

ABSTRACT

“BAREFOOT PRIESTS”

“THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS”: AN ANALYSIS OF THE TRAINING, SUPPORT AND RELEASING OF LAY AND ORDAINED LEADERS INTO THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS.

by

Timothy M Sudworth

Church attendance in the Church of England continues to decline at an alarming rate. Whilst church planting seems to be the main strategy for reversing this trend, many, if not all, churches struggle to maintain or even start new ministries and the strategy of employing lay leaders to do key jobs seems to have slowed after a boom of employment in the early 2000's.

The purpose of this study was to discover, describe and analyse how lay and ordained people in the Church of England are supported in their respective ministries as a Priesthood of all believers, with a view to identify common obstacles and to identify key biblical principles and practices to the way forward.

“BAREFOOT PRIESTS”:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE THEOLOGY, TRAINING, SUPPORT AND RELEASING OF LAY
AND ORDAINED LEADERS INTO THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS.

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by

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CHAPTER 1

NATURE OF THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presents an overview of the research project that explores the theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers within the delimitations of charismatic, evangelical churches in the Church of England. The study seeks to identify practices that can help both clergy and laity fully realize and practice the priesthood of all believers.

The study seeks to answer three main research questions: the extent to which lay people are currently released and supported in ministry, the obstacles preventing this from happening, and the best transformative practices for empowering both lay and ordained people. The study utilised questionnaires, and interviews to gather data from clergy, lay people and educators in theological training institutions. Chapter One provides a general overview and begins by identifying and analysing the current challenges and issues that the church faces in these areas. It then clearly defines the purpose and objectives of this research project, as well as the specific research questions that guided the study. Furthermore, the chapter provides a comprehensive rationale for the project, which serves to sharpen the focus and scope of the research.

By thoroughly exploring these aspects, this chapter aims to lay a solid foundation for the research project, demonstrating the significance and relevance of the study in the context of the contemporary charismatic and evangelical Church of England. It also provides a clear roadmap for the subsequent chapters, which delve deeper into the research methodology, findings, and recommendations for transforming the way lay and ordained priests are theologized, perceived, trained, and deployed within the church.

Personal Introduction

Since 1994 I have been in full time ministry in various positions and ministries within the Church of England, both lay and, for the last fifteen years, ordained. I come from a family of clergy where my grandfather went to train to be a Vicar and got thrown out for being too outspoken and ended up being a Pentecostal elder. My father is a retired Vicar, my brother works with the Archbishop of Canterbury and my wife also got ordained in 2021. All of us share(d) a similar, charismatic churchmanship at the evangelical end of the spectrum.

As a church leader I have always sought to see people empowered into using their spiritual gifts, not just on a Sunday or at a summer festival, but in their working normal lives; to use a John Wimber phrase, to be ‘naturally supernatural’. In full time ministry I have been regularly attending such events as ‘Soul Survivor’ and ‘New Wine’ where use of spiritual gifts has been modelled and expected in most if not all meetings. Throughout my ministry, I have had the privilege of hearing and celebrating numerous accounts of small-scale revivals occurring in various parts of the United Kingdom and around the globe. These stories have filled me with joy and hope, as they demonstrate the power of God's Spirit to transform lives, communities, and even entire regions today.

However, despite these encouraging reports, I have yet to personally witness and experience even a small-scale revival in any of the areas where I have served. As I look to the future, I am filled with hope and anticipation, knowing that God is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think (Eph. 3:20). I am convinced that the same God who has brought revival in the past is more than capable of doing it again in our day.

Over the last few years, I have lectured, trained, and taught at many different Theological Colleges. At St Mellitus College I was an associate tutor for seven years and I served at St Hilda's College of Church Planting and Trinity College Bristol. I was a guest lecturer for New Wine for the last five years, and I have been guest lecturer at their intern college. For Sydney and Melbourne Diocese I was guest speaker on the Mission Shaped Church Conference. Many times,

in these environments I have gotten the feeling that I may be selling the students short with what is expected of them after the teaching. It just seems increasingly frustrating to be doing the same type of teaching and not see much fruit from it: that is released, trained, and empowered priests operating full time, whatever their job is, lay and/or ordained. My aspiration is to empower and equip colleges, church leaders, and lay people with the tools and knowledge they need to effectively train, support, and deploy both lay and ordained priests into their communities. By doing so, these priests will be able to fully utilize their spiritual gifts, not only within the confines of church buildings and religious festivals but also in their daily lives and interactions with others.

The ultimate goal is to extend the reach of the church beyond its physical walls, enabling all priests to share the transformative message of Jesus Christ with the entire world. However, this mission goes beyond simply communicating the good news verbally. It involves embodying the love, grace, and truth of Christ in both word and deed. Through this process of empowerment and mobilization, I believe that the church can become a more vibrant, relevant, and impactful force in today's world, touching lives and transforming communities in ways that truly reflect the heart and character of Jesus Christ.

Statement of the Problem

How is it that within most, if not all, charismatic, evangelical Church of England churches there is a sincerely and widely held theology of the priesthood of all believers, yet there is also a struggle to empower and release these people into effective charismatic mission into ministries in their workplaces, in their homes, and in their communities? There seems to be a widening gulf between our orthodoxy and our orthopraxy. As (Carruthers) states on his blog “I have long felt the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is treated as biblically authoritative, spiritually sound and worthy of every Christian’s affirmation but, then in reality not lived out. It is embraced in form but rejected in function. We call it a vital component of our faith, but reject it in practice.” (Carruthers) This view is not an isolated one. “It has become a forgotten of reformed

ecclesiology's (Barth 199:15) and more or less disappeared from the church orders of most reformed churches" (Dreyer 1). The church invests exhaustive amounts of time and money into areas of 'leadership training'. However, never once have I been part of or received any type of training on 'priesthood' in post ordination training. Priests seem to abandon all notion of it as soon as they are in parish ministry, and never even consider it as an option for reflection for laity.

What kind of change would need to happen within churches or training institutions to facilitate such a transformation, to overturn the Pareto principle of 80% of the work being done by 20% of the people? The Church of England launched the Renewal and Reform initiative in 2010. A series of reports written with the aim of promoting growth, deepening discipleship, strengthening lay leadership, and reversing the declining attendance trends within the Anglican Church. The archbishop said this at the launch: "This is, therefore, a good moment for taking stock of the challenges and opportunities facing us. We believe that these reports, to be discussed in February, provide a basis for developing and delivering a major programme of renewal and reform within the Church of England as a matter of urgency." (*England*)

Whilst feedback from the program is good, there remains a problem which still exists and has become increasingly worse. The church maintains the ministries and mission of the Church, with fewer people around to do them, even before the pandemic hit in 2019. After the major lockdown in 2020 things seem to have got even worse: "6 in 10 church leaders surveyed say they have perceived a "decrease in volunteering in their church", 3 in 10 church members admit they spend less time serving in the church context." ('Church Attendance')

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to identify the practices for clergy and laity, in charismatic evangelical Church of England congregations and training institutions for fully realizing and practicing of the priesthood of all believers.

Research Questions

The three research questions were written to line up with the purpose statement for the project.

Research Question #1:

To what extent are Church of England lay people currently released and supported into ministry as Priesthood of all believers in their communities?

The study was designed to help in the discovery, description and quality of the training and support that exists to help lay leaders live out the theological principal of the priesthood of all believers. To achieve this objective, two comparable questionnaires were created. One questionnaire was tailored for individuals currently involved in charismatic, evangelical colleges, including both students and staff members. The other questionnaire was designed for lay leaders in charismatic evangelical churches. The questionnaires and interviews encompassed specific inquiries regarding the present curriculum, methodologies, perspectives, and training approaches employed for priests.

Research Question #2

What do clergy and laity identify as obstacles to lay people being released and supported as Priests in their communities?

The research questions were designed to highlight possible obstacles to effective training and support of laity in being the priesthood of all believers in their communities. The questions in each questionnaire were crafted to align with the primary purpose statement and elicit responses directly relevant to that purpose.

Research Question #3

What are the best transformative practices for the Church of England to empower and release lay and ordained people into ministry?

The last research question aimed to combine the previous two by eliciting participants' current views on best practices as well as their vision for what those practices might look like going forward. The questionnaires developed from specific inquiries to more broad, open questions over time, allowing participants the space to contemplate and reply judiciously and thoroughly. The research methodology sought to complement the objectives of the study by drawing out accounts of present approaches and future ambitions from respondents.

Rationale for the Project

The justification for undertaking this project will be organized into three distinct categories:

The first is biblical. The original vision set out in the Bible for God's people in Exodus 19 was to be: "my treasured possession. Although the whole world is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (NIV, Ex. 19. 5-6)". This vision was maintained throughout the Old Testament with his chosen people stepping in and out of this vision God had for them. A temple and priestly theme are picked up and explored in Luke's gospel. A key point is when Jesus sends out the seventy-two, an allusion to the numbers of nations in the world. "Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road" (Luke 10. 4). With no money or resources, the person would be reliant on the gifts of others, as the Aaronic priests in Num. 18. 21. "I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the tent of meeting" (Num. 18. 21). Their job would be to bless and heal, all priestly actions, and finally to go about this work barefoot, sandals not being part of the priestly outfit as described in Exodus 28.

Four New Testament passages explicitly apply priesthood language to Christians: “And he has made us to be a kingdom of priests to serve his God and father” (Rev. 1. 6). “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God and they will reign of earth” (Rev. 5. 10). “Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years” (Rev. 20. 6). The quintessential verse of this understanding of priesthood in the New Testament comes in 1 Peter: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession” (1 Pet. 2. 9).

Exploring the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is biblically grounded, as it constitutes a central leadership theme woven throughout Scripture. Moreover, Jesus himself placed great emphasis on this concept in his ministry, instructing and sending out his disciples to advance the Kingdom of God.

The second is practical. The Pareto principle contends that for most outcomes, around 80% of the consequences come from twenty percent of causes, ‘the few’. If we hold to the priesthood of all believers and all members of a Church are one body with many gifts, we should not be operating under the Pareto principle. Even with declining numbers as they are, according to statistics, more people are not serving in church or, more importantly living out the priestly call in their lives.

The practical rationale for the examination of the topic of priesthood of all believers is that even before COVID hit, the Church of England was facing a crisis in the Church of England, especially in charismatic evangelical churches, with leadership. They are stuck with one form of limited leadership, ordained, and this form of leadership disempowers everyone else. The church is facing major restructuring with most Diocese looking at a multi-benefice approach to parish ministry, declining numbers of clergy, a lack of diversity and inclusivity in leadership, and ultimately less evangelism and mission happening week to week. It seems that the only notion of

continuing training for Clergy is in 'leadership'. With a very narrow reading of scripture, one could conclude that this idea is not a biblical one. Even in some more recent secular written books the notion of 'leadership' is seen as passe and outmoded:

The tireless teaching of leadership has brought us no closer to leadership nirvana than we were previously; that we don't have much better an idea of how to grow good leaders, or how to stop or at least slow bad leaders, than we did a hundred or even a thousand years ago....notwithstanding the enormous sums of money and time, over its roughly forty-year history the leadership industry has not in any major , meaningful, measurable way improved the human condition. (Kellerman xiv)

If the church would look at its theology, its understanding and outworking of priesthood would improve, and the church would start to see some of these problems reduce, if not disappear altogether. The third is theological. The church faces an urgent task to re-evaluate its theology of the priesthood of all believers and to ask critical questions of the inherited theology of the priesthood of believers, in both lay and ordained environments. Graham Tomlin sought to ask a similar question and suggested a similar course of re-evaluation in *The Widening Circle*: "The word 'priest' evokes a range of emotions. Within the Church, some see it as representing the pinnacle of religious status or activity.... For others, especially in more Protestant circles, it is a word they want to avoid." (1) Whilst Tomlin starts by asking the hard questions and acknowledging the issue the Church of England has, he really does not conclude any actual change from the situation. His conclusions offer light relief to the central problem which is a clear theology of priesthood of all believers and a structure that does not really support his theology in its practical outworking.

The theological rationale for studying and evaluating the effectiveness of the priesthood of all believers, both lay and ordained. Is to develop clarity on where the church is, both good and bad, and where it should be. The goal is for the church to embrace its corporate

theology of election and to live out its lay and ordained priesthood calling of whoever they are and wherever they are. This may ask serious questions of ecclesiology, of training institutions and how ongoing training and support is given to Clergy.

Definition of Key Terms

The Church of England, the established national church in England, holds a position of leadership within the worldwide Anglican Communion. While maintaining its Catholic roots in both doctrine and structure, the Church of England has embraced and integrated numerous tenets of the Protestant Reformation into its beliefs and practices.

“Charismatic” is the international movement that adopts the beliefs and practices like Pentecostalism with use of spiritual gifts being one of the main aspects. Within the Church of England, such Vicars such as Colin Urquhart and David Watson were pioneers in the twentieth century in the practices of Pentecostalism and the use of spiritual gifts.

“Priesthood of all believers” is a Protestant theological belief based on the verses from 1 Peter 2. 9-10 that all people, lay and ordained, are called to live out the ‘priestly’ calling on their lives.

Delimitations

This study worked within the area of the Church of England known as charismatic evangelical. To easily identify these churches, they were selected from the membership list of New Wine. The study did not look at other areas of the Church of England as both the conservative evangelical and some high church ends tend not to fully embrace the theology of priesthood of all believers and the use of the charismatic gifts. Given this delimitation the study was able to work at a considerably deeper level of detail on the subject, rather than being

distracted by side issues of disagreements over use of charismatic gifts and lack of acknowledgement of lay leadership.

Review of Relevant Literature

The theological basis for the priesthood of all believers in this study was established through a thematic biblical examination of priesthood: the first reference to a priest, the emergence of Levitical priests, and New Testaments themes related to priesthood.

Having got a clear theological root, the study then explored the development and theology of Priesthood through church history, using Matthew Levering's breakdown of Church history: Apostolic from Pentecost to AD160, Patristic 160 to 700, Medieval 700 to 1500, Reformation and Early Modern 1500 to 1800, Modern 1800 to date. This study presumes to add two further recent breakdowns: Postmodern Priests 1945 to 2004 and Pioneer Priests 2004 to date.

In the contemporary Anglican situation in England, the study looked at Cuff, Tomlin, and Peters and any more up to date journals that can be identified alongside current changes in clergy selection in the Church of England.

Research Methodology

The research data was collected through three in-depth questionnaires, a series of semi-structured expert interviews, and a review of existing literature on the topic. The first questionnaire named "Priesthood of All Believers Clergy" (PHABC) was for ordained clergy whose church identify as being in sympathy with the vision and objectives of New Wine and therefore fall into the category of charismatic evangelical. The second questionnaire called "Priesthood of All Believers Lay" (PHABL) was for those who were lay leaders whose churches identify as charismatic evangelical. The final piece of instrumentation was a best practice

interview named “Priesthood of All Believers Educators” (PHABE) was for educators in theological training institutions.

Type of Research

This pre-intervention research utilized a combined quantitative and qualitative methodology, amassing numerical and descriptive data. Information was accumulated through surveys and interviews that were documented and converted into written transcripts.

Participants

The participants were all Anglican, and from several different dioceses in the UK. They were either from churches that have signed up to New Wine or were from theological colleges that sympathize with the aims and objectives of New Wine. This was done with the proviso that all Church of England theological colleges must teach a breadth of tradition, so although they are not exclusively New Wine, they but are broadly welcoming of such students.

Instrumentation

The questionnaires and best practice interviews were researcher-designed for the three separate groups interviewed: clergy, lay leaders, and educators. The first part of the questionnaire was basic questions about demographics, churchmanship, training, and experience. The remainder of the inquiries were open-ended questions concerning the participants' lived experiences with and application of the theology of the priesthood and obstacles to completely embodying this theological perspective and conduct in practice before a final chance for them to pose additional questions or provide further responses. PHABC and PHABL were a mix of qualitative and quantitative data, whilst PHABE was a purely qualitative piece of data.

Data Collection

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilising both qualitative and quantitative research methods to investigate the theology, preparation, empowerment, and commissioning of lay and ordained leaders in the context of the priesthood of all believers. Two questionnaires were developed to collect data from lay individuals “Priesthood of All Believers Lay” (PHABL) and ordained individuals “Priesthood of All Believers Clergy” (PHABC) in charismatic evangelical churches within the Church of England. Additionally, semi-structured interviews “Priesthood All Believers Educators” (PHABE) were conducted with educators working at theological colleges aligned with the mission and objectives of New Wine to gather in-depth, descriptive data.

The researcher designated compiled lists of potential participants and sent out emails with standardized messages, consent letters, and questionnaire links. Survey Monkey was used to create the questionnaires, ensuring respondent anonymity. All data collected was securely stored on the researcher's password-protected laptop, with printed materials kept in a locked filing cabinet. The interviews followed a standardised protocol, and recordings were transcribed and stored securely, with all recordings deleted after the project's conclusion.

Data Analysis

Survey Monkey was used to compile the data collected from the three questionnaires: PHABC, PHABL, and PHABE. The questions were designed to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. Some questions in the PHABC and PHABL questionnaires were identical and open-ended, focusing on the perceived theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers, teaching, and application. This parallel structure allowed for direct comparison of the responses.

The semi-structured interview responses, PHABE, were subjected to linguistic and textual analysis to identify consistencies, inconsistencies, recurring words, and emerging themes.

The combination of data from the interviews and questionnaires provided a comprehensive and insightful perspective on the topic.

Generalizability

The subjects who were interviewed and answered the questionnaire were all Anglican, ordained and or lay charismatic evangelicals of varying degrees. Given these limitations, the project will massively transfer to other settings, other than for reflective purposes.

Project Overview

Chapter 2 delves into the pertinent literature, research, and journals to provide a comprehensive background for the research topic. Chapter 3 offers a detailed exploration of the project's structure, data collection methods, and analysis techniques. Chapter 4 showcases the collected data and present a thorough analysis of the findings. Chapter 5 draws conclusions and discusses the implications derived from the analysis, culminating in recommendations and potential avenues for future research and action.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presents a comprehensive survey of the contemporary biblical theology literature pertaining to the concept of priesthood, encompassing recently published scholarly articles and papers that explore the theological tenet known as the priesthood of all believers. The literature review explores the underlying questions raised in Chapter 1, enabling a more comprehensive evaluation of the theology and practical application of the priesthood of all believers.

The biblical and theological foundations that build up in this chapter show a strong theme of priesthood, throughout the Bible, in particular a strong theme of discipleship where everyone is called. This chapter highlights how this theology has gone in and out of favour throughout church history for many different reasons. In revisiting these themes in depth, the study shows a strong basis to look again at our theology of the priesthood of all believers, and in so doing our practice of it in Church of England evangelical charismatic churches.

The research designed for this project employed a mixed methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative tools, as guided by the works of Sensing and Creswell. The basis for taking this approach is considered in the research design literature section.

Biblical Foundations

The purpose of this project was to identify the implications for clergy and laity, in charismatic evangelical Church of England congregations and training institutions for fully realizing and practicing the Priesthood of all believers. This section of the project analyses the

grand narrative of priesthood in the whole canon of scripture. As Crispin H T Fletcher-Louis points out these themes in the Old Testament tend to be overlooked:

Jesus' priestly character has been ignored, first and foremost, because the priesthood has itself been ignored in modern biblical studies. In the Old Testament the priesthood – its ordination, clothing, sacrificial and other responsibilities – is described with considerable detail. But Old Testament scholarship has traditionally marginalised these portions of the canon. (2)

Walter Brueggemann echoes this view. “Despite the central role which priesthood played in Israel's life and worship, the majority of the Old Testament's theologies neglect to explore the peculiarities of Israel's priesthood; perhaps as a result of Protestantism's aversion to the cult” (Brueggemann 652). This discussion of the biblical foundations starts with the Biblical theme of Melchizedek, the first priest to be mentioned in the Bible, then looks at Abrahamic or Levitical Priesthood and in the final section looks at church history and up to date journals and books on understandings, practice, and reflections on priesthood.

Pre Genesis 14 Priesthood

The first mention of Priest in the Old Testament is in Genesis 14. Although there is evidence, of things before that as G K Beale points out: “It becomes evident in pursuing this task that the first tabernacle and temple existed long before Israel happened on the scene. Indeed, it is apparent that the first sanctuary is discernible from the very beginning of history” (The Temple 10). The later temple was the unique place where God resided and where Israel goes to experience His presence. Eden was the place where Adam walked and talked with God. Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 23, and 2 Samuel 7 all give a description of God's presence as ‘walking back and forth’: “I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people” (Lev. 26.12), “For the LORD your God moves about in your camp to protect you and to deliver your enemies

to you” (Deut. 23.14). “I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you” (2 Sam. 7. 9).

God gives directions to Adam in Genesis 2 to ‘work it and take care of it’. The Hebrew words here are *אבד* *abad* ‘work it’ and *שמר* *samar* ‘guard’ or take care of it. Beale goes on to stress that: “When these two words occur together later in the Old Testament without exception they have this meaning and refer to either to Israelites ‘serving and guarding’ God’s word or, more often to priests who ‘serve God in the Temple and “guard” the temple from unclean things entering it.” (The Temple 10) And so, if a sanctuary and a temple are present, a priest, he is also present. Adam is also portrayed as having priestly attire in Ezekiel: “You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: carnelian, chrysolite, and emerald, topaz, onyx and jasper, lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold on the day you were created they were prepared” (Ezek. 28.13). Adam is the priest in the Garden of Eden.

The Biblical Narrative of Melchizedek, the ‘First’ Priest: Genesis 14

The first mention of Melchizedek is found in Genesis 14 and only contains three verses, one author described it as “an enigmatic text” (Granerød 3). The origin of this chapter is not without questions, as Robert Alter points out: “Scholarship is virtually unanimous in identifying this chapter as the product of a different literary source from the three principal strands out of which Genesis is woven.” (45) Nahum M. Sarna echoes this opinion: “The story does not, at first glance, seem to be organically related either to the preceding or following events in the life of the Patriarch.” (*Genesis* 102)

At the same time Gard Granerød points out that even though it does seem different: “the composition as such is often taken to be late, the textual parts that one assumes Genesis 14 is

composed of are thought to be traditional stemming from much earlier periods than the time a redactor combined them and added the resulting composition to the rest of the Abraham narratives” (3).

The questions this chapter generally raises are under form and content. Nowhere else in the Pentateuch has direct references to military conflict. In chapter thirteen the Lord promised Abram national tenure, and in chapter fourteen Abraham is at the centre of an international ‘stage’ doing battle with kings in far flung corners and making peace with others. Melchizedek enters. As Alter points out, the dating of the narrative is in dispute although ‘relative antiquity’ is about as specific as biblical authorities can be given only four of five Kings can be authenticated. This suggests that an older document with alterations existed by the time the text was woven into the Abrahamic narrative.

Straight away at the start of the verses, a distinctly different approach between the two ‘Kings’ becomes apparent: “After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him.” Gen. 14. 17. The King of Sodom came out empty handed, no greeting, blessing, or proclamation is recorded, not even his name. In stark contrast, the King of Salem came out with bread and wine, blessings, and proclamations: “Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was Priest of God Most high, and he blessed Abram.” Gen. 14. 18. Could this be the reason why the text is recorded as ‘king of Sodom’ in contrast to ‘king Melchizedek of Salem’? Clearly something was different with this person, and clearly something was going on.

Melchizedek’s name reveals two interesting points. First, his name means ‘righteous king’, which does suggest an allusion to a Davidic agenda: “The LORD has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in his sight” (2 Sam. 22. 25). Second, he also was King of Salem, which Psalms 76.2-3 indicates is the future location of the Temple, that is Jerusalem. “His tent is in Salem his dwelling place in Zion. Where he broke the flashing

arrows, the shields and the swords, the weapons of war.” This reference to ‘Salem’ is followed by the statement about the destruction of weapons of war. This suggests: “the shortened name of the city is a poeticism to produce the effect of *shalom*, that is ‘peace’. ‘Jerusalem’ has been reinterpreted to mean ‘city of peace’, a symbol that later found expression in prophecy in such texts as Isa. 2.1-5, and Mic. 4.1-4.” (Sarna *Genesis* 110)

The gifts Melchizedek brought to offer Abram are also of interest: “Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine.” Gen. 14. 18. Alan C. Mitchell and Daniel J. Harrington raise an interesting point about this ‘gift’: “The Genesis Apocryphon changed the reference to ‘food and drink’ in 1Q2-, col. 22.15. The lxx and Hellenistic Judaism simply portray Melchizedek’s offering hospitality to Abraham after the latter’s victory, whereas later Christian tradition will interpret the detail as eucharistic” (142). Erick Ybarra suggests a clear link between the gift and sacrifices and gifts offered in Lev. 7: “In this way the Melchizedekian bread and wine might be elements of a thank offering made to God Most High in gratitude for a successful mission, and as such they would constitute a communion sacrifice to be consumed by the priest and participants alike.” (22)

Another puzzling question is about Melchizedek being a Priest and a King. As John D. Currid and David W. Chapman point out: “The combination of the offices of priest and king was not unusual in the Ancient Near East. However, it seems to have been strictly limited in the history of Israel” (35)

The most puzzling aspects of these few verses are “He was priest of God Most High” (Gen 14.18). At the same time Melchizedek describes Abram as “Blessed be Abram by God Most High” (Gen. 14.19). Clearly there is some link between the two. Within Jewish commentaries there is a need to explain the origins and nature of the priestly role of Melchizedek, which predates the priesthood outlined and established in Exodus 28: “Let Aaron your brother be brought to you from among the Israelites, with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so

that they may serve me as Priests.” (Exod 28.1). Where Aaron set up a priesthood of *descent* passing the priesthood from one generation in a family to another, Melchizedek had a priesthood of *ascent* where priesthood came from above. Whoever or whatever the view of Melchizedek one must attempt to understand the origins and function of him as a character in this discussion on Priestliness. Failure to understand his origins and function leaves two distinct, parallel biblical priestly lines in scripture, which is, at the least within Judaism, problematic.

Fred L. Horton claims that a repeated tradition within rabbinic sources is that Melchizedek is Shem, the son of Noah. He also goes on to say that this thought should be with some suspicion as it only seems to have a history going back to the second century. Through various calculations there is a weak case for Shem to still be alive during Abram’s time and he is described, at various points, as a ‘wise’, ‘good’ and ‘virtuous’, but nowhere he is described as a priest or acting like one. Only by looking at extra-biblical content does one discover that within his lineage people acted as priests: “Thus, Adam is given a priestly function in Jubilees 3. 26-27, Enoch in 4.25 and Noah in 6.1-3. It is interesting, however, that despite the priestly role given to these characters in Jubilees, Shem is not explicitly assigned a priestly function in the text” (Grypeou 203).

The very act of giving a blessing cannot be ignored either. As C. H. Spurgeon states in one of his sermons: “It was a blessing, in the first place, given through a priest. Not every man might take upon himself to bless the people: it was Aaron, God’s high priest, who offered sacrifices for the people, who was called to bless the tribes” (57).

Also, Abram’s response to being blessed by Melchizedek cannot be ignored: “Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything” (Gen. 14.20). Place this response alongside Melchizedek ‘blessing’ Abram, and the ‘temple’ gifts of bread and wine there does seem to be a strong suggestion of a priestly relationship. Furthermore, as seen in the study of Hebrews discussed later, the author emphasizes the need for a change in the law therefore a change in priesthood: “For

when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also” (Heb. 7.12). Doing so highlights the necessity for a change in priestly orders. There is a strong case to suggest that Hebrews imply an Aaronic line descends ultimately from Abraham. This interaction between Melchizedek and Abram shows the superiority over Abram and his descendants. This superiority is demonstrated by the fact that Melchizedek blessed him and received a tithe from him.

Psalm 110

The next direct mention of Melchizedek is in Psalm 110: “The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek’” (Ps. 110.4). This is the most cited Old Testament passage in the New Testament:

“How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him “Lord”? For he says, ‘The Lord said to my Lord: ‘sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet’” (Matt. 22.43-45).

