prayer. I wondered if it might be significant to some, perhaps even most, of the leaders and their movements, but I did not expect to see it practiced in every movement. This is not to suggest that fasting is a so-called ‘silver bullet’ that is key to prayer and breakthrough, but growing movements do seem to fast in some way as part of the

discipline of prayer, which is a practice that has often been overlooked. Further research into the significance of fasting in church planting would be welcome.

Third, I noted that many of the movement leaders enjoyed talking about their prayer lives when being interviewed. As they relaxed and were asked questions, almost all were keen to talk about their habits and practices of prayer. It seemed like they rarely discussed this with anyone, and that they were delighted to share. As such, talking with them about such matters felt like an honour. As I thought about this later, I reflected on *why* these leaders may not often talk about their prayer lives. It could be that they considered personal prayer to be something private, in the sense that it should not be discussed. Indeed, this dissertation has occasionally used the world 'private' interchangeably with the word 'personal' - which could mistakenly be seen to support such a view. Western culture, particularly in its late modernist form in the twentieth century, divided the private from the public (Hampshire 23; Schaeffer 18) so perhaps the church planting leaders subconsciously embraced such a view, seeing personal prayer as something that should not be talked about, for cultural reasons. If this was the case, then that view should be challenged, for such a public/private divide is a false dualism which requires exposure (Newbigin 16-20, 75-94). Alternatively, perhaps leaders said little about their prayer lives because they were seeking to be humble and not parade their spirituality. This would concur with Jesus's teaching on prayer, when he said: 'go into you room, close the door and pray to your Father … who sees what is done in secret' (Matt. 6:6). While such humility is to be lauded, leaders should be aware that Jesus' prayer life must have been sufficiently visible and attractive for his disciples to want to learn from him, which is why they asked him 'Lord, teach us to pray' (Luke 11:1). Jesus did go off privately to pray (Mark 1: 35), but his prayer life was also very public. As a person of prayer, it could be no other way. The example of Jesus therefore challenges all Christian disciples and leaders to be more public and open about prayer.

Fourth, the field research showed that for most of the movement leaders, prayer was both a delight and a discipline. They were pleased to pray, knowing it was how they connected relationally with the living God and most spoke of moments of great intimacy and joy in prayer. At the same time, all spoke of the discipline of prayer and some at interview opened up to say that at times prayer was hard, and that because of that they thought they were not very good at it. Many spoke of the desire to pray more and that they wanted the churches in their movement to pray more. This was because they knew that prayer was foundational, connectional, and transformational. This struggle with prayer that the leaders spoke about may well reflect how many, or perhaps most, disciples of Jesus feel about prayer: they know they should pray more!

Fifth, while there were few silences in the field research that were particularly noteworthy, one did stand out, and that is that none of the ten participants spoke of using The Lord's Prayer either in their personal devotions or in the corporate prayer of their movement. This does not mean The Lord's Prayer was never prayed; it just means that it was not mentioned. This was surprising, given the importance of The Lord's Prayer in biblical scholarship and in the liturgy of many churches, throughout church history and today.

Sixth, I had expected to see some data variations between gender. I did not approach the research with any preconceived notions of what that would be, but I had expected the data to reveal something. As it was, there was little gender variation that

was remarkable. That could be because the sample was small and only three of the ten participants were women. I had hoped that at least one third (thirty three percent) of the field research participants would be female. In the end, this figure was not quite reached, with thirty percent of participants being female. While this is close to the target figure, the small number of female participants would have influenced the data and necessarily limited the ability to compare and contrast according to gender.

Seventh, the literature review of the seventh century monasteries founded by Aidan and Hilda showed them to be very different from many monasteries today. They were formed to be places of prayer and outreach. Their main style of prayer was not contemplation like many contemporary monasteries (Merton, *Flourishes* 136), but petition and especially intercession - praying for others (Adam, *Saints* 49). Trained teams of evangelists and church planters led their outreach, sent out to transform the North of England. As such, they were mission bases, what today might be called 'missional communities,' which might, in time, send a leader to start another monastic mission centre (Simpson, *Aidan* 67). This is what Hilda did - starting new monasteries, or reviving older ones - in order to plant churches. These monastic centres provide historical precedent for the so-called 'resource church' of today, which is a mission base from which new Christian communities are planted (Thorpe). Recognition of seventh century monasteries as an ancient prototype for the contemporary resource church was a surprise.

Recommendations

This research project makes three main recommendations

First, conversations, plans, strategies, and training events relating to church planting should be grounded in prayer. Having a prayer champion to keep prayer central might help, but care should be taken with that, so that it is not perceived that prayer has been contracted out to a specialist. People follow leaders, and so, if leaders want their people to pray, it must start with the leadership.

Second, further research on the relationship between prayer and growing movements of church in the west would be welcome. As noted above, studies on the significance of fasting and growth would be fascinating.

Third, this study has shown how prayer seems integrally linked to the growth of all the renewal movements researched. Other movements not included in this dissertation, such as the monastic movement of the middle to late medieval times, and the Wesleyan movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would, I believe, show a similar link between growth and prayer (Merton, 2018; Bevins, *Marks* 26). As such this research is part of a growing body of evidence that points to the central place of prayer in the growth and renewal of God's church. As many look to see the church grow and be revitalised in the west in the present day, the role of prayer must not be overlooked.

Postscript

This dissertation has brought together three great themes of the historic and contemporary church: prayer, leadership, and church planting. It has shown that church planting movements are led by leaders and churches that are not just strategic, but are

also prayerful. They are working and praying that the mission of God would advance, particularly as churches plant churches that plant churches.

For the last two thousand years, these three themes of prayer, leadership, and church planting have been central to the missional plans and purposes of God's church. Jesus revolutionised prayer and, through his death and resurrection, gave his followers access to the Father by the Holy Spirit, as they cry for God's kingdom to come. Mary and other leaders in the movement Jesus founded knew this. That is why Tertullian (AD155-240), an early church father, urged disciples to pray, saying that prayer

> washes away faults, repels temptations, extinguishes persecutions, consoles the faint-spirited, cheers the high-spirited, escorts travellers, appeases waves, makes robbers stand aghast, nourishes the poor, governs the rich, upraises the fallen, arrests the falling, confirms the standing. Prayer is the wall of faith: her armour defensive or offensive against the foe who keeps watch over us on all sides. And, so never walk we unarmed (Tertullian 691).

Tertullian knew that prayer changed things.

Church history shows that the Spirit of Christ regularly raises up visionary pioneering leaders to help advance God's kingdom. These leaders seek to continue the renewing work of Jesus in their generation. Aidan and Hilda were two such leaders who strategically led the church in the North of England in the seventh century, training new leaders and sending them out to evangelise and plant churches. Behind all their pioneering and training and planting was a deeply prayerful spirituality which was central to their lives and to the movements they founded. The same is true today. Pioneering leaders are being raised up who know they are called to share the good news of Jesus and plant churches that plant churches. In a western context where so many churches are declining and closing, these churches and their leaders stand out as different. What is usually noted is their apostolic gifting, their zealous vision, their strategic action and their hard work (Ott and Wilson), but what is often missed is the centrality of prayer, both in the leaders and in the organisations they lead. This study of ten growing movements and their leaders has shown that prayer is central to them all. This prayer begins in the leader. They model it. This is not surprising, given that communities are highly shaped by those leading them.

Pete Greig is right when he says that, 'The rusty hinge of human history turns out to be the bended knee' (Greig 120). God calls his people not just to action but to *prayerful* action. This research is part of a burgeoning body of evidence which shows that growing movements are praying movements, and praying movements are led by praying leaders.

