

## **ABSTRACT**

# **IDENTIFYING AND PROMOTING EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH THE ROLE OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT IN THE NORTHEAST JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

by

Ronald V. Isaman

The project identified ways to promote pastoral effectiveness and create a tool for developing a growth plan. The research used surveys to determine correlations between what district superintendents and clergy believe to be the essential characteristics for effectiveness.

The findings demonstrated that those surveyed viewed all assessed characteristics as important. Effective ministry becomes almost impossible. Relationships were demonstrated to be more important than characteristics. In fact, effectiveness is the result of a complex set of variables working together. The study confirmed that district superintendents have a significant impact on pastoral effectiveness by nurturing an environment of continued growth.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled  
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NORTHEAST JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

presented by

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**IDENTIFYING AND PROMOTING EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP  
THROUGH THE ROLE OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT IN THE  
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Of the Requirements for the Degree  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

by

Ronald Vincent Isaman

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM**

#### **The Problem**

One day while I was watching the news on television, I saw a car hanging precariously over the side of a bridge with passengers still inside. A quick assessment of their situation revealed that a wrong move would mean plunging to their death. If however, they carefully thought out their plan and looked at how to keep their balance until help arrived, they could be saved and return to safety and to a vital, active life. Yet in their anxiety, the ability to formulate a plan was next to impossible. They needed an outsider who was free from anxiety to help them calmly discover how to be saved. They needed a leader.

The predicament of the car passengers is essentially the picture of many United Methodist churches; in fact, it describes many churches regardless of denomination. Churches have been hanging on, precariously situated on the edge of pending doom hoping for the advent of leadership with the ability to bring them out of the danger of demise. Some have not witnessed a new member or a baptism in years. Others are frantically trying to raise enough funds to keep the doors open, and yet others are lamenting the fact that they have only enough funds to afford a pastor who preaches on Sunday. These churches demonstrate little indication of a passionate vision or purpose. Their mission is to keep the church open at least while they are alive. These churches are in grave need of effective pastors.

Much of the current material that addresses the state of the Church addresses the importance of leadership. The Church critically needs leaders who demonstrate an ability

to lead more effectively, the ability to articulate a guiding vision, and a desire to equip the local church to be in ministry. The need for leadership is not the same as giving the church membership what they want. Often they want a savior not a leader. Some congregations want a pastor who will do all the ministry of the church and have no vision of how they can be equipped to participate in ministry. Thankfully, this trend is not universal, many local churches are alive and engaging in fruitful ministry and mission. These churches are powerful examples that effective ministry is a possibility in the twenty-first century. Effective churches are growing, and they focus on being servants and witnesses to the community. They address the needs of the community they serve and are bringing in and developing new disciples for Jesus Christ. They are apostolic communities of faith sending members out in mission and ministry at home and around the world. These churches are willing to hear the call of God, risking themselves in responding to that call and making a difference for Jesus' sake.

Various attempts at addressing the problem of ineffectiveness have produced few positive results. Pastors attend seminars with one or two laypeople that get all excited only to have their spirits dampened when they go back to a church full of passive and uninterested people. Pastors are sometimes encouraged to attend counseling and/or retooling events by their superintendents. They go through the motions without appreciating how much they could learn. They gain little out of the treasure placed before them.

The literature does not offer much to address the part denominational leaders play or how they contribute to the problem or a solution. District superintendents and judicatory leaders need to look at how they influence the problem both negatively and



positively. Many superintendents oversee struggling churches like the ones I have described. Struggling churches are especially prevalent in the Northeast Jurisdiction where the United Methodist Church has lost enough members that some are convinced one entire conference area should be eliminated. The average Sunday morning worship attendance in the Western New York Conference for 2001 was ninety-one attendees. Many of the small churches are barely hanging on. Six in the Mountain View District will likely be closed in less than ten years without major transformation. This study is not the last word or the end-all solution to the problem. Hopefully, the study will be a helpful contribution to the Church of Jesus Christ and its search for excellent spiritual leadership.

The concern over spiritual leadership has grown out of an environment of necessity. Dynamic new leaders are not attracted to a vocation of ordained ministry in significant numbers. In the 1980s, the Western New York Conference ordained five to eight candidates every year at annual conference. Today that number is one to two. Robert Kohler indicates that this trend is church wide. In an article by Tom McAnally, Kohler says, “[P]eople talk about a clergy shortage, but I don’t see it;...[however], he acknowledges a drop in seminary-trained candidates ordained as elders—from 820 in 1990 to 621 in 2000” (1). Kohler continues to share that more licensed local pastors are filling the gap. Seminary education is no longer the norm; local pastors numbered 2,096 in 2000 compared to 1,013 in 1990. The level of education and preparation for ministry is shrinking in some places as local pastors and lay speakers are being used to minister to congregations who can no longer afford the cost of ordained and/or full-time pastors. Some are choosing this route into ministry rather than face the education requirements, the ordination process, and the itinerancy system (1).

Congregations need strong, equipped leadership to turn the church around. Without significant growth and ministry development, the pattern of stagnancy and decline will continue. Signs of hope and new life are making the need for excellent spiritual leadership a critical issue for the Church today. As recently as 2002, Steve Smith writes, “During the next five years, annual conferences plan to start 607 new churches, mostly in hot growth areas, compared with 378 for the previous five years, according to the General Board of Discipleship [of the United Methodist Church]” (1). Nevertheless, churches are giving up in areas where the population has been in decline. “Over half of all United Methodist Churches are located in rural counties and one-fifth of all UMCs are in rural declining counties” (McAnally 2). The reality is that these declining areas still have great ministry opportunities because large portions of the population have no church affiliation. Some areas are experiencing a turnaround in population statistics. In the 1980s only 45 percent of rural counties gained population while in the 1990s 71 percent of rural counties increased in population. Whether population is growing or in decline, without quality leadership the ministry of the Church will not reach its full potential.

### **Biblical and Theological Foundations**

Evangelism and mission are foundational concepts for any study of leadership in the Church of Jesus Christ. In Matthew 28:16-20, Jesus appears to his disciples in a post-resurrection experience. Here on the mountain, he told the disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. As modern-day disciples, the Church is still trying to figure out the most effective way to make disciples for Jesus Christ. Some have achieved great numbers of conversions or commitments but have made few disciples. Others have developed programs of discipleship and Christian education with little emphasis on

conversion. The results are negligible transformation of hearts and lives. The making of disciples is primary to the work of the Church. Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt. 28:18, NIV). This authority was followed by a “therefore,” which means that Jesus’ authority gave him the right to empower his band of disciples to go and make other disciples. They, in turn, have authority to go and make disciples who will take the authority of Christ and go into all the world and make more disciples. The main verb in this passage is *mathēteusate*, which translates to “make disciples.” The other verbs used here by Jesus speak of the actions “go,” “baptize,” and “teach,” which have a subordinate function in this passage. The main verb is to “make disciples,” and the Church fulfills the Great Commission by doing so. The essence of discipleship is in the teacher-student relationship. Making disciples is the act of hearing the Word deep within, understanding it enough to believe and accept it, and then being obedient to that Word out of loving response to God (Gaebelin 8: 595). Fulfilling the Great Commission and making disciples involves movement toward those who do not know Jesus Christ, initiation (conversion) of new believers into the Church, and instruction in the faith.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told his disciples that they were the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world” (Matt. 5:13-16, NIV). In order to have an impact on the world for Jesus Christ, the Church needs a strong and effective ministry. The Church is unable to reach out to the world if the church is floundering in holding itself together. The gospel is God’s living word and has great power to transform lives, yet transformation and change is not happening. Many of the churches in today’s culture assume that seminary degrees automatically translate into strong spiritual and effective

leaders. They expect leaders who will perform miracles and resurrect congregations, even those with little or no vitality. A quick look at the Church indicates the absurdity of this assumption. Education is no guarantee for effectiveness. At times inexperienced people produce more fruit than seasoned and educated clergypersons. Two congregations in my district were served by elders for many years until they had declined to part-time status and the point of stagnancy. Two young local pastors, both in full-time careers outside the church, were appointed as lay pastors. At one-third time in the church, they have taken the congregations from twenty-five and thirty in worship to seventy and ninety on most Sundays. When I share this story, other church leaders acknowledge that this phenomenon happens across the Church. The God-given pastoral aptitudes produced good results without the benefit of a seminary education.

### **Concepts of Leadership in Scripture**

The importance of effective leadership can be easily understood; however, the task of how to get to effectiveness is another issue. The biblical-theological understandings of effective ministry rest on several biblical concepts. This section on leadership is not an exhaustive list, rather it presents concepts that repeatedly appear in Scripture. The key concepts are covenant, calling, character, maturity, spirituality, integrity, health, and fruit in and through pastors. Each has a relationship to the process of disciplining leaders for the Church.

#### **Covenant**

First and foremost is the idea of covenant:

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, NIV)

God told Moses to go to the people of Israel. He was to deliver God's message that God was establishing his covenant with them. At the heart of all ministries is one's relationship with God. For Christians this relationship centers around the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the acceptance of that gift of grace.

The Exodus passage is about obeying God and keeping his covenant. Israel held a unique place in the order of God's creation. They were a treasured possession, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation. This distinction also carried weighty responsibility. As priests, they exist not for themselves but to intercede on behalf of the people and to represent God to the world. They were in ministry on God's behalf, teaching the world to understand God's ways, to lead the people in worship, and to pronounce God's forgiveness for sin. In reality, they were a bridge connecting fallen humanity with the Creator. They were calling people into covenant with God. As a holy nation, they were set apart for a purpose. As Christians holiness is expressed through the manifestation of Christlikeness and the embodiment of God's holy character.

### **Calling**

The whole concept of calling is crucial in understanding God's word:

[Y]ou are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet. 2:9-10, NIV)

Peter is connecting the character of a Christian as a called disciple back to the Old Testament covenant nation. God came to the Israelites in Exodus 19:9: "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud" (NIV). God is extending his call to the Israelites to be his people. In Deuteronomy 4, Moses reminds the people of this relationship with God who

led them out of Egypt and into being heirs of God. This state of relationship with God was for the Israelites, and it is the Christian's inheritance as well. God's call is his initiative, calling disciples to follow him in obedience and in ministry. The above passage also reiterates the unique position of God's covenant people. Covenant people are to live out this covenant through God's call. Pastors who start to believe that they are doing their own ministry rather than the ministry of Jesus Christ need to be cautious.

This calling also suggests a qualifying difference between the world and the Church. The call to be in ministry is a call to holiness of heart and mind. Peter uses the contrast between the old and the new life: "[Y]ou may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (vs. 9, NIV). The entire body of Christ is called to this royal priesthood. Paul reminds the Church in his letter to the Ephesians, "It was he [Jesus] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers" (4:11, NIV). As all are called to the covenant community of faith, some are called for specific responsibilities in that body. These callings carry a leadership responsibility with them.

The call of God on one's life gives purpose and direction regarding how to live out the Christian faith. Kirbyjon H. Caldwell helps the church understand the importance of call:

Finding your calling opens the door upon the second step of the "why" of your birth. Because once you recognize your calling and follow it to the place it ultimately leads, you will eventually gain sight of God's preferred future for you, a literal picture of what you're destined to do that's so bright and so unmistakable it's not merely a sighting: it's a Vision. (35)

When discerning call, people often consult the narratives of Moses, Isaiah, and Esther as examples of God's calling and the human response. These biblical figures experienced

God in powerful ways. The Bible clearly illustrates that the vision they were given came from God. It was not a human dream acted out “as if” God was in charge. William H. Willimon writes, “God’s vocation is the only ultimate validation of our ministry” ( 22). In the New Testament, Jesus is calling the disciples from their everyday activities to follow him. In Luke 9, he demonstrates the result of disciples being called: “When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick” (Luke 9:1-2, NIV). They were called before they were sent, and they were sent to impact the world through their leadership.

### **Character (Integrity)**

Willimon along with Paul believes that character and moral living are important tenets of effective leadership. In 1 Timothy, chapter 3, Paul describes the character of overseers and deacons. He speaks of that calling as a noble task; nevertheless, one dares to look no further than the evening paper to realize that nobleness does not describe how the world views pastors, nor have some pastors lived in ways that demonstrate noble character. The resulting mistrust and disrespect of pastors is calling the Church to revisit the whole topic of character in regards to effectiveness in ministry. Paul is clear in his writings that this call to leadership or oversight is a unique giftedness within the body of Christ. He uses the language of gifts (charismata) to describe this calling. “Paul is not referring to abilities in the natural realm, but to those functions made possible by a specific enablement of the Holy Spirit granted to believers” (Gaebelein 10: 130). He reminds Christians to “live a life worthy of the calling you have received” (Eph. 4:1, NIV). This verse connects character and integrity together with calling. I recently had a

pastor tell me that “it is no one’s business what he did away from the church.” The inability to accept God’s call as pastors and all that goes with it presents many problems.

Character is a hot topic in the Church as this new century begins. The Roman Catholic Church is under siege because of the character and integrity of its leaders. Both those who have fallen into temptation and those who have covered the tracks have brought disgrace to the body of Christ. Pastors can no longer rest on the laurels of a glorious past when the position demanded respect and honor, nor can the Church cover for the sins of its leaders. Today’s culture demands moral and ethical integrity from its pastors. In many ways pastors are being forced to take their covenant with God and their role as a holy priesthood seriously.

### **Maturity (Transformation)**

The whole of Christian experience is one of growing. Just as the human body cannot survive if it does not grow, the Christian must grow toward maturity and usefulness in the body of Christ. Paul gives the Church guidance in his letter to Timothy:

Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap. (1 Tim. 3:1-7, NIV)

In this passage, Paul connects the character of a leader to the biblical concept of maturity. A leader “must not be a recent convert” (vs. 6, NIV). He is not saying that a person has to be an old sage to be effective. On the contrary, a degree of spiritual maturity and experience is needed in an effective leader. I would add to that emotional



maturity. A tension exists between doing ministry and being effective in ministry. Dr. Robert Stamps, in a message at Camp Findley Bible Conference, said, “Pastors must learn to minister on the way to ministry [when God steps into our plans].” He was talking about being driven by a pastor’s human agenda of ministry and discovering in the midst of that agenda unexpected opportunities of ministry from God. He was also referring to ministry tasks that are interrupted with more pressing opportunities of ministry. That flexibility and preparedness to deal with these times comes with maturity. As pastors grow in effectiveness, they realize that ministry plans must not be concrete but fluid. God will put pastors in places of usefulness as they are on their journey. Often these times are not on the agenda or planned in any way. God does not wait for maturity before he uses a person’s gifts; rather, he is transforming lives as he uses one’s gifts along the way. Moses is a good example of leadership that is not perfect but growing. He continued to learn about being a leader for God. He was being transformed into a spiritual leader.