“David himself declares in the Book of Psalms: “the Lord said to my Lord ‘sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet’” are just two of over 100 references to this Psalm in the New Testament.

Most translations are consistent in how these verses are written apart from Alter who, due to the ‘poor condition of the scrolls’ (Barker, *King of the Jews*), translates verse 4 as follows “The LORD has sworn, He will not change heart. “You are a priest forever. By solemn word, my righteous king’” Ps. 110.4 (Alter 265) Cross referencing this translation with the Gen. 14 reading shows that the change is not that big as Melchizedek can be translated as ‘my King of Righteousness’.

The overall theme of the chapter is that of an enthronement Psalm (Barker, *Temple Theology*) based in the holy of holies. The Davidic King is declared to also be a priest ‘forever, in the order of Melchizedek’. Whilst the text does not establish the ‘how’ of how this came about

Barker in *Temple Theology* goes on to suggest that: “the old Greek translation, however, says that he was begotten as a son of God. Part one of the text once read: ‘In the glory of the holy ones I have begotten you’. The king has been born as an angel among the angels in the holy of holies. The damaged text also mentions ‘dew’ as a part of the process, and dew was a symbol of resurrection.” (57) The Psalm goes on to clearly describe David sitting at ‘his right hand’ with the promise of power to rule.

Fletcher-Louis (Jesus Monotheism) sees Psalm 110 describing a figure who is at first a king and then a priest ‘after the order of Melchizedek’. He builds on this by suggesting that: “Psalm 110 represents the political model of the old Canaanite city states that allowed the king to function as a priest (sacral kingship)” (235). Before looking at what priesthood in the Melchizedek tradition looks in the New Testament, an important consideration is something that Fletcher-Louis mentions about how 11fzedek can open up other verses in the Old Testament that shed light on this mysterious biblical figure “In that text (11QMelchizedek) Melchizedek (who appears as a priest-king in Gen. 14.18-20 and Ps. 110.4) is a divine warrior and judge who is identified with the ‘god’ (*elohim*) of Ps 82.1 and then with the *yhwh* of Isa. 61. 2: “the year of *Yhwh*’s favor” becomes “the year of Melchizedek’s favor” (11QMelch2:9)” (195) He goes onto suggest an even stronger link: “The appearance of the “god” Melchizedek as an end time judge in 11QMelch takes place on the Day of Atonement of the climatic year of jubilee and there are plenty of reasons to assume that the text describes one who is both “divine” but also recognizably human priest-king” (195)

Levitical Priests: The Vision

Genesis 12 tells of God’s instigation of a relationship with Abram: “The LORD had said to Abram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing’” (Gen. 12.1-2). Important points to note in these verses are that Abraham

was sent, the blessing was for the whole nation and even in Genesis 12, this early in the narrative, the future vision of priestliness is beginning to emerge, with the people being a blessing. The narrative continues but the vision remains the same in Exodus. Despite being under persecution and in slavery they were saved by their God and in Ex. 19 the vision is being revisited, this time in front of the whole nation, and with an explicit call of being priestly: “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant then out of all the nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex. 19.5-6). This is the first mention of ‘covenant’ in the Exodus narrative, a new dimension is now being put in place between God and His chosen people, Israel. The word סגולה ‘*segullah*’ is also found, translated as ‘possession’ which Sarna, points out: “At the same time, those biblical texts, as well as Ex. 19. 6, all; uniquely emphasise the inextricable association between God’s *segullah* and the pursuit of holiness.” (Sarna, *Exodus* = 104) The priests place and function within the nations must be the ideal. They are set apart by a distinctive way of life to the service of God and dedicated to the ministry of the needs of the whole earth. As Sarna in *Exodus* = continues to point out: “Time and again the Book of Leviticus repeats this exhortation. Holiness is to be achieved by human imitation of God’s attributes (Lev, 19:1)” (104).

Between Exodus 19 and Exodus 28 it goes from ‘a kingdom of priests’ to ‘a kingdom with priests’: “Let Aaron your brother be brought to you from among the Israelite, with his sons Nabab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so that they may serve me as Priests” (Exod. 28.1).

The Structure of the Priests Post Exodus 32.

As David Schrock points out there is a problem: Kingdom of priests is never mentioned again after Exodus 19. The book of Leviticus only refers to Levites four times and all in one passage (Lev. 25.32-33). Aaron was never referred to as a High Priest—only his sons and only after his death. The term Levitical Priesthood is a term that only appears in Deuteronomy. Simply

put, God conditioned Israel's priesthood in their covenantal obedience. When they sinned, in Exodus 32, their priesthood changed.

The change happening in Exodus 32.1 starts to be seen with Aaron being led astray by the people: "When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, 'Come, make us gods who will go before us.'" Instead of leading the people to God in worship he fashions an image. Later in Numbers 3, 8 and 18 report the directions given to Aaron about the role of the Levites, to 'guard the sanctuary'. Sadly, these guardians were not in place in Exodus 32, and the change started. Following the narrative through, Moses is seen returning from the mountain and finding the people of God worshipping an idol., and God's anger burned against them: "Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them" (Exod. 32.10). Moses, although never referred to as a priest, starts to act like a priest by interceding on Israel's behalf. "Sovereign LORD do not destroy your people, your own inheritance that you redeemed by your great power and brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand" (Deut. 9. 26). From the start the weakness of the Aaronic Priesthood, and the need for 'something greater' is evident: "I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish his priestly house, and they will minister before my anointed one always" (1 Sam. 2.35).

As Moses returns from interceding on their behalf, he calls the Israelites to stand for the LORD: "So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, 'whoever is for the LORD, come to me' And all the Levites rallied to him" (Exod. 32.26). This response to Moses' call qualifies them as priests, God confirmed on them a blessing to stand and serve in the House of God, but the sin perpetrated disqualifies them from the original vision of being a 'priestly nation', just a nation with priests.

Hebrews

The next time these two titles of Levitical Priest and Priest in the order of Melchizedek are dealt with in detail is in the letter to the Hebrews. The letter refers to Jesus with many different titles at many different points, but by far the most referenced titles are High Priest and Priest:

Table 2.1 – Titles Used in Hebrews for Jesus

Title	Reference Example	Number of Occurrences
Christ	Hebrews 3. 6: “But Christ is faithful as the Son over God’s house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.”	12
Lord	Hebrews 2. 3: “how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.”	4
Great Shepherd	Hebrews 13. 20: “Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep.”	1
Apostle	Hebrews 3. 1: “Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest.”	1
Pioneer	Hebrews 12. 2: “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith”.	2
Forerunner	Hebrews 6. 20: “where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”	2
Son	Hebrews 1. 2: “In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son”	4
Son of God	Hebrews 4. 14: “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.”	3

Priest	Hebrews 5. 6: “And he says in another place, ‘You are a priest for ever, in the order of Melchizedek.’”	11
High Priest	Hebrews 2. 17: “For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people”	18

The main argument and titles that Hebrews deals with is the title ‘Priest’ or ‘high Priest’. As Fletcher-Louis points out: “The whole argument of Hebrews – that Jesus is priest, not just king (after the order of Melchizedek) – is predicated on the assumption that Jesus’ *royal* messianic identity was well known and not at issue” (171).

From the beginning of the book Hebrews, the writer names Jesus as priest or high priest and also looks at his priestly actions. “After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven” (Heb. 1.4). The reference to Jesus’ purification work and the Greek word used is only referenced one other time in the New Testament: “For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whoever does not have them is short sighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins” (2 Pet. 1.8-9). The Greek word used in both passages is *καθαρισμοῦ* (*katharismou*) The most notable use of the same word in the Septuagint is in Exodus describing the day of atonement: “Once a year Aaron shall make atonement on its horns. This annual atonement must be made with the blood of the atoning sin offering for the generations to come. It is most holy to the LORD” (Exod. 3.10). As Eric Mason emphasizes: “Use here is particularly relevant for the author of Hebrews, who frequently alludes to this context; he understands Jesus as both the Day of Atonement sacrifice and the high priest administering it.” (18) Psalm 2 refers to ‘the LORD and his Anointed one’ that subdues the hostile powers and in Hebrews he makes purification for sin. As Barker states in *King of the Jews*,

both describe atonement. Hebrews goes on to make an argument as to why the Jesus is superior to the Aaronic priesthood line:

- i. Descendants of Levi are commanded to take tithes: “Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people” (Heb. 7.5)
- ii. Melchizedek was not a Levitical Priest: “This man (Melchizedek) however, did not trace his decent from Levi” (Heb. 7.6).
- iii. Since Levites are children of Abraham, they gave tithes to Melchizedek: “Yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him” (Heb. 7. 6).
- iv. Therefore, Melchizedek was superior to Levitical Priests. “And without a doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater” (Heb. 7. 7).

Therefore, with the coming of Jesus the Priesthood no longer resides with Levi and bodily descent, Jesus becomes the high priest by the power of indestructible life: “And what we have said is even more clear if another Priest like Melchizedek appears, one who has become a Priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life” (Heb. 7.15-16). Revelation 1 also refers to Jesus as the high Priest: “and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash round his chest” (Rev. 1.13). This long robe and golden sash are indicative of the High Priest’s garments worn on the Day of Atonement as he brings both the people of Israel and the whole of humanity into the holy of holiness for purification and restoration: “He is to put on the sacred linens tunic, with linen undergarments next to his body; he is to tie the linens sash round him and put on the linens turban. These are the sacred garments” (Lev. 16.4).

Some scholars argue (Fletcher-Louis and Baker) that Jesus’ final confrontation with the religious authorities in Mark 14 was the actual point at which the Levitical priestly line is finished

and passed to Jesus. The pivotal clash between Jesus and the authorities, where Jesus overtly proclaimed himself the fulfilment of Daniel 7.13 (Mark 14.62), brought the essence of this otherwise baffling passage into sharp relief through the conflict between his claim to be the true, eschatological high priest and Caiaphas' self-perception. Mark 14 established the point at which the Levitical Priesthood ended due to the establishment of Jesus as the eschatological high priest. Luke's Gospel establishes a foundation of the new priestly line continuing beyond his ascension.

Temple and Priest Theme in Luke.

Positioning Luke's gospel in this biblical setting of priesthood requires grounding it in the historical and social context of the time and exploring one of the focuses of Luke's Gospel. The Gospel of Luke is the third and longest of the gospels in the New Testament and is widely seen as one of the synoptic gospels that includes many similar stories and in a similar sequence to the other synoptic gospels. John's Gospel which is distinct in character, narrative, and possible audience in not one of the synoptic gospels. The timing of the writing of the gospel is slightly disputed and centres around two periods between AD50-63 to AD 70-80. As with Mark's Gospel the main audience was to the Gentiles, but some suggest it is to a different 'class' to Mark's. Mark's focus tends to be Roman whilst Luke tends to be more of a focus on the Greeks. With this 'Greek lens' Luke presents Jesus as the 'ideal man', the 'Son of Man' the high point being in chapter 19: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke. 19.10). Despite Luke's intended audience being Greek he is considered to be a proselyte or convert to the Jewish religion (Gray 164) What follows then is a deep interest and explanation in validating Jesus' claims from within Jewish scripture, for an intended Greek audience.

Luke also seems to have a focus on women and the marginalized, especially in the resurrection accounts. Although within first century culture women were marginalized and not held as reliable witnesses, Luke has them as a major role and witness. This perspective influence's other key themes in Luke's Gospel.

Overview – Luke 1

A very superficial reading of Luke's gospel reveals that he starts his story in the Temple: "Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense." Luke. 1. 8-9. A look at the final entry in his gospel, finds the story finishing at the Temple: "Then they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God" (Luke. 24.25). Many commentators of the gospels assume that Luke, like the rest of the gospels is negative towards the temple and priests in general. However, this study suggests that Luke is neither positive or negative, but he is 'prophetic' towards the issue of the temple and the priesthood: he realizes the weaknesses of the present structure and practices but is willing to suggest that a greater movement is about to happen.

Luke 2

The next two mentions of the temple occur in Luke 2, where Jesus is presented in the temple for the purification rights and Jesus is in the temple when he was a boy. Luke goes to great pains to point out that Jesus was sitting under the authority of the law and the temple and has a clear understanding of it, even from such an early age: "When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (As it is written in the Law of the Lord, 'Every first-born male is to be consecrated to the Lord') (Luke 2.22-23). "After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting amongst the teachers, listening to them, and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers" (Luke. 2.46-47).

As the narrative continues so does the theme, and Luke does seem to be setting the temple and priests as a place where and a group with whom more significant things will happen

later in the gospel. But the 'word search' approach to deciding whether Luke thinks priests and the temple are significant ignores a deeper level of appreciation as to what Luke is trying to suggest.

Luke 6

Reflection on Luke's account in chapter 6 of the Beatitudes, reveals distinctly priestly behaviour that Jesus is doing. In Numbers 6.22-26 the Levitical priests were charged with the responsibility of pronouncing blessings over people. Four times in Luke's account Jesus pronounces a blessing. Whether this is Jesus producing blessing or just declaring the poor metaphorically blessed, the framework in which Jesus is doing his teaching is significant. The sequence he proclaims is taken directly from Isaiah 61, a passage in which the eschatological high priest is declaring the Kingdom of God is here and now in the jubilee. The declaration of a jubilee is a priestly role set out in Leviticus 25

Luke 9

Luke 9 talks about the sending out of the twelve. Within this passage Jesus gives the authority to the twelve to drive out demons and to cure diseases. A deeper into the ministry of the priests in the Old Testament shows that they are called to extend the ministry of God to 'heal' and 'restore': "If you listen carefully to the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you" (Exod. 15.26).

Luke 9 also has the directive to "proclaim the kingdom of God" (Luke. 9.2). God elected Israel to be his chosen people to reflect his kingdom and his nature, which will ultimately lead them to be a blessing to the whole world. These kingdom people are his treasured possession to be a Kingdom of priests to proclaim his kingdom. Proclamation is a priestly act!

Luke 10

In Luke 10 Jesus sends out another group—this time seventy-two. If the sending out of the twelve in Luke 9 represented the twelve tribes of Israel the seventy-two represents the ‘nations of the earth’ (Genesis 10-11; Numbers 10-11). As it says in Romans: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel. Because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew (*represented in the 12 being sent out*) and then the gentile (*represented by the seventy-two being sent out*) (Rom. 1.16-17; my italics and additions).

Reading this number as suggested does have some problems. In Numbers Moses originally appointed seventy, but two joined a short time later. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson) suggest that there is more confusion as the Greek word *δύο* is in some manuscripts but not in others (316).

Verse 3 is also worth pausing on with the warning that he is sending them out like “lambs amongst wolves”. Whilst the Old Testament always uses the wolf image as an ‘attacker at dusk’ (Hab. 1) or attackers that ‘leave nothing in the morning’ (Zeph. 3) the New Testament builds levels on this imagery. In Matthew 7 the image of wolves is not only seen as a negative but also as a metaphor because they are ‘like false prophets’: “Watch out for false prophets, they come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves” (Matt. 7.15).

The instructions Jesus gave to the seventy-two follows with a directive to take ‘no purse or bag’ (Luke 10.4). The significance of this verse is found in Deuteronomy where the Levites (sic priests) were given the right to serve as priests and therefore they did not receive an inheritance of the land or an income: “The LORD set apart the tribe of Levi, to stand before the LORD to minister and pronounce blessings in his name. As they do today. This is their inheritance” (Deut. 10.8-9).

Therefore, in a gospel where priesthood and temple are a theme, Jesus sent out a group of his followers and told them to be reliant on what others gave them to survive: “Stay there eating and bringing whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages” (Luke 10.6).

Part of the problem for the next few verses is that there is not a conclusive agreement as to the translation of the text from Luke 10 in the Greek. Some translations ignore it all together while others add things that are not in the original manuscripts.

Table 2.2: Different Translations of Luke. 10. 4

Version	Translation
NIV – New International	“Do not take a purse or bag or sandals”
AMP – Amplified Bible	“Do not carry a money belt, a provision bag, or (extra) sandals” (brackets their insertion)
CJB – Complete Jewish Bible	“Do not carry a money-belt or a pack.”
NLT – New Living Translation	“Do not take money with you, nor a traveller’s bag, nor an extra pair of shoes”

Whilst the list is not exhaustive some confusion over translation leads to some confusion where certain aspects of this verse are either ignored or changed, as the addition of ‘extra’ in some translations demonstrates. A clear translation of this verse is key to reading of Luke’s gospel as one having a temple and priest theme; therefore, the NIV is the clearest and closest to the translation from the Greek as seen below:

Table 2.3: Interlinear Translation of Luke. 10. 4.

μὴ	βαστάζετε	βαλλάντιον	μὴ	πήραν	μὴ	ὑποδήματα
Neither	carry	purse	nor	bag	nor	sandals

What is Luke trying to say by pointing out that the seventy-two were sent out ‘barefoot’? Exodus 18.1-43 and Exodus 39.1-31 give the detailed design of the priest’s outfit. Nowhere does it describe the priests as having footwear of any description. Also, in Exodus 3.5 and Joshua 5.15, God tells Moses to take off their sandals because they’re on “holy ground”. These verses alongside the fact that the two rooms of the tabernacle, and ultimately the temple were called ‘the holy place’ and the ‘most holy place’, where “God resides” (Lev. 16). give a fuller picture as to why the reading of this verse might be as significant as it is.

Non-biblical sources provide evidence. *Mishnah Berakhot* 9.5 says, “One may not enter the Temple Mount with his staff, his shoes, his money belt or even dust on his feet” (*Mishnah Berakhot* 9).

In Luke 10.5 they are given specific instructions to be people of peace and proclaim blessings: “When you enter a house, first say “Peace to this house”. As stated in Numbers 6, Priests were charged with the role of blessing people: “Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: The LORD bless you and keep you: the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face towards you and give you peace” (Num. 6. 22-26). Luke 10. 9 gives the direction to heal: “Heal those who are ill and tell them, “The Kingdom of God has come near to you.” Chapters 12-14 of Leviticus clearly outlines the priestly role when it comes to all things medical. The process ranged from the examination of skin diseases and subsequent declaration of being unclean and the need for isolation, to the proclamation of the person being pronounced clean. Looking forward into Jesus’ ministry and reflecting on his interaction with the woman with bleeding in Luke 8, reveals a distinct change in the theology of cleanliness. The narrative moves from people being ‘made unclean’ through various interactions and mistakes to being ‘made clean’ through touch or “contagious holiness” as opposed to contagious uncleanness. “But Jesus said, ‘someone touched me; I know that power

has gone from me” (Luke. 8.46). This moment shows the point at which Jesus reversed the polarity of temple holiness cleanliness codes and rituals. The old covenant sought to stop people from becoming unclean, but the new covenant sought to show how to make people clean.

Luke 10.9 gives the direction to ‘Tell them the Kingdom of God has come near you’. On a superficial level, the Hebrew definition of priest, *כֹּהֵן* or *kohen*, is ‘one who performs a verbal action’. So, in essence they are people who speak. Put this alongside the fact that when Jesus sets out the beatitudes in Luke 6, he does so with the same eschatological high priestly framework of Isaiah 61 where the role of the high priest was to proclaim the Kingdom of God is here.

In Luke 10.11-12, the ‘sent out priests’ act as judges. Outside the sacrificial system and worship duties priests also oversaw lots of different aspects of life. The Urim and Thummim functioned like a sacred lot device used in divine consultation, first mentioned in Exodus 28, and then unpacked further in Numbers 27: “He is to stand before Eleanor the priest, who will obtain decisions for him by enquiring of Urim before the LORD” (Num. 27.21). The role of the priests as judges continues to the end of the Bible in Revelation 20.4-6, where those seated on the thrones were given authority to judge and to rule as “priests of God”.

1 Peter

The story of the Exodus has a clear role in the writings of 1 Peter where he starts with a distinct allusion to Exodus 19 and the people of God being ‘chosen’ and a call to ‘obedience’: “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole is mine you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exod. 19.5-6) “To God’s elect, exiles, scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who have been *chosen* according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be *obedient to Jesus Christ*” (1

Pet. 1. 1 2; my italics). This use of Exodus continues throughout the letter: “Therefore gird up the loins of your mind” (1 Pet. 1.13, KJV); “But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect” (1 Pet. 1.19, NIV); and “Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time” (1 Pet. 5.6). Most powerfully in chapter two when the image of a ‘spiritual house’ and a ‘royal priesthood’: “Peter’s description of the commentary as a spiritual house evokes the biblical metaphor of the tabernacle/temple as a house for Israel’s God” (Rodgers 79).

As Barker points out: “The first Christians saw themselves as the new/restored priesthood” (*King of the Jews* 348). She goes on to emphasize: “This is a clear statement that the ways of the second temple have been rejected – ‘futile ways of your fathers’ – and that the older royal priesthood is restored.” (*King of the Jews* 348) G. K. Beale suggests that 1 Peter 2.4-9 confirms an analysis of Revelation 11 that in parts of early Christianity the church was conceived as: “both a royal priesthood’ (an allusion to Ex. 16. 6, as in Rev. 1. 6; 5 10) and as a temple in the process of being built and expanded from Christ, the foundation of the new temple.” (The Temple 331) Donald Senior and Daniel J. Harrington follow this train of thought to its ultimate end and questions what some people could conclude from this train of thought:

Some consider these texts the basis for a ‘priesthood of all believers’ that, in effect, would deny the possibility of a specific priestly ministry in the church. But in referring to a priesthood exercised by all Christians 1 Peter is neither affirming or denying the possibility of a specific liturgical role in the church, just as the author of Exodus 19 could speak of the entire Israelite community as ‘priestly’ without thereby passing judgement on the Levitical priesthood.” (61)

The climax of the first section of 1 Peter is reached in 1 Peter 2 9: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” (1 Pet. 2.9-10) To truly

understand the priesthood of all believers outlined in 1 Peter, one must see and understand the reference to Exodus 19 and the allusions to Hosea in the following verses: “Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you receive mercy” (1 Pet. 2.10). “I will plant her for myself in the land; I will show my love to the one I called ‘not my loved one’. I will say to those called ‘not my people’, ‘you are my people’ and they will say, ‘You are my God’” (Hos. 2.23).

A clear biblical narrative runs through scripture of two avenues of priesthood: one of ‘descent’, that is Levitical, from father to son in one tribe which is part of a chosen people; and the other of ‘ascent’ modelled in Melchizedek, hinted at in Psalm and Jesus’ ministry and unpacked in Hebrews and 1 Peter. As John A. T. Robinson puts it: “In the Old Testament the priesthood was to do for the people what the people could not do. In the New Testament the whole people of God are called to the priesthood – the priesthood of Christ. It is called to share his priesthood to the world, mediating his atoning and reconciling work.” (Robinson 72)

Revelation

The final references to ‘priests’ come in the final book of the Bible, Revelation. Three times they occur in the book all linked and in reference to the ‘people of God’: “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father” (Rev. 1.6). “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on earth” (Rev. 5.10). “Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years” (Rev. 20.6).

Beale in *The Temple and the Church’s Mission* suggests that each of these quote’s echoes both Paul’s conception of believers as priests found in Romans 12.1: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and

pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.” In all three bible quotes the mention of priests also echoes back to Exodus 19.6: “You will be for me a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” Hoskins goes on to suggest that these echoes or allusions are the beginning of a common pattern throughout Revelation culminating in Jesus being the antitype to the Passover lamb setting people free from the bondage of their sins: “When Jesus sets people free from slavery to their sins, he simultaneously sets them apart to become priestly servants of God under the new covenant. Revelation 1 6a provides initial evidence for this transformation from slavery to priestly service. It says, ‘And made us a kingdom of priests to his God and Father.’” (102)

Revelation 5.10 says: “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on earth.” The word ‘priests’ and ‘kingdom’ are placed after a reference to the Exodus: “Because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Rev. 5.9b). The sacrifice of the lamb to purchase the people for God presents him as the fulfilment of the Passover sacrifice.

The third and final mention of priests is in Revelation 20.6: “Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.” As with the other two quotes, priests receive the benefits of the blood of the lamb sacrifice but in this case the aspects and benefits relate to their future role.

Overall, Revelation presents Jesus Christ as the fulfilment of the priesthood, granting believers direct access to God’s presence and shared authority to reign. Earthly temples, priesthoods and sacrifices are superseded by heavenly worship and Christ's mediator role.

Theological Foundations

A brief of look at church history from the Pentecost to the present reveals the demarcation lines and disagreements over the ideas, theology, and practices of priesthood in the

church. Matthew Levering splits church history into five distinct eras with find distinct theologies, disagreements, and practices of Priesthood:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Apostolic | Pentecost to AD 160 |
| 2. Patristic | 160 to 700 AD |
| 3. Medieval | 700 to 1500 AD |
| 4. Reformation and Early Modern | 1500 to 1800 AD |
| 5. Modern | 1800AD to present. |

This study proposes that these distinct areas of priesthood within charismatic evangelical circles begin to have a distinct focus mid twentieth century and as the century begins to close a real change starts to show itself, with the addition of four more periods:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 6. Post War Priests | 1945 onwards |
| 7. Women Priests | 1992 onwards |
| 8. Pioneer Priests | 2004 onwards |
| 9. Planting Priests | 2018 |

Apostolic Period: Pentecost to 160AD

The Apostles got their name and ultimately their function from being sent by Jesus, as missionaries. Although they were not the only ones to receive God's Spirit: "One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)" (Acts. 11.28). Between sixty and seventy years later Ignatius referred to Antioch and other churches as having a 'monarchical bishop, presbyters and deacons.' How this happened, to go from apostles to bishops, priests and deacons is not clear although some sources do offer snippets of information. Clement was the

third person to hold the position of Bishop of Rome approximately AD 90-99 (Levering). He authored a letter to the church in Corinth in which he outlined and pleaded for the Church to remain under the authority of the ‘ministerial priesthood’. Whatever the issue being addressed was, it appears that during this period the terms ‘bishop’, ‘priest’ and ‘deacon’ was still up for debate and was slightly loose on how it was applied. Bishops, *episcopoi*, would have had care over an area with many congregations. At the same time, they also are called ‘evangelists’ in the New Testament: “But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do they work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry” (2 Tim. 4.5). *Presbuteroi*, the word for priest, is sometimes translated elder or presbyters. They seemed to have the role of teaching, governing, and providing the sacraments to congregations: “The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honour, especially those who work in preaching and teaching” (1 Tim. 5.17). Whilst deacons, *diakonoi*, are the bishops’ assistants, they are also responsible for teaching and administering specific church tasks, like the distribution of food in Acts 6: “Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them” (Acts. 6.3-4). This does seem make things all clear except that Paul occasionally called himself a *diakonos*: “He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant – not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills but the Spirit gives life” (2 Cor. 3. 6). He used the term even though he held the title much higher than that of deacon—that of an apostle.

One of Clement’s letters has the first use of the word ‘layman’ in Christian literature: “To the high priest, indeed, proper ministrations are allotted, to the priests a proper place is appointed, and to the Levites their proper services are imposed. The layman is bound by the ordinances for the laity.” (Clement Chapter 40) It is used in a negative sense, and he was not the only one who used it in this way:

Clement of Rome (c 96) in his letter to the Corinthians is the first to use *laikos* in a way that suggests the incompetent masses of the people. This use is also found in Origen and especially in Clement of Alexandria. By the time of Tertullian and Cyprian the word 'laity' is used to refer to a distinct group of common believers in contrast to the clerical hierarchy. (Doohan 168)

As seen from this narrative in the century before Justin Martyr the church had no real uniformed agreement about the way to organize the church. But with the growth of Christianity and the appearance of sects, the need to develop a strong leadership, internal government, and ways of dealing with heresies became apparent.

Patristic Period: approx. 100AD – 700AD

The Patristic period is a key point in the history of Christianity which experienced the development of the church and the theology and practice of priesthood. The period extends from the time of the death of the last apostle John, approximately 100AD, to the early Middle Ages and the Council of Chalcedon, 451AD. The Patristic period transitioned from concentrated periods of persecution in the first two hundred years by various Roman emperors, to Christianity becoming the legitimate religion of the empire under Constantine in 321 AD, although the periods of persecution were not continual but rather came and went according to the whims of the emperors. Diagram 1 below shows the major focus of Christianity geographically moved from being focused on Jerusalem to Turkey by 700AD.