APPENDIXES

A. Survey and Interview Information
    A1. Research Instrument #1 Protocol – Survey
    A2. Research Instrument #2 Protocol – Interview
B. Informed Consent Letters/Forms
    B1. Survey Invitation Letter to Participants
    B2. Interview Invitation Letter to Participants
    B3. Interview Informed Consent Form
C. Other
    Summary from "Revitalising Movement" by Anthony F.C. Wallace. American Anthropologist, New Series, 58:2 (Apr. 1956): 264-281.

APPENDIX A. Survey & and Interview Information

APPENDIX A1
Research Instrument #1 Protocol – Survey
THE PRAYER LIFE
OF WESTERN MOVEMENT LEADERS and THEIR ORGANISATIONS

Participant selection
A list of participants will be selected by the researcher, with the assistance of a member of the expert panel. To qualify for this group, candidates need to:

- be serving in the Western cultural context
- be the senior leader
- be leading a growing movement
- be either male or female (a minimum of 1/3rd of the participants will be male and a minimum of 1/3rd of the participants female)
- be aged 18-years old, or older.

Some leaders will have contact details that are in the public domain. Others will be personally known to the researcher, who will already have their email addresses. Some may need to be contacted via support staff or PAs. In the UK, the acquiring, holding and disposing of personal contact information such as email addresses is subject to UK GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) with personal information protected under the Data Protection Acts 2018. This study follows the requirements of that legislation.

Those on the list will be sent an email where they will be invited to participate in an important online *Prayer Survey* about their prayer life and the prayer life of the movement they lead.

If participants would like to take part in this study but think they may require permission from a person or Board who oversees them, they will be asked to email the researcher with relevant contact details, and the researcher will first seek their approval.

The survey involves mainly a set of open questions asking for description and opinion, plus a few box-checking, numerical questions to provide background information. It will be designed via Survey Monkey and will contain an informed consent statement through which participants can opt out if they wish (Question 1a.)

The survey contains 10 varied and open questions and should take 20-25 minutes to complete.

Survey Questions
PRAYER SURVEY

Thank you for doing this prayer evaluation. Your feedback is essential for us to understand more of the relationship between prayer and the growth of movements. Please complete the following questions:

Q1: **BACKGROUND**

Question Title 1a. Are you willing to take part in this survey?

- Yes
- No *(Go to end of Survey)*

Question Title 1b. What is your name? *(This information will be held confidentially and is required should you be invited to take part in a follow-up interview)*

Question Title 1c. What is your age?

Question Title 1d. What is the denomination or stream of your church/ organisation?

Question Title 1e. How long have you served in your church/ organisation?

Question Title 1f. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other

Question Title 1g. What is your ethnicity?

(Categories correspond to questions asked in the 2021 UK Census)
*Choose **one** section from A-E, then **tick one box** to best describe your ethnic group or background.*

- A1. WHITE: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- A2. WHITE: Irish
- A3. WHITE: Gypsy/ Irish Traveller
- A4. WHITE: Roma
- A5. WHITE: Other *(please state below)*
- B1. MIXED or MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS: White & Black Caribbean
- B2. MIXED or MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS: White & Black African
- B3. MIXED or MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS: White & Asian
- B4. MIXED or MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS: Other *(please state below)*

- C1. ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH: Indian
- C2. ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH: Pakistani
- C3. ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH: Bangladeshi
- C4. ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH: Chinese
- C5. ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH: Other *(please state below)*
- D1. BLACK, BLACK BRITISH, CARIBBEAN of AFRICAN: Caribbean
- D2. BLACK, BLACK BRITISH, CARIBBEAN of AFRICAN: African background
- D3. BLACK, BLACK BRITISH, CARIBBEAN of AFRICAN: Other *(please state below)*
- E1: OTHER ETHNIC GROUP: Arab
- E2: OTHER ETHNIC GROUP: Other *(Please state below)*

If answered OTHER to any of the above questions on ethnicity, please describe:
(e.g. ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH: Japanese)

Question Title 1g. Data collected from this survey will be kept confidential and will be deleted after one year. Do you give permission for it to be stored for up to three years, should a subsequent book be produced from this research?

- Yes
- No

Q2: YOUR PERSONAL PRAYER: RHYTHMS

Question Title When do you pray?

Guidance
Please include:
- *details of set times in a typical day, week, month and year*
- *how long you pray for*
- *if you are also prayerful through the day (in a less structured way), please describe*

Q3 YOUR PERSONAL PRAYER: CONTENT

Question Title What do you pray about?

Guidance
Please include:
- *for whom do you pray?*
- *what kind of situations?*
- *what forms of prayer do you use? (e.g. adoration; thanksgiving; confession; intercession; etc.)*

- *what do you pray most for your church/organisation?*

Q4: **YOUR PERSONAL PRAYER: PRACTICES**

Question Title How do you pray?

Guidance
Please include:
- *posture(s)*
- *styles (e.g. silence; liturgy; singing; tongues, etc.)*
- *whether fasting is important*
- *whether you hear prophetically from God when praying, and how*
- *whether you pray with others*

Q5: **YOUR PERSONAL PRAYER: UNDERSTANDINGS**

Question Title Why do you pray?

Guidance
Please include:
- *what you think happens when you pray*
- *what you think changes through prayer (e.g. you; others; God; Satan; etc.)*
- *please give examples*
- *how important is seeing personal prayers answered? And does personal answered prayer influence your praying?*

Q6: **CORPORATE PRAYER: RHYTHMS**

Question Title When does your church/organisation pray?

Guidance
Please include:
- *details of set times in a typical day, week, month and year*
- *how long you pray for*
- *who attends*

Q7 **CORPORATE PRAYER: CONTENT**

Question Title When you gather, what do you pray about?

Guidance
Please include:

- *for whom do you pray?*
- *what kind of sitiations?*
- *what forms of prayer do you use? (e.g. thanksgiving; adoration; confession; intercession, etc.)*
- *what do you pray most about?*

Q8: **CORPORATE PRAYER: PRACTICES**

Question Title When you gather, how do you pray?

Guidance
Please include:
- *posture(s)*
- *styles (e.g. silence; liturgy; singing; tongues, etc.)*
- *whether fasting is important*
- *whether you hear prophetically from God when praying, and how*
- *how such meetings are led*

Q9: **CORPORATE PRAYER: UNDERSTANDINGS**

Question Title When you gather, why do you pray?

Guidance
Please include:
- *what do you think happens when you pray together?*
- *what do you think changes through your corporate prayer? (e.g. you; others; God; Satan, etc.)*
- *is testimony of answered prayer important? If so,how is it shared?*

Q10: **PRAYER & YOUR ORGANISATION**

Question Title FINAL QUESTION: How do you think your prayers influence your organisation? Please explain.

APPENDIX A2

Research Instrument #2 Protocol – Interview
THE PRAYER LIFE
OF WESTERN MOVEMENT LEADERS & THEIR ORGANISATIONS

Participant selection

The list of participants will be identical to those selected in Research Instrument #1, selected by the researcher, with the assistance of a member of the expert panel. To qualify for this group, candidates need to:

- be serving in the Western cultural context
- be the senior leader
- be leading a growing movement
- be either male or female (a minimum of 1/3rd of the participants will be male and a minimum of 1/3rd of the participants female)
- be aged 18-years old, or older
- have completed the online questionnaire.

Having completed the online Prayer Survey, the participants will be sent an email where they will be invited to participate in an online interview that clarifies answers given in the Prayer Survey as well as gives further feedback for the training that they received. They will be offered an informed consent statement to sign through which participants can opt out if they wish. The interview will be conducted either by phone or on the Zoom online platform and will be recorded. It will take between 30-45 minutes.