The transformation process is the result of turning one’s life over to God. Paul wrote about the surrender of our lives in his letter to the Romans:

Therefore, I urge you brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Rom. 12:1-2, NIV)

Borrowing from Judaism, Paul is recognizing that to be in service to God, priests must consecrate themselves and offer sacrifices before being able to minister (Gaebelein 10: 127). Likewise, Christian servants, in renouncing sin and committing themselves to the will of God, become “holy” and more useful to God. The biblical language is very clear of the need for spiritual cleansing and obedience and the need to grow through ministry experiences.

## **Spirituality**

In the account of Moses on Mount Horeb, ministry becomes a “holy ground” experience. Whether one feels adequate or not, a pastor’s place in the body of Christ is one that represents the presence of God to the world. Ministry as a pastor is a form of offering oneself to God, and as Paul writes, “[it] is our spiritual worship” (Rom. 12:1, NIV). The priestly role is crucial to the practice of ministry. Pastors are intimately involved in the sacred matters of life. When a pastor walks into a hospital room or a funeral home, God is present for the people they visit. At that holy moment, pastors (priests) stand before God for the people of God. Pastors are never fully adequate, but God is.

Jesus lived out this “holy ground” awareness of God in his day-to-day life. As a leader he was a servant for the kingdom of God. That spiritual connection with God was central to his whole ministry. His prayer life demonstrated and exemplified a vital connection with God. In John 17, Jesus prayed for unity of all believers just as he and the Father are one. That oneness with God is at the heart of effective ministry. Spirituality is found in direct proportion to one’s relationship with God or lack thereof.

## **Health (Spiritual and Physical)**

A pastor’s spiritual journey is a crucial piece to remaining both healthy and effective in ministry. Much burnout is due not so much to exhaustion and overwork as spiritual emptiness and imbalance. In the creation narrative, God gives a model for Sabbath for a reason. Times of rest and renewal are needed in order to be refreshed and revitalized. Pastors often function at a level that demands giving out continuously without renewing their own spirit, and with this, they are headed for decline in effectiveness and

spiritual exhaustion. Paul speaks of the overseer being able to manage his household or family well; the first part of that process is to manage one's self. Jesus summarizes the Torah by saying, "[L]ove your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 19:19, NIV). To destroy one's self is equal to not loving oneself and the person God created. The "self-control" Paul speaks of as the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 is critical to the well-functioning leader. Balance does not come easily but is dependent upon an ability to be self-controlled. It requires a healthy self-knowledge and the managing of life by maintaining a healthy pace and pattern. Maintaining health requires a learned ability to care for oneself. Self-care is a biblical concept demonstrated in the life of Jesus. He drew away from the crowds at times for self-care (Mark 3:7). Spirituality and maintenance of health are important pieces to pastoral effectiveness. They are crucial components of pastoral formation.

### **Fruitfulness**

Often when thinking about effectiveness, people immediately jump to looking for fruit. Fruit is a consequence of a life in the Spirit, and the fruit of effective ministry will be evident in the transformed lives and the disciples formed as a result of God's work in and through pastoral ministry.

Paul wrote Timothy and laid out a model for the life of an overseer in the Church. He gives a clear sense in the early Church that people had various roles. Overseers or "bishops" carried great responsibility to lead the Church in both the spiritual life of the Church as well as its temporal affairs. District superintendents are an extension of that responsibility. In order to oversee the church effectively, pastors under that supervision must be equipped and trained for doing their ministry effectively. The goal of the church

is to produce fruit. The Great Commission is a call to the Church to make disciples.

### **The Context**

As a judicatory leader in the Western New York Conference of the United Methodist Church, I oversee fifty-four churches. I had fifty-five until June 2002 when one congregation voted to close. They repeatedly blamed clergy leadership for the problem. Their history was reviewed at a congregational meeting. For the fifty years prior, they could only name two or three pastors that they thought had helped them to be vital and healthy. Unfortunately, they did have some legitimate complaints. They had one pastor who was put in prison over sexual misconduct, others who were discontinued from ministry, and another who was not able to function in the United Methodist Church and left the denomination. The congregation also reported that former district superintendents had made suggestions about closing the church. This one comment about closing seemed to color how they saw the future of their church. For their part, my assessment is that they could not develop a guiding vision nor adopt the one their pastor was casting. They tried a few programs and activities to attract new life, but nothing seemed to work for them.

While neither owning the blame nor casting blame, a church closed its doors. The context of my ministry is one where unless the tide is turned and churches develop excellent leaders, congregations will not grow; instead, they will die. My hope is to help leaders be more effective and find ways to revitalize many of these churches into congregations where excellent ministry takes place. My particular situation is rural, and the following statistics of the district I serve are far too common in the northeast.

The fifty-four churches of the Mountain View District have forty pastors. Twelve of the fifty-four churches are full-time, single-point charges. The rest are yoked charges

or part-time, single charges. The district has seventeen elders (four are members of other denominations), nine probationary members, one associate member, four licensed local pastors, and nine lay pastors. The part-time pastors who work full-time in other employment have difficulty participating in training events and meetings that could foster collegial sharing and growth.

Another contextual dynamic is the tenure of clergy. Dr. Thom Rainer of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has studied the average pastoral tenure in churches and found that the Southern Baptists have an average nearly three times that of most Protestant denominations. Their average is 7.3 years, and the average tenure for pastorates in most Protestant churches is between two and three years (44). This shortened tenure is especially true in the rural areas where churches are training grounds for the new and inexperienced clergy or dumping grounds for the clergy who are functioning ineffectively. Short-term ministries create a situation where pastors do not have a chance to develop congregational vitality and growth.

The socioeconomic state of the area is one of declining populations. Small towns are losing their identity and often hang onto local faith traditions as the last bastion of days gone by. Small percentages of college-educated youth return to small towns given the lack of opportunity. Many of the small rural communities have experienced this loss of a well-educated, youthful population. Two of New York state's poorest counties are in the district I serve. Poverty and despair are common factors. The need for leadership becomes greater because people need a message of hope.

The northeast as a whole has lost much of the industrial base that once kept it strong and vital. From the large cities to the small towns, the economy has changed

drastically. Changing community dynamics create many challenges for local churches and their pastors. The need for effective pastoral leaders who can help these congregations transition into new and need-oriented ministries is immense.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to identify the primary characteristics of clergy effectiveness and develop a tool that district superintendents can use to assess pastoral formation and encourage growth in a pastors' level of effectiveness. The study identified perceptions and descriptions of effectiveness traits of pastors in the Northeast Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. The importance of this study was to identify ways that denominational leaders can assess and promote excellent spiritual leadership in the lives of local church pastors.

Because of the nature of the relationship, the district superintendent may be in the best position to identify the pastor's growth needs. Having access to both the Pastor-Parish-Relations-Committee (PPRC) and the pastor, the district superintendent is able to hear the feedback from both and help to create a growth plan that addresses the needs. District superintendents are in the position to have the big picture regarding the overall effectiveness of a pastor's ministry. Christian A. Schwarz, in his study, includes "empowering leadership" as a crucial element to healthy and growing churches (22). One of the roles that a district superintendent has is to empower pastors. At the heart of this task is a need to address the decline and barrenness of churches in making disciples for Jesus Christ.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions sought to understand what characteristics are important in

effective ministry and what role district superintendents can play in promoting pastoral effectiveness. In order to understand the role of district superintendent in promoting effectiveness, the characteristics that create the greatest probability for a pastor's growth need to be examined.

### **Research Question #1: Congruence**

What is the congruence between pastors' and district superintendents' perceptions and definitions of pastoral effectiveness?

### **Research Question #2: Characteristics of Effective Pastors**

What characteristics are most commonly found in effective pastors?

### **Research Question #3: Growth Opportunities**

What growth opportunities would pastors be more inclined to take to improve their effectiveness?

### **Research Question #4: Role of District Superintendent**

What role does the district superintendent play in promoting effectiveness?

### **Definition of Terms**

Some terms are unique to the United Methodist Church and need further explanation. Other terms are used in a variety of ways. These definitions offer some further interpretation of how they were used in this study.

### **Elders**

Elders in the United Methodist Church are ordained, full members of the annual conference. They are itinerant and examined for effectiveness in ministry. The ordination process seeks to determine when someone is at a point of effectiveness. Ordained clergy in the United Methodist Church have the right to be appointed to full-time ministry, and

the cabinet has the obligation to offer an appointment. “Ordination is fulfilled in leadership of the people of God through ministries of Service, Word, Sacrament, and Order” (Olson 182).

### **Probationer**

Probationers are persons in the process of becoming ordained as elders and elected to full membership. The process is a three-year minimum period beginning with commissioning and a examination for readiness for ministry. The Board of Ordained Ministry is looking for effectiveness in ministry in order to be ordained.

### **Local Pastor**

Local pastors are persons called to ministry and licensed by the United Methodist Church to fulfill the role of pastor in a local congregation. Their credentials are valid only when they are under appointment. Local pastors do not have to itinerate. The educational requirements are (1) taking local pastor’s licensing school, (2) progressing through a five-year course of study, or (3) completing one-third of a Master of Divinity degree. Also the District Committee on Ordained Ministries and the conference Board of Ordained Ministries must approve them annually. After approval the bishop issues the license.

### **Serving our Smaller Churches or Lay Pastors (SOSC)**

SOSC is a category the Mountain View District uses for lay pastors. SOSCs are laypersons that may or may not have a call to full-time ministry. The official category is “hired by the local church.” They may not even desire to become licensed. Often they are certified lay speakers who feel the call to serve, and because of the shortage of pastors, they are hired to fulfill the leadership role in a small, local church. Some do move into the candidacy process and become local pastors or seek ordination.



## **Cabinet**

The appointive cabinet is comprised of the bishop and all district superintendents. They oversee the ministry of the local churches as an extension of a bishop's office, and they provide leadership in appointing pastors.

## **Vision**

Vision is "a compelling mental portrait of a preferable future communicated by God to his chosen leaders and based upon an accurate understanding of God, self, and circumstances" (Barna 43).

## **Effectiveness**

Effectiveness can be described as the ability to oversee the ministry of a local congregation. It involves ordering the life of the congregation, leading them in fruitful ministry of outreach, and disciple making within the congregation and the community. It includes a good complement of ministry skills and competencies. The United Methodist Discipline reminds ordained clergy that they are in covenant with the laity and their colleagues in ministry so connectional relationships are expected (Olson 183). This lifetime commitment is a dedication of one's life to personal and spiritual disciplines. The main focus is the continuation of Christ's ministry, the use of diverse gifts in the body of Christ, and the nurture of people who respond to God's call (183). The United Methodist Discipline spells out, under the heading of Performance Evaluation in paragraph 331, the responsibilities and duties of a pastor under four main headings:

The pastor shall oversee the total ministry of the local church in its nurturing ministries and in fulfilling its mission of witness and service in the world by: (1) giving pastoral support, guidance, and training to the lay leadership in the church, equipping them to fulfill the ministry to which they are sent as servants under the Lordship of Christ; (2) providing ministry within the congregation and to the world; (3) ensuring faithful

transmission of the Christian faith; and (4) administering the temporal affairs of the congregation. (217)

The rest of this paragraph details the ways in which a pastor carries out these ministry responsibilities.

### **Excellence**

Excellence involves displaying the qualities of a leader in effective and fruitful ministry. It includes the casting of vision, the setting of goals, and the achieving of those goals in and through the ministry of a local congregation. Excellence is the demonstration of a healthy spiritual life, exceptional gifts for ministry, and the initiative to use those gifts in service to God, the Church, and the world.

### **The Project**

The project examined the survey responses of both local pastors and district superintendents to determine the leadership role of district superintendents in promoting excellent spiritual leadership in the United Methodist Church. The purpose of this data gathering was to determine the characteristics of effectiveness as identified by both groups, the styles of leadership, and the habits that affect pastors' desire to grow into excellent spiritual leaders. Through the project the data would be used to create an instrument to be used by district superintendents in assessing effectiveness and developing a growth plan for pastors. The surveys were mailed in December 2003 and were to be returned by 15 February 2004.

### **Methodology**

The study was a descriptive study using surveys to gather data in a random sampling of pastors. I also collected data through a comprehensive population survey of the district superintendents in the Northeast Jurisdiction. The pastors' random sample

surveyed ten pastors in each of the thirteen annual conferences. A list of the characteristics of effective clergy was gathered from both surveys for the purpose of comparison and determining their importance and definitions. The research looked at the agreement between what pastors say are the characteristics of an effective leader and what district superintendents say they are. It also studied the agreement between the primary characteristics and the characteristics of pastors who indicated some kind of growth in their ministry.

Data also identified the leadership styles of pastors and district superintendents. It surveyed for the response of pastors to continuing education events offered through the conference or district.

A trial run of the survey instrument was used with ten pastors in the Mountain View District to determine if it measures what it was meant to measure. They received the first copy of the survey 20 September 2003 and the second 5 October 2003. The trial was helpful to refine the instrument. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis determined the conclusions and finding of the study.

### **Population**

The population of this research was a comprehensive sample of district superintendents and a random sample of the clergy of the Northeast Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. This jurisdiction has thirteen annual conferences and ninety-three district superintendents. The active local pastors including elders, probationers, local pastors, and lay pastors (SOSC) numbered 8,834 (G. C. F. & A. 2).

The comprehensive survey of the district superintendents provided a true reading of their responses. The pastors were sampled through a stratified random selection

process of ten pastors from each conference. The Northeast Jurisdiction has 8,834 clergy; 130 were surveyed. Ninety-three district superintendents were surveyed from thirteen annual conferences.