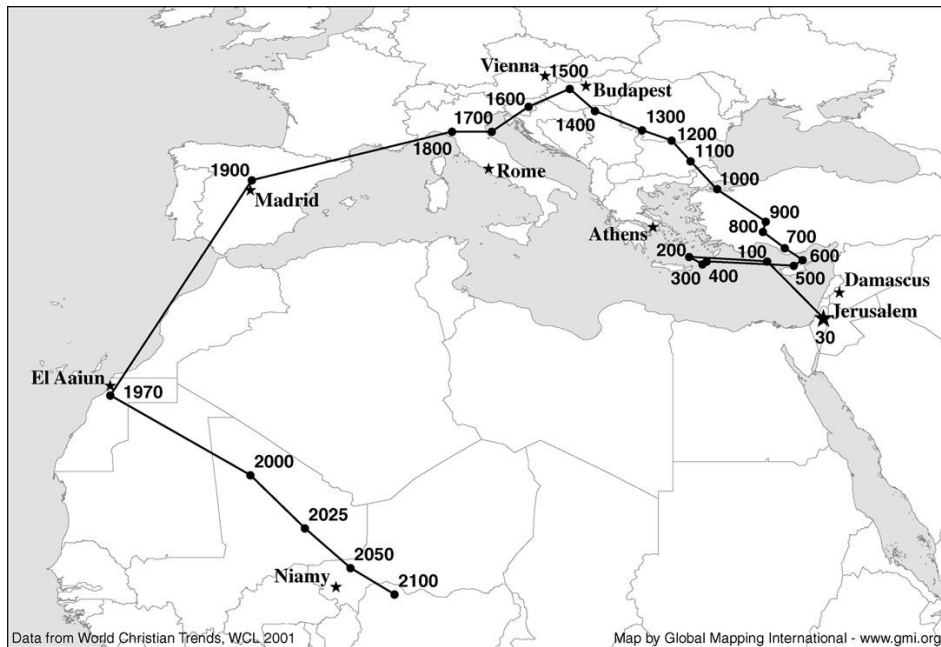


Fig. 2.1: World Christian trends and focus.

In a period when major controversies and theologies were worked out the key leaders were theologians. Justin Martyr, 100AD – 165AD, wrote extensively against paganism attempts to use Greek philosophy in relation to the gospel. Tertullian, 160AD – 255AD produced a series of apologetic writings and was noted for his ability to use Latin terms to reframe an emerging theological vocabulary. Around the year 200AD the term ‘priest’ began to be applied to ministers of the church:

In his Ecclesiastical History (V. 24, 3) Eusebius cites Polycrates of Ephesus (c190) referring to St John as *hierus*. By the early third century both Tertullian and Hippolytus are using sacerdotal terminology regarding the bishop. By the middle of the third century St Cyprian applies it also to presbyters. However, in Cyprian, indeed until well into the fourth century, priesthood was understood to apply first and foremost to the bishop, and only secondarily to the presbyter when he presided at the eucharist.” (Armbruster 66-7)

The development of priesthood came because of pressure of persecution, but also liberation. This was characterized by the ‘conversion’ of Constantine and the First Council of Nicaea 325AD. As Henry Chadwick states, “It meant much more than the end of persecution” (125) It is reckoned to be the first ‘ecumenical’ or world council of the church with a range of representation of over two hundred bishops in attendance, almost all Greek. Whilst it is mostly remembered for the writing and adoption of the Nicæan Creed and ultimate rebuttal of the Arian heresies, it also brought the Syrian church into line with the Egyptian and Roman church on calculating the date of Easter, no mean feat. It also issued twenty canons: “mainly regulating discipline. Hitherto individual bishops had been remarkably free in their actions, and churches had been little controlled in electing them” (H. Chadwick 131). These canons eventually threw a lot of light on the developing organizational structure of the church, the role of bishops, and ultimately the view, role, and practice of priests. Between 375AD and 381AD Chrysostom wrote his six books ‘On the Priesthood’, a book he wrote after agreeing to become ordained with his friend Basil. He never showed up whilst his friend ended up being ordained a bishop. The book is then set up as a dialogue between Basil and John and what to expect from the priesthood.

(Chrysostom)

Chrysostom starts telling Basil the qualifications for being a priest, which he starts by stating is a ‘heavenly ministry’: “The priest, therefore, must be as pure as if were standing in heaven itself, in the midst of those powers.” (Chrysostom 68) He warns Basil to be ‘watchful of his own soul’ at the same time as being watchful of his congregation. As well as offering wisdom as a qualification he warns him not to simply order ‘the sheep’ around like a boss: “In the case we are considering it is necessary to make a man better not by force but by persuasion... since God gives the crown to those who are kept from evil, not by force, but by choice” (Chrysostom 36). He then unpacks these thoughts and grounds the practice of priesthood in two major ways.

Eucharistic Practice of Priests: He describes, to Basil, the priest's role as the one who offers the body and blood of Christ to the Father in 'holy Eucharist': "For when you see the Lord sacrificed, and lie upon the altar, and the priest standing and praying over the victim, and all the worshippers empurpled with that precious blood, can you then think that you are still among men, and standing upon earth? Are you not, on the contrary, straightway translated to haven?" (Chrysostom 4).

Prophetic Voice of the Priest: Chrysostom goes on to describe the priest at the altar during mass as the 'Elijah of the new covenant', the voice calling down the Holy Spirit in grace, sacrament, and enlightenment: "For they (i.e., priests) who inhabit the earth and make their abode there are entrusted with the administration of things which are in heaven and have received an authority which God has not given to angels or archangels" (Chrysostom 35).

Prayerful Focus of Priests: Here Chrysostom suggests the office of priest is shown by the 'nature of his intercession'. The priest intercedes with the authority of Christ, to the Father on behalf of the whole world: "He draws near to God, beseeching that wars may be extinguished everywhere, that tumults may be quelled; asking for peace and plenty, and a swift deliverance from all the ills that beset each one, publicly and privately; and he ought as much to excel in every respect all those on whose behalf he prays, as rulers should excel their subjects" (Chrysostom 64).

This short overview of the period shows that the idea of priesthood has changed both theologically and practically. It went from a period where no one was sure who or what a priest was to a period where the authority, increasingly seated around Rome, was beginning to be unpacked and expectations and practices of the priests were becoming increasingly clear.

Medieval Period: 700AD – 1500AD

Early in this period Christianity became the leading religion in the 'known world'. Key doctrines of 'divine right' and 'suffering and salvation' became the basis for the founding of feudalism and the feudal society. By now the Church was organized in a strict structure with the Pope at the top followed by Bishops, priests, and deacons. Governments, Kings and Queens were intertwined with the Church where royals sought to find sanctification at the centre of their office; ecclesiastical wearing of vestments at coronation, being anointed with holy oil, swords, crowns and rings all blessed in a similar way to clerical ordinations: "For three centuries, from about 750 to 1050, the kings who emerged from these ceremonies exercised an authority which (they were encouraged to think) gave them sacred character and set them above bishops, and priests in the government of the Christian community" (Southern 32).

Within the Church, bishops and priests continued to share the same practices and privileges: they could both celebrate mass, baptize, both administrated dioceses and parishes and both had teaching functions. (Peters The Monkhood) With the church and royal and governmental leadership so intertwined society had massive dependence on the 'supernatural'. With an emphasis on the 'littleness of man' verses the 'impersonal majesty of the spiritual world' it came about: "that the feebleness of man, his insecurity, his weak grasp of the laws of nature, and the ineffectiveness in government, all combined to impose an extraordinary appearance of strength and stability on the products of this period of the Middle Ages" (Southern 33).

As this period moved on the reduction of the urban areas, which had been happening since the end of the Roman Empire and not stopped, was now being reversed (Southern). With this reversing: "The secular ruler lost his supernatural attributes. The clerical hierarchy asserted its claims to be the sole channel of supernatural authority. Both secular and spiritual hierarchies, becoming more clearly distinct in their offices" (Southern 36). Ultimately these changes had a lasting effect on the laity of the church and any notion of the 'priesthood of all believers' was truly extinguished: "The ideal church of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was a society of

disciplined and organized clergy directing the thoughts and activities of an obedient and receptive laity – Kings, magnates, and peasants alike” (Southern 38).

The development of canon law did nothing to stop this movement towards a ‘professionalism’ of clergy. By 1300 the system of canonical law was complete and some would suggested closed (Southern). As within most areas of society as things ‘settled’ and ‘controlled’ so opposition to the status quo reared its head in the church. AD 1312-14 saw the removal and destruction of the Order of Templars, 1323 also saw the condemnation of the Franciscan doctrine of poverty. These ‘fringe’ oppositions alongside growing unrest in France to the Papal influence “helped establish a pattern of opposition, which soon led to new extremism and new opposition” (Southern 45).

As the Middle Ages came to an end the big picture was that of a church seemingly starting in a united way and ending with congeries of churches in the middle of schisms and states of recrimination. As the role of ‘priest’ became ‘more professional’ and the role of ‘lay people’ became less significant so the seeds of a split started growing and the view and role of lay people in church started to be seen totally differently. As Pope Francis said:

Clericalism arises from an elitist and exclusivist vision of vocation, that interprets the ministry received as a power to be exercised rather than as a free and generous service to be given, this leads us to believe that we belong to a group has all the answers and no longer needs to listen or learn anything, or that it pretends to listen. Clericalism is a perversion and is the root of many evils in the church. (Francis)

Reformation & Early Modern: 1500AD – 1800AD

Context and Model of Priesthood

The call to change in the church at the beginning of the sixteenth century was getting very loud. “For a century and more Western Europe had sought for reform of the Church ‘in head

and members' and had failed to find it." (Francis) At all levels the relationships between the priestly levels there was interference and alienation between parishes and priests, priests and Bishops and Bishops and Pope: "The Pope's laws interfered in many matters of Church and State, and men talked of a need to limit the Pope's authority." (O. Chadwick 13) Pope Julius II in 1511, much to the astonishment of the rest of Europe, climbed the breach at the siege of Mirandola with sword in hand and helmet on his head. At every level there were, at best questions, at worst talk, of revolution. Money, power, and authority seemed to lie at the root of most issues that were around. This threatened the practice and theology of priesthood in the Church, the era of pietism and the call to humility and poverty seemed to be left behind. "Money the root of evil – and yet ecclesiastical benefices seemed to the laity too often a mode of heaping gold upon gold. And in the realm of money, in the opportunities for ecclesiastical good living, it seemed to many observers that Rome was re-eminent" (O. Chadwick 19).

As the context was set and ripe for 'revolution' the first main player in the reformation, Erasmus came on the scene. Erasmus was born around 1467AD in the Netherlands. He was educated by monks and studied theology at the University of Paris, whilst maintaining a keen interest in ancient Greek and Roman authors. With the support of wealthy financiers, he travelled around Europe teaching and writing books. He pioneered and modelled the use of the new technology of the printing press as an 'agent of change'. He predated Luther in popularizing Christian topics and on issues like interpreting the Bible and how to be a good Christian. These topics alone began to help people realize that the power, once held by priests and Bishops could be held by 'laity'. Erasmus ultimately started the 'revolution' that 'started' with Luther translating and publishing the Bible into German in 1534. It is traditionally held, though the origins of the quote allude me, that Luther concluded by stating that 'Erasmus 'laid the egg that Luther hatched.'

As the reformation gained pace monks left monasteries, masses were being suppressed, incompetent priests ejected from parishes, and Luther travelled around with a theologian and three lawyers. He realized the church could not be reformed without the consent and assistance of the law. Between 1524 and 1525 provosts continued Luther's reformation by revising liturgy and abolishing mass for the dead. As bishops continued to let go of their exercised jurisdictions in cities, monasteries were dissolved some converted into hospitals and others into universities. The Reformation might have resulted in a doctrine of the priesthood of laity leading to laity possessing all the authority. But, as (O. Chadwick) states "Francis Lambert proposed a democratic scheme of church government which gave each congregation the right to choose, and in effect control, its pastor. Luther, to whom it was referred, would have none of it." (O. Chadwick 70) At the same time Luther, who continued to be shocked at how ignorant 'laity' were, built on his radical use of the printing press, and produced a book in 1529 which on the one hand was incredibly radical. He proposed the use of prayers in the home without a priest present. But on the other hand, it was very demeaning. He produced two versions — one for priests and one for laity *and children!* The reformation was equally radical for the inspiring of laity and equally demeaning placing them alongside and equal to largely illiterate children. As the reformation progressed it seemed that a broken form of authority was being replaced by another form of authority, still interested in control of the masses. Where the Catholic Church had found rituals and beliefs that 'supplemented', but were not found in scripture, the reformation sought to oust these practices and replace them with '*sola scriptura*', (scripture alone). What tended to happen was either the rituals and beliefs were replaced with tradition and reason, or "In breaking down the papal authority, the Reformation seemed to have left the authority of the Christian ministry vague and uncertain." (O. Chadwick 83)

Ripples of the Reformation were now being felt in places other than Germany. What started as a religious movement in Saxony ended up a political movement. In England, under

Henry VIII, the Reformation was a total political movement. Cardinal Wolsey, who was Cardinal from 1515 to 1529, appeared to have some if not all the authority of the state. He did occasionally talk of the need to reform, maybe to placate the masses, but never seemed to get round to it. His unpopular reign, mainly because of his demanding money, resulted in 'educated' laymen being angry at his position and power which led to clerics and ultimately the Pope becoming increasingly unpopular. Ultimately he was 'dethroned' not because he was unpopular but largely because of the "King's desire to be rid of his wife Catherine of Aragon." (O. Chadwick 98)

With the dissolution of the monasteries, some nuns and monks were murdered, and others were given pensions and dowries, the view and practice of priesthood in England began to change. In 1539 Cromwell and Cranmer ordered church wardens to buy 'The Great Bible' further empowering laity beyond the priest. Political structures were slower to change with bishops still sitting in the House of Lords today, but a higher education of the priesthood was put into place "because more was expected of them as preachers and teachers" (O. Chadwick 407). There does seem to be a big change in the Reformation. that was not only about stepping out from the authority of the Pope but also putting place structures and resources to educate priests and ultimately educating lay people. In essence, the reformation was a recalling to the idea that God is revealed uniquely in Christ, that salvation is found through faith in Christ and not in human suffering, striving and effort. Ecclesiologically, the reformation critique of priesthood did not argue based on the priesthood of Christ that *no one* else could be a priest, but everyone was a priest. "Their point was not to deny the possibility of priesthood being extended to others, but to expand it to the whole people of God. Their gripe was not with the ideas of priesthood in the Church, but with the restriction of the category to the clergy alone" (Tomlin 57).

Modern: AD 1800 – Onwards

The revolution in France, 1789-90, rather than bringing about a revolution in all areas of western Europe brought about a relative conservatism in the church: "It is a sociological, rather

than a theological, paradox that for the Churches of the West the nineteenth century was a period of both formidable reverses and of prodigious expansion” (Vidler and Chadwick 246). Rather than reforming the central structures and theologies as what had previously happened, the church started to reform at the margins. The early 1800’s saw the emergence of many different societies partnered with the age of colonial expansion: “Especially by the British, and of the opening to Western commerce and culture of virgin territories that had never been explored, as well as of ancient lands and civilizations that had hitherto been closed to the west. Missionaries were beckoned as they had never been before”(Vidler and Chadwick 247). The Baptist Missionary Society (1795), The London Missionary Society (1795), The Church Missionary Society (1799), The British and Foreign Bible Society (1813) all saw the opportunities to build God’s Kingdom in ‘far away places’, but not many were trained priests. Protestantism allowed for lay people or ‘pioneers’ to expand this work in a way that Roman Catholicism could not. As these ‘missions’ developed so did the questions about the fruit of them: “Presumably all missionaries from the beginning have had it as the back of their minds that, as a result of their labours, Churches would sooner or later come into existence, and that these bodies must sooner or later acquire the characteristics and qualities that are subsumed under the term ‘Church’” (Neill and Chadwick 380). The same problems arise later in the ‘Postmodern Priests section because of Mission Shaped Church.

Stephen Neill and Owen Chadwick go on to suggest that the doctrine of the Church played far less part in theology during this period: “The emphasis was on the church as an administrative organization, as a corporation, rather than on the Church as the divine creation, the body of Christ” (381). A separation between Church and mission seemed to be emerging as this period moved on. This was seen in the development of training for missionaries being at separate institutions and not seen as on the same academic level as clergy colleges.

By 1914 this growth and expansion had: “arrested or slowed down” (Vidler and Chadwick 251). In the most part Christian missions had only got a small footing per head of population and were observed as the ‘religious face of colonialism’, lack of engagement by the ruling classes of the country with Christianity, and the lack of recognition of the need for indigenous ministries and leadership in the local church. These were all reasons, to varying degrees, why the church missionary movement slowed in the first half of the twentieth century.

Post War Priests – 1945 Onwards

As the century moved on evangelicals started to focus their work more on young people than ‘abroad’. Whether this was because of the missionary movement slowing or a cause is not generally known but the slowing of one and the picking up of the other seems to have some correlation. Youthwork in the English context is a nineteenth century invention (Ward). As the Factory Acts (1833-1847) took hold and children were eventually banned from working in factories, society at large were left wondering what to do with impoverished illiterate children roaming the streets. “As awareness of the needs of children and young people grew in the popular consciousness, Christian people, with characteristic Victorian energy, set about the task of creating youth and children’s organizations” (Ward 24). This was modelled on a parish level by young evangelical curates setting up bible classes and Christian youth clubs. The missionary focus and pastoral care once sent or focused abroad had a ministry growing on its doorstep. Young ordained, evangelical priests post WW1 set up camps and house parties. A key person in the development of these ministries was Eric Nash, or ‘Bash’ as he proffered to be called. His prayer was to “Claim the leading public schools for God’s Kingdom and to this end he concentrated his ministry on a small number of elite schools” (Bash 12). His strategy was not just limited to working with young people. Many of the volunteers selected to work in these camps came from university where Bash openly encouraged these young male volunteers to seek

ordination in the Anglican Church: “Many of the major figures in the post-war revival of evangelicalism within the Church of England were deeply influenced by this work, including John Stott, Michael Green, David Watson and Dick Lucas” (Ward 38).

As these ‘new Clergy’ emerged into parishes so evangelical parish ministry turned their attention to youthwork in urban areas (Ward 63). But this work was largely pushed to the margins and seen as a work of ‘prophetic conscience’ rather than an integral, embraced mission of the church. Organizations like the Frontier Youth Trust and the Salmon Centre were all successful in this work whilst some would see them as not attaining their evangelical focus they did ‘demonstrate the kingdom of God’.

In the seventies these evangelical parishes embraced some of the practices of the Jesus Movement from the States and saw a growing sub-culture of UK Christians with their own music, holiday’s, teaching, and groups develop. Out of this Spring Harvest (1979), New Wine (1989), and eventually Soul Survivor (1993) emerged. Key leaders in all these events and churches were either Anglican ‘vicars’ who would not use the title ‘priest’ and only occasionally use the title ‘minister’, or the key leaders would not be ordained at all. Whilst leading Soul Survivor Church, an Anglican youth Church plant from Christ church Chorleywood, Mike Pilavachi, led a church of over 400 people (average size of Church of England church is 54) and only got ordained in 2012.

This was not a one-off situation during the 1990’s across the UK saw the emergence of full time, paid youth ministers working in parishes. Many, though not all, leading ministries were bigger than the average size of a Church of England Parish. Like the missionaries of the early period, many of them and their line-managers began to ask questions about the fruit of them. “Presumably all missionaries from the beginning have had it as the back of their minds that, as a result of their labors, Churches would sooner or later come into existence, and that these bodies must sooner or later acquire the characteristics and qualities that are subsumed under the term

‘Church’” (Neill and Chadwick 380). At the same time many bishops started asking questions about validation of ministry and training for these lay professionals. All these questions led to the Church of England to produce a report called “Mission Shaped Church” in 2004, which fundamentally changed how the Church trained and recognized future clergy posts and people.

Women Priests – 1992

In 1992 the General Synod passed a resolution to allow the ordination of women to the priesthood in the Church of England. This was met with, as Emma Percy calls it, an “Ambiguous welcome” (91) The first women were then ordained on the 12th March 1994. This significant change came after years of debate and argument in the church, the first mention of such came soon after the First World War in 1919 (*Women Bishops*) Sadly, within the legislation set out to release women into priesthood were ‘safeguards’ built in for opponents to the ordination of women. These ‘safeguards’ later became known as Resolution A and B. These effectively stopped women from presiding at communion, pronouncing absolution, or being appointed as incumbent or priest in charge of a parish who signed up to the resolutions.

In 2014 the first woman Bishop in the Church of England was invested. At the same time the ‘Five Guiding Principles’ were adopted as a way of behaving and working in an environment of disagreement on issues of women being ordained. Each candidate going forward for ordination from this point would be expected to sign up to this and abide by them. “Each principal would need to be read one with the other and held together in tension, rather than being applied selectively.” (*The Five Guiding*)

In 2019 the Church of England celebrated twenty-five years of women being ordained into the priesthood. To mark the milestone, 80 priests were invited to Lambeth Palace to celebrate. At the service the archbishop celebrated the change twenty-five years earlier:

Many of those here today have been pioneers as they work out what it means to be an ordained woman in the Church of England, not just for themselves and their communities, but for the whole body of Christ. Today let us bear witness to those who paved the way in 1994, as well as upholding those whose way into ministry has been opened up since ('Celebrations Mark').

To date women now make up nearly a third of all active clergy.

Pioneer Priests – 2004 Onwards

In the forward to "Mission Shaped Church" the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, said this about what he saw in the report: "I have regularly been surprised and deeply heartened by the widespread sense that the Church of England, for all its problems that beset it, is poised for serious growth and renewal. Many feel that, as various streams of development over the past decade or so begin to flow together, we are at a real watershed." What followed in the report wasn't a clear set out theology of church planting but an explanation of the changing context of society and ultimately church. For the first time ever exploration of such ideas as 'postmodernity' and 'networks' were explained, used but sometimes frowned upon in a Church of England report.

In the next section they shared stories of church planting, network churches, youth congregations, café churches, and 'missional communities' from all over the UK. The most interesting aspect was, most if not all, were led by lay people not ordained Vicars. Vicars may have instigated the work, but most were run by paid lay people. Out of this research, the stories and the observations about 'emerging culture's' came a series of proposals which some saw as a radical step forward, others as a way to embrace new forms of leadership, and yet others saw as wholly negative reflection by stating: "The church is a mission project, not the mission in itself; the Kingdom of God is the object of the mission and the life of Jesus Christ continues to be

manifest through the church as it witnesses to, embodies, and proclaims the Kingdom. The problem is that the missiology of the report blurs and confuses these distinctions” (Hull 5).

At the end of the report one of its recommendations was to change parts the structure of the parish system, something that had been in place since the Reformation, the parish system:

A new legal category of ‘Bishop’s Order’ may begin to open the way to creating what is needed in terms of nurturing, validating, and multiplying fresh expressions of church, without making them subject to the existing legislation. A Bishop’s Mission Order is accountable and preserves episcopal authority, but growth and resourcing can be encouraged.” (Church of England, *Mission-Shaped* 131)

Another report written by Peter Toney in the same year as *Mission-Shaped Church* also concluded that the parish system needs to think beyond the ‘one size fits all’ he suggested that the strategy doesn’t work and not really capable of fulfilling the true mission of God.

A new way of training and identifying clergy, who had the ‘mission’ experience, but not the theological education was put into place: “Priority attention needs to be given by the Church of England to the identification and training of leaders for pioneering missionary projects. The possibility of a call to such work needs to be specifically identified in the vocational process” (Church of England, *Mission-Shaped* 134). The recommendation goes on to suggest regional clergy training centres, for lay and ordained. It concludes by stating: “If the missionary challenge we face is to be met, many new initiatives will be lay led.” (Church of England, *Mission-Shaped* 135)

What I have observed since 2004, by being part of this new wave of pioneer priests is a divide between traditional clergy and pioneer clergy. On one side there is a system that is well funded, trained and supported: resource churches, St Mellitus College training. On the other is an under resourced, mostly struggling clergy who feel increasingly hostile to ‘new forms’ of church

or left out in the cold by this strategy. Whilst in the initial report this was referred to as a 'mixed economy' approach it is increasingly seen as a bankrupt statement of division rather than unity in the Church of England.

Planting Priests 2018 Onwards

Although Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) planted its initial church in 1985, they have since established over twenty churches within the Diocese of London, as well as across the nation and internationally. In 2018, the House of Bishops issued a statement endorsing the strategic planting of new churches as a priority. The subsequent year, the General Synod passed a motion encouraging all parishes and dioceses to participate in this 'new church planting movement'.

Alongside this was a program called Myriad aimed at church planting with lay people leading the plants. Within this strategy Bishop Ric Thorpe reaffirmed his commitment to the type, style, and selection of potential leaders in this movement, lay or ordained:

Be careful who you chose and remember Paul's words to Timothy, 'do not be hasty in the laying on of hands' (1 Tim. 5:22). I keep going back to the tried and tested 5 c's for assessing potential leaders, especially for planting: Competence – will they be good at what they need to do in a church plant? Chemistry – are they good at building healthy team dynamics? Character – are they teachable and being refined in Christ? Culture – do they embody the vision and values of the Church? Calling – are they called to be a planter, innovator, or pioneer? (Thorpe Ric 116)

What makes for an interesting development has been the change in selection criteria for those looking at ordained ministry. In the past The Church of England has selected priests using the criteria: Vocation, Ministry within the Church of England, Spirituality, Personality and Character, Relationships, Leadership and Collaboration, Faith, Mission and Evangelism, and

Quality of Mind. As early as 2018 the Church was being criticized for favouring middle class candidates:

Selection procedures must change radically if the Church is to expand its priesthood beyond an “executive class”, the Bishop of Burnley, the Rt Revd Philip North, has said. The current criteria deployed by those selecting ordinands “hugely favour eloquence and education and confidence, over authenticity and evangelistic gifts and genuine vocation,” he said last Friday. “It simply rewards those who have done professional jobs and have led teams.” There was “a widespread perception among northern DDOs [diocesan directors of ordinands] that candidates from working-class backgrounds with northern accents are victims of prejudice. (*Selection Procedures*)

As of autumn 2021, the new criteria was put in place: Love for God; Call to Ministry; Love for People; Wisdom; Fruitfulness; Potential.

Table 2.4: Summary of Eras and Different Models, Theology & Practice of Priesthood

Era/Period	Summary of Practice and Theology of Priesthood
Apostolic Period: Pentecost to 160AD	Confused, word priest was used but no real clarity on definition or application
Patristic Period: approx. 160AD – 700AD	Bishop, Priest & Deacon began to have clarity and began to be routed in establishment. Focus of ministry around Eucharist, prophetic and prayer.
Medieval - 700 to 1500 AD	Role of priesthood began to be professionalized. Direct link with establishment lost but power and control are maintained.
Reformation & Early Modern: 1500AD – 1800AD	Priesthood ‘rewired’ leading to priests being ultimately seen as biblical educators. Less focus on the ‘act’ of holiness but more in the ‘teaching’ of holiness.
Modern: 1800AD – Onwards	Consolidation, priest on the margins, acting not being? The Missionary Priest.
Post – War Priests	Young male evangelical curates focusing on working with young people
Women Priests – 1992 Onwards	Women deacons able to be priested and later accepted as Bishops (2014)
Pioneer Priests – 2004 Onwards	Empowerment of experienced lay leaders to be ordained into post.

 Planting Priests – 2018 Onwards

 Ordained and lay leaders specifically selected and trained to resource, plant and grow church plants.