Primary Questions

Thank you for completing the Prayer Survey.

1. I would like to ask about your prayer life.

   a) In particular, which is your preferred style of prayer and why?

   b) How did you learn to pray? Who or what experiences formed your convictions and methods of prayer?

   c) What role have God-encounters in prayer played in your ministry?

   d) Did you have an encounter with God in prayer, which involved being called into ministry?

2. I would like to ask about prayer and the growth of your movement.

   a) Has prayer played a part in helping your organisation grow?

   b) What role have God-encounters in prayer played in the direction and growth of your church/organisation?

3. I would like to ask you about the role of leadership in shaping organisations.

a) How do think leaders shape organisations?

b) How have you sought to do this?

c) How important is it that the leader is a leader in prayer?

d) Has your praying shaped the praying of your organisation? If so, how? Any examples?

e) If you were to plant churches in the North of England, hoping to see a movement of church planting:

i) how would you pray?
ii) why would you pray in this way?
iii) would you pray similarly to how you pray today, or differently?
iv) please explain iii)

4. Was anything on the survey not clear, or is there anything else you would like to add?

Additional prompts that can be offered by the Researcher

- The Researcher can read out any of the definitions included in the Project Description.
- Repeating the end of a sentence with a question intonation (e.g., "So people fellow leaders?")
- Non-verbal prompts (e.g., "Uh hum").
- "Can you say more?"
- "Tell me more."
- "Did that work well?"
- "Can you give any examples?"
- "What's your opinion?"
- "How would you do that?"
- "How have you done it differently?"
- "Why do/did you do that?"
- "How do you learn to do that?"
- "What aspects of that do you think are most important?"
- "How have you seen that done well?"
- "When was that?"

APPENDIX B. Informed Consent Letters/Forms

APPENDIX B1. Survey Invitation Letter to Participants

This email is for participants doing the online Survey.

Subject: The Prayer Life of Movement Leaders and their Organisations

Dear N,

PRAYER RESEARCH 2021

I would like to invite you to take part in a Doctor of Ministry research study that I am conducting with Asbury Theological Seminary. You are being invited because you are someone leading a movement of significance in the contemporary church.

This is important research, seeking to understand the prayer life of renewal movement leaders today – identifying when, what, how, and why they pray, and also when, what, how, and why the movement they lead prays.

If you are willing to be involved, I invite you to complete a 10 question Prayer Survey, asking about your prayer life and the praying of the movement you lead. Most of the questions are descriptive in nature and include *Guidance* to assist. Please answer honestly and include any information you think is helpful and relevant. The survey is online, and so can be accessed at any time convenient to you. The survey should take about 20-25 minutes to complete. Your identity will be kept confidential.

If you would like to take part in this study but think you may require permission from a person or Board who oversees you, please email me at matthew.j.porter@asburyseminary.edu with their contact details and I will first seek their approval.

When the surveys have been completed, a smaller number of participants will be invited to take part in a recorded Zoom or telephone interview with me for about 20 minutes, to follow up on some of the questions in a little more detail. While I will do all I can to preserve confidentiality, you may be aware there is minimal risk that Zoom security will be breached so I cannot guarantee full Zoom confidentiality. If you are selected, you will be contacted at a later date and be invited to take part. If you are willing, that interview will take place at a mutually convenient time.

There is no financial compensation for participating in this research, although we hope those who participate will feel they have contributed to an important study.

If something makes you feel uncomfortable in any way while you are answering the survey questions, please contact me at matthew.j.porter@asburyseminary.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 other questions about the research study, please contact me at the same email address.

When you begin the online survey, you will be invited to indicate your consent to the above and that you are willing to be involved in this study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not follow the link. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be upset if you do not want to take this forward or even if you change your mind later.

Take the online survey: Click here

With many thanks.

Matthew Porter
Vicar, The Belfrey, York
(resource church leader; author of books including *A-Z of Prayer*; doctoral candidate)

APPENDIX B2. Interview Invitation Letter to Participants

This email is for participants selected for interview.

Subject: The Prayer Life of Movement Leaders and their Organisations

Dear N,

PRAYER RESEARCH 2021

Thank you for completing recently the online Prayer Survey. This important research seeks to understand the prayer life of renewal movement leaders today – identifying when, what, how, and why they pray, and also when, what, how, and why the movement they lead prays.

When you were invited to take part in the survey, you were informed that a smaller number of participants would be invited to take part in a recorded Zoom or telephone interview with me for about 20 minutes, to follow up on some of the questions in a little more detail. You have been selected for this, so please can you reply to this email and let me know if you are willing, or not willing to participate. If you are willing, you will be asked to give informed consent and then a time for the interview will be arranged at a mutually convenient time.

There is no financial compensation for participating in this research, although we hope those who participate will feel they have contributed to an important study.

Like the survey, during the interview 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 other questions about the research study please contact me at matthew.j.porter@asburyseminary.edu

Please be aware that the identity of all participants in this survey will be kept confidential. It is hoped that this research will be significant, helping understand better the relationship between prayer and the growth of movements.

With many thanks.

Matthew Porter
Vicar, The Belfrey, York
(resource church leader; author of books including A-Z of Prayer; doctoral candidate)

APPENDIX B3. Interview Informed Consent Form

Prayer Survey 2021

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Thank you for agreeing to take part in a follow-up interview, following your participation with Asbury Theological Seminary.

As previously indicated, the interview will be conducted using Zoom, or if you would prefer on the telephone. This will be recorded in order to capture the information discussed. A video and/or transcript copy will be made available to you. Your identity will be kept confidential in the research and will only be seen by myself, but I might quote you using your role in a general way so as not to disclose your identity. Once the research is completed, I will keep the original data files electronically for no more than one year after the dissertation is written and approved, or up to three years if a book project is forthcoming, and then all data will be destroyed.

If something makes you feel uncomfortable in any way while you are in this study, please contact me at matthew.j.porter@asburyseminary.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 me.

Please indicate your consent to the above and your willingness to participate in this study by signing the consent statement below. If you do not want to be in the study, simply click no and you will exit the survey. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be upset if you do not want to take this forward or even if you change your mind later. By progressing, you agree that you have been told about this study, why it is being done and what to do.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Porter
Vicar, The Belfrey, York
(resource church leader; author of books including A-Z of Prayer; doctoral candidate)

I volunteer to participate in the study described above by interview ☐ *(please check)*

I have completed the online survey ☐ *(please check)*

Your signature: …….. *(write or type)*

Date: ……..….

Please print your name: ……..…

Please return this form to me by email at matthew.j.porter@asburyseminary.edu (or by post to …). Thank you.

APPENDIX C

Summary from "Revitalising Movements" by Anthony F.C. Wallace. American Anthropologist, New Series, vol. 58, no. 2, Apr. 1956, pp. 264-81.

SUMMARY (279-80)

'This programmatic paper outlines the concepts, assumptions, and findings of a comparative study of religious revitalization movements. Revitalization movements are defined as deliberate, conscious, organized efforts by members of a society to create a more satisfying culture. The revitalization movement as a general type of event occurs under two conditions: high stress for individual members of the society, and disillusionment with a distorted cultural *Gestalt*. The movement follows a series of functional stages: mazeway reformulation, communication, organization, adaptation, cultural transformation, and routinization. Movements vary along several dimensions, of which choice of identification, relative degree of religious and secular emphasis, nativism, and success or failure are discussed here. The movement is usually conceived in a prophet's revelatory visions, which provide for him a satisfying relationship to the supernatural and outline a new way of life divine sanction. Followers achieve similar satisfaction of dependency in the charismatic relationship. It is suggested that the historical origin of a great proportion of religious phenomena has been in revitalization movements.'