### **Variables**

Variables that were part of the analysis of the data in this study included the following:

1. Pastoral effectiveness,
2. The context of the pastors' ministry,
3. The leadership of district superintendents,
4. The pastors' natural gifts and graces for ministry,
5. The pastors' education and subsequent training,
6. The pastors' propensity to grow and develop in their pastoral formation,
7. Length of pastorate,
8. The relationship with district superintendents,
9. The pastors' household support or challenges,
10. Pastors as full or part-time clergy,
11. Pastors in career or tent-making ministries, and
12. Conference standards for continuing education and the size of the conference.

These variables affect the availability and propensity of pastors to take advantage of programs, the degree of personal choice in doing continuing education, and the amount of programming offered by a particular conference. They also affect the ability and degree of pastoral effectiveness in a local setting of ministry.

### **Instrumentation**

The survey instrument had a selection of questions, mostly fill in the blank (see Appendixes E and G). The questions aim to identify the ten most important characteristics of effective pastors as defined by the two population groups. By surveying both pastors and district superintendents, the responses demonstrated agreement or disagreement around the essential characteristics. Eight of twenty-two characteristics were rated very important by both groups.

Several questions pertain to continuing education. These identified what type of events appeal to the clergy sampled. The events were categorized according to their focus. The process of categorization indicated whether the event was for personal and spiritual growth, professional and/or skill building, and congregational development. This helped to determine whether pastors are apt to take part in growth experiences and if so, what type of experience.

Pastors and superintendents received a mailing with a survey and a cover letter. Enclosed was a stick of gum as a refreshing incentive. After one month a second mailing went out to non-respondents. This included a stronger cover letter and a second copy of the survey (see Appendix I). The surveys each had a number and no names appeared on the form for a confidential analysis stage of the study; however, the numbers allowed for follow-up on those surveys that were not yet received.

### **Data Collection**

The names of active pastors and district superintendents were obtained from the directories on conference web sites. The mailing included a cover letter and survey (see Appendixes D and F). As the survey was returned, the data was put into Microsoft Excel

worksheets for analysis. Excel was helpful in calculating averages, doing comparisons, and charting graphs. Some of the data simply received a numerical value of one in the worksheet to result in a total tally for that category, (i.e., elders, the data was looking for the total number of elders). Data that had a numerical response (i.e., 1, 2, or 3) was entered as a number. One exception was in the growth questions, the answers were assigned a number one, two, or, three according to growth, decline, or same. Questions that had a written response were categorized by a key (see Appendix J). The answers that included descriptions of effective ministry were assessed, and key words or phrases were assigned to one of the twenty-two characteristics used on page two of the survey.

### **Importance**

The importance of this project in identifying a common understanding of effectiveness was the development from that understanding of a growth plan tool to encourage local pastor to grow. District superintendents will have an opportunity to promote excellence in a pastor's effectiveness through the use of this tool. The results can be demonstrated in the ministries of those whose level of effectiveness has been raised. The development of a useful tool to identify areas where a pastor needs to grow assists the district superintendent in promoting pastoral effectiveness. The long-term impact assists pastors to grow in their leadership effectiveness in ways to help their churches become more effective places of ministry.

### **Delimitations**

This study covered statistics in the Northeast Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. Results in other areas of the country and in other denominations may differ. For the purposes of this study, coverage of all the material currently available on leadership

and supervision is unfeasible. A plethora of material on leadership has been available in recent years. Some of the literature comes from other disciplines and does not always correlate directly with ministry contexts.

Studying effectiveness demands that the research deal with the breadth of variables that may or may not impact the effectiveness of an individual. The degree of effectiveness is a complex and dynamic consequence of ministry. This complexity makes writing a clear definition of effectiveness difficult. The data on new disciples, baptisms, growth, outreach, small groups, were used as statistical indication of effectiveness. These are clearly arbitrary measures. Caution was taken in weighing the responses, and attention was given to subjective notions regarding the health and effectiveness of pastors. For example, a charismatic leader may be able to draw many people to hear the preaching, but if the people are not moved to deeper levels of discipleship, drawn to make a decision to follow Jesus Christ, or called to some form of ministry, the only effectiveness present is that of a magnetic personality to whom people will gather.

### **Generalizability**

The generalizability of this study is somewhat difficult in that the findings pointed to agreements between the leadership of the superintendents and the willingness to develop greater levels of effectiveness by pastors. The surveys illustrated what, if any, encouragement the superintendents could have offered to motivate the pastors to continue to grow. With a random sampling of pastors tested against the comprehensive survey of district superintendents, conclusions were drawn that indicate the agreement of a core set of characteristics. Nevertheless, the variables present in effective ministry offer a myriad of combinations that may constitute effectiveness. District superintendents must be very

honest at identifying areas of needed growth for individual pastors in order to plan programming that promotes growth in effectiveness.

### **Overview**

Chapter 2 looks at literature in the area of leadership, biblical leaders, supervision, and clergy effectiveness. It looks at current church leaders and studies that reflect degree of effectiveness or the traits of effectiveness. The literature review covers both leadership and the predicament of district superintendents who are both supervisors and pastors. Chapter 3 describes the design of the research. Chapter 4 provides and analyzes the data and furnishes significant findings from the data. Chapter 5 reports the practical implications of the findings that come from the research and addresses areas of further study.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **PRECEDENTS IN LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

For this study, several areas of leadership were examined. They included biblical materials, leadership literature from both secular and Christian points of view, and literature on supervision. The abundance of material on pastoral formation (effectiveness) is a strong indication of the interest and importance of this topic. I recently experienced the magnitude of interest through a grant application. In 2002, I applied for a grant through the Eli Lilly Foundation on behalf of the Western New York Conference United Methodist Church. The grant originally appropriated \$25 million for programs on “Sustaining Clergy Excellence.” The grant office received over seven hundred applications from a variety of ministry-related agencies and educational institutions. The need was so great that the foundation appropriated an additional \$32 million dollars and gave out forty-two awards totaling \$57 million.

In the United Methodist Church and probably elsewhere, the one critical issue being addressed by annual conferences is “Excellence in Spiritual Leadership” or “Pastoral Effectiveness.” Of course, each denominational body approaches its leadership issues from their individual perspectives, but all are dealing with how to provide quality effective leadership for today’s church.

Conference congregational development staffers are becoming increasingly convinced that strong, effective pastoral leadership is vitally crucial to the success of new church starts. Not only has the paradigm shift affected new church starts, but also church revitalization, turnarounds, and high potential church appointments. (“Leadership, Leadership, Leadership” 1).

This study is not just another piece on clergy effectiveness; rather, it is a study of

how the conference, and especially district superintendents, in the United Methodist Church can enhance pastoral formation to provide quality, fruit-bearing, and excellent spiritual leadership within the church. In order to mentor people toward a more effective pattern of ministry, one has to have a definition of ministerial effectiveness. This study reviewed a variety of materials to establish, propose, and produce a paradigm for effective ministry. The findings are valuable to other judicatory leaders as they seek to work with the broad topic of pastoral formation. United Methodist district superintendents work under the guidance of The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, which outlines the duties and the topics of ministry for the office:

The district superintendent shall oversee the total ministry of the clergy and of the churches in the communities of the district in their missions of witness and service in the world: (a) by giving priority to the scheduling of time and effort for spiritual leadership, pastoral support, supervision, and encouragement to the clergy and to the churches of the district; (b) by encouraging their personal, spiritual, and professional growth; etc. (Olson 283)

The district superintendent is to offer spiritual leadership, pastoral support, supervision, and encouragement to grow in personal, spiritual, and professional areas. Leadership is removed from the arena of management and broadened to a holistic approach for the entire ministry of the district. It especially focuses on helping pastors and congregations to do ministry well.

One assumption I have is that pastors who lead well will nurture and develop quality lay leadership in the church and engender healthier and effective congregations. Another assumption is that most clergy want to be excellent and effective leaders. To reach the state of pastoral effectiveness, the assumption is that growth is an essential ingredient in every effective pastor's life. Few pastors enjoy the status of being fully

competent in all areas in the practice of ministry. For some, this need to be fully competent creates a heavy burden of anxiety and constructs a dangerous myth.

“The ‘myth of competence,’ which is an attitude, fed by chronic anxiety, that engenders the belief that personal self-worth, relevance, and meaning reside in external definitions and assurances of being competent in all that one does. It manifests itself in ways of functioning and relating in the church that can result in burnout and depression” (Galindo 18).

Pastors often believe that they are not adequate for the task of ministry. One of the mantras of clergy is that “I did not learn how to be a pastor in seminary.” Fred was called to serve a church near his home:

Fred discovered that the daily realities of ministry included large doses of conflict management, crisis counseling, and administration. He began to feel overwhelmed. He had little or no training in these areas. He found himself chairing board meetings, planning funerals, and setting budget priorities. He was unprepared for any of it. There had been no courses in seminary dealing with domestic violence or other crises that pastors face. (McIntosh and Edmondson 41)

In the United Methodist Church, pastors are appointed, but the experience echoes that of Fred. I recently reviewed a pastor’s records as he prepared to take a leave of absence. A twenty-five year ministry was sprinkled with confessions of not doing a good job and admissions of inadequacy. His feelings of inadequacy affected his ability to serve as a pastor. Pastors seldom are able to find the time and financial support necessary to remain healthy and effective.

Pastors are recognizing that they need a program of pastoral formation that bridges the gap between the academic world of seminary and the congregational mission that needs a leader. No pastor is fully adequate for the demands of ministry, but God is adequate. He chooses to use the lives and gifts of pastors to do his ministry in the world. Few pastors would dare to attempt ministry without remembering Paul’s sentiments to

the Philippians: “I can do everything through him [Christ] who gives me strength” (Phil. 4:13, NIV). Pastors spend much of their time focusing on the needs and development of others. They must make growth and development toward excellence in leadership a personal and professional goal. Leadership places great demands upon ministers:

Leadership is about providing the appropriate functions needed by the church at the right time, promoting health, maturity, and differentiation in others. It means challenging the system more than it means keeping people happy... Given what we are called to do—preach like a golden-tongued angel every Sunday; run an organization efficiently, using a volunteer force and depending on donor’s generosity; afflict the comfortable; give care to the souls that may be unwilling and unmotivated; lift a counter cultural prophetic voice in an often hostile (or worse, apathetic) culture; and act as God’s presence at all times and in all places—given all the demands, we will always be inadequate.... The myth of competence ... rather than generating freedom, leads toward controlling behavior, since a leader focused on competence has little tolerance for honest criticism. When the focus of leadership is on the appearance of competence, it results not in personal and congregational growth but in stagnation. (Galindo 19)

Without a strong theology of grace and a healthy measure of realism, pastors will destroy themselves and others in the process. Leadership demands knowing oneself honestly and not hiding from the reality and disappointments. A healthy degree of emotional competence is also essential. “Emotional intelligence [competence] matters twice as much as raw intelligence or technical know-how in contributing to outstanding performance in work” (Ott 20). Emotional intelligence is concerned about understanding people in the day-to-day management of relationships. The management of relationships is crucial to effective leadership functioning in any organization. Pastors have often adopted an unhealthy image of leadership that places demands of perfection and imbalance on their lives and families. Congregations look for superheroes that will fulfill their every wish rather than provide effective leadership. One pastor recently told me that

a woman in his congregation called him and ordered him to come and walk her dog. She was angry when he did not agree to do it. Leadership means knowing what you should and should not be doing. It focuses on building healthy relationships that empower people to give themselves in ministry to others. Leaders build and mentor people to use their gifts and graces in the church and community. “Effective leadership begins not with some fixed ideology—although one’s values always will be integral to leadership. Leadership begins with people” (Weems, Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit 17). Leaders lead people into leadership. The following sections look at the biblical foundations of effective leadership.

### **Biblical Foundations**

The first and primary reference source for Christian leadership is the Bible. In 1 Timothy, Paul gives a description of the qualities of an overseer. Paul’s guidance carries ethical, moral, and relational significance. In fact he is in agreement with the ancient Greeks and Romans and other authors on leadership up to the present, as discussed later. All these sources connect character with leadership. Biblical examples of leadership abound. Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, Esther, Jeremiah, and Isaiah in the Old Testament all represent a wealth of narrative that informs the study of leadership. In the New Testament, Jesus, Paul, Peter, John, Timothy, the woman at the well, and the rest of the disciples are examples of leadership. Space does not permit the inclusion of all these examples so this review will look at some of them.

### **Moses**

As an effective yet reluctant leader, Moses listened for God’s voice and heard God speak from a burning bush. This “holy ground” experience shaped his call

(vocation). His leadership was a reflection of what God commanded (Exod. 3). Moses' feelings of inadequacy resonate with many leaders throughout the centuries. Often the inadequacy focuses on the articulation of language. In order to help Moses, God appointed Aaron to speak for him. God, however, used Moses in a powerful leadership role even though he had demonstrated his human condition. People looked to him for wisdom because they sensed a spiritual maturity and quality that they could trust. The people perceived, or at least thought, that Moses somehow knew the mind of God better than the average person did. In Chapter 19 of Exodus, Moses again is in the presence of God at Mount Sinai and was told to go to the Israelites and consecrate them. As God's spokesperson, he was to call the people to be a covenant nation, a holy nation set apart for God's purposes as a kingdom of priests (19:5-6). The people looked to Moses for leadership. As long as Moses was present to give leadership, the Hebrews remained faithful and worshipped God rather than idols. They demonstrated signs of being God's covenant people. Nevertheless, in his absence when Moses was so long coming down from the mountain, the people started grumbling. Under Aaron's leadership they created a golden calf to worship and became idolaters (Exod. 32). Without strong, godly leadership, the people fell into a search for other forms of spirituality, something to worship in the absence of leadership. What they embraced was chaos and sin. This concept of covenant follows through into the Christian era; Christians are also called to follow God. Peter's language of a chosen people, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation reflect the continuation of covenant with God. As covenant people the Christian Church is still looking for the strong and God-focused leadership that Moses provided.