Putting this table alongside the liturgies set out for Ordination in the Church of England shows a change in how ordination is perceived. In the Book of Common Prayer, published in 1662, the section for the ordination of priests was entitled: “The Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests” (Church of England, *The Book of Common Prayer* 569) Towards the end of the twentieth century, the Church of England did its first main revision of this prayer book and the section dealing with the ordination of priests was retitled to: “The Ordination of Priests (also called Presbyters)” (Church of England, *Alternative Service Book* 358) The Church of England finally revised its liturgies in 2000 with the publication of Common Worship. In it the liturgy for the ordination of priests changed again: “The Ordination of Priests also Called Presbyters” (Church of England, *Common Worship* 567)

Outlines and Reflections on Most Recent Writings on Priesthood

The use of the word ‘priesthood’ or any of its derivatives, in evangelical charismatic churches is pretty much non-existent. A simple journal search using a wider delimitation than set out for this paper yields very few results given the importance of the theme in scripture.

“Priesthood of All Believers: Clericalism and How to Avoid It.”

Simon Cuff decries the clericalism trend in Church history as a “defrocking of the common royal priesthood”. (59) Or it may be seen as ecclesial mindset where clergy are seen as superior to laity and possess more power and authority in the church. As he goes onto suggest, that this creates an unhealthy dynamic that divides the Body of Christ. The laity become passive

recipients rather than active participants in ministry. The clergy act as administrators over the laity, rather than as servants empowering the people of God.

Cuff traces clericalism back to a confusion between the ‘ontological essence’ conferred by ordination and the ‘functional exercise’ of ministry. Just because someone is ordained does not mean they are the only ones qualified or authorized for ministry. All the baptized have a share in Christ's priestly, prophetic, and royal office. The church needs the gifts, talents, and vocations of both clergy and laity.

To avoid clericalism, Cuff says we need a renewed understanding of ministry that sees clergy and laity working collaboratively in their respective roles, not in competition or isolation from one another. The focus should be on empowering the laity to fully live out their baptismal calling, not consolidating power and control in the hands of clergy. Clergy are called to serve through sacraments, preaching, and pastoral care, not to be administrators lording authority over others.

Cuff suggests avoiding language of "clergy" and "laity" as opposing groups. He advocates referring to all as “the faithful” unified in one Body of Christ, with different vocations or charisms. All have gifts to offer and should humbly serve one another, not try to dominate. Clergy must not view themselves as the only “qualified ministers” or speak as if they are above lay people.

To build up the church, Cuff says clergy and laity need to listen to each other in a spirit of dialogue, empathy, and prayer. They should walk together on the same journey as disciples, not split off into factions. Overcoming clericalism requires renewing our understanding of church as a communion where all contribute according to their calling. The goal is a community of mutuality, not a climate of control and coercion.

“Rehabilitating The Theological Stepchild”

Thomas Scott Caulley in his journal article 'Rehabilitating the Theological Stepchild' explores whether the concept of the "priesthood of all believers," which has been debated since the Reformation, can be positively rehabilitated based on a canonical reading of 1 Peter and 2 Peter. Though the language of "royal priesthood" in 1 Peter seems to portray all Christians as priests, this was likely meant more as encouragement amidst suffering than as prescribing priestly duties. 1 Peter does not stress a "democracy of holiness" or autonomy from authority. In contrast, 2 Peter condemns false teachers promoting dangerous autonomy and freedom from apostolic tradition, associating them with the rebellion of Korah against Moses (Num. 16.1-40).

Looking in detail at this letter he suggests, there is a dialectic tension between these two views on the priesthood of all believers. The positive, egalitarian view in 1 Peter stands in tension with the emphasis on order, hierarchy, and apostolic authority in 2 Peter. Caulley thus concludes a nuanced rehabilitation of this concept is possible today, provided it is held in balance and avoids the dangerous autonomy seen in 2 Peter's opponents.

He suggests specifically, 1 Peter metaphorically portrays its Gentile audience as God's people using imagery of Israel, including being "chosen," "called," and born again. The language of them being a "holy priesthood" and "royal priesthood" draws on the Exodus 19 description of Israel. This seems intended as encouragement amidst suffering, rather than prescribing priestly duties. Their duties are left general - spiritual sacrifices, proclamation, and holy conduct. There is no stress on autonomy from authority (7 and 8).

In contrast, 2 Peter condemns dangerous false teachers who promote autonomy from apostolic tradition. In adapting Jude, 2 Peter associates these opponents with the rebellion of Korah against Moses, who wrongly invoked the "priesthood of all" in his defiance. Echoes of the transgressions of Cain and Balaam are also present in 2 Peter's portrayal. His opponents embrace autonomy and freedom from tradition, denying future judgment.

Canonically, these two views balance each other - the positive, egalitarian portrayal versus the need for order and authority. The already/not yet eschatological tension is also present. The priesthood of believers is a future goal, but partially present now. Overall, this suggests the concept can be positively rehabilitated today, so long as it is held in proper tension with authority and avoids the dangerous extremes seen in 2 Peter's opponents.

“Biblical Assessment of Luther’s View on Priesthood of All Believers”

Davidson Razafiarivony seeks to do a similar piece to Caulley by providing a biblical assessment of Martin Luther's view on the priesthood of all believers and the office of ministry. The paper begins by presenting Luther's perspective that all baptized Christians have equal spiritual status before God and are all priests in the sense that they can approach God directly without the mediation of clergy. Razafiarivony also states that Luther emphasized the universal priesthood of believers while still affirming the need for the public office of ministry for the sake of good order in the church: “At the same time there is a clear functional difference between Christians. There are occasions for service. All Christians ‘do not all have the same work to do’. However, the office does not grant a special status” (Razafiarivony 8).

The paper then analyses Luther's view from a biblical perspective. It looks at Old Testament passages that indicate God established distinctions between the priesthood tribe of Levi and the common Israelites, suggesting some distinction between clergy and laity. However, the New Testament teaches that Christ is the high priest for all believers, who are a "royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9). The paper argues that 1 Peter 2 refers to the function of all believers, not just clergy, to proclaim God's praises.

Razafiarivony goes on to examine evidence from the Pastoral Epistles that show that the early church did establish the special office of overseer/elder. The qualifications for this office given in 1 Timothy 3 indicate it was not open to just any believer. He concludes that the New

Testament affirms both the priesthood of all believers and the special office of elder/overseer.

There are distinctions in roles between clergy and laity, but no difference in spiritual status before God. Luther's vision of upholding both the universal priesthood and the office of ministry aligns with this biblical view. The paper calls for balancing these twin biblical principles in the church today.

“A Rediscovery of the Priesthood of All Believers in Ephesians 4 1-6.”

George Lotter and Timothy Van Aarde explore the theological concept of the 'priesthood of all believers' and its relevance for the *Missio Dei* (“Mission of God”) and biblical missional ecumenism. It begins by stating that this doctrine, which affirms that all Christians have a priestly role and direct access to God, is vital for fostering unity and participation in God's mission across denominations.

They trace perspectives on the priesthood of believers in various Christian traditions:

- The Reformed tradition rediscovered the role of the laity in missions, which Baptists have developed extensively. Lutherans connect it to the immediacy of access to God but limit its scope to the private sphere.
- The Catholic Church recognized the apostolic role of the laity in the Second Vatican Council, responding to crisis and expanding lay roles, though the worldview of separation between clergy and laity persists.
- Pentecostals equipped believers for service through identifying and using spiritual gifts, with some even advocating for a "prophethood of all believers."

They set a biblical basis in 1 Peter 2 and Ephesians 4:1-16, which gives the missional mandate for all believers to participate in God's Mission. Ephesians 4 is made clear that the gifts

in verse 11 are for equipping believers for service and mission, *diakonia* and *oikonomia*. Unity in Ephesians 4:1-16 is missional, not just theological.

They state that the priesthood of believer's doctrine, when properly understood, orients Christians toward a biblical missional ecumenism - finding unity in participating together in God's mission across denominations. It calls for integrating public and private spheres of life and ministry and recognizing the equality of all Christian vocations or callings.

They conclude by affirming the need to recover this doctrine's comprehensive meaning - encompassing both our vertical, immediate relationship to God and the horizontal ministry of all believers - to foster the unity in diversity needed for effective missional engagement.

“Priesthood of All Believers” Wim Dreyer

Wim Dreyer in his article discusses the concept of the 'priesthood of all believers', tracing its origins back to the early church and its discovery/rediscovery during the Protestant Reformation. He argues that this doctrine, though central to Luther's ecclesiology, has become neglected over time in Reformed theology, church culture, and processes: “It has become a forgotten part of reformed ecclesiology’s and more or less disappeared from the church orders of most reformed churches” (Dreyer 2).

As the other papers in this section do, he suggests that all Christians have equal access to God through Christ and do not need a priestly mediator. All are equal before God, with ordained clergy differing only in function, not status. He goes on to suggest this view was held in early Christianity but increasingly institutionalized over time, with a rigid hierarchy developing. Luther saw baptism as ordaining all Christians as priests, demolishing clergy-laity distinctions. Calvin gave it less emphasis, leading to a focus on ordained ministry in Reformed churches. Fear of sectarianism and association with radical reformers like the Anabaptists made Lutheran and Reformed churches wary of implementing the priesthood of believers. Reformed confessions and

church orders like the Synod of Dort gave little attention to the role of ordinary members. The ministry was restricted to educated, ordained clergy.

In the 20th century, the ecumenical movement brought renewed interest in ecclesiology and the priesthood of believers. Theologians like Van Ruler and Kraemer wrote on this forgotten doctrine. In missional ecclesiology today, it has re-emerged as a central issue relating to ministry and the role of church members. Dreyer proposes the priesthood of believers should receive more focused attention in Reformed ecclesiology and church today, as part of continued reformation. It cannot be merely theoretical but must shape practice. The interlink of ecclesiology, polity, orders, and praxis means a shift in one demand adaptation in the others. Recent changes to the Church Order of the *Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika* (NHKA) to reflect a missional ecclesiology and priesthood of believers are used as a case study. Ongoing reformation means church orders should not be static historical documents but facilitate change in ministry. He argues terminology is important going forward, to avoid institutionalizing the priesthood of believers as an 'office'. The calling of all Christians as priests, prophets, and kings should be articulated, based on the approach of the Heidelberg Catechism, a protestant confessional document written in 1563.

“Priesthood of All Believers: Ecclesiology and Political Implications Today”

Victor Aguilan reviews Martin Luther’s doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and its implications for ecclesiology and political theology. This egalitarian theology threatened the hierarchical structure of medieval society led by religious elites like the Pope. Luther asserted that every Christian has a priestly calling to preach, minister sacraments, pray, and make sacrifices for others. The church is thus a community of mutual intercessors who bear each other’s burdens. Luther also rejected the division between secular and sacred callings, arguing that all vocations have spiritual validity if done in service to God. This perspective sacralised ordinary work and vocations.

Protestants historically rejected the notion of a special priestly class separate from the laity. Instead, clergy and laity share authority through participation in church governance, contrasting with the Catholic model of clerical leadership through bishops and the Pope. Luther's doctrine threatened the religious and political power of clericalism by empowering the laity and challenging the hierarchical Church's religious authority and influence over temporal affairs. The doctrine implies equality between clergy and laity before secular controls and law, resisting clerical exemption from oversight.

Aguilan suggests that the implications today include continuing to resist clericalism, promote lay participation and leadership, and implement checks on religious authority. The doctrine encourages accountable governance, distributed authority, and freedom of conscience within religious communities. In sum, Luther's teaching on the priesthood of all believers and its egalitarian vision retains ongoing relevance for countering clericalism and affirming participatory, accountable religious community.

“The Priesthood of All Believers in Africa” Conrad Mbewe

Conrad Mbewe argues that the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, which was rediscovered during the Protestant Reformation, needs to be restored in African churches today. He contends that abuse of church members by leaders is rampant in Africa, enabled by members' lack of understanding of their direct access to God without human intermediaries. He claims the biblical basis for the priesthood of all believers is found first in Jeremiah 31. “This pivotal text is quoted in the New Testament in order to make the point that one of the major differences between the New Testament and the Old is in the office of priest” (Mbewe 173). The doctrine affirms that all Christians have direct access to God through Christ's sacrifice, without requiring mediating priests. However, this doctrine was lost in the medieval church, as a priestly class emerged who controlled access to God and the Bible.

Mbewe continues to outline how the Reformation recovered the teaching of universal priesthood. Reformers translated the Bible into common languages and empowered lay involvement in church governance. He argues that missionary-founded churches in Africa upheld the doctrine to varying degrees. Pentecostalism and its emphasis on spiritual gifts and experiences opened the door to African prophets and healing ministers. This charismatic impulse, combined with weak church leadership, enabled today's "men of God" to gain control over congregations. They claim exclusive access to God and abuse members who desperately seek their mediating prayers.

Mbewe concludes that African worldviews, which see God as distant and require spiritual mediators, make Christians susceptible to manipulative leaders. The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers must be revived to affirm that all Christians have direct access to God through Christ's priestly work, without need for human intercessors. This will liberate African believers and churches from abusive leadership.

In summary, Mbewe provides historical background to the doctrine, shows how its loss enables ecclesial exploitation, and argues for restoring this biblical teaching in Africa to empower Christians and reform churches. The core emphasis is on the Reformation truth that Christ's sacrifice gives all believers direct access to God without fallible human mediation.

Research Design Literature

The research design for this project was primarily guided by the works of Tim Sensing and of John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell. It employed a pre-intervention strategy, with the potential to develop best practice guidelines or a course based on the findings. Given this, the project incorporated both qualitative and quantitative research tools, thereby adopting a 'mixed methods' approach, as Sensing states: "tools should be selected because they best fit the

intervention and are designed to provide the data necessary to present a complete evaluation of the effectiveness of the project” (Sensing 139).

This project aimed to develop a thorough understanding of the theological concepts of priesthood and the priesthood of all believers, in order to determine appropriate practices and guidelines for clergy members, lay people, and educators within that doctrinal framework. The quantitative research component provided data from the instruments that could be analysed statistically. The follow-on tool was qualitative and was designed to go deeper than ‘just numbers’, which could provide a deeper analysis of training, teaching, and possible blind spots in clergy training. The mixed methods approach, incorporating open-ended questions in the questionnaires, Priesthood of All Believers Clergy (PHABC) and Priesthood of All Believers Lay (PHABL), as well as the semi-structured interviews, Priesthood of All Believers Educators (PHABE), enabled richer interpretation of the data, aligning with Sensing’s suggestion: “Subsequently, triangulation (multiple data-collection technologies designed to measure a single concept or construct) provides a complex view of the intervention enabling a ‘thicker’ interpretation” (Sensing 72).

Summary of Literature

In 2020 the Archbishop of York, the Venerable Stephen Cottrell, wrote a book entitled *On Priesthood*. From the very start he outlined the problem we have in the Church of England:

A friend of mine once said that the main problem with the Church was the clergy. Not the clergy as people; they were, as far as she could gather, good honourable men and women. Well, most of them! No, it was the very notion of clergy that was the problem. After all, wasn’t ministry supposed to belong to everyone? Wasn’t this the radical idea at the heart of the New Testament? (Cottrell 1)

If the Archbishop of York, a priest very much from the high church end of the church spectrum, can realise the issue then studies like this one need to happen more: a comprehensive biblical, theological, and historical reflection on the journey, acceptance, and the outworking of the priesthood of all believers.

Rich biblical data has been found throughout the Old and New Testament using a 'priestly lens' to help us understand the genesis of Levitical and Melchizedekian lines of priesthood. Using Brueggemann's and Fletcher-Louis' critique of modern theology as a starting point: "Jesus' priestly character has been ignored, first and foremost, because the priesthood has itself been ignored in modern biblical studies." (Fletcher-Louis 2). Also, "Despite the central role which priesthood played in Israel's life and worship, the majority of the Old Testament theologies neglect to explore the peculiarities of Israel's priesthood" (Brueggemann 652). This study has rediscovered the strong theme of priesthood in Luke's gospel, Hebrews, 1 Peter, and Revelation.

Theological foundations were built around identifying different models of priesthood outworked in different times defined and effected by various social, political, theological and ecclesiological issues of the time (Levering). Significant developments post war in the model of priesthood saw younger, male, and evangelical clergy trained to specifically work with young people. Women as the new millennium started and off the back of the *Mission-Shaped Church Report* the culture of training clergy changed significantly with the adoption of pioneer priests who were trained 'on the job' and empowered to become clergy. What then followed was the latest model of priest the planting priests who were specifically selected and trained to plant resource churches.

This overview of different models of priesthood shows the importance and the culture of change that has existed throughout church history and theology. The early church, the Roman Empire, early church leaders like Chrysostom, the medieval period, the last century, and this one

all show that the change in the model and theology of leadership did not just change at the Reformation.

More recent journals that have specifically written about the priesthood of all believers have not been written with a European or Western underlying theology. Many have been written in South Africa and even one from the Philippines. A significant number of these papers critiqued the practice and theology of the priesthood of all believers broadly and boldly asking the key question: 'We have this theology why aren't we using it?' One case put the Church's lack of church growth down to not truly understanding the priesthood of all believers correctly: "Over time, I believe, the neglect of priesthood of all believers has had a detrimental effect on churches. It has contributed to a strong institutional and structured ecclesiology in which the office of the minister has become a dominant factor. More than often, the ministerial office limited growth instead of growing it" (Dreyer 2). As the global majority grows in its voice and theological confidence maybe the rest need to listen to its critiques and suggestions sooner rather than later.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter describes the research methods used in this project about the priesthood of all believers in evangelical charismatic churches in the Church of England. The researcher used three surveys: one for clergy, one for lay people, and one for teachers at theological colleges. The surveys asked questions about the participants' beliefs and experiences related to the idea, theology, and practice of the priesthood of all believers. Potential participants received emails to invite them to participate in anonymous surveys. to invite people to participate in the anonymous surveys.

The researcher also conducted interviews with some theological college educators. The interviews were recorded, and then typed up what was said. All the survey answers and interview transcripts were stored safely on the researcher's computer and in a locked cabinet. Finally, the answers from the surveys and interviews were analysed to learn more about what people think about the priesthood of all believers and how it works in evangelical charismatic Churches in the Church of England.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

The study was structured to address the projects' purpose to identify the practices for clergy and laity in charismatic, evangelical Church of England congregations and training institutions for fully realising and practicing the Priesthood of all Believers. The instruments aimed to uncover, comprehend, and assess the effectiveness of lay and clergy preparation for priesthood, with the goal of learning how to lead more successfully as either lay or trained in the future.

Research Questions

The purpose statement for the project served as the foundation for the development of the three research questions.

Research Question #1: To what extent are Church of England lay people currently released and supported into ministry as Priesthood of all believers in their communities?

The study was designed around the discovery, description, and quality, of the training, support, and empowerment that was around for lay leaders in the theological principal of priesthood of all believers and its application in life. For this purpose, two questionnaires were designed: PHABL and PHABC. The first questionnaire was for those currently active in charismatic, evangelical churches, as a lay person: Priesthood of All Believers Lay (PHABL).

The second questionnaire was designed for those currently active in charismatic, evangelical churches as ordained leaders: Priesthood of All Believers Clergy (PHABC). PHABC asked respondents questions that would unearth reasons for not empowering lay people into ministry, because of theology or a different understanding of the Priesthood of all Believers: questions – 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 19. In question 20 participants were specifically asked to describe someone who was released into being a lay priest.

Research Question #2: What do clergy and laity identify as obstacles to lay people being released and supported as Priests in their communities?

The research questions were designed to highlight what obstacles there might be for effective training and support of laity in being the priesthood of all believers in their communities. Each of the questionnaires had specific questions in them designed to address the primary purpose statement and draw out answers specific to the purpose. In PHABC questions 6, 9, 11, and 21, the clergy participants were asked directly about what they observed as the obstacles to lay people being released and supported as priests into their communities. In

PHABL, question 14 asked the participants for the same information about what they viewed as the main obstacles to seeing themselves being released and supported as priests in the community.

The Best Practice Interviews (PHABE) began by looking at the demographic's history and experience behind the interviewee. As the interview progressed, participants responded to more direct questions about what they believe to be the obstacles and good practices in this area.

Research Question #3: What are the best transformative practices for the Church of England to empower and release lay and ordained people into ministry?

The last research question aimed to combine the previous two by eliciting participants' current views on best practices as well as their vision for what those practices could look like going forward. PHABC addressed Research Question #3 directly in question 22, whilst PHABL addresses it in question 15. The overall aim of the study design was to align with the purpose statement by eliciting descriptions of both current practices as well as future aspirations: question 22 in PHABC and question 16 in PHABL. PHABE built on the two previous questionnaires and engaged with both the best practices and the obstacles in this area.

Ministry Context

The Church of England is a resource heavy, finance light organization, or so people seem to think it is. It holds a steadily increasing amount of money in investments, an endowment of £8.7 billion which generates a yearly income of about £1 billion a year. Since 1993 these assets have grown from £2.4 billion. On a parish level the Church of England generates approximately £329 million from donations in a year, this would amount to approximately £15 per week per donor in its 12,500 parishes. ('Research and Statistics') On the face of it this could be viewed as a business that is doing quite well. But if one takes the statistics on church attendance and digs deeper, one finds a different narrative being written.

At the end of 2022, a report was published called *Statistics for Mission* by Ken Eames head of the Church of England Data Services team. Whilst a lot of the results were proceeded with comments about the long-lasting effect of COVID on churches the big picture results were not very good. The figures on the table below are taken from the ‘Usual Sunday Attendance’ (USA) figure. This is calculated by taking the number of attendees from the first three Sundays in October and averaging them out.

Table 3.1: Average Weekly Attendance Figures Over Three Years

Average Weekly Attendance	854,000	2019
	345,000	2020
	605,000	2021

The recovery from COVID has been good with a ‘bounce back’ in 2021. However, between 2019-2021 the church attendance had an overall decline of 28%. Setting these figures against the previous 12 years, reveals a bigger picture.

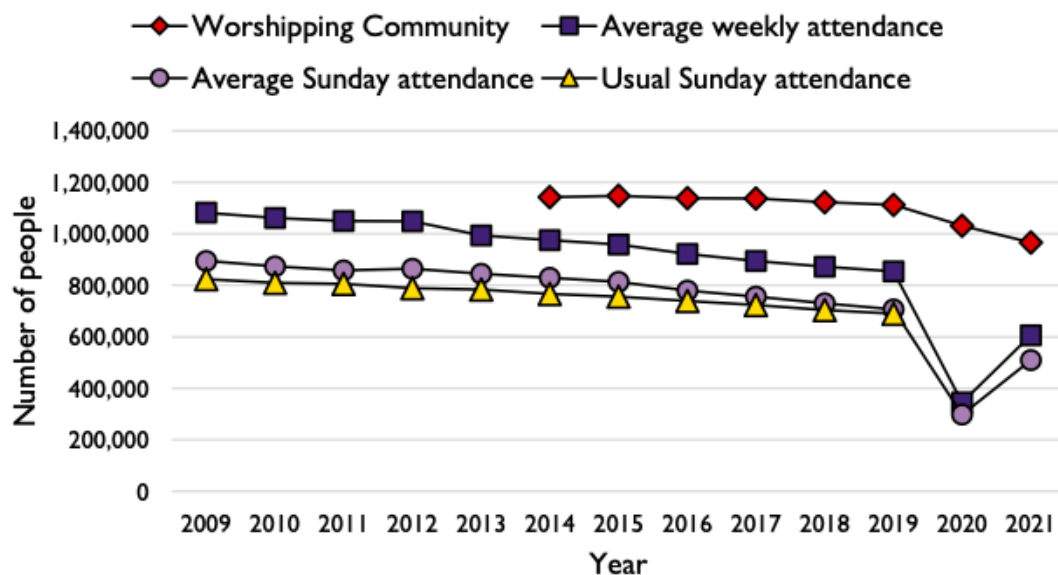


Fig. 3.1: Summary of attendance figures 2009-21 ('Research and Statistics' 11).

The figures just quoted show a national average. Sadly, the average figure papers over some areas of the Church of England where the situation is dire both financially and in reference to a decline in membership. Looking at 'Figure 3.2' we see stark comparisons between Diocese on their Usual Sunday Attendance figures. The top three Diocese in pure numbers lost over five years are Oxford with a loss of 4800, Lichfield with a loss of 4400 loss, and Durham with a loss of 2800 loss. Comparing the numbers lost as a percentage of the whole, Durham has a 25% loss of worshippers over a five-year period.

Diocese	Province	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	completeness, 2019
Bath & Wells	C	17,800	17,300	16,700	16,300	15,900	15,000	90%
Birmingham	C	12,800	12,100	12,400	12,100	11,800	10,900	99%
Blackburn	Y	18,600	17,800	16,400	16,100	15,500	15,000	88%
Bristol	C	10,900	11,000	10,500	9,900	9,900	9,700	98%
Canterbury	C	17,000	15,600	15,400	14,700	14,600	13,800	83%
Carlisle	Y	10,300	9,900	9,500	9,100	9,000	8,500	90%
Chelmsford	C	28,400	27,900	26,600	25,000	24,300	23,800	90%
Chester	Y	24,200	23,600	22,700	21,600	20,500	19,700	95%
Chichester	C	28,800	27,800	27,100	26,200	26,100	25,400	99%
Coventry	C	11,300	10,700	10,300	10,100	9,800	9,900	98%
Derby	C	12,100	12,200	11,600	11,300	11,100	10,300	100%
Durham	Y	15,000	14,200	13,400	12,700	12,100	11,200	96%
Ely	C	13,200	12,800	12,200	12,200	12,000	11,600	96%
Exeter	C	18,500	18,800	18,600	18,000	17,400	17,100	91%
Gloucester	C	13,600	13,600	12,800	12,500	11,700	11,100	100%
Guildford	C	18,400	18,100	17,200	16,800	16,000	15,800	96%
Hertford	C	7,000	7,000	6,900	6,700	6,400	6,300	99%
Leicester	C	10,800	10,200	9,700	9,700	9,600	8,900	99%
Lichfield	C	23,900	23,300	22,400	22,000	20,900	19,500	95%
Lincoln	C	11,100	12,400	11,500	11,000	10,600	10,300	81%
Liverpool	Y	17,300	17,600	16,600	16,100	15,600	14,700	86%
London	C	48,500	48,300	47,500	46,400	45,100	44,600	98%
Manchester	Y	19,900	19,500	19,200	18,000	16,800	16,600	97%
Newcastle	Y	10,600	10,300	9,300	9,400	8,900	8,700	95%
Norwich	C	14,500	13,900	13,600	13,500	12,900	12,300	81%
Oxford	C	37,500	37,100	35,600	34,900	33,700	32,700	95%
Peterborough	C	11,700	11,500	11,100	11,000	10,400	10,000	98%
Portsmouth	C	9,400	9,100	9,300	8,800	8,900	8,200	100%
Rochester	C	18,700	18,800	17,600	17,200	16,600	16,100	99%
St. Albans	C	22,200	21,600	20,700	20,800	20,600	20,100	96%
St. Edms & Ipswich	C	11,400	11,300	10,800	10,600	10,100	9,300	89%
Salisbury	C	19,500	18,300	17,900	17,800	17,000	16,600	93%
Sheffield	Y	12,600	12,300	11,500	11,200	11,200	10,900	100%
Sodor & Man	Y	1,300	1,500	1,200	1,100	1,200	1,200	93%
Southwark	C	29,100	28,800	27,700	27,300	26,600	26,300	98%
Southwell & Nottingham	Y	11,700	11,100	10,600	10,300	10,200	9,600	99%
Truro	C	8,900	8,300	8,000	7,600	7,400	7,100	95%
Winchester	C	18,100	18,100	17,000	16,600	16,400	16,700	92%
Worcester	C	9,800	9,200	9,000	8,700	8,900	8,200	97%
York	Y	18,600	18,600	18,200	17,400	17,200	16,400	99%
Europe	C	8,800	8,900	8,900	8,600	8,800	8,600	94%
Leeds	Y	27,700	27,800	26,300	25,400	25,100	24,300	98%
Church of England		711,200	698,000	671,500	652,700	634,900	613,100	95%

Fig. 3.2: Average USA for each diocese from 2014 – 2019 ('Research and Statistics' 15).