WORKS CITED

Adam, David. *Aidan, Bede, and Cuthbert: Three Inspirational Saints.* London: SPCK, 2006.

---. *Flame in my Heart: St Aidan for Today.* London: Triangle, 1997.

Addison, Steve. *Movements that Change the World: Five Keys to Spreading the Gospel.* Smyrna, DE: Missional Press, 2009.

---. *Pioneering Movements: Leadership That Multiplies Disciples and Churches.* Leicester: IVP, 2015.

---. *The Rise and Fall of Movements: A Roadmap for Leaders.* 100M Publishing, 2019.

Akinade, Akintunde E. "Holy Dilemma: Engaging Prayer and Power in African Pentecostalism." *Journal of World Christianity*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2020, pp. 147–69.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "There is no such thing as Western Culture." *The Guardian*, 9 Nov. 2016. www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/09/western-civilisation-appiah-reith-lecture. Accessed 7 Apr. 2022.

ap Siôn, Tania. "Prayer Requests in an English Cathedral, and a New Analytic Framework for Intercessory Prayer." *A Sociology of Prayer*, edited by Giuseppe Giordan and Linda Woodhead, Ashgate, 2015, pp. 169-90.

ARCIC (Anglican and Roman Catholic International Commission) Agreed Statement. *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ.* Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2005.

Ayers, Michale. "Toward a Theology of Leadership." *Journal of Biblical Perspectives In Leadership*, vol. 1, no. 1, Fall 2006, pp. 3-27.

Azari, Nina P., et al. "Neural Correlates of Religious Experience." *European Journal of Neuroscience*, vol. 13, no. 8, 2001, pp. 1649-52.

Barrow, Julia. "Chapter 8: Oswald & the Strong Man Armed." *The Land of the English Kin* edited by Alexander Langlands and Ryan Lavelle, Brill's Series on the Early Middle Ages, 26, Online Publ. 2020, pp. 183-96.

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics: Vol. II: The Doctrine of God: Part 1*. Translated by Johnston Haire. Knight and Parker; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957.

---. *Prayer (50th Anniversary Edition).* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.

Bauckham, Richard. *Jude and the relatives of Jesus in the Early Church.* Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990.

Bauer, Nancy. "Abbess Hilda of Whitby: All Britain was Lit by her Splendour." *Medieval Women Monastics*, edited by Miriam Schmitt and Linda Kulzer, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996, pp. 13-31.

Beckford, Robert. "Christianity: A History – Dark Ages." Channel 4 UK TV broadcast 23 Jan. 2009. www.vimeo.com/16058197. Accessed 20 Nov. 2020.

Bede. *A History of the English Church and People*. Translated by Leo Sherley-Price. London: Penguin, 1955, 1988.

Beeley, Christopher. "Theology and Pastoral Leadership," *Anglican Theological Review*. vol. 91, no. 1, 2009, pp. 11-30.

Bevans, Stephen. "Wisdom from the margins: Systematic theology and the missiological imagination." *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America*, 56, 2001, pp.21-42.

Bevins, Winfield. *Church-Planting Revolution.* Franklin, TN: Seedbed Publishing, 2017.

---. Lecture on 'Movements, Networks and Institutions.' DMin Course, Asbury Theological Seminary, 14 Sept. 2021.
---. *Marks of a Movement.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan 2019.
Bitesize, B.B.C. www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf626yc/revision/2d. Accessed 16 Mar. 2022
Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Psalms.* Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1970.
Bradley, Ian. *The Celtic Way.* London: Darton Longman and Todd, 1993.
Brierley Consultancy. www.brierleyconsultancy.com. Accessed 18 Mar. 2022.
"About this Journal." *Journal of the American Society of Missiology*. journals.sagepub.com/home/mis. Accessed 17 Apr. 2022.
Brown, Callum. *Postmodernism for Historians.* Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2005.
---. *The Death of Christian Britain.* Abingdon: Routledge, 2001.
Brown, Michelle P. "Bede's Life in Context." *The Cambridge Companion to Bede,* edited by Scott DeGregorio, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, Ch.1.
Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Colossians to Philemon and to the Ephesians.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984.
---. "The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles." *Interpretation: A Journal of Biblical Theology*, vol. 27, no. 2, Apr. 1973, pp. 166-83.
Bruce, Steve. *British Gods: Religion in Modern Britain.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
---. *Religion in the Modern World: From Cathedrals to Cults.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
Brueggemann, Walter. *Great Prayers of the Old Testament*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.
Buby, Bertrand. "Mary, a Model of Ecclesia Orans, in Acts 1:14." *Marian Studies*, vol. 35, no. 12, 1984, pp. 87-99.
Butler, Christopher. *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
Calabro, David. "Nonverbal Communication in the New Testament." *New Testament History, Culture, and Society: A Background to the Texts of the New Testament*, edited by Lincoln Blumell, Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2019, pp. 555-72.
Canales, Arthur David. "Mary of Nazareth." St Mary's Press. www.smp.org/dynamicmedia/files/67270a1eefafe0f8457d559592c79a4f/TX001252_1-Background-Mary_of_Nazareth.pdf PDF Download.
Carson, Don. *The Gospel according to John.* Leicester: IVP, 1991.
Chavda, Mahesh. *The Hidden Power of Prayer and Fasting: Releasing the Awesome Power of the Praying Church.* Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 1998.
Church Growth Resourcing. *City Centre Resource Churches: A Guide.* Mission Bulletin, June 2015.
Clark, Jonathan. *Our Shadowed Present: Modernism, Postmodernism, and History.* London: Atlantic Books, 2003.
Clement of Alexandria. *The Stromata, Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol.2*. Peabody, MA: Hendickson,1885, 1995.
Clowney, Edmund P. "The Biblical Theology of Prayer." *Teach us to Pray,* edited by D. A. Carson, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990. 136-76.

---. *The Church.* Leicester: IVP, 1995.
Coggan, Donald. *The Prayers of the New Testament.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1967.
Collins, Jim. *Good to Great.* London: Random House, 2001.
---. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors.* London: Random House, 2006.
Collins, Jim, and Bill Lazier. *BE 2.0: Turning Your Business into an Enduring Great Company.* London: Random House, 1998, 2020.
"The Rule of Columba" *The Society of St. Columba*, st-columba.com/the-rule-of-st-columba/. Accessed 14 Mar. 2022.
Cox, Harvey. *The Secular City.* London: SCM Press, 1965.
Cronshaw, Darren. *Dangerous Prayer.* Carlisle: Paternoster, 2017.
Cullmann, Oscar. *Prayer in the New Testament.* London: SCM Press, 1995.
Cunningham, John. *The Church History of Scotland*. London: Adam & Charles Clark, 1859.
Cross, J. E. "A Lost Life of Hilda of Whitby: The Evidence of the Old English Martyrology," ACTA VI (1982, 1979), 34.
Cyril of Jerusalem. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol.7*: *Catechetical Lectures.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1885, 1995.
Davie, Grace. *Europe: The Exceptional Case: Parameters of Faith in the Modern World.* London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2002.
---. *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1994.
Davies, Oliver, and Thomas O'Loughlin. *Celtic Spirituality.* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000.
Davies, R. E. *I will pour out my Spirit: A History and Theology of Revivals and Evangelical Awakenings.* Tunbridge Wells: Monarch, 1992.
DeGregorio, Scott, editor. *The Cambridge Companion to Bede.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
Denison, Barbara Jones. "Hilda of Whitby (614-680): Unexpected Leadership by the "Mother of Bishops," in Barbara Jones Denison, ed. *Women, Religion, and Leadership: Female Saints as Unexpected Leaders*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2018, 15-32.
Denzin, Norman K. *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods.* Pisctaway, NJ: Aldine Transaction, 1970, 2009.
Denzin, Norman K. & Lincoln, Yvonna S. (eds). *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* 3rd edition. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2005.
Diani, Mario. "The Concept of Social Movement," *The Sociological Review*, 1 Feb 1992, doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.1992.tb02943.x. Accessed 17 Mar. 2022.
Driver, S. R. *The Book of Genesis*. London: Methuen, 1904, 1938.
Dugan, Kathleen M. "Fasting for Life: The Place of Fasting in the Christian Tradition." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 63, no. 3, Autumn 1995, pp. 539-48.
Dumville, David N. *The Textual History of the Welsh-Latin 'Historia Brittonum'* vol.1. 1975. Edinburgh U, PhD dissertation.
Dunn, J. D. G. *Jesus and the Spirit.* London: SCM Press, 1975.
---. "Prayer." *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, edited by Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall, Leicester: IVP, 1992.