God's vision for Moses was to lead Israel from slavery and bondage in Egypt into

the promised land as servants free to serve God. They were to be a holy nation and kingdom of priests for all of creation. They had purpose and direction that had come from God. Leading people forward was not easy because they wanted to go back to Egypt. They were willing to enter back into bondage under pharaoh rather than trust that God through Moses would lead them to a better place. The account of Moses points to the need for leaders who will be present; people so easily go astray without a strong, present leader. It also points to leaders who know from where their power and strength for leadership comes. Without leaders, the people of God flounder for purpose and direction. One of the tasks of a leader is to chart the course or cast the vision. Exodus illustrates the essence of a vision. Moses was seeking what God wanted and was willing to commit fully to God's direction. People no longer were slaves to the old life but were free in order to be servants of God.

Another characteristic of Moses was his willingness to listen to others. His father-in-law, Jethro, saw the load of leadership that Moses carried in judging for the people. Jethro told Moses that what he was doing was not good and that he should "select capable men from all the people ... and appoint them as officials" (Exod. 18:21, NIV). This ability to let go of some of the work of ministry and share the burden is crucial to leadership in the Church today with its diversity and demands. It also is essential if leaders are going to empower others to be leaders. Here Moses was willing to listen to Jethro and be coached toward a better way of doing what God had called him to do.

In Exodus 35-40, Moses is sharing the commandment of God to build a tabernacle. "Moses said to the whole Israelite community, 'This is what the Lord has commanded'" (35:4, NIV). The plan, the vision for the tabernacle came from God. Moses

was to be the leader sharing the plan, but the building of the tabernacle belonged to the whole community. Each one with gifts and talents were to use them to do their part. “All who are skilled among you are to come and make everything the Lord has commanded” (35:10, NIV). The imagery here is a community with a common purpose working together for the glory of God. God anoints people with unique talents, and together they build the tabernacle. Moses demonstrates several spiritual leadership characteristics. His relationship with God was already mentioned. He was one who talked with God and had a connection with the Holy. His call grew out of his “burning bush” conversation with God. Much of his leadership was simple obedience and carrying forth the word of God for the people of God. He fulfilled the priestly role and interceded on behalf of Israel. After they had sinned by worshipping the golden calf, Moses pleaded with God for their forgiveness (32:32). He represented God to the people and the people before God. The Hebrews would watch as Moses entered the “tent of meeting” and the cloud came down and remained while God talked with Moses (Exod. 33:7-11). Pastors need to realize that their people are actively observing their lives and relationships with God.

Moses was also a leader to the people through his humanity. Even though his humility made him reluctant, he took on the role and authority that God gave him to save the Hebrew people. He was a prophet of God proclaiming the word of God to the people, and he led the people from Egyptian bondage to the edge of the Promised Land (Deut. 31:1-2). In that wilderness journey, Moses was seen as very human. His anger burned against the Hebrews when they turned from God in his absence. The task of judging the people was too great (physical limits), and Jethro challenged him to delegate some of the burden (Exod. 18:13-23). He was able to turn some of the control and load over to others



qualified to lead.

He was willing to do the work of God even when it was difficult; he was committed to being a “servant leader.” Moses was not an absent leader sending forth orders from some remote place, but he was present with the people and worked with them. He was engaged in their world and their lives. Moses demonstrated many of the basic qualities to which current literature points as effective characteristics of leadership. He had a vision and mission from God, he had integrity of character and personhood, he spent time with God and grew spiritually, he was a change agent and risk taker, his relationship skills demonstrated a valuing of people and community, and he was a person who continued to grow and develop in his leadership effectiveness. Moses demonstrated character and integrity as an honest and upright person.

### **Esther**

Few women in the Old Testament hold the reputation that Esther does. Esther was an orphan girl brought up by her cousin Mordecai. While living among her people, the Jews in exile, Esther’s beauty was apparent and she was selected to be queen. Over time she proved her ability as a leader for her people. Mordecai, while sitting at the king’s gate heard of two of the king’s eunuchs planning to assassinate the king. Mordecai reported the conspiracy to Esther who then reported to the king. She was building relationship and credibility with the king. Haman, one of the king’s noblemen, was elevated to a place of honor, and everyone was required to bow before him. Being a devout Jew, Mordecai would not kneel before him. Angered by these actions Haman looked for a way to destroy the Jews. He asked the king to decree that all Jews would be destroyed. Mordecai asked Esther to beg for mercy from the king. He said to Esther,

“And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this” (Esth. 4:14, NIV). She called the people to fast and after the fasting she would approach the king. After the fast, she held a banquet for the king and Haman and revealed the evil of Haman to the king. The consequences were that Haman was hung and the Jews were spared.

The leadership qualities found in Esther were many. She knew herself and her environment. When she was taken into the king’s harem, she wisely did not reveal that she was a Jew. At the appropriate time she spoke on behalf of the Jews and pleaded that the king would avert the wicked plot of Haman. Esther was given authority to issue an edict in the king’s name and Mordecai wrote the edict. Listening to Mordecai, Esther took on the role of saving her people. To approach the king with such boldness was not easy. Nevertheless, Esther was a risktaker for the right reasons. A spiritual leader seeks the Lord in prayer and fasting before taking action, and Esther called the people to a time of fast, but then moved on to actions.

### **David and Solomon**

David as a young boy was selected to be the king after God rejected Saul. From his early years he demonstrated fortitude, wisdom, and courage. From fighting Goliath to conquering Jerusalem, to defeating the Philistines, David was a strong person and willing to step up to the plate of leadership. As a humble king, David was a respected leader. Nevertheless, his humanity was very evident in his tryst with Bathsheba, the sin of having her husband Uriah killed, and his deep grief over the death of his son. Within the warrior king and the sinner was a man of God. David’s repentance, worship, and psalms indicate a man who sought God faithfully.

In David's lineage Solomon became king and was noted for his wisdom and leadership. He was a strong and decisive leader who honored God. Solomon's Temple stood as a monument of faith. These accomplishments were of no small significance and the name of Solomon is equivalent to leadership as was his father David.

### **Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ is the supreme biblical and spiritual example of leadership. He led through his person, his relationships, and his example. He understood people and their motives. He knew God fully, and he was not afraid to sacrifice himself to be a servant for others. His life is a superb model of what is known today as "leaders of leaders" (Galloway, Making Church Relevant 31). At first this phrase sounds redundant, but as its significance becomes clearer, pastors realize that being a leader of others who have the potential of leadership is an excellent model for leadership. Dale Galloway uses this term and includes it as one of the levels of leadership cultivation. Every local church needs to empower leaders; however, any one leader can only successfully disciple a few people (31). That process is a multiplication of leadership rather than addition. Jesus uses the concept of being a "leader of leaders" in his discipling of the twelve. He was their coach, calling the plays, giving room for execution of the plan, and after the execution of the plan he was there to talk. This model is an effective one for leaders at all levels of the church. It models the discipling of other leaders and assisting them to develop into more useful servants of the kingdom. The spread of Christianity attests to the fact that Jesus equipped leaders to carry on his ministry after the crucifixion and his ascension. The very nature of his relationship with the disciples models a way of leading that is wholesome, realistic, and effective. Jesus spent most of his time with the twelve disciples who were

very close to him, and he spent time teaching and sharing his mission with them. At times he approached just one or two, and at other times he addressed the entire twelve disciples. As a leader he was training his disciples to be leaders for the kingdom of God. He left his ministry to the eleven disciples after Judas was gone. They represented the larger Christian community of disciples called to “[t]herefore go and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:20, NIV). The Church is rediscovering this model for pastoral leaders so they can lead a smaller group more intentionally in order to equip them to minister to the larger Church.

Jesus’ life was one familiar with delegation. God sent Jesus, and then he delegated his ministry by sending others. When they went out, they had a vision of what their purpose was. Jesus clearly states his purpose: “[T]he Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matt.20:28, NIV). His goal was to bring abundant life to those who followed him (see John 10:10). He says, “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10, NIV). Leaders who are fully committed to the cause of Christ are essential components to the Church’s ministry.

Luke’s way of asserting that leadership is not optional in the church. There is no church without apostleship, without leaders who are chosen based on qualifications (Acts 1:21-22) and by divine choice (1:24). Church leaders come both from the “bottom up”—from the ranks of those whom the community chooses to lead—and from the “top down”—as gifts of a gracious God who does not leave the church bereft of the guidance it needs to fulfill its mission. (Willimon 15-16)

Jesus knew the significant role of his leadership and the need of salvation for the Church, and he sacrificially took on that role being obedient to God’s “top down” choosing of himself to save the world. Paul writes to the Phillipians, “Your attitude

should be the same as Christ Jesus: who, being in the very nature of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant” (2:5-6, NIV).

Jesus’ complete willingness to be a servant challenges modern-day pastors who are seeking to continue their ministry. This passage suggests that being a leader is a process of investing and submitting life to a higher calling. It involves a willingness to give up “self” and serve God and others. As Jesus’ life and death reveals, life is not always easy for leaders. The willingness of Jesus to give himself so fully is an example to his followers today who often desire convenience over service and sacrifice.

### **Paul**

Paul was a crucial agent of God in spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. As a devout Jew he was set on stamping out this Jesus sect. On the Damascus Road, he had a conversion experience and became as strong a proponent for Jesus Christ as he had been an opponent before his conversion. The strength of his personhood, the influence of being a leader, a teacher, and a preacher was now being used for Christianity. He was now sharing the grace of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the world. No one individual apart from Jesus Christ has made such an impact on this world for Jesus Christ. In a time when many wanted to stamp Christianity out, he pushed on. He was imprisoned and persecuted for his faith and never gave up. His strength and resolve to be faithful are very much a characteristic of a leader. A leader makes a difference, bears fruit, and follows the vision. In that regard Paul was a leader.

### **Historical Foundations**

As the Bible is source of many examples of leadership, the history of the Church

is also rich with examples of leaders who made a difference for the kingdom of God.

People like St. Augustine, Charlemagne, Luther, and Wesley not only accomplished great things through their lives but also left a legacy of leaders who disciple others to be leaders as well.

### **St. Augustine**

Few have made the impact on civilization, philosophy, and Christian theology as St. Augustine. As a young man, his Christian schooling did not make much of a difference in his life. He had a natural inclination for philosophy and pursued his education. That education along with a moral crisis resulted in a son that he entitled the son of his “sin.” The events during this period in his life brought Augustine to faith (Portalié 2).

He did not seek the priesthood but was called into it and confirmed by the congregation at Hippo. Bishop Valerius ordained him in 391. He returned to his home area and established a monastery. He fought against heresy in the Church and was named Bishop of Hippo for thirty-four years. He was in demand in the early Church to preach and contribute at councils. St. Augustine was a leader in the early Church. He certainly was a leader who left a lasting impact (Portalié 5-6).

### **Charlemagne the Christian King**

Charlemagne presents an unusual picture of a Christian leader. As king, he brought both great progress to the society of the empire and a stern rule that would be called abuse today. He has been hailed as one of the “greatest medieval kings” (Durant 1). He was a protector of the of the papal states under Hadrian II and personally led fifty-three campaigns throughout Europe conquering Bavaria and Saxony and guarding against

invading groups. In the campaigns into Saxony he is quoted as giving the Saxons “a choice between baptism and death” (1).

Despite the gruesome battles, he contributed much to society and the Church. He loved administration and organized the government and brought structure and faith into Western Europe that had been plagued by conflict. Will Durant says, “He could vision large purposes, and could will the means as well as wish the ends. He could lead an army, persuade an assembly, humor the nobility, dominate the clergy, rule a harem” (2).

Despite the harsh ways of Charlemagne, he brought much reform to Europe and was quite progressive for his time. He established schools, fought for a free peasantry, was generous to the Church and ruled out of a desire to be a servant of God. He was appalled by the language of the clergy and issued a directive that “reproached ecclesiastics for ‘uncouth language’ and ‘unlettered tongues’ and exhorted every cathedral and monastery to establish schools where clergy and laity alike might learn to read and write” (4).

His leadership strengths were in his organization, his ability to muster the troops, and his continued desire to grow both academically and spiritually.

### **Martin Luther**

Martin Luther lived in a time when the clergy’s moral and ethical practices were corrupt. Calls for reform met with resistance from the medieval Roman Catholic Church. Then in 1517 Luther posted his famous ninety-five theses on the Castle church door in Wittenburg. His written thesis brought Luther to the center of conflict with the Roman Catholic Church. His vision was for a Church that would function with more integrity according to the authority of Scripture. He challenged the privileges of the pope and the ordained, and he raised up the role of the laity, which challenged the institutional Church

to its core. His bold leadership and risk taking led to his separation from the Roman Catholic Church, to the eventual Protestant movement, and to the Augsburg Confession, which became the creed of the Lutheran Church (Cairns 287-98). Luther stood against the worldly movement of his day and took great risk to call the Church to faith and integrity. As a passionate man of the Bible, he believed that the Church should be scripturally founded and sought to live according to the Scriptures. Luther's leadership turned the tide of the Church in his day and reshaped Christianity for all future generations. His vision of a faithful Church and his integrity of character could not be stopped, even by the powers of the Roman Catholic Church.

### **John Wesley**

John Wesley launched a movement that continues to influence lives today through a variety of Wesleyan denominations. The United Methodist Church and many other denominations claim roots in the historical Wesleyan movement. Methodism began as a renewal movement. The movement's emphasis was on both personal and institutional revival. John Wesley had no desire to parent a new branch of the Christian Church. He simply wanted to bring life back into the Anglican Church of his day and reach the world for Jesus Christ. His model for renewal included small groups known as societies, classes, and bands. In fact, on his Georgian mission, he divided the congregation up into small groups. He had witnessed the small group process and the spiritual growth it brought through "the Holy Club" at Oxford (Henderson 45). Frederick A. Norwood writes that the Holy Club was for "young men of serious religious intention for Bible study, prayer, conversation, and Christian service, especially to those in trouble or distress" (25). Wesley also experienced and appreciated the piety, spiritual warmth, and



joyful hymn singing of the Moravians on his voyage to Georgia. Impressed with their faith and discipline, he continued to search for a deeper experience in his own faith (Henderson 51-53).