Focusing on these statistics reveals how the culture and environment of the Church of England is affecting leadership in Charismatic, evangelical churches in the Church of England. New Wine operates a leadership support network for lay and ordained church leaders. Its vision is 'to equip the local churches to release confident Spirit-filled followers of Jesus'. It aims to achieve this through prayer, training in the gifts of the Spirit, network Church leaders regionally and gather a national yearly festival once a year. The network supports 3500 church leaders who are signed-up members of their database. Of these, 2625 of them are Church of England vicars and 58% of them are senior vicars in charge of churches in the Church of England. This does not sound like a large network within the Church of England, considering there are just over 19,000 ordained ministers. But in recent years the New Wine national event manages to attract over 10,000 people.

In the context of this project involving charismatic, evangelical Church of England churches, the situation is quite concerning. On one hand, the significant loss of worshippers leads to a shortage of volunteers (lay priests?) to carry out God's mission in the UK. Put simply, these churches are struggling to retain their existing congregants, let alone reach out and attract new ones. On the other hand, church history reveals that when the church is faced with its most oppression and threats, it brings out the best in the church. This could be an amazing opportunity for clergy to change how they think about lay leaders and ultimately how to empower the church's lay leaders better.

Participants

The study participants encompassed a diverse range of individuals over 18 years old, selected on the basis of their replies to the researcher's emails. Due to the constraints of this project, the researcher contacted member clergy friends who attend or support New Wine to request participation in the PHABC questionnaire.

Criteria for Selection

For the third questionnaire I approached the clergy whom I had approached for PHABC and requested permission to send the application, PHABL, to some of their church members. After identifying two theological colleges that were in sympathy with the values of New Wine, staff members were approached for the PHABE best practice interviews. Overall, 200 persons were approached to take part in the questionnaire or interview.

Description of Participants

Fifty-eight people responded to the questionnaire Priesthood of all Believers Lay. A total of 58.06% were female and 41.94% were male. Only 6.89% were under the age of 25. The majority of 67.24% were between the ages of 26 and 55. Whilst 25.86% were over the age of 56. Those who described themselves as White British came to 80.65% of responders, whilst 18.35% were happy to describe themselves as UK minority ethnic or other.

Thirty-eight people responded to the questionnaire Priesthood of all Believers Clergy. Of these, 72.73% were male, and 27.27% were female. Only 2.78% were under 25 years of age. The majority, 69.44%, were between the ages of 26 and 55. Whilst 27.77% were 56 plus. Those who described themselves as White British came to 82.61%, whilst 17.39% were happy to describe themselves as UK minority ethnic or other.

For the best practice interview (PHABE), all six who were invited worked full time, part time or occasionally as a theological educator at a theological college. Four ended up completing the interviews—two women, two men. All of them described themselves as a Charismatic and evangelical. Three described themselves as Anglican, and one as an ‘ex Anglican’.

Ethical Considerations

Significant efforts were made to preserve the anonymity of all participants throughout the research process. For the questionnaires, potential participants received an initial email invitation to take part in the research project. Attached to every email was a document detailing informed consent, potential risks involved in participation, and the measures taken by the researcher to mitigate those risks as much as possible. The first question on each questionnaire was about whether they wanted to take part in the research. At this point if they answered “no” to the question they would be taken straight to “submit” section of the questionnaire and the process would be completed.

For PHABE, the people asked were sent an email asking them if they would be interested in doing the interview. As with the PHABC and PHABL the researcher also explained in the email about needing their informed consent to participate and that this would be a key part of the process. The researcher recorded the PHABE interviews and transcribed them onto a laptop using appropriate software. The data collected from the PHABC and PHABL were kept securely by the researcher in a locked filing cabinet, accessible only by the researcher's key. The transcripts and recordings stored on the researcher's laptop were deleted or shredded within twelve months after the completion of the researcher's Doctor of Ministry degree.

Instrumentation

Three researcher-developed research tools were utilized to meet the study's purpose statement. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing questionnaires that contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions, complemented by interviews that gathered in-depth qualitative insights. The first questionnaire was for clergy leading charismatic evangelical churches who directly or indirectly affiliated to the values of New Wine (PHABC) It was made up of thirteen questions with a mix of qualitative and quantitative data. The rationale for employing the instrument was to obtain precise information regarding the cognitive processes, theological underpinnings, educational backgrounds, and practical experiences of the priesthood

of all believers. The objective was to delve deeper into the data to identify which training methods were proving effective and which were not, as well as to gain insights into the experiences of the clergy within the church. This exploration aimed to uncover potential reasons for the observed outcomes and explore avenues for improvement.

The demographics of the interviewee were requested at the start of the questionnaire. Questions 1-2 asked about Church Information, what label they would be happy calling themselves. Questions 3-10 asked the interviewee about their training, experience, and current role in their local church. Questions 11-23 were about their understanding application and assessment of the theology of the priesthood of all believers. Each of these questions was framed in a way to get qualitative results and in some cases, 20-23, left deliberately open ended to get a fuller appreciation of the interviewees thoughts. A copy of PHABC can be found in Appendix A of this study.

The survey aimed at lay members of charismatic evangelical churches (PHABL) consisted of 16 questions. Similar to PHABC, it employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative elements. The rationale behind employing this instrument was to gather accurate insights from lay individuals regarding their thoughts, theological perspectives, and experiences related to training and the practice of the priesthood of all believers. The objective was to delve deeper into the data to identify effective training methods and areas that required improvement, as well as to understand the lived experiences of lay members within the church setting. This exploration sought to uncover potential reasons for any existing gaps and explore ways to enhance the application of the priesthood of all believers.

The demographics of the interviewee were requested at the start of the questionnaire. Questions 1-2 asked about Church Information, what label they would be happy calling themselves. Questions 3-4 asked them if they had got any previous theological education and to what level. Questions 5-7 were about their experience as a lay leader in church and how they saw

themselves in those roles. Questions 8-16 was to hear their understanding application and assessment of the theology of the priesthood of all believers. These were worded slightly differently than in questionnaire PHABC to get the interviewee to reflect as a lay person not a clergy person. Each of these questions was framed in a way to get qualitative results and in some cases, 13-16, left deliberately open ended to get a fuller appreciation of the interviewees thoughts. PHABL is reproduced in Appendix B of this study.

The semi-structured Best Practice Interviews, also known as PHABE, consisted of six core questions that were consistent across all interviews, in addition to demographic inquiries.

The questionnaire relied mainly on qualitative methods. The researcher aimed to provide experienced trainers and educators ample opportunity to reflect in depth. The semi-structured interview format ensured consistency across all interviews without limiting interviewees responses. To begin, participants were asked to share their personal encounters and observations regarding the practical application and manifestation of the theological concept known as the priesthood of all believers. The second question asked them what the main obstacles for people are to embrace the reality and practice of the theology of the priesthood of all believers, lay and/or ordained. In the third question, interviewees were prompted to reflect on the most crucial elements they would incorporate or have incorporated when conducting training sessions related to the priesthood of all believers. The fourth question asked is can there be a clearly understood and practice of the theology of the priesthood of all believers whilst maintaining the priestly structure that exist in the Church of England. The fifth question asks if there isn't a clear theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers how can best be used to empower and train volunteers and lay leaders in Church For the final question, participants were given the opportunity to share any additional thoughts or insights they deemed relevant to the discussion. The complete set of questions used in the Best Practice Interviews (PHABE) can be found in Appendix C.

Reliability & Validity of Project Design

The project demonstrated a high level of reliability due to the meticulous processes employed in both the PHABC and PHABL questionnaires. The consistency of the questions asked of all respondents ensured that they were responding to identical inquiries. The risk of interference with the processes was minimal to non-existent, and the researcher had no means of influencing the respondents' answers or identifying the individuals who participated. The response rates for the questionnaires were satisfactory, with PHABC achieving a 38% response rate and PHABL garnering a 58% response rate. The combined response rate for the two questionnaires was 48%, indicating an adequate sample size and contributing to the overall reliability of the collected data.

The Best Practice Interviews (PHABE) were conducted consistently across all participants, with a predefined set of questions serving as the foundation for each interview. This approach ensured a high level of reliability in this aspect of the project. The questionnaires were meticulously designed to align closely with the purpose statement, further enhancing the reliability of the data collected.

Survey Monkey, the program used to administer the questionnaires, guaranteed the anonymity of the responses, ensuring that participants could provide honest and unbiased answers. The inclusion of similar questions in both questionnaires allowed for meaningful comparisons between the responses, strengthening the reliability of the findings. To maintain participant engagement and maximize the response rate, the researcher set a concise timeframe for responding to the questionnaires, considering the participants' attention span and availability.

The semi-structured nature of the Best Practice Interviews (PHABE) introduced a potential risk, as each interview could vary in content and direction. However, this risk was mitigated by the inherent design of the semi-structured interview format, which provided a consistent framework for all interviews. To further safeguard against potential inconsistencies, the interviews were intentionally kept concise and not unnecessarily lengthy, ensuring that the core questions and themes remained the focus of each discussion.

Using diverse research methods strengthened the validity of the study. The mixed qualitative and quantitative questionnaire approaches offered complementary strengths. Adding semi-structured interviews introduced triangulation, enriching the data with multiple vantage points. The combination of methods provided robust results from all angles.

Data Collection

The pre-intervention study utilized mixed qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the theology, training, support, and empowerment of lay and ordained leaders for the priesthood of all believers. Two questionnaires gathered both qualitative and quantitative data from lay people (PHABL) and ordained clergy (PHABC) in charismatic evangelical Church of England congregations sympathetic to the aims of the New Wine movement. Semi-structured interviews with educators at ecological colleges aligned with New Wine's aims provided additional qualitative data.

On May 26th, 2023, the researcher reached out to 100 individuals who were considered potential respondents for the PHABC questionnaire. Each prospective participant received a standardized email containing an informed consent letter (Appendix A) and a unique link to an anonymous Survey Monkey questionnaire. To encourage participation and maximize the response rate, a follow-up email was sent during the designated response period, which included the consent form and questionnaire link.

For the PHABL questionnaire and educator interviews, the researcher followed a similar recruitment process of compiling contact lists, emailing informed consent forms, and providing anonymous response links.

The researcher compiled a list of potential participants for the questionnaires and interviews. After creating the list, he emailed 100 prospective PHABC questionnaire respondents on May 26, 2023, using the same message and including the consent letter found in the Appendix. The email contained a link to the questionnaire that interested respondents could access and complete.

Survey Monkey was utilized to create an anonymous questionnaire, ensuring that the researcher could not identify the respondents. The email sent to potential participants included a deadline for completing the questionnaire. Within the given time frame, a follow-up email was sent, which included the informed consent letter and a link to the questionnaire, to remind participants to complete the survey.

The researcher ensured the security and confidentiality of the collected data by receiving all responses on his personal laptop, which was safeguarded with a password. Survey Monkey, the platform used to administer the questionnaires, automatically compiled, and summarized the responses. The researcher then printed out these summaries and stored them in a locked filing cabinet at his residence, with access restricted solely to the researcher. The design of both questionnaires incorporated the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, a strategy employed to enhance the overall validity of the gathered information.

The Best Practice Interviews (PHABE) elicited in-depth qualitative data to build on the questionnaire findings. The researcher identified six potential interviewees and emailed identical recruitment messages on May 22, 2023, with an informed consent form.

The researcher conducted the 1-hour Zoom interviews from home in a private room. Each interview followed the same semi-structured format covering six core questions, with occasional follow-up questions for clarification or elaboration. Interviewees signed consent forms at the start. With permission, the researcher recorded interviews on his computer and took notes. He later transcribed the recordings using software, storing transcripts on a password-protected laptop only he could access. Any printed transcripts and notes were kept in a locked filing cabinet at home. Recordings were deleted after project completion.

Data Analysis

In an effort to minimize the influence of personal biases and preconceptions on the research, the investigator implemented several measures. Creswell and Creswell outline this approach, stating:

The process of data analysis involved making sense out of text and image data. It involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding data (some qualitative researchers like to think of this as peeling back the layers of an onion), representing the data. And making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data. (183)

The data from the two questionnaires was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative analysis involved examining the frequencies and averages of the questionnaire responses. The mean values for the Likert scale items were also inspected.

For the interview data, a thematic analysis approach was taken (Sensing 198). Responses to each interview question were grouped together and reviewed to identify common themes, categories, and patterns in the data. These themes were ranked from most to least prevalent based on the frequency of their appearance across the interview responses.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The purpose of this project was to identify the practices for clergy and laity, in charismatic evangelical Church of England congregations and training institutions for fully realizing and practicing of the priesthood of all believers. This chapter presents data collected from two sources: questionnaires completed by both lay and ordained church leaders, and semi-structured interviews with theological educators. The chapter concludes with the identified major findings.

Participants

The study participants involved a diverse range of individuals over 18 years old, selected on the basis of their replies to the researcher's emails. Due to the constraints of this project, the researcher contacted member clergy friends who attend, are in sympathy with or support New Wine: Lay leaders involved in \churches and theological educators who are in sympathy with the objectives of New Wine.

Priesthood of All Believers Lay (PHABL)

The researcher utilized a questionnaire as one of the research instruments, specifically designed for individuals who identify as leaders within the Church but have not been ordained. This questionnaire was referred to as "The Priesthood of all Believers Lay" or PHABL for short. This was sent to one hundred different lay leaders who were within the delimitations set out at the start of the project: that they worked or served within the area of the Church of England known as charismatic evangelical. To easily identify these Churches, they were selected from the membership list of New Wine. The questionnaire achieved a response rate of fifty-eight percent,

with all respondents being men and women personally acquainted with the researcher. These individuals serve in various capacities within local Church of England congregations.

When it comes to the age demographic most of the respondents were in the forty-one to fifty-five age group at 46.55%, followed by 25.86% in the fifty-six to sixty-nine age group, 20.69% in the twenty-six to forty age group, and 5.17% in the nineteen to twenty-five-year-old age group. None were in the seventy plus age group.

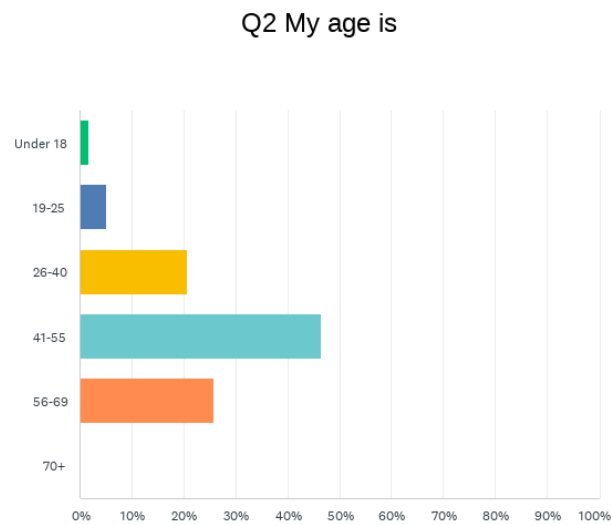


Fig. 4.1 Age Demographic of respondents to PHABL.

Of the responses twenty-eight came from women and twenty-three came from men, seven skipped the question.

Q3 These questions will help the researcher understand your context and background.
Please circle the ones that best describes you:

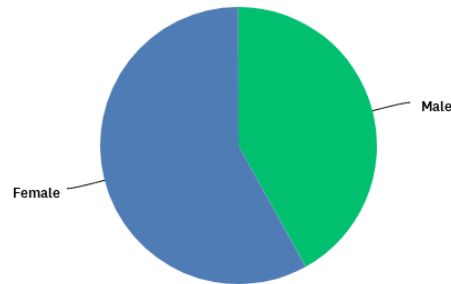


Fig. 4.2 Gender breakdown of those who responded to PHABL.

In terms of ethnic background, the majority, 80.65% gave their ethnic background as 'White British' 12.9% at 'UK Minority Ethnic' and 6.45% as 'other'. Included in those responses was 'Naturalized Malaysian' and 'White European'.

Q4 I am

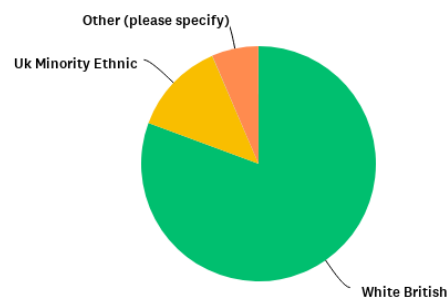


Fig. 4.3 Ethnicity of those who responses to PHABL.

Church background did not offer that much diversity with 77.42% claiming a background in the Church of England.

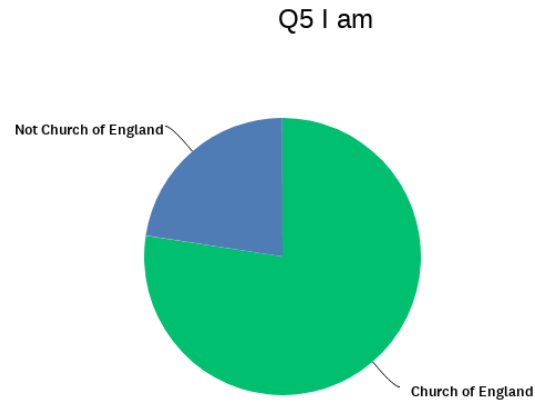


Fig. 4.4 Church background of those who answered PHABL.

In terms of church tradition, spirituality and practice most respondents called themselves charismatic (54.84%), then evangelical (51.61%), then liberal (38.71%), Anglo-Catholic (9.68%) and finally Pentecostal (6.45%) Respondents were asked to select as many titles as they wanted to embrace.

Q6 I would describe myself as: (feel free to select more than one)

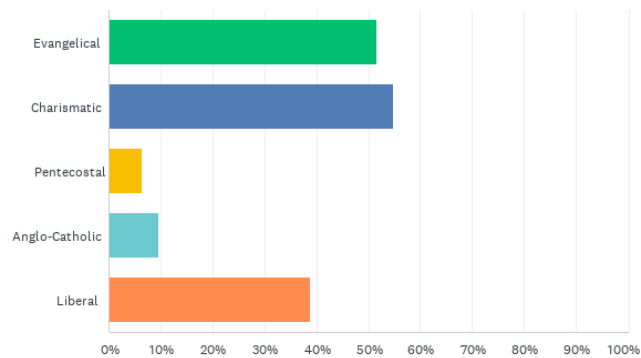


Fig. 4.5 Church tradition, spirituality, and practice of those who responded to PHABL

A total of 61.29% of all respondents answered yes to ‘Have you had any previous theological education?’ Of those who said yes, 64% described the theological training as informal, secondary school or diploma level. Thirty-six percent of those who said yes to having had theological training stated they had an undergraduate degree or post graduate degree in theology.

Q7 Have you ever had any previous theological education?

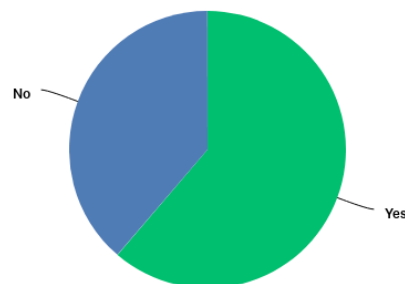


Fig. 4.6 Theological training of those who responded to PHABL.

Q8 To what level? (Please tick the ones you have completed)

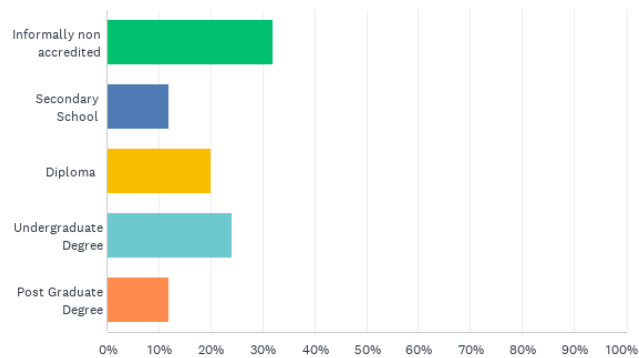


Fig. 4.7 Level of Theological Training identified by those who responded to PHABL.

Looking at question eight, the researcher found that these lay people had served in many different areas of leadership within the church. Most of the respondents, 83.87%, had served on the Parochial Church Council (PCC) or its equivalent with 74.19% having served as a service leader. The joint third most popular roles were Welcomer and Children's Leader at 54.84%.

Q9 What roles have you filled, as a leader in your local church? (Circle as many as you have done, please)

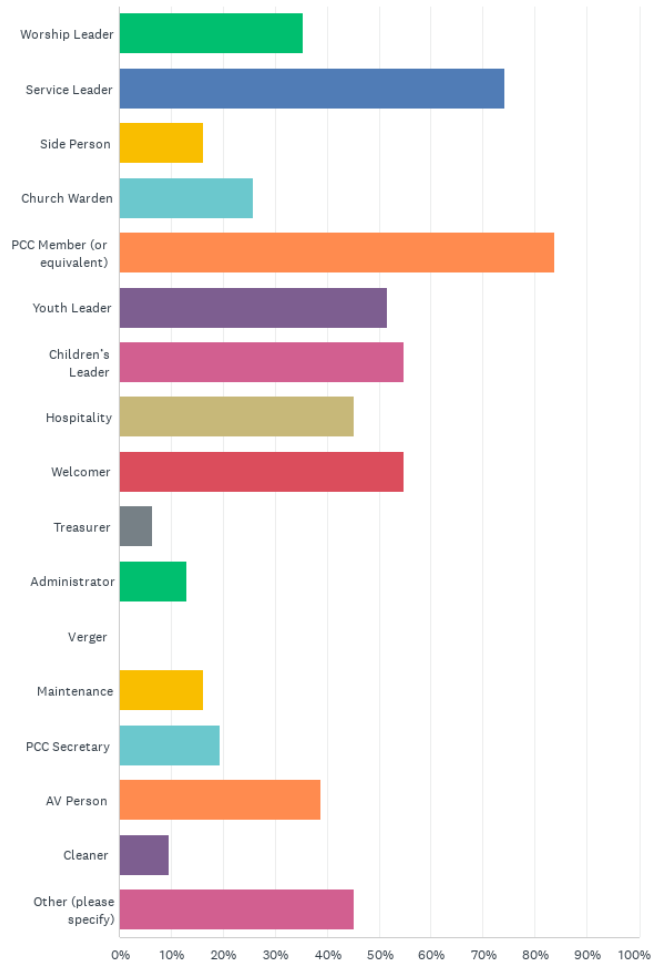


Fig. 4.8 Roles filled by those who responded to PHABL in their local church.

In terms of how the respondents viewed themselves, only 54.84% viewed themselves as a leader in their church setting and 80.65% would not describe themselves as a priest.

Q10 Would you describe yourself as a Church Leader?

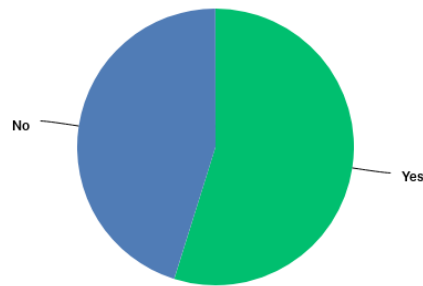


Fig. 4.9 Those who would describe themselves as a leader who responded to PHABL.

Q11 Would you describe yourself as a Priest?

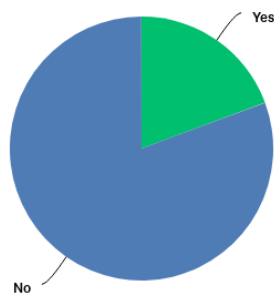


Fig. 4.10 Those who would describe themselves as a Priest who responded to PHABL.

Priesthood of All Believers Clergy (PHABC)

Another research instrument employed in the study was a questionnaire specifically tailored for ordained clergy members. This questionnaire was titled "The Priesthood of All Believers Clergy" (PHABC). This was sent to one hundred different clergy who were within the delimitations set out at the start of the project: that they worked or served within the area of the Church of England that could be described as charismatic evangelical. To easily identify these churches, they were selected from the membership list of New Wine. The questionnaire garnered a response rate of thirty-eight percent, with all participants being clergy members personally known to the researcher. These individuals, both men and women, serve in various Church of England congregations. Of the respondents to PHABC sixteen were male and six were female, 16 skipped the question.

Q3 These questions will help the researcher understand your context and background.
Please circle the ones that best describes you:

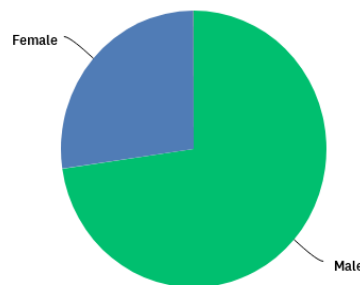


Fig. 4.11 Gender breakdown of those who responded to PHABC.

When it comes to the age demographic most of the respondents were in the forty-one to fifty-five age group at 44.44%, followed by 25% in the twenty-six to forty age group, 19% in the fifty-six to sixty-nine age group and 2.78% in the nineteen to twenty-five-year-old age group. There were 8.33% in the seventy plus age group.

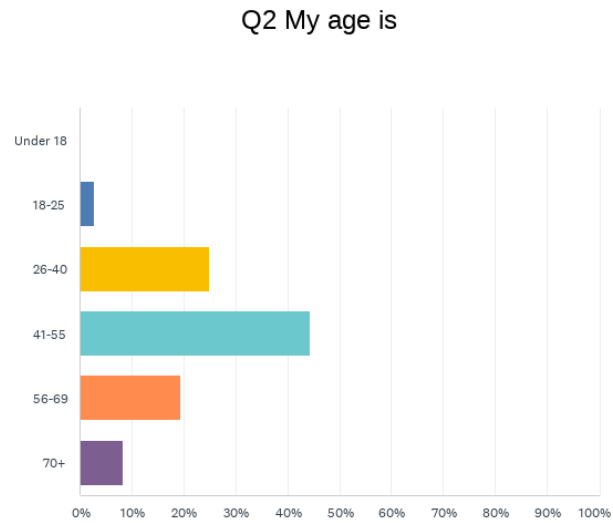


Fig. 4.12 Age of those who responded to PHABC.

In terms of ethnic background, the majority, 82.61% gave their ethnic background as 'White British', 13.4% as 'UK Minority Ethnic', and 4.35% as 'other'. With one defined response as: African.

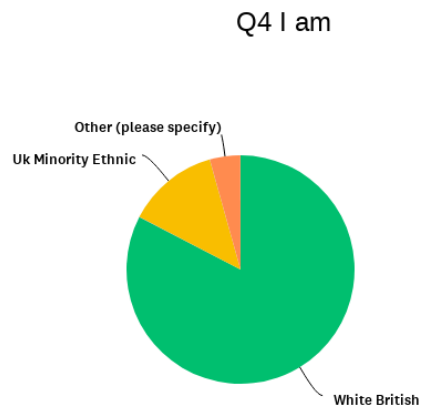


Fig. 4.13 Ethnic Background of those who responded to PHABC.

Church background did not offer that much diversity with 95.65% claiming a background in the Church of England.

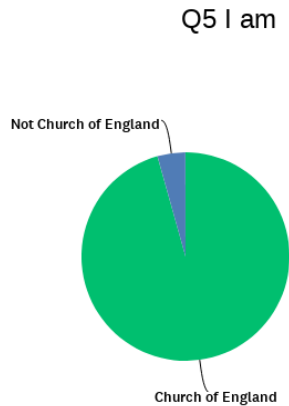


Fig. 4.14 Church background of those who responded to PHABC.

When asked about their church tradition, spirituality, and practice, the majority of respondents, 78.26%, comfortably identified with both charismatic and evangelical labels. The second most popular self-identification was liberal, with 4.35% of respondents selecting this option. Participants were encouraged to choose multiple titles that they felt accurately represented their beliefs and practices.