Earls, Aaron. "Seven Encouraging Trends of Global Christianity," *Lifeway Research*, 31 Jan. 2022. https://research.lifeway.com/2022/01/31/7-encouraging-trends-of-global-christianity-in-2022/. Accessed 19 Mar. 2022.

Ellicott, Charles John. *The Gospel according to St Mark* London: Cassell & Co, 1897.

---. *The Gospel according to St Luke.* London: Cassell & Co, 1897.

---. *The Gospel according to St John.* London: Cassell & Co, 1897.

Ellison, Clare. *St. Hilda of Whitby.* Farnworth: Catholic Printing Co. of Farnworth, 1964.

Farley, Harry. "Young more likely to pray than over-55s – survey." *BBC News*. 4 Oct 2021, www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-58681075. Accessed 16 Mar. 2022.

Farrell, Marie T. "Mary, Our Mentor in Prayer," Compass (2013): 39-44.

Fiddes, Paul. *Participating in God.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2000.

Finney, John. *Recovering the Past: Celtic and Roman Mission.* London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1996.

Fee, Gordon D. *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984, 1988.

---. *Paul's Letter to the Philippians.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.

Fletcher, Richard. *The Conversion of Europe: From Paganism to Christianity 371-1386 AD.* New York: HarperCollins, 1997.

Foot, Sarah. "Church and Monastery in Bede's Northumbria." *The Cambridge Guide to Bede*, edited by Scott DeGregorio, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 54-68.

Ford, David F. *Theology: A Very Short Introduction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Fournier, Keith. *The Prayer of Mary.* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005.

France, R. T. *Divine Government.* London: SPCK, 1990.

---. *Matthew.* Leicester: IVP, 1985

---. "Old Testament Prophecy and the Future of Israel: A Study of the Teaching of Jesus." *Tyndale Bulletin*, vol. 26, 1975, pp. 53-78.

Frie, Roger, editor. *Understanding Experience: Psychotherapy & Postmodernism.* Abingdon: Routledge, 2003.

Garlick, Phyllis. *Pioneers of the Kingdom Part 1.* Jacksonville, FL: The Highway Press, 1941.

Garnett, Jane, et al., editors. *Redefining Christian Britain.* London: SCM Press, 2006.

Garrison, David. *Church Planting Movements.* Midlothian, VA: WigTake Resources, 2004.

Gatta, Julia. *Life in Christ: Practicing Christian Spirituality.* New York: Church Publishing, 2018.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures.* New York: Basic Books, 1973.

Genova, Carlo. "Prayer as Practice: An Interpretative Proposal." *A Sociology of Prayer*, edited by Giuseppe Giordan and Linda Woodhead, Farnham: Ashgate, 2015, pp. 9-24.

Gerlack L.P., and Hine V. H. *People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation.* Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970.

Giordan, Giuseppe. "You Never Know. Prayer as Enchantment." *A Sociology of Prayer*, edited by Giuseppe Giordan and Linda Woodhead, Farnham: Ashgate, 2015, pp. 1-8.

Glatz, Carol. "Surge in online Google searches for 'Prayer'," *The Tablet*, 03 April 2020. www.thetablet.co.uk/news/12707/surge-in-online-google-searches-for-prayer-. Accessed 10 Mar. 2022.

Goodhew, David, editor. *Church Growth in Britain.* Farnham: Ashgate, 2012.

---. *London: The Desecularisation of the City*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2018.

Grace, Nancy Kay. Blog. www.nancykaygrace.com/about-nancy/. Accessed 24 Mar. 2022.

Graef, Hilda. *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion.* London: Sheed and Ward, 1963, 1965.

Greig, Pete. *Dirty Glory.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2016.

Green, Jack, "Mary: The Model Disciple – Introduction," *Catholic Outlook*, 13 July 2017. www.catholicoutlook.org/mary-model-disciple-introduction. Accessed 4 Sept. 2020.

Green, Jack, "Mary: The Model Disciple – Part 1 Mary at Prayer," *Catholic Outlook*, 20 July 2017. www.catholicoutlook.org/mary-model-disciple-part-mary-prayer/. Accessed 4 Sept. 2020.

Gregory of Nanzianzen. *Patrologia Graeca*, edited by J.P. Migne, Paris, 1857-1866, I.1.18, pp. 480-87.

Grenz Stanley. *Beyond Foundationalism.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

---. *Prayer: The Cry for the Kingdom.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988, 2005.

---. "The Spirit and the Word: The World-Creating Function of the Text." *Theology Today* 57:3 (2000): 357-374.

---. *Theology for the Community of God.* Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994.

Gross, Rachel B et al. *New Directions in the Study of Prayer: Scientific, Social Scientific, Ethnographic, and Theoretical Perspectives*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Grudem, Wayne. *1 Peter*. Leicester: IVP, 1988.

Gunkel, Hermann, Muilenburg, James and Horner, Thomas, M. *The Psalms: A form-critical introduction.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967.

Hagner, Donald A. *Word Biblical Commentary: Matthew 1-13, vol. 33A,* Dallas, TX: Word, 1993.

Hampshire, Stuart. *Public and Private Morality.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

Hauerwas, Stanley. *Matthew.* London: SCM Press, 2006.

Henriques, Gregg. "What is Metamodernism?" *Psychology Today,* 17 Apr. 2020. www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/theory-knowledge/202004/what-is-metamodernism. Accessed 16 Mar. 2022.

Hertel, Bradley R., and Nelson, Hart M. "Are we entering a Post-Christian era?" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* vol. 13, no. 4, Dec. 1974, pp. 409-19.

Herzfeld, G., editor. *An Old English Martyrology*, Early English Text Society, 116, London: Kegan. Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1900, pp. 206-08.

Hills, Nancy. "Creativity: Simplicity, Constraint & Occam's Razor," *Blog*, 1 Mar. 2020. www.artistsjourney.com/blog/creativity-simplicity-constraint-occams-razor. Accessed 7 Apr. 2022.

Hirsch, Alan. *The Forgotten Ways.* Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006, 2016.

Holder, Arthur G. "Bede and the New Testament." *The Cambridge Companion to Bede*, edited by Scott DeGregorio, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, Ch.10.

Hollis, Stephanie. *Anglo-Saxon Women and the Church.* Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1992.

Hooker, Morna D. *The Gospel according to St. Mark.* London: A&C Black, 1991.

Hooker, Morna, and Frances Young. *Holiness and Mission.* London: SCM Press, 2010.

Horst, Pieter W, van der. "Silent Prayer in Antiquity." *Numen*, vol. 41, no.1 Jan. 1994, 1-25.