Wesley's passionate vision was, "[T]he world is my parish," in other words to reach all people for Christ. This passion to reach the lost especially included the common workers of Wesley's day who were often outside of the organized Church. Wesley developed a method for discipling new converts:

Wesley's medium for his method was the arrangement of his interlocking groups. [In these groups] [h]e especially focused on the practical application of spiritual truths into a believer's life—the pursuit of holiness.... The combination of genuine care, acceptance, and concern together with pointed questions about how people were doing proved to be a powerful tool for behavioral transformation. (Reinhardt 40-42)

This model of training Christian disciples and raising up leaders for the movement is a model that still has merit in today's Church. For Wesley, leadership was a matter of faithfulness, growth, and accountability. When one demonstrated these characteristics they could move on up the ladder of leadership. This system was one of empowering people to take on effective spiritual leadership.

"Wesley was no *prima donna*; he was always a team player, and he modeled for his colleagues a collaborative style of directing and decision making" (Henderson 145). He was thoroughly Christian in character and maintained spiritual disciplines that kept him grounded in his faith. He was an effective change agent in his society with his ministry reaching into the mines, the prisons, and the establishment of schools. His ministry focused people on behavioral transformation and empowered them to use their lives for the gospel calling. Wesley grew up in a home nurtured by his mother, Susanna. This background gave him a lust for learning, and he encouraged others to learn and grow

in their faith as well.

Luther and Wesley present models of leadership that still influence the Christian community. Their willingness to go against the grain of society and the negative influence it was having upon the Church is noteworthy. They responded to a godly call to holiness of life and practice in the Church. They also refused to stand by and let the Church cease to be what God had called it to be. It was called to be salt and light to a world in need, and they could not bear that any part of society would be left out of that enlightenment. Effective leadership takes great strength of character and conviction that both Luther and Wesley demonstrated. They became “leaders of leaders” in their time and for future generations.

### **Current Leadership Foundations**

From the early periods of history to the current studies of the topic, the issue of leadership has attracted much attention. In looking at the history of the study of leadership in secular society as well as the Church, parallel paths emerge.

### **The Intertwining Road of Secular and Church Leadership Theories**

Secular theorists have been studying leadership for many years. Theories have evolved from the earlier concept that leaders are born with the ability to be leaders to the study of the various leadership traits and behaviors of successful leaders. Some of these traits may be innate and others are learned. Currently the focus is on the relational dynamics of leaders. Nance Lucas writes, “Theorizing has evolved even further into an understanding of leadership as a complex process. Indeed, leadership is a transforming process that raises all participants to the level of leadership; all participants can become effective leaders” (1).

Many approaches to leadership are found in business, industry, medicine, social sciences, and the Church, to name a few. In the Church, some have adopted the CEO model of leadership and try to apply it without building networks, and it becomes tyrannical and crippling to fruitful ministry. Mary Logan, former General Council for the United Methodist Church, gives this advice: “[R]emember, Ron, we are dealing with people’s lives, we are in the people business.” A pastor in charge must develop the people around them through relationships. Leaders must recognize the need for followers if they are going to have any impact upon people. The Church will no longer be effective if leaders are not constantly growing and developing their own well-being and skill competencies. Leaders cannot expect congregations to grow if they are not themselves growing. John C. Maxwell uses the term “the lid principle,” which purports that bodies of believers cannot rise above the potential of a leader’s abilities (21 Irrefutable Laws 5-8). He also points out that when the ability of leaders is raised the effectiveness of their leadership is multiplied (8). If the Church is able to create an environment for growing leaders, then the leadership potential can be enhanced across the Church. The environment of growing leaders is a critical concept for this study.

In the Church, the idea of being a “leader of leaders” is a very important concept. Galloway helps the Church understand the need for leaders to be people of passion and vision. He writes, “Build leaders, and they will build ministries” (On-Purpose Leadership 43). One might paraphrase that to say that if a pastor builds up leaders and they build more leaders, God’s work will be accomplished. Maxwell rightly sees that the relationship of leaders with their people is crucial to leading. People need to be affirmed, listened to, and built up (Developing the Leader 113-37). The Church is learning from the

theory of family systems and has looked at the process of congregational life and pastoral development. The leader plays a key role in helping the body reach its full potential and accomplish its vision. The relationships and networks of a pastor's ministry are critical parts of the process of doing ministry. Building strong connections builds trust and opens many doors for effective ministry.

Leaders use their gifts and abilities to create networks of partnership ministries. As the level of effectiveness grows in the leader's life, it will create an atmosphere of growth for those whom the leader is trying to lead. Rosabeth Moss Kanter writes about world-class leaders:

Leaders must become *cosmopolitans* [original emphasis] who are comfortable operating across boundaries and who can forge links between organizations. Leaders must take their ability to craft visions, inspire action, and empower others and use it to encourage people from diverse functions, disciplines, and organizations to find common cause in goals that improve the entire industry, community, country, or world and expand the pie for everyone, rather than pushing in narrow parochial interests that pit group against group, wasting resources in a scramble for shrinking slices of the pie. They must become cosmopolitans who have vision, skills and resources to form networks that extend beyond their home base and to bring benefits to their own group by partnering with others. (91)

This quote is intended for the profit-oriented business world, yet it speaks volumes to leaders in the Church today. The days of the "lone ranger" and isolated ministry are passing. In the Church, believers are coming together across denominational and theological lines and uniting to serve Jesus Christ in the work of transforming lives. The Sentinel Group has produced two videos that recount the unifying work of God in a variety of places around the world. In Cali, Columbia, churches have joined together and watched as God blessed them with unity and great spiritual and social renewal. The key point is that transformation can be a reality when the Church of Jesus Christ comes

together in ministry. Denominational, social, and political lines can be erased to give God and his people an opportunity to touch the lives of others (Otis). The prayer of Jesus in John 17 is becoming a reality in some areas as leaders search for God's unified vision for the Church. This freedom from competing attitudes and a vision of working together as the body of Christ is a healthy posture. Leaders who are healthy enough to get beyond their fears and anxiety are fostering wholeness and effectiveness in their local congregations.

### **Michigan State University Study**

Richard P. DeShon and Kerrie L. Vanden Bosch studied clergy in the Detroit and West Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church. Their purpose was to do a job analysis for the position of a United Methodist minister. They studied previous research to see what criteria for effectiveness had already been established. They found a possible discrepancy between what pastors see as effectiveness and what their supervisors believe to be the characteristics of effectiveness. They asked the participants a set of questions and found that a pattern of effectiveness "competencies" did appear, and they have reported the percent of the population who discussed each trait as a part of effectiveness in ministry. In Table 2.1, the percentage in parenthesis indicates the frequency with which interviewees identified a particular trait as an essential competency for effective ministry.

**Table 2.1. Michigan University Job Analysis Effectiveness Criteria for the Position of Methodist Minister**

<b>Competencies</b>	<b>Behaviors</b>	<b>Behaviors</b>	<b>Behaviors</b>
1. Vision (100%)	Discerning vision	Casting vision	Carrying out vision
2. Leadership (100%)	Personality characteristics influencing leadership	Leadership methods	
3. Empowerment (100%)	Person-service fit	Managing volunteers	Equipping others
4. Relational Focus (100%)	Encouragement	Intentional relationship building	Strategic interactions
5. Flexibility/ adaptability (100%)	Adapting to a Changing world	Adapting to the church	Adapting to a situation
6. Balance (100%)	Time for family, self, and God	Maintaining healthy boundaries	Consequences of neglecting balance
7. Surrounding yourself with support (100%)	Colleagues	People who are strong in your weak areas	Family
8. Strong sense of Self (100%)	Resilience	Boundaries	
9. Discernment (86%)	Knowledge of self	Knowledge of others	Knowledge of the church
10. Continual improvement (86%)	Continuing education	Reinvent yourself	
11. Passion/ enthusiasm (86%)	Effects excitement on the church	Effects on the minister –[engenders quality]	
12. Integrity and honesty (71%)	Genuineness	Live as an example	
13. Passionate preaching that communicates a clear message (57%)	Be prepared	Be practical	
14. Deep spirituality (57%)	Communicate with God	Keep your priorities straight	
15. Creativity/ innovation (43%)	Make cultural references [relevancy]	Use audio and visual aids [be aware of learning styles]	

In the Michigan University study, a consistent set of competencies surfaced from the research. Table 2.1 presents some questions about what characteristics are foundational in ministry. Integrity and honesty was number twelve, preaching was thirteen, and deep spirituality was number fourteen. The findings rated leadership higher than integrity of character and spirituality.

## **An Overview of the Study of Leadership**

Writings on leadership cover a breadth of years that few people recognize. A brief glance at history will uncover both good and bad examples of leadership. European history is rich with both types of leaders. Historical writings like Niccolo Daniel Donno Machiavelli's The Prince, Plutarch's Lives, and Plato's Republic all develop commentary on issues of leadership.

Machiavelli, a contemporary of the Medici family in Italy, lost his position and public office in 1512. He had played a leading part in the political life in his day. Very involved in politics and the Roman Catholic Church, he writes a critical descriptive commentary of the political systems and personalities of his day. He writes about the failures of Emperor Maximillian and “describes him as a secretive man, without force of character ignoring the human agencies necessary to carry his schemes into effect, and never insisting on the fulfillment of his wishes” (6). This work on leadership deals with character and morality in his period. He is equally frank about the faults of the Church (1-25).

Plutarch's Lives deals with familiar people of his day and compares the Grecian and Romans leaders and their characteristics. He deals with ability, character, integrity, their upbringing, power, education, family, gender treatment, how they got people to follow their leadership, justice, and their treatment of people. In describing leadership he compares Sertorius to Eumenes: “They followed the one honestly, out of desire to be commanded by him; they submitted to the other for their own security, because they could not command themselves” (225).

Plato's famed work The Republic offers a unique look at politics, justice, and the

process of argument. He has had great influence on the thinking of the modern world and the tools of persuasion. In this work he practices the principles of argument and boldly demonstrates the need to influence others as a leader. Its main theme is justice and, in fact, has an alternate title Concerning Justice. The argument hinges on what is just and what is not. From a leadership perspective, it demands one look at the motivation for their actions. Leadership authority can be an act of ruling out of selfish fulfillment or for the benefit of those they rule. It raises questions about good and evil, friend or enemy, and justice and injustice. Socrates, in Plato's work, challenges readers to think about things from different points of view, which leaders must be able to do. Plato calls readers to think about the significance of uniqueness of their "art" or vocation. He writes, "[T]he good of each art is specially confined to the art," yet he goes on to challenge about the connectedness of the "art": "And when the artist is benefited by receiving pay the advantage is gained by an additional use of the art of pay, which is not the art professed by him" (1: 26).

In Book 3, "The Allegory of the Cave," Plato describes the role of the "philosopher-ruler" in helping people to understand reality. The role of the "philosopher-ruler" is to raise the aspirations of those who are in intellectual darkness. It involves exposing persons to the light and helping them to experience this newly acquired sight:

[I]f I am right, certain professors of education must be wrong when they say that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like sight into blind eyes.... [T]he business of us who are the founders of the State will be to compel the best minds to attain that knowledge which we have already shown to be the greatest of all—they must continue to ascend. (514-21)

Today raising the bar of a pastor's knowledge and effectiveness in ministry is a popular topic. This concept closely mirrors the thinking of Plato.



These works from an early point in history look at leadership and extend a call to examine character and motivation of the leader. These early beginnings present concepts that have guided and influenced the way people are led. Nance Lucas as well as Michele Erina Doyle and Mark K. Smith have written of the changes in leadership theory over the twentieth century. The Church often runs parallel with other discipline's studies of leadership. One point made is how often leadership and authority are confused (Doyle and Smith<sup>10</sup>). This presence of confusion is an important point in researching leadership, especially in the Church where the base of one's authority as a minister has drastically changed over the years.

Doyle and Smith have studied classical leadership and have discovered that much of the imagery of leadership has come from the arena of conflict (1). As noted above, the early writings about leadership involved political leaders who were often people successful in war. Doyle and Smith talk about "Gandhi or Joan of Arc; Napoleon or Hitler. The stories around such persons seem to show that there are moments of crisis or decision where actions of one person are pivotal" (1). They find that four things are necessary for leadership to occur:

1. Leading involves influencing people;
2. Leaders need followers;
3. Leaders seem to come to the fore during a crisis or special problem; and,
4. Leaders are people who have a clear idea of what they want to achieve and why (2).

John P. Kotter summarizes the 1900s when the intense study of leadership began. Early research in the twentieth century espoused the "great man" theory believing that

leaders are born not made. “During the Great Depression, US social psychologists found in studying groups that democratic leadership was not only possible, it was more effective” (2). This idea opened the door for more participant involvement in succeeding models. In the 40s and 50s, studies looked at what universal traits are found in leaders. This work continued with a behavioral focus through the 50s and 60s to determine patterns of behavior in effective leaders. The behavioral studies looked at styles of leadership versus traits of leaders. One of the difficulties of these studies was that not enough consideration was given to the situational context of a person’s leadership.

A change in thinking occurred approaching the 70s. Researchers believed that situations influenced which behaviors would succeed. This change in thinking mirrors the transition of the Church in the 70s and 80s when the United Methodist Church believed that any ordained minister, in theory, should be able to pastor any church in the conference. Proponents of universal leadership neglected the concept of matching strengths and gifts with congregational needs and expectations. The situational theory (also the contingency theory) looked at which leadership behaviors would be most effective in a specific location. In this era, leaders were viewed as agents of change to move people to a preferred future. In the 1980s, the “buzz” word became excellence. Studies focused on what characteristics, habits, situations, and group dynamics worked together to allow leaders to move organizations on to excellence.

During this same time, Greenleaf came out with his servant-leader model that called on leaders to support and help their followers to achieve their very best. The focus of study moved from transactional to transformational theories of leadership. Students of leadership made a key distinction between “transactional” and “transformational”

leadership. Transactional leadership is what “we are most use [sic] to in our businesses, clubs, even families—negotiating, mediating, compromising, adjusting” (Burns and Sorenson 1). Transformational leadership occurs when leaders and followers engage in a process that reaches for higher goals, greater motivation, and greater morality (Kotter 1-28). Transformational leadership is the type “called for in great national or even personal crises—when we must transform our society or ourselves as measured by the great values of liberty or equality or happiness” (Burns and Sorenson 1; see Appendix B).