Q6 I would describe myself as: (feel free to select more than one)

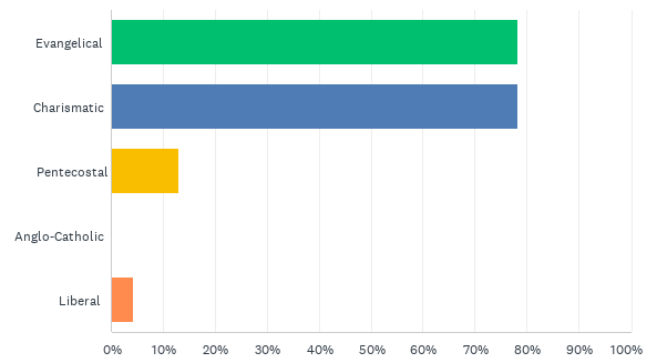


Fig. 4.15 Church tradition, spirituality, and practice of those who responded to PHABC.

Not many of the respondents had experience in teaching at a theological college, with only three, 13.64%, having done some teaching and 86.36% having had no experience of teaching at a theological college at all.

Q7 Have you ever taught at a theological College?

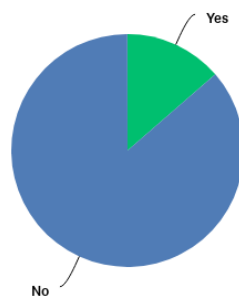


Fig. 4.16 Experience of teaching at theological college of those who responded to PHABC.

Following on directly from this question the respondents were asked if they had done some teaching, which colleges had they taught at? One had taught at Oak Hill, one at Trinity Bristol, and one other at St Mellitus.

The research instrument then asked the level of the clergy's theological training.

Q9 Please circle the one that describes you best - I have a

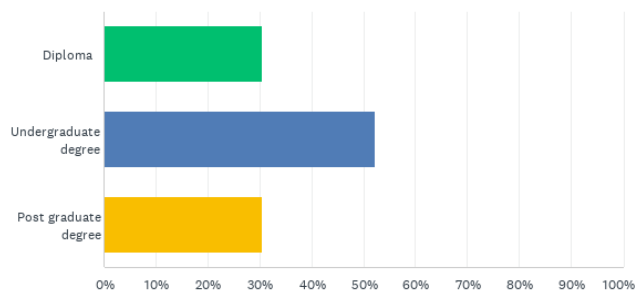


Fig. 4.17 Level of theological training of those who responded to PHABC.

The Training Centres identified by the respondents as places they trained were:

Table 4.1: Training Colleges Attended by Those Who Responded to PHABC

Training Centre	Percentage Attending
Trinity Bristol	39.13%
St Mellitus	30.4%
London School of Theology	4.4%
St John's Nottingham	4.4%

Oak Hill College, London	17.4%
Ridley College, Cambridge	4.4%

Following on from the training centre question the research instrument asked which year they were trained. Only 4.4% (1) trained in the 1970's, whilst 8.7% trained in the 1990's, 30.4% trained in the 2000's, 21.7% trained in the 2010's, and the largest group of 34.8% trained in the 2020's.

The respondents to PHABC were equal in the role they currently held at a church with 40.91% both holding curacy and incumbent posts, and 18.18% being an associate at a church.

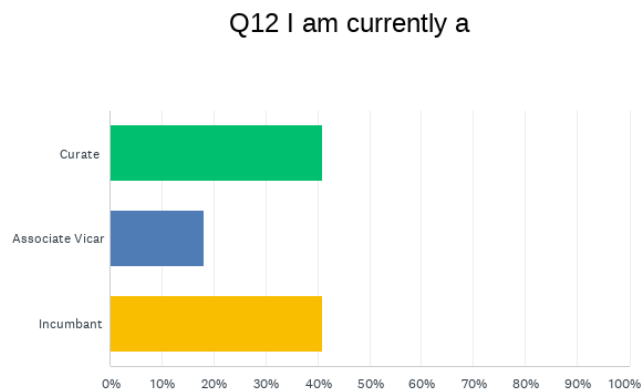


Fig. 4.17 Position held by those who responded to PHABC.

Just over 80% thought that the position they now held reflected their spiritual tradition, with nearly 20% saying it did not.

Q13 The current role i am in reflects my tradition

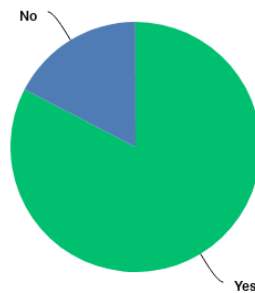


Fig. 4.18 The current role they held reflected their tradition of those who responded to PHABC.

Only 13.04% of respondents had served in five or more Churches, 21.74% had held three to four positions, and 65.22% had only ran 1-2 Churches.

Q14 How many churches have you served in as a clergy person?

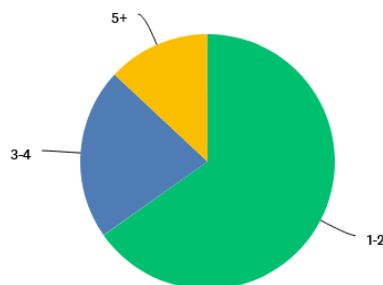


Fig. 4.19 Number of posts held by those who responded to PHABC.

Priesthood of All Believers Educators (PHABE)

The third research instrument involved conducting interviews with experts or "educators" in the field of theological education. Initially, the researcher intended to interview six individuals; however, one declined to participate, and another did not respond to the inquiry. The final group of interviewees consisted of a diverse range of male and female Anglican educators, all of whom endorsed the aims and objectives of New Wine, a Christian organization. The participants, based in London and various other locations throughout the United Kingdom, brought a wealth of experience and expertise in theological education to the study. Among the interviewees, two was a close acquaintance with the researcher. When it comes to age demographic all the respondents were in the 41-55 age bracket. Of all the respondents 60% were male and 40% were female.

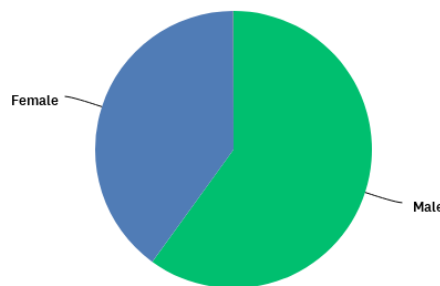


Fig. 4.20: Gender breakdown of those who responded to PHABE.

In terms of ethnic background, the majority, 60% gave their ethnic background as 'White British', 40% White non-British, one of these was unspecified.

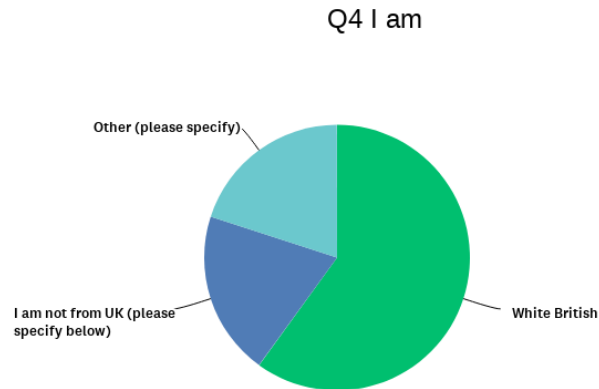


Fig. 4.21: Ethnicity of those who responded to PHABE.

All the responders gave their church background as 'Church of England'. One responder selected both member and not member of Church of England.

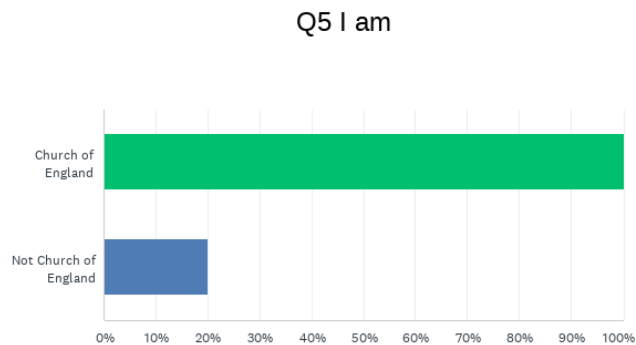


Fig. 4.22: Church of England background of those who answered PHABE.

When the responders were asked to circle the one phrase that described their level of theological education 80% answered they had a post graduate degree, whilst 20% said they had a PhD or Doctorate.

Q9 Please circle the one that describes you best? I have a

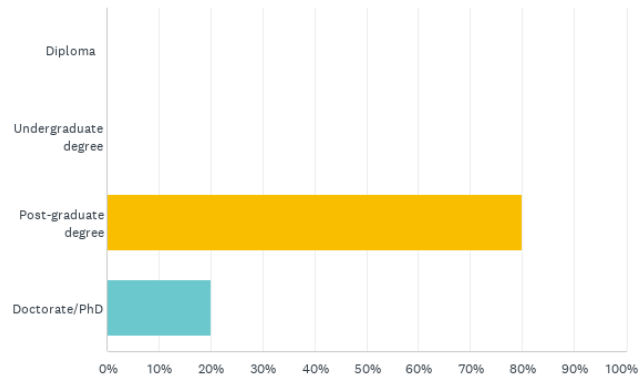


Fig. 4.23: Level of academic education of respondents to PHABE.

Research Question #1: Description of Evidence

How are Church of England lay people currently released and supported into ministry as Priesthood of all believers in their communities?

The central section of all three of the research instruments: PHABL (questions 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13), PHABC (questions 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23) and PHABE (14, 15, 16, 17 and 18) were designed for responders to reflect on their current thoughts in ministry, theology, and practice of the priesthood of all believers and how it released them and others into their communities. These sections were done in such a way to get comparisons from lay people, clergy, and educators.

In this section of the research instrument, the respondents were asked about their understanding of the ‘Priesthood of all Believers’ from 1 Peter 2.9. This is a summary of their

responses and a few common themes in the understanding of ‘the Priesthood of all Believers’ amongst lay leaders (PHABL).

- Fifty-eight percent of respondents expressed the belief that all Christians have direct access to God and can serve as priests or ministers without needing a formal intermediary. This is based on Jesus’ sacrifice which removed barriers between God and humanity.
- Respondents frequently cited the “priesthood of all believers” theology – that Christians have a priestly role to play even if not formally ordained. This includes leading services, teaching, preaching, praying, blessing, and serving.
- Some noted that while all believers have priestly responsibilities, there are still specific church leadership offices or roles such as a priest, pastor, and evangelist.
- A common theme was that sharing the gospel is a responsibility held by all believers even if not designated as a pastor or evangelist.
- A few respondents focused on the formal definition of a priest as someone ordained and designated by a church for leadership.

In summary, most respondents expressed a belief that all Christians share in leadership, ministry, and priestly roles, with an emphasis on direct access to God and the priesthood of all believers based on Jesus’ sacrifice. From the respondents they seemed to suggest that formal titles were seen as secondary.

In comparison to the same question asked of Clergy (PHABC) the following is a summary of their responses:

- All believers have equal direct access to God and the ability to represent Christ and serve others. Very few show a distinction between ‘Clergy’ and ‘Laity’.

- All believers have a responsibility and calling to bless, interceded, point people to Christ and minister God's love.
- While some may have specific roles of leadership, teaching, or sacramental functions, all believers are equally part of the same priesthood and body of Christ. No one is more special or valuable.
- This equal calling and privilege are rooted in the believer's identity as beloved children of God and members of Christ through baptism.
- The priesthood of all believers emphasizes participation, service, representing Christ, and helping others know God. It is not about hierarchical status.
- All have a ministry to fulfil, though the specific forms may differ. Evangelism, spiritual leadership, works of justice and mercy are all valid expressions.

In summary, the answers suggest there is a strong affirmation of equality, shared privilege, responsibility, and access inherent in the concept from 1 Peter 2. Again, in comparison to the same question being asked in the best practice interviews of the theological educators, one interviewee had serious questions as to the understanding of priesthood of all believers being an individual call for all Christians as opposed to a corporate call: "The priesthood of all believers is the type of phrase that should be understood as a metaphor like 'the body of Christ'. I don't think it's about us each individually being gifted that priestly role, it's about participation and in that just as we function as the body of Christ." One other interviewee explored this same idea but came to a different conclusion: "Whilst I appreciate some people's views that we are not 'individually acting as a priest' I don't think the view is consistent with the whole canon of scripture. We must, at the very least, consider it a 'both and' situation. Personally, I think we have used this argument too long to maintain a priestly model that is outdated."

In terms of how the respondents felt the concept of the priesthood of all believers is key to their ongoing discipleship; among lay responders 45.16% felt it played little to no part, whilst 54.83% felt it played a large to key part in their ongoing discipleship.

Q13 How much do you feel the concept in the priesthood of all believers is key to your ongoing discipleship?

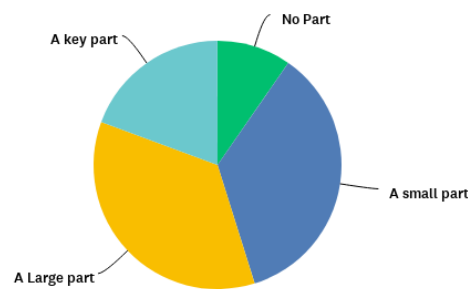


Fig. 4.24: How those who responded to PHABL felt that it was key to their ongoing discipleship.

Comparing the same question, the questionnaire asked of clergy received a similar but not identical set of answers. Among the clergy, 36.4% of respondents believed that priesthood of all believers played little to no part in their ongoing discipleship. Whilst 63.6% believed that the priesthood of all believers played a large to key part in their ongoing discipleship. Nearly 9% fewer of the lay people thought the theology of priesthood of all believers is a large to key part in their ongoing discipleship.

Q16 How much do you feel your understanding of the priesthood of all believers is key to your ongoing Christian discipleship?

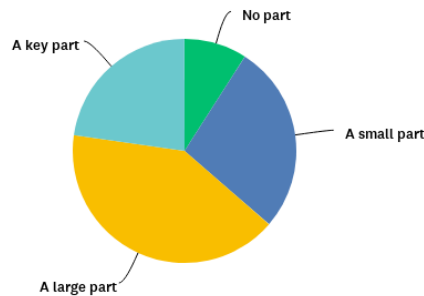


Fig. 4.25: How those who responded to PHABC felt that priesthood was key to their ongoing discipleship.

In the next section the lay respondents were asked the open-ended question; ‘If you have been taught on the subject of “Priesthood of all Believer”, could you outline the three main topics/areas covered?’ Below is a summary of the key points from the answers provided:

- Several respondents indicated there has not been clear or memorable teaching on the evolution of priesthood from the original ‘Aaron-ic’ model or reasons for continuing ordained priesthood.
- A common theme is the idea of the "priesthood of all believers" —that all Christians have direct access to God through Christ and can minister without the need for an ordained priest as intermediary. All followers of Jesus can teach, preach, and baptize.
- The respondents expressed some disagreement and uncertainty about whether sacraments like communion and baptism should still be reserved for ordained priests only. One response suggested baptism may be performed without a priest in exceptional cases.

- Other ideas and thoughts mentioned regarding priesthood include it being an intrinsic part of the "everyone gets to play" a Vineyard ethos, a missional calling, adoption into God's family removing the need for a mediator, empowering all people to become involved in church leadership.
- For those entering ordained priesthood, it is seen as a calling that requires discerning, holiness, justice, and service.

In summary, there is a shared sense that all Christians participate in Christ's priesthood in some way, but questions and confusion remain around sacramental exclusivity and the purpose of an ordained priesthood alongside that. Alongside this confusion, the most common word used in the answers was 'call', but 18.97% of the people who responded stated they had no or little recollection of either being taught on the call to priesthood or if they had been taught on it at all. Compare this to the question asked of clergy: How many times in the last five years have you taught or done training on your understanding of 'Priesthood of all Believers?'

Only 26.09% of clergy felt the issue of priesthood of all believers was important enough to teach on it as a subject more than three times in the last five years. This left 73.91% who didn't really see the necessity to train or teach on the subject 0-2 times in the last five years.

Q18 How many times in the last five years have you taught or done training on your understanding of "Priesthood of all Believers"?

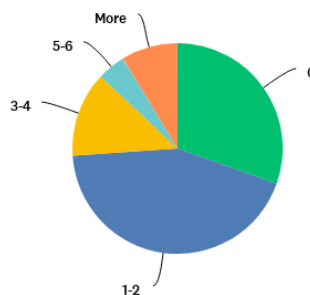


Fig. 4.26: How many times in the last five years have you taught or done training on your understanding of “Priesthood of all Believers”?

Of those Clergy respondents who taught about the priesthood of all believers only 25% taught within an environment where key or future key leaders were present. Seventy-five percent of the teaching on the subject was done in an environment that was not specifically for leaders in a church.

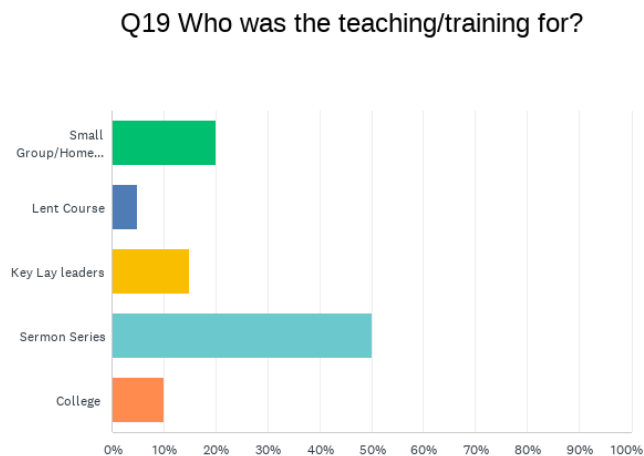


Fig. 4.27: Who was the teaching/training done for?

Following on from this, the lay respondents were asked if you have not been taught on the subject of “Priesthood of all Believers” what would you say are the three main topics, you would want to be covered? Here is the summary of key points made:

- the meaning of "priesthood of all believers" biblically and what it means for believers today

- the equality of all believers before God, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability status.
- the call for all believers to serve God and others through intercession, making God known, preaching the gospel
- the distinction between the office of priest and the general priesthood of believers
- what being "God's chosen people" and a "holy nation" means for everyday believers
- practical examples of lay people living out their Christian vocation
- ethical issues like use of power and integrity for those in leadership
- exegesis of relevant biblical passages about priesthood and holiness

In the next open ended question respondents were asked to describe someone who is fully released into being a lay priest.

There was no shared consensus on a definition or description. Suggestions include:

- someone dedicated to serving God and the church, but not ordained
- someone able to perform priestly duties like sacraments without being ordained
- a lay leader or pastor
- someone demonstrating gifts and calling but needing exploration
- someone supported by the church to serve using their talents

Some express confusion or scepticism about the term and how it aligns with Church of England rules on who can perform sacraments. Overall, there are diverse perspectives on the meaning of "lay priest" with no clear agreement on a definition.

When you compare the answers to the clergy respondents to the same question you get these answers:

- actively serves and participates in church ministry based on their spiritual gifts and talents
- takes initiative to lead and contribute
- submits to and operates under the authority of ordained clergy but takes ownership of their role
- displays confidence in their identity in Christ and calling to ministry.
- does not feel a need to prove themselves and reflects Christ in their daily life and interactions
- faithfully lives out their Christian witness and responds to the leading of the Holy Spirit
- follows God's mission wherever it leads them
- Sees their vocation and daily work as ministry and connects discipleship to all of life
- Equips and empowers others to serve and encourages the priesthood of all believers.
- Has the freedom and permission to preach, lead worship, and pioneer new ministries as gifts allow
- Is trusted with greater responsibility and authority in church leadership
- Is fully trained, equipped, supported, and unleashed to serve in ministry, both in the church and the world.

Both clergy and lay respondents describe lay people actively serving in the church based on gifts and sitting and operating under some ordained authority. Both clergy and lay respondents

point to the idea that a lay priest should reflect Christ in their lives and always respond to the Holy Spirit's leading. Equipping people for lay ministry also came up as a key issue. In summary, lay respondents seem to envision a more active, practical, and unleashed lay ministry role with perhaps more church leadership responsibility. Clergy respondents focus relatively more on lay ministry in daily life and mutual lay empowerment than the more practical up-front outworking that lay respondents do.

Both research instruments then asked a similar question of each participant: "If you taught on the subject of 'Priesthood of all Believers', could you outline the main three topics/areas covered?" The lay questionnaire asked, "If you haven't been taught on the subject of "Priesthood of all Believers" what would you say are the three main topics, you would want to be covered?"

Table 4.2: Contrasting of Lay and Clergy Responses to Training Question

Clergy	Lay
Focuses more on biblical examples, interpretation, exegesis	Does not emphasize this as much
Includes more topics around community, diversity, empowering marginalized groups	Not mentioned
Not emphasized as much	Focuses more on relationship to ordained clergy and how this teaching differs from common practice
Includes ideas like preaching the gospel, being blessed.	Does not mention these topics.
Does not reference this.	Talks about the Old Testament more
Has more topics around power structures, integrity, accountability.	These subjects are lacking in these answers

Overall, the clergy answers see teaching as having a more practical, applied focus with attention to including diverse voices and empowering all believers. The lay answers ground it more in theology and biblical study, with some critique of current structures. Both share an interest in defining the concept and connecting it to life.

The clergy respondents were then asked, how significant was your theological college training to your understanding of “Priesthood of all Believers?”. The majority or 86.96% of the respondents felt that their college training showed little to no significance to their understanding of the theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers. This compared to 17.39% finding their college training had a large or key understanding to the theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers.

Q17 How significant was your theological college training to your understanding of “Priesthood of all Believers?”

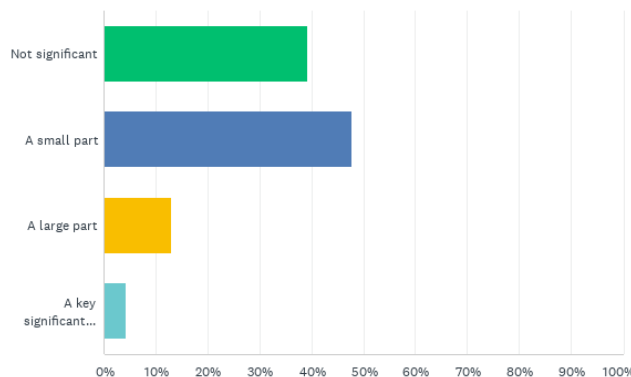


Fig. 4.28: How significant was your theological college training to your understanding of “Priesthood of all Believers?”

Looking at the responses in more detail, shows the four most suggested teaching points from clergy and lay questionnaires.

Table 4.3: Contrasting of Lay and Clergy Top Four Teaching Points in Order of Importance

Clergy	Lay
1.Priesthood - Explaining the meaning of the "royal priesthood" biblically and historically.	1.Defining the concept - What does this doctrine mean biblically, historically, and today for all Christians?
2.Ordnation - How the priesthood of all believers relates to ordained clergy roles and offices.	2.Practical application - What does it mean to live out this priesthood and what does it look like in daily life, ministry, and service?
3.Practical life - What living out this priesthood looks like in daily/practical life.	3.Identity and community - How this doctrine affirms our collective identity in Christ and calls us to encourage one another.
4.Gifts - Identifying and using spiritual gifts to serve.	4.Relationship to clergy - How the priesthood of all believers relates to the role of ordained priests/ministers.

Both questionnaires emphasize the importance of defining meanings and the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and applying this in practical ways. Only lay respondents expressed the need for there to be teaching on the difference between Lay and ordained priestly roles.

Research Question #2: Description of Evidence

What do clergy and laity identify as obstacles to lay people being released and supported as Priests in their communities?

The PHABL and PHABC questionnaires included targeted questions, PHABL 18 and PHABC 24, designed to identify obstacles hindering the training, releasing, and empowering of lay priests. Furthermore, the interviewed educators were asked to share their perspectives on the primary barriers to effectively training, releasing, and empowering lay priests within the church (PHABE 15).

Both questionnaires yielded significant feedback concerning clericalism and elitism, with the lay questionnaire specifically employing the latter term. A further obstacle identified was structural rigidity and limitations within the Church of England. Thoughts centered around lack of empowerment coming from or based around clergy insecurity, lack of valuing of lay people in churches, and the busy-ness of lay people to fully embrace the role of lay priest. The semi-structured interviews touched on each of these points, deepened these concerns, and refocused the questionnaire data into a wider perspective. This section reports on feedback from each of these suggested barriers in turn, starting with the most popular and finishing with the least. At the end it seeks to reflect on wider obstacles which the interviews and questionnaires seemed to bring about.

Clericalism and Elitism

By far the most commented on issue in the research instruments was the issue of clericalism and elitism as an identifiable obstacle to the out working of Priesthood of all

believers. One interviewee from PHABE went as far as saying: “the notion of the collar, who is wearing, who is wielding it and more importantly who is not is a constant worry and headache in churches.” Other interviewees echoed similar sentiments: “To understand the reasoning behind by why these obstacles in place would require a PhD in itself. I think there’s probably, practical things at work, there’s theological things at work and definitely sociological things at work.” “I think it’s what holds us back from living out this full life that God’s got for us in Christ, which is naturally quite priestly, I suppose. I wonder if it’s because we think the professionals need to do it. And we leave it to those people with the collars on in our churches or theological colleges.”

Similar comments surfaced in the questionnaires from clergy and lay: “Hierarchical structures promote clerical control and reinforce clergy as a higher position than laity.” “With clericalism often comes a lack of accountability for clergy, especially in the Church of England, elitism breeds abuse when left unchecked.”

Structural Rigidity and Limitations Within the Church of England

The respondents to the questionnaires and the interviewees expressed shared apprehensions regarding the perceived rigidity and inflexibility of the Church of England's structure, particularly in relation to its approach to leadership. One interviewee from PHABE put it like this: “Historically the Church of England, and sadly a few other denominations, there is a strong separation between the role of ordained priests and the lay person. The structures and culture of clericalism are deeply embedded.” Another interviewee put it this way: “We have an inbuilt insecurity in ourselves that leads us to feel threatened and resistant to change and so we resist empowering laity and cling to our historic cultural privilege and power.” One interviewee who used to train clergy within the Church of England and is now an independent theological educator thought the problem does not only exist within the Church of England:

There are sociological factors at play that mean human beings like to give away power and let others take responsibility for their lives. So, I think there is a sociological phenomenon what comes into play. That means in the community churches, the house church movement for example, starts out with a strong priesthood of all believer's philosophy. It is not long before the power is concentrated in one person or a few, and changing that structure is impossible even when there are serious abuses of power and authority.

One person from the lay questionnaires developed this and suggested that the problem is a historical one: "The Church of England only properly acknowledges five named models of leadership: Bishop, Archdeacon, Area Dean, Vicar and Curate. All ordained no lay roles, wait lay reader, they are a lay leaders acknowledged by Church of England. But even those no one really knows what they do or how they got there."

Lack of Empowerment of Lay Leaders.

Also arising from the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were comments about the theme of empowerment and the lack of it around lay people. One interviewee from PHABE put it this way: "Anecdotally, there does seem to be a lack of empowerment of lay leaders in churches. I don't know where this comes from, or probably where it doesn't come from to be more precise, but you see it everywhere, all churchmanship's, all sizes, it's always an issue." Another interviewee saw the same issue of lack of empowerment and went on to suggest that the root of the problem was in the way the church selects clergy:

Up until relatively recently we have been selecting vicars on competence, their ability to lead a service, their experience in mission work, ability to craft a sermon, all of which are important. However, the people who thrive in and through that process are 'doers': project leaders, program managers etc. The downside of these type of people is that

empowering other competent lay leaders in their church to also be ‘doers’ takes away a lot of their key purpose in ministry. I have seen overwork, burnout, insecurity, and lack of empowerment in many of these ‘doing’ ordained priests.

One person who answered the questionnaire and was a clergy person summarized it this way: “The concentration of power and authority solely in the hands of clergy is a deeply embedded habit in the Church of England. Moving past this requires challenging long held assumptions, rethinking some of our theologies and giving up ingrained privileges.”

The Undervaluing of Lay People.