Howell, Brian M., and Jenell Williams Paris. *Introducing Cultural Anthropology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.

Hunter, George G., III, *The Celtic Way of Evangelism.* Abingdon Press, 2000, 2010.

Hunter, W. B. "Prayer." *Dictionary of Paul and his Epistles*, edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin,., and Daniel G. Reid, , Leicester: IVP, 1993.

Jackson, Kelly F., and David R. Hodge. **"**Research on Social Work Practice." *Sage Journal*, vol. 20, no. 3, May 2010, pp. 260-70.

Jalil, Mazhar, editor. *The Abrahamic Encounter.* Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2016.

Jenkins, Allan. *Morning.* London: Fourth Estate, 2019.

Jeremias, Joachim. *The Prayers of Jesus.* London: SCM Press, 1967.

Jerome. *The Perpetual Virginity of Blessed Mary.* Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, vol.6, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1885, 1995.

Jones, Mark. *The Prayers of Jesus.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019.

Jonquière, Tessel M. *Prayer in Josephus*. Leiden: Brill 2007.

Josephus. "Antiquities." *Josephus: The Complete Works*, edited by Ernst Wedland, Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1960.

Jung, Kyu Nam. "Prayer in the Psalms." *Teach us to Pray*, edited by D. A. Carson, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1990, pp. 35-57.

Keener, Craig S. *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.

---. "Jesus' prayer for disciples. John 17:1-26." azbyka.ru/otechnik/world/the-gospel-of-john/31. Accessed 11 Mar. 2022.

---. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament.* 2nd ed., Leicester: IVP, 2014.

Keller, Timothy. *Center Church.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012

---. *Prayer*. Leicester: IVP, 2014.

Kreider, Alan. *The Patient Ferment of the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic 2016.

Ladd, George Eldon. *A Theology of the New Testament.* Cambridge: Lutterworth 1974.

Ladd, Kevin L. "The Science of Prayer: Opportunities and Limits," John Templeton Foundation, April 2021, pp. 1-32.

Langford, Thomas, A. "Theology and Prayer." *The Christian Scholar*, vol. 44, no. 3, Fall 1961, pp. 253-58.

Laubach, Frank. *Letters to a Modern Mystic.* London: Form, 2021.

Lawrence, Brother. *The Practice of the Presence of God.* Hendrickson: Peabody, MA, 2004, 2010.

Lewis, C. S. *How to Pray.* London: William Collins, 2018.

Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Leaders in the Northern Church.* London: Macmillan & Co, 1892.
Lings, George, and Stuart Murray. *Church Planting: Past, Present, and Future.* Cambridge: Grove, 2003.
Longman, Tremper, III, and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.
Lovelace, Richard. *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal.* Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1979.
Lutz, Antoine, et al. "Attention Regulation and Monitoring in Meditation." *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, vol. 12, no. 4, 2008, pp. 163-69.
MacArthur, John. *Spiritual Gifts.* Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1985.
Macquarrie, John. *Mary for All Christians.* London: William Collins, 1990.
---. *Paths in Spirituality.* London: SCM Press, 1972.
McCarty, V.K. "Abbess Hilda: Shining Light of the Northumbrian Renaissance." www.academia.edu/42331493/_Abbess_Hilda_Shining_Light_on_the_Northumbrian_Renaissance._pp. 1-17. Accessed on 4 Dec. 2020.
McConville, J. G. *Chronicles.* Edinburgh: St Andrew Press, 1984.
McKnight, Scot. *The Letter to the Colossians.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018.
---. *Fasting.* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2010.
McNamara, Jo Ann. *Sisters in Arms: Catholic Nuns Through Two Millennia.* Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1996.
Magnusson, Magnus. *Lindisfarne: The Cradle Island.* Abingdon: Routledge, 1984
Marshall, Howard I. *The Epistles of John.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978.
---. *The Gospel of Luke.* Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978.
Martin, Ralph P. "Aspects of Worship in the New Testament Church." *Vox Evangelica*, vol. 2, 1963, pp. 6-32.
---. *Worship in the Early Church.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964, 1974.
Mauss, Marcel. *On Prayer.* Yale, CN: Howard Morphy, 2003.
Merton, Thomas. *The Climate of Monastic Prayer.* Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 1969, 2018.
Merton, Thomas. *Where Prayer Flourishes.* London: Canterbury Press, 1969, 2018.
Millar, J. Gary. *Calling on the Name of the Lord: A Biblical Theology of Prayer,* New Studies in Biblical Theology 38, Leicester: IVP, 2016.
Millar, Sandy. *Prayer Ministry Training Manual.* Alpha North America, 1999.
Miller, Paul E. *A Praying Life.* Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2017, 2019.
---. *J Curve.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2019.
Miller-Hardie, Sylvia, "Prayer in the Life of Jesus." Study Leave Paper 2012, www.knoxcentre.ac.nz/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/2012-Apr-Miller-Hardie-S-Prayer-in-the-Life-of-Jesus.pdf. Accessed 11 Mar. 2022.
Missler, Chuck. 'The Mystery Woman: An Overlooked Mystery?' www.khouse.org/articles/2001/335/. Accessed 5 Apr. 2022.
Mitton, Michael. *Restoring the Woven Cord: Strands of Celtic Christianity for the Church Today.* Abingdon: Bible Reading Fellowship, 1995, 2019.
Moltmann, Jurgen. *The Trinity and the Kingdom.* New York: Harper & Row, 1981.
Morris, Leon. *Luke.* Leicester: IVP, 1874, 1988.

Morse, Michael A. *How the Celtics Came to Britain.* Cheltenham: The History Press Ltd, 2005.
Mowinckel, Sigmund. *The Psalms in Israel's Worship,* translated by D.R. Ap-Thomas. Blackwell: Oxford, 1962.
Nardi, Peter M. *Doing Survey Research.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 2003.
Nennius. *History of the Britons.* Translated by J. A. Giles. London: Book Jungle, 2008.
Newberg, Andrew, et al. "The Measurement of Regional Cerebral Blood Flow During Glossolalia: A Preliminary SPECT Study." *Neuroimaging*, vol. 148, no. 1, 2006, pp. 67-71.
Newbigin, Lesslie. *Foolishness to the Greeks.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986.
Office of National Statistics: "2011 Census." www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census. Accessed 7 Apr. 2022.
O'Loughlin, Thomas. "The Missionary Strategy of the Didache." *Transformation*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2011, pp. 77–92.
Origen. *Origen.* Translated by J.J. O'Meara, 31.2, Ancient Christian Writers, 19, 1954.
Osborne, Grant R. "Moving Forward on our Knees: Corporate Prayer in the New Testament." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, vol. 53, no. 2, June 2010, pp. 243-67.
Ott, Craig and Wilson, Gene. *Global Church Planting.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.
Pannenberg, Wolfhart. *Jesus, God and Man.* London: SCM Press, 1968.
Pargament, Kenneth I. *The Psychology of Religion and Coping: Theory, Research, Practice.* New York: The Guildford Press, 1997.
Paul, Ian. *Revelation.* Leicester: IVP Academic, 2018.
Persinger, M. A. "Vectorial Cerebral Hemispherity as Differential Sources for the Sensed Presence, Mystical Experiences, and Religious Conversions." *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, vol. 76, no. 3, 1993, pp. 915-30.
Peskett, Howard. "Prayer in the Old Testament outside the Psalms." *Teach us to Pray*, edited by D.A. Carson, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1990, 19-34.
Peterson, David. "Prayer in Paul's Writings." *Teach us to Pray*, edited by D.A. Carson, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1990, pp. 84-101.
Peterson, Eugene. *The Word Made Flesh.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2008.
Phillips, Edward. *A History of Prayer: The First to the Fifteenth Century.* Leiden: Brill, 2008.
Porter, Matthew. *A-Z of Prayer.* Milton Keynes: Authentic, 2019.
---. *Overflow.* Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2020.
---. "Praying for God's Transformation of the North." *Northern Church, Northern Gospel*, edited by Gavin Wakefield, Durham: Sacristy Press, 2016.
---. *Spiritual Disciplines and Leadership Formation.* Cambridge: Grove, 2005.
Porter, Richard. *For Noble Purposes.* Ilkeston: Moorley's, 2005.
Puffett, Michael, and Andy Faulkner. *The Vital Key of the Resource Church.* Maidstone: Jubilee Church Maidstone, 2011.
Rad, Gerhard, von. *Genesis.* London: SCM Press, 1961, 1963.
Randall, Ian M. *Rhythms of Revival: The Spiritual Awakening of 1857-63.* Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2010.