More recently the movement has used both concepts to address the leadership process. Lucas asserts, “Leadership has to do with relationships, the role of which cannot be overstated” (2). In her work she identifies the following components of the relational model:

- Inclusive of people and diverse points of view;
- Empowering of others who are involved;
- Purposeful—having an individual commitment to a goal or activity and ability to find common ground with others to establish purpose, vision;
- Ethically driven by values and standards and leadership that is “good” or moral in nature;
- Process oriented—how the group goes about being a group, remaining a group, and accomplishing the group’s purpose (4-7).

The New Testament has promulgated transformational leadership throughout its history. Jesus was a transformational leader. His ministry of healing and compassion were avenues for transforming lives. The woman at the well, Matthew, and Zaccheus are just a few examples that speak of the difference Jesus made in their lives. The Church

continues to seek to be a transformational body.

In many ways, the Church has been on the same journey of leadership development and understanding as the academic secular culture. Many of the studies referred to here run parallel with the Christian leadership movement. The Church was founded on a transformational model; however, it moved away from transformational to transactional leadership. For example, indulgences, committees, and democratic decision making are transactional activities. Conversion counting can be more transactional unless accompanied by discipling ministries that clearly bring it into a transformational model. Relational leadership comes through repeatedly in the concept of biblical covenant. In recent cultural shifts, the idea of transformational and relational leadership has been embraced over and against managerial approaches. Greenleaf's Servant Leader theory certainly appears to have roots in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ:

Servant leadership, made popular in contemporary management theory by Robert Greenleaf and rooted in Jesus' model of the suffering servant, is rightly focused on others, not ourselves. But in the long run, it is the most powerful, because it evokes long-term, in-depth trust and confidence in the leader. Leadership, whether in secular or sacred settings, is the most crucial variable affecting the viability of any organization. (Lewis 84)

In looking at the trends of leadership studies, effective leadership is apparently much more complex than any particular set of characteristics and behaviors. They may not be as crucial to effective leadership as other factors. More recently some have looked at what combination of traits provides good leadership in a particular situation. The challenge for ministry is to determine what makes for successful leadership in the Church.

### **Leadership Characteristics**

When effective functioning grows out of one's own degree of wholeness and

spirituality, several themes rise to the surface as common characteristics of effective spiritual leaders. G. Douglas Lewis raises one of the critical issues facing the understanding of leadership:

A mistaken understanding of leadership in our society assumes that leadership means knowing all the answers and merely telling or directing people to what they should do. Leadership is much more than having the right answers. The critical issue for the leader is to keep the organization actively naming its own issues and envisioning new possibilities. (21)

Effective spiritual leadership has two assumptions. The first is that God calls persons into leadership as a vocation. Willimon writes, “God’s vocation is the only validation of our ministry” (22). The biblical literature and historical leaders like Wesley and Luther point to a clear sense of God’s call on their lives in order to be used as leaders. The other essential ingredient to effective ministry is the motivation from one’s personal relationship with Jesus Christ. A pastor’s call is a response to God’s guidance in that relationship. This response to God results in a ministry focused around spirituality and relationships as priorities.

This posture is one of knowing the call of God and being spiritually focused, and out of that, effective ministry may happen. In that leadership as a pastor, one has the ability to bring change and influence into people’s lives. “Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or group in efforts toward accomplishing goals in a given situation” (Lewis 8). Without a healthy relationship with Jesus Christ, the act of influencing people becomes an act of manipulating persons for one’s own benefit, and it ceases to be value-led Christian leadership.

The conclusions from the literature suggest six common characteristics needed for effective leadership. Other characteristics have impact, but these are essential to any

leadership mix. They are spirituality, vision, personhood, change agent, relationship focus, and a pattern of ongoing development. These characteristics repeatedly appear in the literature and are most prevalent in effective leaders' patterns of ministry.

### **Spirituality**

Spirituality involves a relationship with Jesus Christ and with other Christian brothers and sisters. Practicing faith and spiritual disciplines keeps a pastor strong. Spirituality becomes stronger as the Christian allows the word of God to form and be formed in the believer. This process of spiritual formation recognizes that God's transforming grace does not hurl one into completeness but gently day-by-day fashions life into Christlikeness:

Our attitudes, our behaviors show forth the "word" we are. In all that we are and in all that we do with one another in the world, God is seeking to bring to full expression of that "word" spoken forth by God [that spoken word is our life spoken into being by God].... Paul, like us, found that there were dynamics of being within him that were inconsistent with God's will for his wholeness. (Mulholland 36-37)

For Paul and for all Christians, God is willing to do the life-changing transformational work needed. Michael Slaughter highlights ministries at the end of each chapter. He interviewed Dick Wills of Christ Church, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He quotes Dick's expression of his experience and need for a relationship with God:

When I do not take time to grow in this relationship with God, I find myself running on "empty" and leading out of my own strengths and talents. I need to make my relationship with God the number one priority in my life. The church will never experience renewal without spiritual leaders.... For us to be complete, happy, and whole people, we have to create those spaces for God to speak in the margins in our lives. A lot of us are running ragged because we're filling up the margins. (175, 182)

The problem is that many clergy do not talk about their spiritual lives because they believe that they are supposed to be perfect. In the typical relationships that support

and build up Christian friends, people play a hide-and-seek game for fear of letting the real person show through. These obstacles must be overtaken so as to concentrate on healthy spiritual living.

## **Vision**

The Bible in Proverbs reads, “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (29:18, KJV). Vision is the one characteristic identified most often in studies on leadership. God gave Moses a vision of what he wanted Moses to do:

The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey... I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt. (Exod. 3:7-10, NIV)

Vision that springs out of one’s relationship with God is the cornerstone characteristic for any leader. Nevertheless, George Barna writes, “Less than one out of every ten senior pastors can articulate the vision for the ministry he or she is trying to lead” (18). The experience of being a district superintendent has convinced me that pastors who do not have a clear, articulated vision struggle to lead the congregation in any positive direction. They seem to be wandering in the wilderness. Effective leaders know: “The leader must become an artist—drawing on his or her best experience, knowledge, reasoning, and intuition—creating a picture, a vision, an environment that moves the leader and others towards a new possibility, yet unrealized” (Lewis 16).

Lewis in this quote does not address spirituality, but spirituality and receiving a vision from God is critical to the process of vision casting. This vision lifts up a picture of the future in a way that people are inspired and excited to be doing what God has given

them to do. Michael Slaughter writes, “My job is not to manage the present so much as to proclaim a future of promise” (134).

Vision is the picture of a preferred future. In my fall meetings with local churches one year, I talked about liking pumpkin pie. I shared how I love a good piece of pumpkin pie; I talked about how I could smell it baking in the oven. Before long I had everybody’s mouth watering, and then I asked, “Could you see a piece of pumpkin pie in your mind’s eye?” Almost universally, I received an enthusiastic nod and often a smack of the lips. Some even said, “I could taste it!” Then I told them, “The vision of the church needs to be just as real an image in our mind’s eye as that piece of pumpkin pie.” In order to accomplish a vision or build the kingdom, it has to be able to be envisioned:

Vision is focused guidance that helps you determine the unique way in which you have been called to fulfill the mission. Mission without vision leads to frustration and paralysis because it can never be completed or perfectly fulfilled—it is too general and too broad. (Barna 41)

The mission of building the kingdom of God will go nowhere if the Church does not have a vision of what the kingdom will look like. “In the discernment process, keep in mind that vision is not the result of consensus. What God wants does not rely upon a majority vote or some other democratic process” (Barna 47). “A vision must be clearly related to and grow out of the *mission* [original emphasis] of an organization” (Weems, Church Leadership 41). Nevertheless, mission is much different from vision. A congregation needs both a mission or purpose statement and a vision of what the future will look like. Another piece critical to vision and mission is identification of a congregation’s values. They must decide what is worth their total commitment. These are not peripheral issues but spiritual and crucial life issues. One of the problems in this process is when the values of the congregation and the values of a leader are not in sync.



When the pastor and congregation have different ideas, a leadership challenge arises. The pastor's task is to try to finesse movement in a way that acknowledges each person's values and then builds bridges toward a common journey. Barna writes, "God's vision always builds a bridge from the past to the future" (43). Generational differences in values create many church conflicts. A leader needs to be a bridge architect to lead well and bring the family values into a workable unity within the congregation.

In order to develop a vision, passion is needed. In that development of vision, an examination of one's life is necessary to discover what is exciting and what motivates the church to take action. God is putting ideas in the heart of the local congregations and calling them to do the work of the kingdom. I like the phrase that defines passion as "loving the things that God loves." The difference in getting excited about a new car or a new boat or getting excited about winning souls for Jesus Christ is major. Slaughter says, "Leaders have a passion for the kingdom of God" (119). That passion continues to burn within the pastor seeking to be satisfied.

### **Personhood**

Personhood is *who one is*. It is that inward integrity of body, mind, and spirit that allows people to function out of their wholeness. Lewis paraphrases Ed Friedman in regards to personhood and leadership:

[Ed Friedman] makes the point that the effectiveness of the leader is determined more by who the leader is and how the leader functions than by the leader's expertise.... Healthy, effective leadership has more to do with the personhood of the leader and his or her functioning in the world than with the circumstantial social structures in which the leader works. *Being* [original emphasis], more than anything else, will determine healthy, effective *doing* [original emphasis]. (108, 113)

In Christ, transformation is possible; therefore, hope that ineffectiveness can be

transformed into effective leadership is a possibility. The way transformation plays out is in the development of *character* in an individual. Willimon says, [W]e must not let those who are ignorant of themselves be in the morally demanding role of pastor....

Congregations have every right to expect that what we preach is who we strive to be not perfect but reaching for an ideal (37).

Knowing oneself is very critical for leaders. A leader must recognize and embrace the transformation happening in their lives. Some of the problems arise from not being aware of what is going on in the leaders' lives or having a realistic view of their character.

Edwin H. Friedman has helped to apply family systems theory to congregational life. He has awakened the religious community to the concepts of triangulation and differentiation (221-30). Both of these concepts are important for the effective functioning of a pastor. Pastors will continually be in conflict without a clear understanding of who they are and how to avoid getting caught up in the spider webs of triangulation. Triangulation is when a third party is dragged into a dysfunctional relationship between two other parties or issues. They become party to the dysfunction. Triangulation is often found in church politics. *Differentiation* is being able to distinguish oneself from the system's dynamics. While staying in relationship and contact with the system (congregation), a leader is able to stay emotionally calm and separate. Differentiation is being aware of one's own identity and the identity of others in the system. It is the ability to remain non-anxious when anxiety is all around. Some pastors act as conduits for anxiety while others calm the waters effectively.

Being true to self and one's own convictions is also a part of personhood:

When we act out of conviction of heart, God combines our failures and victories together, and they become the will of God. You and I do not have to fear making mistakes. We simply live with passion out of the call of Jesus Christ upon us. Integrity of heart is the first part of spiritual leadership. (Slaughter 122)

Within personhood is a sense of the need for *self-care*. People know when clergy are not taking very good care of themselves. A common theme for Thomas Merton was the abuse of the Sabbath and what it does to the spirit. Willimon writes, “Thomas Merton once spoke of our overwork as a form of violence against God’s gift of rest” (141). The increasing levels of stress mixed with the inability to handle anxiety can be a disastrous situation for a leader. The reality is not how to get rid of stress but how to manage stress in a healthy way so it will not destroy pastors and their ministry.

Self-care is about balance, Sabbath, and life-management skills. A pastor’s self-care requires the clergy person to weigh the ministry demands carefully. Many demands are not worth the energy expended on them. Time for renewal and refreshing is robbed, and self-care is gone. Sabbath is both a spiritual and a stewardship concept. First, God created Sabbath to give balance to human life as a day of rest. “Sabbath is a publicly enacted sign of our trust that *God keeps the world* [original emphasis]; therefore, we don’t have to” (Willimon 141). Burdens can be released as trust in God reaffirms God’s ability to manage his world while his creation rests. In Deuteronomy, the Hebrew slaves were freed from bondage, but more they were freed in order to live out their lives in covenant with God. Dorothy C. Bass asserts that slaves cannot have a day of rest, but in freedom they are afforded a day of rest. Rest is a privilege that comes with the freedom that God provides. For the Hebrews every Sabbath rest day was a reminder of how God had brought them out of the Egyptian bondage (79). For the Christian, Sabbath should be

a reminder of freedom in Jesus Christ.

### **Change Agent**

In his book Person and Profession, Charles William Stewart identifies five primary roles of ministers in order to function effectively (166). Being a change agent within the church and larger community is one of the important characteristics. One of the roles of the body of Christ through the Holy Spirit is transformation of people and community to see change come in ways that aligns life with God:

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Cor. 3:17-18, NIV)

Change is a natural part of life; to make change work for the purposes of God is a choice.

Working with change involves *risk taking*, *transformation*, and *empowerment*. One cannot lead any organization well without taking some risks. The risks can be personal, professional, relational, or visionary. Risks come in socioeconomic terms or political terms and can range from slight impact risks to the “my career is on the line” type of risks. Without such risks much would be lost in the name of timidity and transformation. Growth and development would never happen.

Transformation is change that moves people, communities, and institutions toward a deeper walk with God to become the kingdom of God. Paul wrote to the Romans that this transformation is a renewing of the mind (Rom. 12). One of the main emphases of the Wesleyan renewal in England was the focus on behavioral transformation. The class meeting was a group experience with a mission to change lives for the better (Henderson 93). Once again many are calling for transformation of society. The self-help books, the talk shows, and the rise of counseling therapies speak to the

needs of today's culture. Church leaders must be attuned to community needs and be leaders who actively move the Church into life-changing ministries. A manager of schedules and organizations without transformation results in a stagnant local church. At the heart of Christian ministry is the call to be agents of transformation and redemption for individuals, institutions, and social structures. "The Church needs transformational leaders who can influence and enable change. Being agents of God's ministry in the world requires the skills and art of leadership" (Lewis 15-16). The Methodist movement is credited as having a major positive impact on the English culture. England experienced a behavioral transformation that brought people's lives and the whole of society to a healthier state. It was used by God to bring much needed change.