A related obstacle that came out of the semi-structured interviews, was the undervaluing of lay people. One interviewee put it like this: “I’m not sure what valuing of lay leaders looks like in church, but I’m pretty sure it’s not happening.” More specifically speaking into existing lay models of leadership that formally exist within the church of England one interviewee said: “I know some Lay Readers love their position, but also know many more feel undervalued and like second rate clergy.” Another interviewee went into some depth as to ‘how’ this ‘lack’ of valuing came about:

Tradition and history have gradually created overly structured organization. The structures seem to begin with an ordinand and finish ultimately with a Bishop. Anything before ordination is not necessarily valued by the structures, they are just pew fodder. There’s something around the idea that as a priest’s role becomes more ‘doing’ rather than ‘being’ everyone else becomes rota fillers to make sure things happen. Where we have lay leaders drawn into lay ministry we try and formalize it: lay minister, Children’s Minister, Youth Minister. We furiously try and draw them into our structures. But is that drawing them into structures or valuing them or their ministry?

Sadly, it seems the problem that exists is systemic. That we undervalue our leaders of any type within our structures and systems.

Busy-ness of Lay People

Those interviewed in the semi-structured interviews and those answering the questionnaires also mentioned the busy-ness of lay people: “Works demands, social calendar for children and general increased pressure of life. Something has to give; it just seems church volunteering for anything is a major thing that gets dropped.” “I don’t think church cultures and structures have kept pace with the change in society. People are too busy.” There was a bit of a wider reflection around the idea of busy-ness being an obstacle: “I can’t say for sure that busy-ness is an issue or just that we use it as an excuse. But if we look at how churches are changing there seems to be a more consumerist approach to faith where volunteering and leading groups is not really seen as part of the equation. So, is busy-ness the fruit of a consumerist faith?”

Theological Barriers

Whilst there was some general feeling of agreement with the theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers there was, by no means, a total agreement on this theology. One person interviewed asked the question that succinctly summarizes the disagreement: “The Priesthood of ALL (his emphasis) believers corporately – the whole church, the whole body of Christ that has a royal and priestly identity, or is it really the Priesthood of EACH believer?” Another dug a bit deeper into the reluctance to accept the priesthood of all believers in an individual corporate calling: “

I think it’s one of many helpful ways to talk about the nature of the Church. I think there’s helpful elements to the body of Christ, to the family of God, to the priesthood of all believers to all these different ways in which scripture talks about the nature of the church, anyone over worked becomes unhelpful. As I understand it’s a summary phrase

and it's been interpreted through a lens of how priesthood developed over the years in our contemporary context rather than understanding it within and from its original context.

Taking this lack of agreement of what exactly is the theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers and putting it alongside some of the clergy questionnaire responses, PHABC, reveals why some of these issues arise. How significant was your theological college training to your understanding of "Priesthood of all Believers?". A large majority of 86.96% of the respondents felt that their college training showed little to no significance to their understanding of the theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers. This is compared to 17.39% who found their college training had a large or key understanding to the theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers. (See figure 4.24.)

Research Question #3: Description of Evidence

What are the best transformative practices for the Church of England to empower and release lay and ordained people into ministry?

This Research Question forms the foundation upon which the entire study is built. What elements of current 'best transformative practices for the Church of England can be identified to empower and release lay and ordained people into ministry?'

The question of best practices and empowerment was addressed by all three research instruments, as evidenced in PHABL 19 and 20, PHABC 25 and 26, and PHABE 18.

There were some concrete suggestions as to the best transformative practices or resources to releasing lay people, but some respondents had a cynical or slightly negative view around answering the question: 32% felt disillusioned or disempowered about the idea of lay leadership, whilst 13.8% suggested that there needs to be an element of risk involved in moving forward. The findings are presented in the data summary, organized under the following categories: theological and biblical foundations, practical training in spiritual gifts, suitable venues, and settings for exercising these gifts, the process of releasing individuals into ministry, and ongoing training and support.

Best Practice as to Theological and Biblical

Both questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews showed that some form of training in the practice and theology of priesthood of all believers is needed. This observation aligns with certain findings from the literature review in Chapter Two which highlighted the tendency of training programs to focus solely on adapting secular leadership models for use within the church context. The literature review also revealed a notable absence of theological reflection on the concept of priesthood, particularly within the charismatic evangelical segment of the Church of England. As stated in Chapter 2 there no journals, written on the practice and theology of priesthood of all believers in the last 15 years, that are from an evangelical charismatic position, which the delimitations for this paper. There were numerous journals and books written about leadership, but none written on priesthood. The only journals found were from theological colleges from Africa and the Philippines.

In the Lay questionnaire, PHABL, 34% of respondents believed that there was a need for some type of theological or biblical training on the priesthood of all believers: “For me personally the most transformative practice I have done has been a one-year training in theology at St Mellitus.” “We just need better teaching about the vital importance of lay ministry.” No actual courses or books were suggested other than Alpha, which was mentioned once. But not all the

respondents agreed on training. One answered the question very directly: “Ignoring structures and places like theological colleges” is the best transformative practice.

In the clergy questionnaire, PHABC, 62% of respondents believed that there was a need for some type of theological or biblical training on the subject of priesthood of all believers: “Providing the space for encounter with the Holy Spirit alongside theological teaching to help people discover the full breadth of the authority and responsibility they carry as followers of Jesus and teaching on mission and evangelism to demonstrate that all believers should proclaim Jesus.” “Making sure people know that priesthood of all believer’s ministry is something they are invited into and expected to participate in as a Christian.” “Nurturing a culture where it is ok to fail. Not waiting till someone feels they are ‘ready’. We used to call it ‘deep end theology’, the idea of letting people jump in at the deep end, knowing you will not let them drown.”

In the semi-structured interviews, PHABE, all interviewees agreed that there should be some theological training on this, but what the training should be had a multitude of answers: “We do seem to be in a space where we think this is an important issue, and I do, but there seems to be precious little in the way of resources and or training on this.” “Theological training on the priesthood of all believers? I can’t think of any off hand, maybe I should write one, I could make some money?” Four resources were named as good for this type of training: *Growing Leaders* was mentioned 3 times, Vineyard Theology Courses, St Mellitus, *Fivefold Ministry Training* and Alan Scotts *Scattered Servants* mentioned 1 time each. There are certain questions as to the level of theological training *Growing Leaders*, Five-Fold Ministry and Alan Scotts *Scattered Servants* has, they seem to be more practical in nature rather than having a theological foundation.

Theological training is needed, but what type of theology? What type of course? Little agreement is seen. Looking at both the clergy and lay questionnaire combined shows that nearly 60% want some theological training, but it has not been produced, although Pneumatology, theology of the Holy Spirit, was mentioned a few times by all three research tools: “Following the

Holy Spirit where appropriate and wise in the conversations that follow.” “Giving people good theological and practical training and experience of the Holy Spirit gifts is essential”.

Best Practice as to Practical Gifts Training

The second group of answers to research question three were given the heading, “Best Practices as to Practical Gifts Training. While the most prominent suggestion was for theological training there was also a distinct call for practical gifts training to empower laity. Some cross over did occur in the theological and practical focuses of the participants’ reflections. In the lay questionnaire, PHABL, 28% suggested some form of practical training is needed for laity to be fully released into ministry of the priesthood of all believers. “Being given the space, the time, and the training to explore my lay vocation. Feedback that is constructive and motivating and a vicar who walks alongside me not above me.” “Train them, trust them, take care of them.” Some comments suggested that the focus of this training and empowering should start with young lay leaders: “The training and supporting of young leaders is the best place to start if we want to see a change in how the church views and uses lay leaders.”

In the clergy questionnaire, PHABC, 18.4% suggested some form of practical training is needed for laity to be fully released into ministry of the priesthood of all believers: “a gifts course, maybe growing leaders?” “Alan Scott’s book *Scattered Servants* that’s really good. He challenges that clergy/lay divide, and he suggests just what you are asking the encouraging focus on empowering and releasing of leaders, it’s really good you should read it.”

In the semi-structured interviews (PHABE), some of the suggestions for training have already been reflected upon: *Growing Leaders*, *Five-Fold Ministry* and *Scattered Leaders*, training courses that, at their foundation, have a practical outworking. Their focus is different from the focus of the theological courses or centres. One of the interviewees, who objected to the

idea of lay priests and did not want to use the phrase, ‘priesthood of all believers’, suggested an out working for lay people ‘as leaders’ was initially as a welcomer or someone who volunteers in hospitality: “A really interesting component to inviting people to serve is often a way of people getting involved, and it’s not something we need to apologize for. We also want to equip you in things like welcoming people with disabilities, fire regs or children’s ministry.”

Best Practice as to Venues and Settings for Use of Gifts

The third set of responses to research question three were grouped under the heading, “Best Practice as to Venues and Setting for Use of Gifts”. This easily relates to the second set of responses about the need for practical training. If the church is going to provide training, where will the training take place? As one person replied in the clergy questionnaire: “So why do we do all these courses and gifts training? To fill rotas? To value people? If we do the training and the courses, then don’t provide opportunities for people to serve and use the training we create a group of frustrated lay people.”

In the lay questionnaire, PHABL, there were several references similar to the one just quoted related to the questions of will the training lead to using the gifts and where is the space for this to happen? “The freedom and space to explore gifts would be amazing, I’m just not quite sure where this would happen”. “I’d love to think the training would be used?”

The clergy questionnaire had a slightly more positive approach to the question: “Being open to contributions, ideas, allowing people to try out new things in a safe environment, being OK with failure or outcomes being not as planned.” One reply suggested some very specific settings in which lay people could operate as priestly people: “Recognizing and allowing people to use their gifts as lay people. Involving them in lay ministry with other lay leaders e.g. chaplaincy roles in prisons or hospitals and maybe even spiritual direction.”

The educators semi-structured interviews did not seem to touch on the idea of space, or a place to work out your gifts. One suggested “getting involved in some rotas” but no real suggestions beyond what has previously been outlined.

Best Practice as to Releasing and Ongoing Training and Support

Finally, the third group of responses to research question number three fit under the heading, “Best practice as to Releasing and Ongoing Training and Support.” In the lay questionnaire, PHABL, there was a popular theme of mentoring or role modelling as a way of releasing, ongoing training and support as seen in the following responses; “A need to continually role model people trying to do new things” and “Someone who is willing to work alongside lay people offering constructive criticism and support” Each time, though, there was almost an assumption that the lay person would still be ‘managed’ or ‘overseen’, by a clergy person.

The clergy questionnaire, PHABC, did mention some ongoing support and releasing but only a couple of times and one of them only obtusely: “We used to call it deep end theology the idea of letting people jump in at the deep end, knowing you will not let them drown.” “Someone who is invested in, supported and encouraged along the way that works for them.”

In this section the answers from the semi-structured interviews of the educators, have become thinner and thinner. The educators had no real engagement with the final question other than this quote: “How do we stop the situation we have in the charismatic evangelical end of the church where all we do is get busier, we do rather than be. To answer the question properly I think we need to release people into who God has called them to be rather than release them into filling rotas and getting busier.”

Summary of Major Findings

The data analysis generated the subsequent outcomes, which are examined more thoroughly in this chapter. Following this in-depth exploration, the chapter delves into any prospective ramifications stemming from these findings.

Firstly, the lack of clear theological understanding of the priesthood of all believers. The key area for understanding the issues around the practice of the priesthood of all believers in charismatic evangelical churches is the theology. There was a need for clear ecclesiology and how priests, more importantly, leaders, serve, and are accepted within that theology and structure. The research, from PHABC and PHABL, revealed a distinct lack of clarity for the definition of both lay and ordained priests. How this calling is expressed through the gifts of the spirit, and how this is theologically key to most other areas in the churches requires clarification. The educators who granted interview lacked total agreement as to the theology and practice of priests.

Secondly, the need for training and ongoing support at all levels. There needs to be some training for lay and clergy which, longer term, will lead to ongoing support of lay leaders being released into their priestly role in our communities, not just ‘filling rotas’.

Thirdly, the continued issue of clericalism and elitism. The data also suggests that clericalism and elitism are still issues for the Church of England as a whole, not just within the delimitations of the project. Many areas of the Church of England have sought to reduce the influences of clericalism and elitism by empowering the laity, making leadership more representative, and selecting clergy and bishops from more ethnic minorities but the problem persists.

Fourthly, the lack of recognition and empowerment of lay leaders. The data also suggested that lay leaders are not very well supported in churches and lack recognition and empowerment for the work that they do in local churches. Even the dioceses and bishop fail to give adequate recognition and training to the lay leaders and let them know that they are valued.

Fifthly, educators seem isolated from churches they seek to train clergy to lead the last key finding was that the ‘educators’, those in place to train clergy to be ‘priests’ and leaders in local parishes, lack the knowledge to do appropriate training to equip, train, and release the clergy to do the same in a parish setting for lay people.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter integrates and discusses the information, questionnaires, and interviews presented in the previous sections. The core issue that this study sought to address was the following: Despite the sincere and widespread acceptance of the theology of the priesthood of all believers within most, if not all, charismatic evangelical Church of England congregations, why do these churches still grapple with the challenge of empowering and releasing their members to engage in effective charismatic mission within their ministries, workplaces, homes, and communities?

This chapter delves into the research findings on current practices, examining them through the lens of contemporary literature, biblical and theological frameworks, and the author's personal insights. The objective is to propose recommendations for a novel or rediscovered approach to empowering lay priests, one that is both theologically sound and practically applicable. Additionally, the chapter addresses the study's limitations and discusses unanticipated findings that caught the author off guard. By meticulously analysing the results, positioning them within broader discourse, and suggesting concrete action steps, this chapter seeks to transition the research project from data collection to transformative proposals. The ultimate aim is to equip and mobilize lay individuals for priestly service in their daily lives.

Major Findings

The Lack of Clear Theological Understanding of the Priesthood of All Believers

Personal observation. One of the key overarching problems that came out of the research project was a theological one. What was surprising is how this problem seemed to pervade through both questionnaires and through all the semi structured interviews. Whilst I assumed, prior to this research, that there may be some theological issues in the lay questionnaires, what surprised me was these theological issues were not constrained by the presence or lack of a theological degree. The participants expressed little agreement about the definition of a ‘priest’ neither lay or ordained, in either of the questionnaires and none of the semi-structured interviews. The outworking of the theology of the priesthood of all believers was also just as messy. Whilst both PHABC and PHABL shared notions and allusions of priesthood around ‘everyone gets to play’ and ‘everyone having a responsibility to intercede for others and point to Christ’. Of lay people who answered the questionnaire, 80.65% stated they did not feel like a priest, but 54.84% said that they felt like a leader. When evangelical charismatic churches do not have a clear understanding or theology of priesthood, the lack of agreed theology leads to a confused orthopraxy.

Literature Review. In the literature review in chapter two Levering shows that the model and practice of priesthood has changed many times, up until 1945 and the Post War Priests model. What followed was an addition of several changes to the model up until the final change in 2018 with the Planting Priests. One of the semi-structured interviews and a few of the questionnaires revealed a very binary view of the theology and practice of priesthood. The view did not allow for the idea or development of a model of priesthood that incorporates lay people.

The literature review also revealed the lack of agreed language in the understanding of priesthood, let alone lay priesthood. As shown in the previous point, this is not solely a recent happening. Throughout church history the definition, theology and outworking of that theology has been changing. The questionnaires and one of the semi-structured interviews revealed that

while participants held a belief in the theology of priesthood, they lacked the vocabulary or the desire to explore and articulate this concept in a constructive manner.

Biblical Review. Chapter 2 noted an overarching vision of all God's people being called to be a nation of priests. Whilst the vision is inferred earlier, the specific vision is outlined in Exodus 19: "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of Priests, and a holy nation" (Exod. 19.5-6). Whilst the outworking of this vision is down to God's chosen people, good and bad. The total outworking comes in the arrival of Jesus, followed by his empowerment of his disciples in Luke 9 and theological reflection in Hebrews and 1 Peter.

The Need for Training and Ongoing Support

Personal Observations. One thing both clergy and lay respondents agreed on were the lack of resources available for addressing the issue and training of priesthood of all believers. When clergy were asked to reflect on the training, they received at theological college on the issue of priesthood of all believers 86.96% stated that their college training showed little to no significance to their understanding of theology and practice of the priesthood of all believers. This should not come as a surprise given my previous major finding, but it does. Ironically when both clergy and lay were asked what they would teach if they were to teach about the priesthood of all believers, clergy gave more practical focussed subjects: Gifts and living out priesthood in service and practice. lay people wanted more theological Bible focussed training: Living out priestliness, doctrine, and affirmation of role and identity in Church.

Literature Review. Chapter Two showed that over time the model, theology, and practice of priesthood has changed. see Table 2.1 The training and support of clergy also changed within these very different times. Table 5.1 shows that in the second half of the last century the change was quite rapid compared to the previous centuries.

Table 5.1 - Summary of Eras and Different Models, Theology & Practice of Priesthood in 20th and 21st Century

Era/Period	Summary of Practice and Theology of Priesthood
Post – War Priests	Young male evangelical curates focusing on working with young people
Women Priests – 1992 Onwards	Women deacons able to be priested and later accepted as Bishops (2014)
Pioneer Priests – 2004 Onwards	Empowerment of experienced lay leaders to be ordained into post.
Planting Priests – 2018 Onwards	Ordained and lay leaders specifically selected and trained to resource, plant and grow church plants.

Beginning with evangelicalism in the post-war period the church focussed its mission on the training of young male priests working with young people and students especially:

Bash's (Anglican Clergyman Eric Nash) was to claim the leading public schools for God's Kingdom and to this end he concentrated his ministry on a small number of elite schools... With pastoral care later extended by Bash's helpers into university life many of these young people were to go on in the faith and attain positions of influence. Bash openly encouraged young men to seek ordination in the Anglican Church and many of the major figures in the post-war revival of evangelicalism within the Church of England were deeply influenced by his work. (Ward 38)

With the ordination of women came a big change in how the Church of England trained and supported its clergy. With the new millennium also came two other significant training changes where clergy were trained 'in post' as pioneer priests and later clergy were identified and trained specifically as planters, having "little to no time to do IME 2 training" (*Mixed-Ecology*

Church). One critique of the more recent developments in training of clergy is that these planters is that they have a low view of priesthood:

DR THORPE acknowledges that his plans for rolling out more planting curacies have encountered resistance from those who saw it as unnecessary tinkering with a centuries-old system that still worked. Those with a higher view of priesthood had pushed back on theological grounds, arguing that leadership of any worshipping community must always reside in a priest.” (*Mixed-Ecology Church*)

Biblical Review. As already established, the vision for God’s people is to be a nation of priests. This was curtailed when the Israelites chose to worship a golden calf: “They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt’” (Exod. 32 8). After this incident the priests were only selected from a chosen tribe, the Levites. The expectation and ‘training’ came through the family line. When Jesus selected the 72 in Luke 10, he modelled the behaviour of a priest in how he sent them: relying on tythes, blessing, healing, and proclaiming the kingdom of God is at hand. Less training just the expectation, empowerment, modelling and debrief:

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, ‘Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.’ He replied, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.’ (Luke. 10. 17-20)

The Continued Issue of Clericalism and Elitism

Personal Observations. Firstly, as Mbewe mentioned, clericalism and elitism is nothing new in the Church he states that the issue started way back in the Medieval Era:

Sadly, despite the clarity in the Bible concerning the Priesthood of all Believers, this teaching was largely lost in the medieval era through the emergence of a priestly caste in the church. This happened through the erection of a barrier between ordinary believers (the lay) and those who ministered God's word to them (clergy) The Lord's supper became a sacrifice that the priests were enacting, Sacredotalism was born, and ministers claimed supernatural powers to dispense the grace of God through the sacraments, which gave them control over laity. (Mbewe 174)

Secondly, in 2023 the National Ministry Team for the Church of England concluded an investigation into clergy well-being by stating one of the main contributions to a 'lack of clergy well-being' was an established 'class system':

The report describes the Church of England as a "predominantly elite Church". There is, it says, "a culture of privilege amongst many of its ordained representatives who often benefit from elite educations and come from highly respected professions prior to their ordination. . . Our research reveals that clergy identifying as working-class often find themselves socially and culturally at odds with the Church environment, and that this negatively affects wellbeing. (Davies)

This was echoed in this research. Some questionnaires pointed to the structures being the problem, that they promote clerical control and reinforce clergy as a higher position than lay people. Others suggested that the issue has both theological and sociological reasoning as to why this is the case. Whatever the reasoning behind it, my observation is that it is an issue needing to be considered.

Literature Review. The historical elitism can be reflected upon using Levering's table. During the Patristic period from 160 to 700AD, the office of Bishop, Priest and Deacon was routed into the establishment of the church. As soon as Christianity became the religion of the

Empire in 380 AD, any question that priesthood was not an elitist idea must have been dismissed. During the Medieval period from 700-1500AD, there came a professionalism of priesthood, where a respected 'calling' of the second oldest son on the local landowner was the priesthood. From 1500-1800AD the Reformation and the Early Modern Period because of the reformation, the priests' focus was then turned to as 'biblical educators'—the people in the community with the education to pass on the gospel. As time went on modern priests emerged from 1800AD onwards where the establishment of schools and the modern missionary came to the fore. This elitism and clericalism increased post war in the early twentieth century with a mission and leadership focus around private schools and the education of future evangelical male priests.

Biblical Review. From the earliest dates of the church there were incidents, not necessarily of clericalism, but of elitism:

My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: one of you says, 'I follow Paul'; another, 'I follow Apollos'; another, 'I follow Cephas'; still another, 'I follow Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptised in the name of Paul? I thank God that I did not baptise any of you except Crispus and Gaius, so no one can say that you were baptised in my name." (1 Cor. 1. 11-15)

The scriptural call to be holy is also found throughout scripture if we/you/us are to be a priest: "...you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites." (Exod.19.6); "You are to be holy to me because I, the Lord, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own." (Lev. 20.26); and "He has declared that he will set you in praise, fame and honour high above all the nations he has made and that you will be a people holy to the Lord your God, as he promised" (Deut. 26.19). This priestly call to holiness and servanthood continues in the New Testament: "you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God

through Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 2.5) and “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” (1 Pet. 2.9) Accounts of elitism did exist, are in scripture, and the call not to do that it is key.

Lack of Recognition and Empowerment of Lay Leaders

Personal Observations. One of the main reasons that I wanted to study this area was the question: ‘What if we could get the thousands of Christians who have not studied theology, who go year on year to Christian festivals in the summer get passionate about God to go home and transform their working environment, their street or their home for the Kingdom of God?’ As the research, interviews and questionnaires progressed the issue of ‘lay leadership’ seemed to always emerge. Since the 1940’s, the Church of England has regularly produced reports asking the question around how we ‘empower laity’. Many of these reports struggle around the issue of lay presidency and never seem to move further forward. Others, tend to work around existing models of lay leadership but never critique them. These models include Lay Reader, Licenced Lay Minister, Pastoral Assistant, and Myriad Lay Leaders. Lay leaders are a legal form of leader within the Church of England that takes three years training and is then licenced by the bishops.

Literature Review. The Pastoral Letters make it clear that clericalism, elitism, and institutionalism started quite early on:

For the high priest the proper services have been given, and to the priests the proper office has been assigned, and upon the Levites the proper ministries have been imposed. The laymen are bound by the layman’s rules. Let each of you brothers, give thanks to God with your own group, maintaining a good conscience, not overstepping the designated rule of his ministry, but acting with reverence. (Rome et al. ch40)

Cuff dismisses the trend and practice of clericalism and the mindset of clergy being superior to lay people because they have more power and education! He develops this thought by saying laity become passive recipients rather than active members of the body of Christ. The up-to-date dearth in writing on the issue of priesthood of all believers from charismatic evangelical theologians is only matched by the number of papers written on the subject from places other than the Western Church. Papers written by Razafiarivony, Lotter and Van Aarde, Dreyer and Mbewe all, at the very least, call for a relook at the assumed theology of priesthood of all believers. Many go further suggesting that continuing the situation as is allows for unaccountable and/or abusive practices in leadership to continue.

Biblical Review. The comments made on clericalism and elitism show that the concept of priesthood and laity as opposing terms in scripture is not found. Priesthood can be found in Hebrew *‘קֹהֵן’*, *kohen*, and *ἀρχιερατικός*, *archieratikos*, there is also the people *‘λαός’*, *laos*, the same Greek word used in the Septuagint Sadly, some outworking of similar and other issues amongst priests and the emerging ‘lay’ priests of Christianity (Acts 1 – 5). Arguments, disagreements, and judgements emerge over many issues including contested domains, authority, teaching, public authority, and internal authority.

The book of Acts includes several instances of conflict. At first these conflicts are of a religious nature, as the Christian message encounters the religions and cultures of the Jewish and Hellenistic-Roman world. However, these conflict narratives suggest that other factors were also involved. Recorded in Acts are issues of power, influence, and control over identity.” (Stenschke 211)

Educators Seem Isolated from Churches They Seek to Train Clergy to Lead

Personal Observations. Whilst the number of best-practice interviews was few, the educators expressed a consistent theme of isolation. The idea that the educators and the

theological institutions are preparing future priests to be leaders in the Church and empowering lay people to lead seemed to be quite alien to most. Simple answers of “we have tried to get more volunteers by giving a notice and encouraging people to sign up, it seems to work occasionally, but in the end all churches have a struggle of engaging volunteers” (PHABE). Whilst one of the semi-structured interviews did overtly go into the theological significance of a lay person “acting as a priest” and not seeing them “just as a volunteer” once they shared this, they seemed to be at a loss to know how to make this culture change ‘on the ground’. Most educators were well meaning, but there did seem to be a disconnect between what they thought and what it meant in and part of parish life week to week.

Literature Review. Recently Clergy training has changed quite significantly. As seen in Chapter 2, in the last 10 years alone with the adoption of pioneer training and planting training has led to quite a significant change in the options open to potential clergy training. At the same time, since 2004 ordinands have been given the option of training full time residential or part time residential. This has led to quite a significant increase in the take up of non-residential training, almost 70% (Paul) In non-residential training, clergy stay working in parish based jobs whilst committing to training one day a week at College. With the model of non-residential training now being the primary model in clergy education, one would expect the link between parishes and education institutions to be better. But this research does seem to suggest the opposite.

Ministry Implications of the Findings

Something needs to happen with the church. As seen in previous chapters, numbers are in decline. Even if it were not for COVID, numbers would still not be good. The number of lay people employed to do ‘ministry’ jobs is past its peak, but this is still happening in charismatic evangelical churches, but this is not an adequate long-term solution to dwindling numbers of volunteers. From Chapter Two showed saw that the church has a good theology that is truly

empowering of lay people, the priesthood of all believers. So, what are the practical implications and outworking for the findings from this study?

The first finding, the lack of clear theological understanding of the priesthood of all believers, poses two major theological problems that need to be addressed. First, within charismatic evangelical churches have a problem using the word ‘priest’ with clergy, let alone even using it within the context of lay people.

The practical outworking from this would be to start truly embracing the use of the word priest for myself. I am a product of my upbringing and because of this study I have realised in myself I am insecure in the use of the word priest for myself.

- I would turn this research into a book and write an accessible, passionate, creative case for the re-owning of the theology of priesthood and the re-owning of the theology of priesthood of all believers.
- Myriad a network that is doing similar work in proposing lay lead church plants. The interesting thing is none of their literature, so far, includes any reference or use of the word priest. I would seek to share my study and findings to help see the vision of Myriad increase and bear fruit.
- I would connect in with the four main theological colleges who would be in sympathy with the aims and objectives of New Wine. In building this relationship I would offer to share my findings and seek to offer a clearer, workable, and applicable theology of the priesthood of all believers.

The second major theological problem posed by the first finding is that at the core of what the church does in ministry is its model of discipleship which functions on a ‘micro’ level from Sunday to Sunday, and on a ‘macro’ level focusses from festival to festival. This perpetuates the problem of disempowering lay people to operate as ‘priests’ during the week or for the rest of

the year. This may not be an obvious ‘theology’ issue, but the discipleship offered, and the model used has a very firm theology behind it. It can draw people in and then send them out to survive to the following week, or the following year, rather than ‘sending out in the power of his spirit to live and work to his praise and glory’.