Randolph, Justus J. "A Guide to Writing the Dissertation Literature Review." *Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation*, vol. 14, no. 13, June 2009, pp. 1-13.
Rauer, Christine, editor. *The Old English Martyrology*. Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2013.
Rotelle, John. *Mary's Yes*. London: Collins Liturgical Publications, 1989.
Rowland, Christopher. *Christian Origins.* London: SPCK, 1985.
Rumsey, Patricia, M. "The Liturgy of Hours: Are we Biologically Programmed?" *New Blackfriars*, vol. 84, no. 992, Oct. 2003, pp. 462-72.
Ryle, J. C. *John.* London: William Collins, 1990.
Safrai, Shmuel. "Spoken and Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus." *Jesus' Last Week*, Brill, 2006, pp. 225-44.
Saliers, Don E. *The Soul in Paradise.* White Sulphur Springs, WV: OSL Publications, 1980, 2011.
Saver, Jeffrey L., and John Rabin. "The Neural Substrates of Religious Experience." *Journal of Neuropsychiatry*, vol. 9, no. 3, 1997, 498-510.
Scott, C. *The Book of Revelation.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1905.
Seamands, Stephen. *Ministry in the Image of God: The Trinitarian Shape of Christian Service.* Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2005.
Schaeffer, Francis A. *A Christian Manifesto.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1981.
Seidman, Irving. *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2006.
Sensing, Tim. *Qualitative Research.* Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011.
Sharpes, Donald. *The Evolution of the Social Sciences.* Washington, DC: Lexington Books, 2009.
Sherley-Price, Leo, "Introduction." *A History of the English Church and People* by Bede, London: Penguin, 1955, 1988.
Shoemaker, Stephen J. *Mary in Early Christian Faith and Devotion.* Yale, CT: Yale University Press, 2016.
Simpson, Ray. *Exploring Celtic Christianity.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995.
---. *St Aidan's Way of Mission.* Abingdon: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2016.
---. *Hilda of Whitby.* Abingdon: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2014, 2019.
Smalley, Stephen S., "Spirit, Kingdom and Prayer in Luke-Acts." *Novum Testamentum,* vol. 15, no.1, Jan. 1973, pp. 59-71.
Snyder, Howard. *Signs of the Spirit: How God reshapes the Church.* Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1997.
Stancliffe, Clare. "British and Irish Contexts." *The Cambridge Guide to Bede,* edited by Scott DeGregorio, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 69-83.
Stanford, Peter. *If These Stones Could Talk.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2021.
Stark, Rodney. *The Triumph of Christianity.* New York: HarperOne, 2011.
St. Hild of Whitby. *English Heritage*. www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/whitby-abbey/history-and-stories/st-hild/. Accessed on 15 Mar. 2022.
Stephanus, Eddius. *The Life of St Wilfrid.* Translated by Bertram Colgrave. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927.
Stenton, Frank M. *Anglo-Saxon England.* Oxford: Oxford University Press,1943,1970.
---. "The Historical Bearing of Place-Name Studies: The Place of Women in Anglo-Saxon Society." *New Readings on Women in Old English Literature*, edited by

Helen Damico and Alexandra Hennessey Olsen, Indiana, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990, pp. 79-88.
Stott, John. *The Message of Acts.* Leicester: IVP, 1990.
Strauss, Mark L. *Four Portraits One Jesus.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020.
Suchocki, Marjorie. "A Process Theology of Prayer." *American Journal of Theology and Philosophy*, vol. 2, no. 2, May 1981, pp. 33-45.
Tacitus. *Annals* 15:44, edited by Ronald Mellor. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
Taussig, Hal. *Jesus before God: The Prayer Life of the Historical Jesus.* Salem, OR: Polebridge Press, 1999.
Taves, Ann. *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age.* Harvard: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2007.
Temple, William. *Readings in St. John's Gospel.* London: Macmillan, 1945.
Tertullian. "On Prayer." *Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 4,* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1885, 1985.
Thacker, Alan. "Monks, Preaching & Pastoral Care in Early Anglo-Saxon England." *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, edited by John Blair and Richard Sharpe, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992.
Acquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologica, IIIa. q.31, a2*. www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1225-1274,_Thomas_Aquinas,_Summa_Theologiae_%5B1%5D,_EN.pdf. Accessed 18 Mar. 2022.
Thompson, Michael E.W. *I have heard your prayer: The Old Testament and Prayer*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012.
Thompson, William. *An inquiry into the principles of the distribution of wealth most conducive to human happiness; applied to the newly proposed system of voluntary equality of wealth*. Robarts – University of Toronto. London, printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1824.
Thorpe, Ric. *Resource Churches.* London: CCX, 2021.
Torrance, Iain. "Creation and Incarnation." *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, vol. 43, no. 1/4, 1998, 353-63.
Turner, M. M. B. "Prayer in the Gospels and Acts." *Teach us to Pray*, edited by D.A. Carson, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 58-83.
Tyson, Jon. *Sacred Roots.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013.
Waal, Esther de. *A World Made Whole.* London: Fount, 1999.
Wakefield, Gavin. "Mission in the Spirit: Revivalist & Celtic Strands of Mission." *Anvil*, vol. 18, no.1, 2001, pp. 7-19.
---. "Myths of Celtic Christianity." *Anvil*, vol. 23, no. 3, 2006, pp. 191-206.
---. editor. *Northern Church, Northern Gospel.* Durham: Sacristy Press, 2016.
Walker, Brandon. "This Kind Only Comes Out by Prayer (and Fasting): Fasting, Ritual Efficacy and Magical Thinking in Early Christianity." *Journal of Ritual Studies*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2017, pp.43-52.
Wallace, Anthony F.C. "Revitalising Movements." *American Anthropologist,* New Series, 58:2 (Apr. 1956): 264-281.