Empowerment is a critical part of being a change agent. Leaders who lead well train and empower leaders to carry out ministry and to recruit and train other leaders. A leader who believes everyone has strengths and who is constantly on the lookout for those strengths—affirming them and putting them to use—can release vast, untapped reserves of energy and enthusiasm. This enthusiasm and passion keep leaders coming back. Steven R. Covey describes empowerment: "As a co-mission with people who have dormant talent, ingenuity, intelligence, and creativity. When this happens he says, "a fire is ignited." There is a synergy of people and the vision" (153). The sum of the parts is much greater than individual pieces. Empowerment is the process of freeing people to open up their hidden gifts and talents for a vital and compelling purpose. Studies such as Natural Church Development have found that empowering others for ministry is an area of focus with pastors of growing churches. The congregation is brought into the acts of ministry, equipped and empowered to do what God is calling them to do:

They invert the pyramid of authority so that the leader assists Christians to attain the spiritual potential God has for them. These pastors equip, support, motivate, and mentor individuals, enabling them to become all that God wants them to be. (Schwarz 22)

### **Relationship Focus**

Another important piece of leadership is how a leader relates to people, which is closely correlated with leadership style. A coach or mentor will approach people differently than someone who is worried about being in control or is a taskmaster for whom the bottom line is efficiency, production, and profit. By its very nature, the Church is a relational institution. The United Methodist Church prides itself on being a connectional church, yet as all denominations they have many shortfalls in the connection. Relationship skills focus on communication, community, family systems, and support networks. Many do not have these skills to be connectional.

Communication is extremely important for a leader. Most conflicts arise out of communication issues. Communication is more than speaking words. It involves sending a message, receiving a message, understanding, body language, etc.

Leaders who take time to understand the people they are trying to lead reap much benefit from getting acquainted with them, their dreams, and their hopes:

In order for a pastor to become an effective leader in a new congregation, he or she must understand the new culture—its foundational values, beliefs, hopes and dreams. The effective pastor will begin to influence and affect the organizational culture by virtue of trust. (Lewis 36)

Trust or the lack of trust will make or break leaders in the community they serve.

Leaders' perceptions of people will shape relationships with them. People can be viewed as trusted friends, cogs in the wheel to get something done, or team members who are fully involved in the mission. People are blessed when they are part of a team where

they feel valued and respected. How pastors live out their relationships will have great impact on their effectiveness. At times the drive for the leaders' success is so great that they forget that people are important to their success. If progress is slow, some leaders may try to force progress:

The need to control may be one of the most destructive traits in leaders. The attempt to dictate the outcome of every decision, to weigh in on every proposal, is like acid rain, which poisons the environment. The most damage is often done by the leader who manipulates subtly, who outwardly talks about team leadership, but rules like an iron fisted Kaiser (Goetz 1).

Gordon McKenzie describes his personal work situation at Hallmark in his book Orbiting the Giant Hairball:

My last boss at Hallmark, a fellow by the name of Bo Kipp, sat at the wheel of one of the corporate speedboats. I was at the end of a towline on water skis. We spent our time together skimming across the great Lake Hallmark. Kipp was so sure of who he was and why he was where he was and where the power was that he was not threatened at all when I would ski around in a wide arc until I was up even with the boat and sometimes even past it. He knew I was not going to start pulling the boat with him in it. It just doesn't work that way. The power remains in the boat. But, in allowing me to ski past him—in a sense, allowing me to lead—he would unleash in me an excitement about our enterprise that served our shared goals... If you are in a position of power and want to lead well, remember: Allow those you lead ... to lead ... when they feel the need. All will benefit. (211)

One of the common complaints of leaders is that no one wants to do anything. Nevertheless, creating opportunity and empowering congregations to get involved moves people to accomplish their vision. How a leader treats and trusts people makes a difference as to what they will do. The Church is rediscovering the concept of Christian community. People want to contribute to something about which they feel good. They

want to belong to something that is making a difference. They want to be part of a family system that encourages them, supports them, and gives them a place to make their contribution. The way that pastors build relationships affects the entire ministry they do:

The nurturing of a minister's relationships is vital both for ministry effectiveness and for the vocational satisfaction of the minister.... Ministers need quality relationships in at least two content areas: (1) Realistic feedback of their job performance and (2) close confidantes with whom they can share their private feelings. (Blackmon and Hart 36)

Relationship is not only about how the pastor relates to others, but it is also about networks of support and accountability for the pastor. Effective clergy connect with people who sharpen them as leaders, hold them accountable, and challenge them to grow.

### **Ongoing Development**

Continuing education is encouraged by most denominations, yet not all pastors continue to develop their personal and professional lives. The possibility exists that pastors will attend opportunities they enjoy but not attend events that challenge them:

[T]he key to change is disciplined adult spiritual formation. We talk about leverage points in the various subsystems of congregational life, but adult spiritual growth is the fulcrum over which everything must be elevated. It is impossible to get very far in expanding worship options, building ministry teams, multiplying cell groups, launching capital campaigns, or renewing property and technology without engaging a majority of the adults in the congregation in serious adult spiritual growth. (Bandy 90)

Developing leaders through continuing spiritual formation and leadership training is crucial for everybody. A key piece to this study is looking at what is working to encourage leadership development. Visiting other places of ministry and hearing what others are doing are parts of the creative process helping pastors dream and envision new ministries in their local settings. Pastoral formation comes from individual study and reflection, group process, formal learning workshops, and seminars. These opportunities



deal with theology, personal issues, spirituality, and skill development. Effective pastors know that continuing growth is critical.

These six characteristics are not only critical for local church pastoral leaders, but they apply aptly to the roles of district superintendent and bishop. Even though the daily routine of a district superintendent is very different from a local pastor, the need to continue to grow is as essential to one as to the other.

### **Models of Leadership Styles**

Much has been written on healthy churches in recent years. A common theme of healthy church studies is the importance of the role of strong pastoral leadership. Leaders, in the family systems language, who are “self-differentiated” and are able to lead congregations calmly tend to make wise and vision-directed decisions and enjoy effective ministries; however, differentiation takes healthy clergy. Pastors who are healthy in body, mind, and spirit focus on self-care, balance, Sabbath keeping, and maintaining adequate support systems. The lack of self-care is at the core of many clergy problems. Clergy who are trying to be all things to all people hurl themselves into self-destructive patterns that sabotage themselves and commit what I call “professional suicide.” Professional suicide is when pastors act out in ways that destroy their credibility and their ability to ever function as pastors again. Such destructive cases can be sexual misconduct, unethical behavior, or any behavior that destroys the ability to minister. It is as unhealthy toward self as suicide except that person lives to regret it.

Roy M. Oswald has worked in the area of clergy self-care. He states that “as clergy, we are in the health and wholeness business. The healthier we become

on this journey toward wholeness, the more effective we become in our ministry to others. Wholeness happens on four levels simultaneously: physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual” (x). Healthy pastors live out wholeness through a variety of leadership models.

Effective leadership uses combinations of models. Leaders have their dominant model from which they work most of the time, but not exclusively. Some models come directly from Scripture and the experiences of the Church; others are more eclectic coming from business, social sciences, and education. The following models are not meant to be all inclusive, but they give a picture of models that have been or are being used in people’s ministries. These models come from the literature and from my personal experience in supervisory ministry.

### **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**

The chief executive officer (CEO), manager, and autocratic model grows out of the managerial theory of leadership. Although management is certainly a part of all leadership, it is not the complete picture. Leadership is not simply being a good manager of people and processes. This model comes out of the business world but had political roots prior to that. When the ruling monarch decreed, no one dared go against the order. The boss was always right even when wrong. This model does not invite or allow input from people who might wish to stand up for their convictions and beliefs.

The CEOs/managers keep everything running smoothly. As planners, organizers, staffers (personnel), directors, and controllers, they are in charge of the big picture. They set goals and literally manage the day-to-day operations in order to meet those goals. In ministry, managers are more often maintainers and administrators than visionaries.

The chief executive officer continues to be a term used in business and industry. The earlier versions of this model were concerned about who is in charge. As the culture has changed, CEOs take on more people and relational skills. They lead their organizations differently than in the past; however, the bottom line profit is still priority number one.

In James MacGregor Burns and Georgia Sorenson's terminology of transactional leadership, the CEO model is more transactional in nature. Transactional leadership has an expectation of exchange of value. Each person contributes something that the other views as valuable. For instance an employee works to get a paycheck to support the family; the employer pays the employee and receives the benefits of the employee's labor and makes a profit. Transactional models are less favorable in ministry than the following models.

### **Charismatic**

The charismatic model is based on the winsome qualities of the leader. The word comes from the Greek word "charisma" or gift of grace. These leaders often rise on the strength of their personalities and gather persons around them. They are esteemed to have special qualities, talents, or gifts that will help those who follow. Because so much is dependent upon the leaders, when they leave the momentum of ministry may be difficult to sustain.

### **Spiritual Leader**

Spiritual leaders, shepherds, or priests demonstrate a genuine walk with God. They lead through their relationship with God and with others. Decisions and guidance come from a thoughtful prayer life and disciplined patterns of worship and devotion.

They demonstrate the spiritual fruit of Galatians 5. Moses was a spiritual leader.

Spiritual leaders/shepherds are pastors who watch over the sheep. They love their people and take care of them. As pastors the care of congregations is critical. They do a lot of visiting, caregiving, and go the extra mile to help people.

As spiritual leaders, they carry out the priestly role as liturgical and sacramental leaders. They find ways to incorporate the God of life into everyday activities. As priests, they stand before God on behalf of the people and before the people on behalf of God.

Arthur Gafke broadens the understanding of the role of ordained elders in the Church:

A narrow understanding depicts elders as simply officiating at the celebration of the two sacraments. A broader understanding expects elders to name and enact the name of God's presence with people in sacramental events; to name and demonstrate human presence before God in these same events. (1)

### **Servant Leader**

Servant leaders look at how they can serve and build others up to do their ministry. Servant leadership became better known through the work of Robert Greenleaf in the management world; however, Jesus lived this model as the suffering servant giving his very life for others (Lewis 84). Servant leadership focuses on the needs of others and motivates people to get involved in meeting the needs of the community. Servant leaders are good observers of the culture around them. They identify needs and find ways to meet needs.

### **Coach (Team Leader)**

Coaches, mentors, or equippers are team directors, encouragers, and people who call the play. They are good at bringing the team together to work toward a common goal. As mentors the leaders are always working with others, helping to disciple them in their Christian lives. They may or may not be potential leaders, but coaches are searching for

their gifts and how those gifts can be enhanced. The joy of coaching comes from watching the transformation of the team.

Coaches are equippers. They empower people to understand their gifts and talents and help them find avenues and opportunities to serve. They have a focus on training and developing disciples. Paul sees this training as the role of a people with leadership gifts (Eph. 4:11-12). Thomas G. Bandy has helped the Church explore team ministry and the concept of coaching:

A great coach brings to the team more than expertise, much more than personality, and far more than the confidence of the team owner. A great coach brings to the team four things:

- ✓ a mission attitude
- ✓ a work Ethic
- ✓ a variable game plan
- ✓ a winning faith. (51-59; see Appendix C)

### **Supervision of Ministry**

Supervision is a part of the job description of every district superintendent. In some ways supervision truncates the covenantal nature of pastoral care. It creates a challenge for the denomination, particularly for the leadership of bishops and district superintendents. They are to support clergy and help pastors to cope, urge them to grow in needed areas, and supervise them as well. The Book of Discipline of the United

Methodist Church is clear about the task:

The district superintendent shall oversee the total ministry of the clergy and of the churches in the communities of the district in their missions of witness and service in the world: (a) by giving priority to the scheduling of time and effort for spiritual leadership, pastoral support, supervision, and encouragement to the clergy and to the churches of the district; (b) by encouraging their personal, spiritual, and professional growth...(Olson 283)

As a judicatory leader, examining the role of supervision is very important. In the

United Methodist Church, the absurdity or brilliance of connecting the role of being pastor to the pastors and the administrative and supervisory duties of a superintendent create an interesting tension. The role of the supervisor offers unique opportunities and limitations. I found that my relationship with colleagues changed on 1 September 2000 when I moved into this role. Some who had been confidants were suspicious and leery. Some who had never known me became my “best friends.” These contradictions have sidetracked the topic of effective ministry much too often. Without a basis of trust, little progress is made on the things that need to be changed.

Nevertheless, the task of supervising must be done. It involves management, evaluation, pastoral care, and spiritual exhortation. Kenneth Pohly assists in defining pastoral supervision for the church:

[Pastoral Supervision is] a method of doing and reflecting on ministry in which a supervisor (teacher) and one or more supervisees (learners) covenant together to reflect critically on their ministry as a way of growing in self-awareness, ministering competence, theological understanding, and Christian commitment. (75)

Pohly’s definition of pastoral supervision is the essence of what The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church asks district superintendents to do.

As a superintendent, I find that what derails ministry often relates to people’s character, how they balance life, and their vocational calling to ministry. People like John E. Harnish and William Willimon have given much time to help regain the importance of vocational callings and the importance of moral and ethical integrity. Supervision must have eyes wide open in order to take a proactive role. Pastoral reclamation and remediation is not easy but is critical for the future effectiveness of the Church and its ministry. Several concepts need the supervisory attention of the district superintendent.

## Stress

Evidence exists of a relationship between the stressors and frustrations of pastoral ministry and the immoral and unethical behaviors that are so prevalent today. The debate is whether stress or the inability to handle it cause behavioral problems or if character weaknesses rise to the surface under stress. Jackson W. Carroll discusses how pastoral ministry needs to be resilient, agile, and connected. The calling of a pastor is one that naturally is less aligned with the stakeholders or the institution than some other vocations (27-29). Not having a vested interest in the status quo creates stress, conflict, and isolation on the part of the pastor. The dynamics and changes essential to effective ministry are no less problematic for the judicatory level:

Judicatory leaders so far have been affected by the change of ministry age in two ways: (1) They have received increased calls to intervene when clergy-lay friction erupts into a bruising battle, which happens frequently in these times of confused and conflicting roles and (2) they must deal with almost annual reductions in resources in regional budgets. Congregations genuinely trying to respond to the missionary frontier on their doorsteps naturally see a more convincing case to fund their own mission endeavor rather than support the judicatory. (Mead 37)

The pastor and judicatory leader need resiliency in order to stand against the tides that wash over them in everyday functioning in these times. Agility is the ability to respond to situations creatively and maintain a commitment to the foundations of one's faith while responding to the opportunities that the present-day world presents (Carroll 29). Though not as easy as it sounds, pastoral supervision and caregiving can provide an outlet for such stresses before they turn into problems. The culture around ministry today is often not Christian. That is expected outside the Church community, but often the Church acts as un-Christian as the world. Pastors need strong spiritual and emotional resources in order to do ministry in this setting. In addition, dealing with those stressors

day after day as a district superintendent also requires strong resources in order to remain sane.