I would, again, seek to model this change and distinction in my own life. A full-time priest can be taken up with the whole process of maintaining and running the ministry of the church. As far as possible I would seek to step out and of, and off this treadmill of ministry and embrace working and being a priest. In doing this I would model what I see as a change in what I want to see in others.

This problem and proposed outworking and solution would be covered in the book as part of our ‘rewiring of theology and practice’ to close the gap between our ‘orthodoxy and our orthopraxy’.

The second finding is the need for training and ongoing support. As stated in the research, 86.96% of clergy stated that their college training showed little to no significance to their understanding of theology and the practice of the priesthood of all believers. Following this both clergy and lay were asked if they were to teach about the priesthood of all believers what would you teach? Clergy gave more practical focussed subjects: Gifts and living out priesthood in service and practice. The lay people wanted more theological Bible focussed training: Living out priestliness, doctrine, and affirmation of role and identity in Church. Training and ongoing support of clergy and laity is, at the very least not consistent or, at worst totally ineffective.

Following on from one of my previous points, I would build on the relationships with the colleges and seek to provide modular training and teaching on the priesthood of all believers and how to empower laity.

On a local level I would write a course off the back of the book empowering laity to reflect on their role as lay priests. This would be a fundamentally different course to ones such as a gifts course where people are given the opportunity to 'find' their gifts and use them in church. This course would start by rewiring the expectation and reality of who and what they are in Christ, and then how they should be a tool for his blessing in our communities.

The third major finding was about the continued issue of clericalism and elitism. As (Mbewe) clearly states, clericalism and elitism is nothing new in the history of the church. (Dreyer) goes even further by stating that the institutionalisation and elitism of the minister can even constrain growth in the church: "I believe the neglect of priesthood of believers has had a detrimental effect on reformed churches. It contributed to a strong institutionalisation and structured ecclesiology in which the office of the minister became a dominant factor. More than often, the ministerial office limited growth instead of promoting it" (Dreyer 2). To change the culture of clericalism and elitism even in charismatic evangelical circles, a 'long game' approach would need to be taken.

Culture change starts when the key influences understand the value or the purpose of what the change is about. So, communicating the advantages and the value of the priesthood of all believers is vital, and creating a shared language that makes sense of Diocesan structures, within church structures.

Once the shared language is in place then targeted key people, Bishops, Directors of Ministry and Core Churches, need to buy into the concept and begin to model it and do it.

Another suggested piece of research would be to examine Myriad and other initiatives like it to assess their impact and the reality of lay leaders stepping into positions that would be traditionally held by priests.

The fourth major finding was about the lack of recognition and empowerment of lay leaders. This emerged as a recurring theme throughout both questionnaires and all semi-structured interviews. The task of clergy in preparing the laity is rooted in the priestly role of equipping and empowering the people of God to live out their faith in their daily lives. Just as priests in the Old Testament prepared sacrifices and offerings to God on behalf of the people, so modern pastors are called to prepare their congregation to be "living sacrifices" (Rom. 12.1). This involves nurturing their spiritual growth through teaching, preaching, modelling faithful living, and administering the sacraments. The goal is to send the laity out from worship on Sunday into their neighbourhoods, workplaces, schools, and families as ambassadors of Christ's love. Pastors are to empower laypeople with the theological foundation, moral compass, and spiritual practices to show God's light, power, and love wherever they go. Equipped and empowered, the laity can fulfil their own priestly calling to offer their lives in service to others, spreading the gospel through word and deed. As (Sunquist) states: "It is imperative that each local church find ways of releasing and empowering the laity to do the work of the mission of God." (309) The view of lay people in the Church needs to be changed. As in previous points, this is a long-term project starting with me. I need to change the culture and expectation around volunteers in the church I serve as priest.

A series of commitments to valuing, training, and supporting all 'volunteers' needs to be set in place. At the same time, there needs to be set a series of expectations because of the training and support on each member of church about what it is to be a priest in your home, work, street, or family. The resulting book and course would play a key part in starting to rethink our church cultures and discipleship models.

The fifth major finding was about the isolation of educators from parish work. Whilst this observation only came through the semi-structured interviews it did seem quite key in understanding what the problem was and where the problem may start. If 86.96% of clergy state

that their college training showed little to no significance to their understanding of a key reformation theological concept, then there is a problem. This lack of training leads to the isolation and the isolation leads to clergy not feeling trained or empowered to do a key thing.

All theological institutions in the Church of England do a review every six years to assess and hold them accountable as to how clergy are being trained. They are assessed around six aims: Formation Aims, Formation Context, Leadership and Management, Student Outcomes, Partnership with University and Taught Programmes. Whilst the programme is very thorough and detailed there is a distinct lack of evaluation from the perspective of the receiving parish: Did the Curate turn out to be a good one? How well trained did you find your Curate. Every avenue seems to be covered in the evaluation apart from the one area that is going to benefit and or suffer from the Curate. This will need to be changed and be addressed to see the isolation of educators starts to change.

Limitations of the Study

The very nature of doing an invitation to fill in a questionnaire limits the field of participants who choose to respond to the request. Whilst the number of people who responded and filled in both questionnaires was adequate, there were some limitations.

The first limitation was the ethnic make-up of the respondents. Whilst every effort was made to get respondents from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, only 12.9% described their ethnic background as “UK Minority Ethnic” and 6.45% as “Other” in the ‘Priesthood of All Believers Lay’ (PHABL) questionnaire (Figure 4.3). When I was collating and sending out the

questionnaire, I tried to put the list of invitees together that mostly reflected the ethnic make-up of the UK which is approximately 75% white British and 15% UK minority ethnic.

Whilst the results did reflect a little of the ethnic diversity of the UK, as the questionnaires came back, it became apparent that to obtain the percentage breakdown I wanted, I would have had to invite more people from the UK minority ethnic background. In retrospect more numbers from UK minority ethnic lay church people would have been an interesting comparison to answers given by White British respondents.

The second limitation was the gender make-up of the respondents. As with the ethnic make-up of people participating in the questionnaire, I sought to have the gender breakdown as wide as possible. At the least, I sought for the gender breakdown to reflect that of the Churches' national average of clergy. What is interesting and equally frustrating is that despite the measures taken to get a good representation from both genders, I ended up with 75% male respondents and 25% female respondents, compared to the national average of clergy being 70% male and 30% female. (Church of England, *Ministry Statistics*) A greater participation from women clergy would have led to better final statistics and more interesting reflection and breakdown of differences between answers.

The third limitation was limited representation from the church hierarchy. As the research questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews progressed, I became increasingly aware of a gap in my research, that of the 'gate keepers' on the issue of 'priesthood' as a whole. I am hoping that this work's major practical outworking will be a change in how the word priest is viewed. This will only gather momentum if key people agree with the direction and are willing to get behind a cultural and structural change within the Church of England. These people are the bishops and directors of ministry, both national and local. Without these people onboard, the change can only happen locally and not have any real lasting effect. Because of this I think the study missed an opportunity to gain their opinions and thoughts on this matter.

The fourth limitation was the need for journals and more semi-structured interviews. Towards the end of this project I came across the journals written by theologians from the global south (Caulley; Razafiarivony; Lotter and Van Aarde; Dreyer; Aguilan; Mbewe). They all were saying similar things to what I was saying about rethinking theology on the priesthood of all believers. Sadly, it was too late in the research to try and do a semi-structured interview with these educators. This would have been very useful and interesting given their cultural background and differences of opinion.

Unexpected Observations

From the actual study itself I was shocked at the lack of disagreement about priesthood of all believers, the majority stated they believed in it. In my mind at the outset of the study, I was expecting there to be several strong, well held theological opinions as to why the priesthood of all believers was not a key principle. Maybe the wrong people were asked, but in continuing conversations a groundswell of theological opinion that clearly states why Christians are not using this wonderful theology in their churches more often still cannot be found. On a personal note, when someone willing to disagree on the subject and maintain that 'it's a metaphor adopted in post reformation England the metaphor of being the body of Christ would not be taken literally' was found, it seemed to come more from a position of maintaining power and authority than it did from a position of thought-out theology.

Recommendations

The results of this study have several implications for the practical work of ministry. Based on the data gathered through the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, I would make the following recommendations. Several conversations need to start to try and unlock the issue of Lay people in leadership:

The first conversation needs to be amongst the charismatic evangelical churches which have two elephants in the room. One elephant is that we do not want to talk about is lack of lay leaders, and the other is the whole issue of priesthood. Talking about the lack of lay leaders is avoided because everyone has the same problem, and those with money try to sort the problem by employing an ever-increasing number of lay "professionals". Talking about priesthood is avoided because of some distorted notion that this is what the high church end of the Church of England does, not other denominations. Leadership and being a minister are discussed when feeling exotic. The need is to talk about the one model of leadership that is consistently present in both the Old and New Testament. Sadly, people are more at home reading and learning from the latest secular leadership manual written by a retired football coach than reading the Bible about priesthood. In starting and having these conversations, it can lead to being more at home with accepting the identity of Christians and in turn, with time, accepting the identity of non-ordained church members.

Secondly, once charismatic evangelical churches are more at home with the use of language such as "priest", the next stage and conversation should be between their Parishes and their Theological Educational Institutions (TEIs). The feedback into the training establishments where all ordinands go to train as clergy or priests needs to start. Questions need to be asked of the parish about how the new clergy person worked, ministered, empowered, and trained others to serve in ministry. Unless these questions are asked and the answers are really engaged with and listened to, future clergy will continue to be a blockage to the long-term empowerment of lay leaders

The third conversation should be among the ministry divisions, TEIs and parishes. Once the relationship and the ongoing learning is established between the parishes and the TEI, the ministry divisions can then be brought in. A clearly written report with clear accounting and recommendations set out can be the starting point for a discussion with the ministry divisions.

While it may not be an easy or quick conversation to have, once the relationships have been established, the learning shown, and the suggestions for a way forward are agreed upon, then the next conversation can proceed.

The fourth conversation should be amongst the bishops, ministry division, TEIs and parishes. It is essential that Bishops should play a key role in this process. As with the previous suggested conversation this will take time, patience, and discernment to finding a clear way forward.

Ultimately bishops are key gate keepers on this and many other issues. Yet I am convinced that a clear, well written, well researched proposal would be listened to and with a few tweaks move forward to be adopted by other charismatic churches.

Postscript

Firstly, one of the main reasons why I chose Asbury Seminary as a place to do my Doctorate was the faculty's insistence that the project must have a practical outworking and had no notion of researching how many angels can be placed on a pin head type of study. Whilst there were times in the last three years I got frustrated with the 'process' of writing and researching this project, overall I am still interested in and delight in the notion of empowering priests to be priest and lay people to do the same. It has only been as I have been writing this final chapter that my own journey of accepting myself 'as a priest' not a minister or a vicar but a priest has ended. This has been the biggest surprise for me personally, that the journey of study for me and has had an emotional theological outworking for myself.

Secondly, this study, over the last 3 years, has been an enlightening experience for me—not just theologically but personally as well. When I started studying at Asbury, we were only recently out of the disruption of COVID, still feeling loss, struggling with the idea of community, wondering what God can teach us through this pandemic, and grieving at the state of our

churches that this has left us in. Three years on and I am seeing the light at the end of the tunnel for the study, planning a church revitalisation, and looking at the possibility of changing jobs. I am now at home with the idea of calling myself a priest and excited at the possibilities this brings with an emerging ministry amongst festival goers over the summer. Most of where I now find myself has come directly or indirectly from the study I have done these last 3 years. It has been a real privilege, spending time with other learners, making new friends, and engaging in thoughts and issues I would not have done otherwise.

Thirdly, nearly every book, journal, or training day I have been on the receiving end of in the last few years has, at some point, included a point about how the Global South Church is at the forefront of thinking on whatever issue of the training I was doing or reading about. Sadly, I only caught on late in the study that the Global South is at the forefront of thinking on this issue. I could try and defend my Western, white, privileged, male background by saying the journals were hard to find, or that the online library was hard to navigate, but I will hold up my hands and admit I was not looking because of my inherent bias, I should not have been shocked at finding these answers and journals, but I was.

Finally, another point at which I found myself surprised and frustrated is with clergy and educators when talking about lay leadership. Do not get me wrong, this issue is key to understand, discuss, and unpack when looking at the clergy and lay people in Church. But, more often than not, clergy want to discuss the issue of lay presidency. Nearly every time I talked with clergy this issue came up, as if it were a block to all other discussions and thoughts on the matter. Now I will be the first to admit, I am of a low churchmanship and the sacraments are not key to my understanding of ministry. But priestly acts go beyond the sacramental. Indeed, there can be quite a debate as to the list of what is included as a sacramental. However, to use the argument around lay presidency as a block for all other detailed debate around lay leadership is so short sighted.

The Church of England is still struggling with, mourning, and unpacking the effects of COVID and will probably still be doing so in 5 years. But we need to realise that most of the problems we have were around before COVID. They are not as a result of it. COVID just heightened them. What it is to be a priest, and what it is to be a lay disciple, a lay priest? How should we train and equip people, and what does this means on a Monday morning when we are waiting in the rain for the next bus to come? These questions have always been crucial to consider, but they are just more crucial now.

We are at an impasse in the Church of England and what it will look like in the future is still, largely in our hands with God's instigation. My prayer and hope is that this piece of research will contribute to the shaping of leadership and priesthood going forward.

APPENDIX A

The Research Instruments – The Questionnaires and Questions for Interviews

Questionnaire for Clergy (PHABC)

Tim Sudworth MTP

“The Priesthood of all Believers - Clergy”

An analysis of the theology, training support and releasing of lay and ordained leaders into the priesthood of all believers.”

A questionnaire for Clergy (PHABC)

Dear potential participant,

I am writing to invite you to participate in my research project, which aims to investigate the theology, training, support, and deployment of lay and ordained leaders within the Church of England. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing any repercussions.

If you choose to participate, please complete the questionnaire provided below. If you prefer not to take part, simply select "no" in response to the first question, and you will be automatically redirected out of the questionnaire. You are also free to exit the questionnaire at any stage if you change your mind about participating. Please be assured that your decision will not impact any current or future relationship between us.

The questionnaire has been designed to maintain your anonymity, ensuring that your identity remains confidential and will not be revealed or published. Although there is a slight possibility

that your responses could lead to your identification and association with the research findings, I will take all necessary steps to minimize this risk.

This research forms an essential part of my Doctor of Ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary, where the findings will be documented and published. There is also a small possibility that the research may be featured in a future book. The purpose of this study is to contribute to a more robust, theologically sound, and practical application of the theology of the priesthood of all believers.

When responding to the questions, please provide candid and sincere answers without overanalysing. This approach will generate the most valuable insights for the research. The questionnaire should take approximately 15-18 minutes to complete.

I genuinely value your time and effort in this matter and am deeply appreciative of your participation. Your input will play a significant role in shaping our understanding of leadership within the Church of England.

Thank you for considering this invitation.

Best regards,

Revd Tim Sudworth

Voluntary Participation

Are you willing to take part in this research by completing this short questionnaire? If you answer “yes” below, that will mean you have given your consent to do so, and that you are aware of the procedures, risks, and statement of confidentiality.

Demographic Information

This will help the researcher understand your context and background. Please circle the ones that best describes you:

I am under the age of 18

I am aged between 18 - 25

I am aged between 26 - 40

I am aged between 41 – 55

I am aged between 56 – 70

I am aged over 70

I am white British

I am not from the UK (please specify)

I am UK Minority Ethnic

I am from some other ethnic background (please specify)

Church Information

1. I am Church of England

I am not Church of England

2. (Please feel free to select more than one)

I am Evangelical.

I am Charismatic.

I am Pentecostal

I am Anglo-Catholic

I am Liberal

Other: please state

Your Previous Work, Training and Experience

3. I have taught at a theological college.

4. If yes which college?

5. (Please circle the one that describes you best)

I have a:

Diploma

I have an undergraduate degree

I have a post graduate degree

6. I trained at

7. In what year were you ordained?

8. I am currently a

9. The current role I am in reflects my tradition.

10. How many churches have you served in as a Clergy person?

Priesthood of All Believers

11. What is your understanding of the ‘Priesthood of all Believers’ from 1 Peter 2 v9?

12. How much do you feel your understanding of the priesthood of all believers is key to your ongoing Christian discipleship?

- No part
- A small part
- A large part
- A key part

13. How significant was your theological college training to your understanding of “Priesthood of all Believers”?

- Not significant
- A small part
- A large part
- A key significant part

14. How many times in the last 5 years have you taught or done training on your understanding of the priesthood of all believers?

0

1 - 2

3 - 4

5 – 6

more

15. Who was the teaching/training for?

- Small Group / Home Group
- Lent Course
- Key lay leaders
- Sermon Series
- College

16. If you have done some teaching/training on the subject to what extent was it useful to help your parishioners in their calling as a lay priest?

- Not at all
- A bit
- A large extent

17. If you have taught on the subject of 'Priesthood of all Believers', could you outline the main three topics/areas covered?

18. By way of percentage how many lay people in your church would you identify as being fully released into being a lay priest in their/your community?

19. How significant was your theological college training to your understanding of “Priesthood of all Believers”?

- Not significant
- A small part
- A large part
- A key significant part

20. How would you describe someone who is fully released into being a lay priest in your parish?
21. What do you see as the main obstacles to lay people being fully released into being a lay priest in the Church of England?
22. What have you identified as the best transformative practices and/or resources to releasing lay people into ministry?
23. Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank you very much for all your time and effort you have put into this questionnaire I really appreciate it. If you wish to have a further discussion about the research, then please get in touch with me via email at timsudworth@btinternet.com

Every blessing

Revd. Tim Sudworth.

APPENDIX B

The Research Instruments – the questionnaires and questions for interviews

Questionnaire for Lay (“PHABL – Priesthood of All Believers Lay”)

Tim Sudworth MTP

“The Priesthood of all Believers”

An analysis of the theology, training support and releasing of lay and ordained leaders into the priesthood of all believers.”

A questionnaire for Lay people (PHABL – Priesthood of All Believers Lay)

Dear potential participant,

I am writing to invite you to participate in my research project, which aims to investigate the theology, training, support, and deployment of lay and ordained leaders within the Church of England. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing any repercussions.

If you choose to participate, please complete the questionnaire provided below. If you prefer not to take part, simply select "no" in response to the first question, and you will be automatically redirected out of the questionnaire. You are also free to exit the questionnaire at any stage if you change your mind about participating. Please be assured that your decision will not impact any current or future relationship between us.

The questionnaire has been designed to maintain your anonymity, ensuring that your identity remains confidential and will not be revealed or published. Although there is a slight possibility

that your responses could lead to your identification and association with the research findings, I will take all necessary steps to minimize this risk.

This research forms an essential part of my Doctor of Ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary, where the findings will be documented and published. There is also a small possibility that the research may be featured in a future book. The purpose of this study is to contribute to a more robust, theologically sound, and practical application of the theology of the priesthood of all believers.

When responding to the questions, please provide candid and sincere answers without overanalysing. This approach will generate the most valuable insights for the research. The questionnaire should take approximately 15-18 minutes to complete.

I genuinely value your time and effort in this matter and am deeply appreciative of your participation. Your input will play a significant role in shaping our understanding of leadership within the Church of England.

Thank you for considering this invitation.

Best regards,

Revd Tim Sudworth

Voluntary Participation

Are you willing to take part in this research by completing this short questionnaire? If you answer “yes” below, that will mean you have given your consent to do so, and that you are aware of the procedures, risks, and statement of confidentiality.

Demographic Information

This will help the researcher understand your context and background. Please circle the ones that best describes you:

I am under the age of 18

I am aged between 18 - 25

I am aged between 26 - 40

I am aged between 41 – 55

I am aged between 56 – 70

I am aged over 70

I am white British

I am not from the UK (please specify)

I am UK Minority Ethnic

I am from some other ethnic background (please specify)

Church Information

1. I am Church of England

I am not Church of England

2. (Please feel free to select more than one)

I am Evangelical.

I am Charismatic

I am Pentecostal

I am Anglo-Catholic

I am Liberal

Other: please state

Priesthood of All Believers

3. Have you had any previous theological education?

4. To what level?

(Please circle the levels you have done)

Informally non accredited

Secondary school

Diploma

Undergraduate degree

Post graduate degree.

5. What roles have you filled, as a leader in your local church? (Circle as many as you have done, please)

Worship leader Service leader Side person Church Warden

PCC member Youth leader Children's leader Hospitality

Welcomer Treasurer Administrator Verger

Maintenance PCC Secretary AV Person Cleaner

Other (please state)

6. Would you consider yourself a church leader?

7. Would you consider yourself as a Priest?
8. What is your understanding of the “Priesthood of all Believers” from 1 Peter 2 v9?
9. How much do you feel the belief in the priesthood of all believers is key to your ongoing discipleship?
 - No part
 - A small part
 - A large part
 - A key part
10. How many times in the last five years have you been taught about the priesthood of all believers?
 - 0
 - 1 - 2
 - 3 - 4
 - 5 – 6
 - More

11. If you have been taught on the subject of “Priesthood of all Believer”, could you outline the three main topics/areas covered?

12. If you haven’t been taught on the subject of “Priesthood of all Believers” what would you say are the three main topics, you would want to be covered?

13. How would you describe someone who is fully released into being a lay priest?

14. What do you see as the main obstacles to lay people being fully released into being a lay priest in the Church of England?

15. What have you identified as the best transformative practices and/or resources to releasing lay people into ministry?

16. Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank you very much for all your time and effort you have put into this questionnaire I really appreciate it. If you wish to have a further discussion about the research, then please get in touch with me via email at timsudworth@btinternet.com

Every blessing

Revd. Tim Sudworth

APPENDIX C

Questions for the semi structured Best Practice Interviews for Educators

("PHABE" – Priesthood of All Believers Educators)

Tim Sudworth MTP

"The Priesthood of all Believers"

An analysis of the theology, training support and releasing of lay and ordained leaders into the priesthood of all believers."

Semi structured best practice interviews for Educators (PHABE – Priesthood of All Believers Educators)

Dear [Interviewee],

I am writing to express my gratitude for your willingness to participate in my research project, which focuses on the theology, training, support, and releasing of lay and ordained leaders within the Church of England. Your contribution is invaluable, and I deeply appreciate your time and insights.

Please be assured that your participation is entirely voluntary. If you decide not to take part, simply answer "NO" to the first question in the questionnaire, which asks about your willingness to participate. This will automatically direct you out of the questionnaire.

Additionally, if at any point during the interview you wish to discontinue, you may do so without any consequences. Rest assured that your decision will not impact any existing or potential relationship between us.

When we meet for the interview, I will request that you sign an Informed Consent Letter prior to the start of our discussion. I have attached the letter to this email, allowing you to review it in advance.

The interview will be conducted in a private setting, with only the two of us present. To ensure accurate data collection, I will record the interview using my phone and then transfer the audio file to my computer. Once the transfer is complete, I will delete the recording from my phone to maintain confidentiality. I will personally transcribe the interview, and you will be identified only by your initials in the transcript. The digital transcript will be securely stored on my password-protected laptop, while a single physical copy will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, for which I possess the only key.

This research constitutes a significant portion of my Doctor of Ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary, where the findings will be written up and published. There is a small possibility that the research may also be included in a future book. The ultimate goal of this study is to contribute to a healthier, theologically grounded, and practical application of the theology of the priesthood of all believers.

The interview will begin with a series of biographical questions, followed by five questions centred on best practices that you can identify for training clergy and lay people in the priesthood of all believers. The entire interview should not exceed 60 minutes.

Once again, I sincerely appreciate your time and effort in this matter. Your participation is crucial to the success of this research project, and I am immensely grateful for your support.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns.

Best regards,

Revd. Tim Sudworth

Voluntary Participation

Are you willing to take part in this research by completing this short questionnaire? If you answer “yes” below, that will mean you have given your consent to do so, and that you are aware of the procedures, risks, and statement of confidentiality.

Demographic Information

This will help the researcher understand your context and background. Please circle the ones that best describes you:

I am under the age of 18

I am aged between 18 - 25

I am aged between 26 - 40

I am aged between 41 – 55

I am aged between 56 – 70

I am aged over 70

I am white British

I am not from the UK (please specify)

I am UK Minority Ethnic

I am from some other ethnic background (please specify)

Church Information

1. I am Church of England

I am not Church of England

2. (Please feel free to select more than one)

I am Evangelical.

I am Charismatic

I am Pentecostal

I am Anglo-Catholic

I am Liberal

Other: please state

Your Previous Work, Training and Experience

3. Which college to do work at?

4. For how long?

5. (Please circle the one that describes you best)

I have a:

Diploma

I have an undergraduate degree

I have a post graduate degree

I have a Doctorate/Phd (please state in what field below)

6. I trained at

7. Are you ordained?

8. In what year were you ordained?

9. I am currently a

The Interviews (“PHABE”)

1. What is your experience of the outworking of the theology of the Priesthood of all believers?
2. What are the main obstacles for people embracing the reality and practice of the theology of the priesthood of all believers? (Lay and/or ordained)
3. If you had to or have done training for the theology, practice and outworking of the theology of the priesthood of all believers what would be the most important aspects to the training?
4. Can we have a clearly understood and practice of the theology of the priesthood of all believers whilst maintaining the priestly structure we have in the Church of England?
5. If we don't have a clear theology and practice of the theology of the priesthood of all believers, how can we best empower and train our volunteers in our churches?
6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix D

Informed Consent Letters/Forms

Ethical Consideration Worksheet

Consent Forms Templates

Informed Consent Letter for the Educators' Questionnaire ("PHABC")

Revd. Tim Sudworth

100 Creffield Rd

London, W3 9PX

United Kingdom

tim.sudworth@asburyseminary.edu

tims@oaktree.org.uk

DATE

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"The Priesthood of all believers"

Dear Potential Participant,

I am writing to invite you to take part in a research study conducted by Revd. Tim Sudworth who is currently studying at Asbury Theological Seminary. The study aims to investigate the theology, training, support, and deployment of lay and ordained leaders within the framework of the priesthood of all believers. Your participation would involve completing a questionnaire, which should take approximately 10-15 minutes.

The study is divided into two phases. The first phase involves two questionnaires, one for lay people and one for clergy. These questionnaires are designed to collect information about individuals' understanding of the theology of the priesthood of all believers, how it is applied in their life and ministry, and to identify any barriers to the empowerment and support of lay and ordained priests in their life, community, and ministry. The second phase of the research involves conducting interviews to examine best practices in greater depth. The ultimate objective of this study is to offer recommendations, based on a review of current literature and evidence from the research, that could help enhance the training of lay and ordained priests to serve in a more empowered and supported manner in our parishes.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and no financial compensation will be provided. Be assured that your participation in this survey is entirely anonymous, and your identity will not be disclosed at any point during the research process or in the dissemination of its findings. The data collected through this questionnaire will be analysed and incorporated into my doctoral dissertation at Asbury Theological Seminary, which will be made publicly available upon completion. Furthermore, the insights gleaned from this study may be shared through various scholarly and popular media, such as academic articles, online blog posts, conference papers, and possibly even a published book. Rest assured that your anonymity will be strictly maintained throughout all stages of this research and its subsequent publications. Be aware that, despite best efforts to safeguard your privacy, there remains a potential risk that your identity and the views you express may be disclosed to third parties. However, rest assured that

we have implemented stringent measures to mitigate this risk to the greatest extent possible. Your participation in this study and the opinions you share will remain unknown to me, as the data is gathered through an anonymous process. The information collected through this questionnaire will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, with the sole exception of instances where the researcher is compelled by law to report specific incidents, such as those involving harm to oneself or others. The data will be securely stored on my password-protected laptop, and any hard copies of the questionnaire will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for which I retain the key. Upon completion of the research, all hard copies and electronic versions will be destroyed.

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Sincerely,

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Asbury Theological Seminary

I have carefully reviewed the information provided and have been given the chance to ask any questions I may have. I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and I am at liberty to withdraw at any time without the need to provide a reason or incur any costs.

With full understanding and of my own free will, I hereby consent to participate in this research project.

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CONSENT

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