Webb, Christopher, S., "The Prayer-Filled Life of Jesus," Renovare, Bible Society, undated. Accessed 4 Sept. 2020.
Wenham, Gordon. *Genesis 1-15.* Dallas, TX: Word, 1987.
Widmer, Michael. *Standing in the Breach: An Old Testament Theology and Spirituality of Intercessory Prayer,* Penn State University, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2015.
Wiles, G. P. *Paul's Intercessory Prayers: The Significance of the Intercessory Prayer Passages in the Letters of St Paul,* SNTSMS 24; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
Wilkins M. J. "Prayer." *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and its Development*, edited by Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids, Leicester: IVP, 1997.
Wilkinson, Michael and Althouse, Peter. "The Embodiment of Prayer in Charismatic Spirituality." *A Sociology of Prayer*, edited by Giuseppe Giordan and Linda Woodhead, Farnham: Ashgate, 2015, pp. 153-168.
Williams, D. H. *Tradition, Scripture and Interpretation: A Sourcebook of the Ancient Church.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006.
Williams, Rowan, "The Prophetical and the Mystical: Heiler Revisited." *New Blackfriars*, vol. 64, non. 757, July/Aug. 1983, pp. 330-47.
Willis, David. *Daring Prayer.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1977.
Woodhead, Linda. "Prayer as Changing the Subject." *A Sociology of Prayer*, edited by Giuseppe Giordan and Linda Woodhead, Farnham: Ashgate, 2015, pp. 213-30.
Woodward, JR, and Dan White, Jr. *The Church as Movement.* Leicester: IVP, 2016.
Wright, J. Robert. *A Companion to Bede: A Readers' Commentary on The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.
Wright, Tom. *Luke for Everyone.* London: SPCK, 2001, 2004.
---. *Surprised by Hope*. London: SPCK, 2011.
Yahalom, Joseph. "Angels do not understand Aramaic: On the literary use of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic in late antiquity." *Journal of Jewish Studies*. vol. 47, no. 1, 1996, pp. 33-44.
Yilmazçoban, Muhsin. "Mindset And Culture Difference in Eastern and Western Societies in Gender and Feminism." *International Journal of Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2020, pp. 189–202.
Yorke, Barbara. *The Conversion of Britain 600-800.* London: Pearson Education 2006.

WORKS CONSULTED

Anderson, Gerald H., et al., editors. *Mission Legacies.* New York: Orbis, 1996.

Baguley, Andrew. *Golden Bowls of Incense.* Swanmore: Ignite, 2009.

Bailey, Kenneth E. *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes.* London: SPCK, 2008.

Baker, Rodney. *The Impact of Prayer on the ministries of D.L. Moody, C.H. Spurgeon and Billy Graham: A Descriptive Study*. 1999. Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, DMin dissertation.

Balch, David, and John Stambaugh. *The Social World of the First Christians.* London: SPCK,1986.

Barton, Ruth Haley. *Invitation to Solitude and Silence.* Westmont, IL: IVP, 2010.

Batterson, Mark. *The Circle Maker*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

"Pope Benedict: Mary is our Model for Prayer," National Catholic Register, posted 3/14/12. www.ncregister.come/site/print/32692. Accessed 4 Sept. 2020.

Bevins, Winfield. *Field Guide for Daily Prayer.* Franklin, TN: Seedbed, 2015.

---. editor. *Global Voices.* Asbury, KY: Church Planting Initiative, 2019.

---. *Multiplying Disciples.* Exponential, 2020.

Bickle, Mike, and Dana Candler. *The Rewards of Fasting.* Kansas, MO: Forerunner Books, 2005.

Bing, Alan. *Reimaging Resource Churches.* Cambridge: Grove, 2018.

Blaiklock, E. M. *Acts.* London: The Tyndale Press, 1959.

Blair, John. *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Bloom, Anthony. *Beginning to Pray.* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1970.

Bosch, David. *Believing in the Future.* Leominster: Gracewing, 1995.

Bosch, David. *Transforming Mission.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994.

Bruce, F. F. *The Book of the Acts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.

Chadwick, Henry. *The Early Church.* London: Penguin, 1967.

Chadwick, Samuel. *The Path of Prayer.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1931

Cole, Neil. *Pray.* Starling Initiatives, 2020.

Collier, Bryan. *The Go-To Church.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2013.

Dunn, James D. G. *Baptism in the Holy Spirit.* London: SCM Press, 1970.

---. *The Christ and the Spirit: vol.1,: Christology.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998.

---. *The Christ and the Spirit: vol.2, Pneumatology.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998.

Ellis, E. Earle. *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1993.

Fee, Gordon. *God's Empowering Presence.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.

Finney, John. *Finding Faith Today: How Does it Happen?* Swindon: British & Foreign Bible Society, 1992.

Foster, Richard. *Celebration of Discipline.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1989, 2000.

Giles, Kevin. *Patterns of Ministry among the First Christians.* Blackburn, Victoria: CollinsDove, 1989.

Greig, Pete. *How to Pray.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2019.

Hartl, Johannes. *Heart Fire.* Edinburgh: Muddy Pearl, 2018.

Hawthorne, Gerald F., Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, editors. *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters*. Leicester: IVP, 1993.

Jenkins, Tim. “Marcel Mauss’s essay On Prayer: an important contribution on the nature of sociological understanding.” www.journaldumauss.net/?Marcel-Mauss-s-essay-On-Prayer-an. Accessed on 10 Mar, 2022.

Kee, Howard Clark. *Miracle in the Early Christian World.* Yale, CN: Yale University Press, 1983.

Kidner, Derek. *Genesis.* Leicester: IVP, 1967.

---. *Psalms.* Leicester: IVP, 1973.

Mitton, Michael. *The Sounds of God.* Guildford: Eagle, 1993.

Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook.* New York: MLA, 1978, 2016.

Moltmann, Jurgen. *The Spirit of Life.* London: SCM Press, 1992.

Monk of Whitby (Anonymous). *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968.

Murray, Stuart. *Planting Churches: A Framework for Practitioners*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008.

Naselli, David Andrew. “12 Reasons You Should Pray Scripture.” *Themelios,* vol. 38, no. 3, 2013, pp. 417–25.

Neblett, S.A., translator. “The World Prayer Movement,” *El Evangelista Cubana*, 10 Sept. 1957.

Norris, K. *Larger Churches in the Church of England.* London: Resource Strategy and Development Unit, 2015.

Oden, Thomas C. *John Wesley’s Teachings: Vol. 4: Ethics & Society*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014.

Outler, Albert, editor. *John Wesley.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Paas, Stefan. *Church Planting in the Secular Age.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.

Patrick. *The Confession of St Patrick.* New York: Beloved Publishing, 2015.

Peterson, Eugene. *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction.* Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1980, 2000, 2019.

---. *Praying with Moses.* New York: HarperCollins, 1994.

Porter, Matthew. *A-Z of Discipleship.* Milton Keynes: Authentic, 2017.

Porter, William. *Revival: Fading Memory or Vibrant Expression.* Ilkeston: Moorley’s, 2002.

Riss, Richard. *A Survey of Twentieth Century Revival Movements in N America.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988.

Spilka, Bernard, and Kevin. L. Ladd, editors. *The Psychology of Prayer: A Scientific Approach.* New York: Guilford Press, 2012.

Stanton, Graham N. *The Gospels and Jesus.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Strub, Alexander F. *Agents Unto Themselves: Reconstructing the Narrative of Women’s Roles in the Anglo-Saxon Conversion.* University of Missouri. 2015. MA dissertation.

Turner, Max. *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts, Then and Now*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996.

Verkuyl, Johannes. *Contemporary Missiology.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978.

Walker, Andrew, and Kristin Aune, editors. *On Revival: A Critical Examination.* Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003.

Wallis, Arthur. *God’s Chosen Fast.* Victory Press, 1968.

---. *In the Day of Thy Power.* Alresford: Christian Literature Crusade, 1956.
---. *Pray in the Spirit.* Alresford: Christian Literature Crusade 1970.
Warner, Marina. *Alone of All Her Sex.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976, 2013.
Wenham, David. *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.
Willard, Dallas. *Renovation of the Heart.* Leicester: IVP, 2002.
---. *The Spirit of the Disciplines.* New York: HarperOne, 1988.
Williams, J. Rodman. *Renewal Theology, 1990-1996.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988-1996.
Winter, Ralph D., and Steven C. Hawthorne, editors. *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 1981, 1992, 1999.
Wright, Tom. *Paul.* London: SPCK, 2019.
Zilioulas, John, D. *Being as Communion.* Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985.