### **Relationship with God**

This kind of stamina is necessary for ministry in the twenty-first century. It is crucial, yet so many pastors recognize that the tasks of ministry rob them of time with God. Key to Jesus' ministry was his strong relationship with his heavenly Father. Pastors need the connection that comes from one-on-one time with God on a regular basis. Time with God is essential in order to stay healthy and handle the stresses that are sure to come. They need to find ways of being nurtured spiritually so they have the inner resources to deal with these matters. Finding the time for personal devotion creates a lot of frustration for pastors. They enter ministry to deal with the mysteries of God and find out that ministry is dealing with the dysfunctions of people and the mundane administration of the local church and denomination instead.

### **Evaluation**

Another important topic of supervision is how the church evaluates the pastor. Most standard evaluations soon lapse into statements such as, "We love him," or "We hate this pastor, get her out of here." Evaluations based on pastoral ministry skills soon reveal that they are less than helpful in assessing the vision and mission of a congregation or pastor. Church growth proponents have often been accused of just worrying about numbers and so evaluation turns into a game of counting the results. Many of the established congregations soothe their conscience by saying, "It is not all about numbers; we are concentrating on spiritual growth." Effectiveness involves both growing in numbers and in spirit. Evaluations and assessments are essential to keep a church on track



with its goals, establishing strategies, and boldly addressing what works and what does not work.

Both the church and the pastor need annual evaluations in order to examine the leadership throughout the congregation and the fruit that is being produced. In order to do effective evaluation, the vision God has given the church needs to be appraised rather than personalities. The evaluation of skills is often a waste of time. Quality leaders will be able to develop skills to enhance their performance. Poor leaders will demonstrate deficiencies repeatedly. People cannot fake the integrity of their faith journey, the skills and competencies for ministry, nor the commitment to God and the people they serve, at least for very long. Arthur Gafke, while a district superintendent, “affirmed repeatedly that the one and only function of evaluation is to strengthen the pastor’s ministry and that evaluation is an ongoing process” (5).

Evaluations that create an environment of pastoral formation are more helpful than summative evaluations that simply give a pass or fail performance review. Formational evaluations are less threatening and engender growth in the individual. I asked the clergy of my district to adopt a “growth plan” approach to evaluation. With that plan they can identify personal and professional goals and strategies to accomplish them. They also, together with the congregation, create goals for the church’s ministry.

### **Support**

Evaluation that does not challenge pastors and congregations is not very helpful. Pastors need supportive groups who can ask the pointed questions and deal with accountability and spiritual concerns. This support needs a very high trust factor in order to be effective. District superintendents have traditionally not had great trust levels with

local church pastors. Supportive networks are critical to maintaining health. Often in the isolation of pastoral ministry, pastors go into hiding because they feel guilty or afraid of being seen for who they really are. This contributes to a life that is more vulnerable to moral and ethical failure. If one is hiding in one area of life, hiding in another area may be easier. “While clergy have responsibility for their personal support systems, conference leaders can model, support, and stimulate their use” (Gafke 5). Looking at the health of the clergy and their congregations in order to establish an environment where conversation can get beyond the surface issues is most helpful.

Accountability demands that the poignant questions be asked. Questions that relate to patterns of Sabbath, avenues of nurture and growth, frequency of renewal retreats, where are they struggling, or how they protect their integrity and boundaries in the counseling setting need to be asked. These are important areas because healthy pastors grow healthier churches.

Natural Church Development gives a good model of the essentials of a healthy church that could be used for assessment of the signs of a healthy church. These also could be a basis for pastoral supervision as well. What I have found is that the local pastor, the cabinet, and the Board of Ordained Ministries are all people of integrity, trying to do their best to lead the church forward. The problem with non-support has been a lack of working on this in partnership. The time has come to lay down paranoia and come to the table. I believe that a partnership with other bodies will be the first step in making the superintendency effective in helping clergy grow. Helping clergy grow is a step toward greater pastor formation that results in effective ministry. The denominational structures are being put in place to help the local church and pastor reach

their full potential. This new direction is arising out of the focus of annual conferences on “Excellent Spiritual Leadership.” Academies and pastoral formation programs are being devised to address leadership needs firsthand. The superintendents need to be a part of the ground-floor planning of such a venture, yet the distrust with the system must not get in the way. I see my task as helping churches become exciting stories of faith. The same is true of pastors: I want to see them grow and develop their rich talents for God in order to encourage them on to effective ministries.

One part of the United Methodist system that will take gigantic efforts to untangle and improve is the ordination process. From early in the history of the Church, a hierarchy has existed Church with the clergy at the top. Loren B. Mead writes in terms of reversing this clergy ownership (1). That may be a little excessive, but a partnership ministry between lay and clergy, local church, and denominational leaders needs to be fostered. This new day demands that the Church listen to the wind of the Spirit. At times, the issues around the ministry of the ordained and the ministry of the laity have gotten in the way of the work of ministry itself. This work of pastoring whether ordained or not will become even more challenging:

In the next generation we must produce clergy who can support the ministry of others and train them, rather than act out of a need to control their ministries. Clergy leadership must be unabashedly religious and spiritual, but they will also have to be flexible and creative managers of institutional structures, coping with all kinds of changes. They will have to become imaginative stewards, frequently operating with decreasing resources. They must be single minded in commitment to building up and equipping the people of God for their new mission in the new age (53).

This obstacle has been the focus of those who want to preserve and defend the institution and tradition. Even the most institutional people are recognizing that the Church must change its leadership structure and develop a new model founded on biblical faith in Jesus Christ and the priesthood of all believers. Any change of this magnitude demands that the Church address the process of ordination in order to attract more people to the United Methodist Church and full-time Christian vocation. The ordination process is far too cumbersome, and many are discouraged before they ever begin.

This chapter looked at some of the concepts and issues that are part of this leadership study. The goal is clear—ministry that produces fruit for Jesus Christ. The pathway is a little more complex but well worth the effort. The literature points out that the interest in leadership is not new. From the ancient times to the present, people have studied the reason why some are leaders and some are not.

This study has drawn the following conclusions. Leadership is a complex interaction of dynamics including person, training, and placement. A person's innate gifts and abilities are a starting point and are very important but should not rule out the skills and competencies that a pastor can learn or improve. The location of ministry is a very important dynamic. In ministry, a pastor does not work in isolation as an individual but in concert with a system that has a history and pattern usually long established prior to the arrival of the pastor. These dynamics help explain why a person can excel in one location and fail miserably in another.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

#### **The Problem**

The problem of this study was finding ways to promote pastoral effectiveness and what district superintendents can do to encourage growth toward excellence and pastoral formation. The underlying problem is that the United Methodist Church in the Northeast has been on a flat or declining pattern for nearly forty years. The Church simply has not been making disciples. One of the pieces of this decline is leadership of the local churches. Many pastors are ineffective or, at best, maintenance people. The Church is in critical need of excellent pastors who function effectively in leading the local church.

This study surveyed district superintendents and pastors to determine their perceptions of the traits of clergy effectiveness. The survey explored the understandings and patterns from district superintendents in the Northeast and how they are encouraging growth and pastoral formation. The insights and discoveries are helpful in assisting district churches to be in transformational ministry through excellent spiritual leaders. An instrument was developed to guide district superintendents in working with their pastors in a process toward determining what was needed to attain growth in their effectiveness. The instrument assesses pastors to determine their level of effectiveness in relation to the characteristics of an effective leader as determined by this study. The plan “Reaching for Excellence” surveys pastors, a trusted layperson, and the pastor’s district superintendent to identify strengths and areas for potential growth. Then from that data an individualized growth plan is developed.

### **The Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to identify the primary characteristics of clergy effectiveness and develop a tool that district superintendents might use to assess pastoral formation. This tool would also encourage growth in a pastors' level of effectiveness. The characteristics of effectiveness used in the growth plan come from the review of literature on leadership in Scripture, history, and various biblical and current models. The study identified perceptions and descriptions of traits for effectiveness based on surveying the Northeast Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church.

### **Research and Operational Questions**

District superintendents are charged with encouraging growth in their pastors' lives and ministry. The survey explored the role that superintendents fulfill in accomplishing this important part of clergy effectiveness. The study clearly pointed out that in order to recognize effective leaders, the characteristics of leaders who are already effective must be defined. The survey developed a composite of characteristics and identified the most prevalent ones in settings of effective ministries. The Church is notorious for assigning tasks to leaders and not giving them the tools or the structure to do the job. This tool will provide the resource needed to do that task.

#### **Research Question #1: Congruence**

What is the congruence between perceptions and definitions of pastoral effectiveness? In order to identify effectiveness, the study determined what effectiveness looks like through the perspectives of pastors and district superintendents. It also looked at descriptions of effective ministries as identified by the superintendents. Increased numbers are likely the result of several variables but some traits were evident in the

ministry of effective pastors. Nevertheless, an agreement between certain characteristics and the presence of fruit in ministry surfaced in the data.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:20 that “by their fruit you will recognize them” (NIV). In John 15:2 he said, “[E]very branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful” (NIV). Much of the material brings together the two concepts of making disciples and growing disciples as the essential pieces of an effective ministry. These two aspects of ministry are not a formula produced out of exact science but a pattern distilled out of years of experience and observation. Developing a definition that has universal integrity is difficult. Lewis gives one of the most helpful expressions of an effective leader: “The leader must become an artist drawing on his or her best experience, knowledge, reasoning and intuition creating a picture, a vision, an environment that moves the leader and others toward a new possibility, yet unrealized” (17). He states that “[t]ransformational leadership helps change and empower others so that they choose to invest themselves in new goals, in new directions, and in new missions” (16). The dynamics of effectiveness are fluid in that one may be effective in one location but not in another. The place and people served are part of the dynamics of ministry effectiveness.

This study does not attempt to explore the congregational dynamics; rather, it looked for what the pastor brings to the setting of ministry. To accomplish this task, the work surveyed perceptions of what it takes to be an effective and the descriptions of effective ministries to compare the agreement of characteristics between definitions and practice.

## **Research Question #2: Characteristics of Effective Pastors**

What characteristics are most commonly found in effective pastors? Pastors and

district superintendents were asked to select ten traits from a broad list of characteristics. The hope was that a pattern of what is believed to be necessary for effectiveness in pastoral ministry would be identified. The district superintendents' survey was a comprehensive survey within the Northeast Jurisdiction. The random sampling of pastors covered thirteen annual conferences. Out of 8,834, 130 (ten from each conference) received surveys. The surveys asked the participants to rate twenty-two characteristics in regards to their importance to ministry. These survey questions tested for perceptions about characteristics of effective clergy. The surveys asked both the pastors and district superintendents to identify their own ten most significant characteristics and put them in order of significance with one being the strongest and up through ten. The results demonstrate what they think are the critical characteristics for clergy effectiveness and the characteristics they see as their strongest (see Appendixes E and G).

To develop a composite of characteristics found in effective ministries, the participants were asked about growth in specific areas such as baptisms, attendance, and small groups. The district superintendents were asked to score the pastors who were surveyed on their districts. This cross check of answers provided a check on their perceptions. The district superintendents were also asked to provide a description of two effective ministries on their district. The data was tabulated and compared to the other lists of characteristics.

### **Research Question #3: Growth Opportunities**

What growth opportunities would pastors be more inclined to take to improve their effectiveness? This question explored where pastors are inclined to put their energies when doing continuing education. We asked for responses and put them into five



categories. They are

1. Personal development (spiritual, emotional, renewal time or personal goals),
2. Professional development (skills, training: time management, preaching, etc.),
3. Church and congregational development (vision, dealing with particular issues),
4. Only required events, and.
5. Variety of 1, 2, and 3.

This research explored the link between effectiveness and the attendance at growth opportunity events. It demonstrated whether pastors who attend growth-type events are becoming more effective in ministry. It looked at what pastors who reported growth did for continuing education or whether or not they took part in training.

#### **Research Question #4: Role of the District Superintendent**

What role does the district superintendent play in promoting effectiveness? The surveys asked about opportunities for growth that are offered and what pastors would like to have offered. The response of clergy to those programs indicates their level of interest in development of their ministry effectiveness. This question addresses whether opportunities that are offered are addressing the needs that pastors believe they have. The study indicates whether clergy and district superintendents are in harmony with each other in defining effectiveness and promoting growth. When pastors indicate that helpful and challenging events are offered but they do not participate, a question is raised about why they do not attend.

This research sought to find out what expectations the pastors had of their district superintendents. It also explored the environment of learning around continuing

education. The survey asked if district superintendents enforced continuing education planning. The data also reported on the type of support that is offered to encourage continuing education. These questions tested for an environment of growth that expects and values continuing education. In addition, the surveys looked at what deters pastors from taking advantage of continuing education events.

### **Hypothesis**

If district superintendents offer encouragement and support to help pastors take advantage of continuing education, then the pastors' effectiveness will improve. Also, a tool to identify needed areas of growth would help pastors do continuing education that would meet their needs.

### **Subjects**

The particular populations of this research were district superintendents and clergy of the Northeast Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. This jurisdiction has thirteen annual conferences with ninety-three district superintendents at the time of this study. The active local pastors including elders, probationers, local pastors, and lay pastors number 8,834 (G. C. F. & A. 2). The pastors were chosen through a stratified random sample of the population. All of the district superintendents were surveyed.

### **Instrumentation Trial**

A trial run of the survey instrument was used with ten pastors in the Mountain View District to determine if it measures what it was meant to measure. They received the first copy of the survey 20 September 2003 and the second 5 October 2003. The trial was helpful to refine the instrument. I received an 80 percent return of the first round of surveys and 60 percent the second round. The participants responded with an 82 percent

agreement between the first and second survey. Also, seven out of nine of the top characteristics identified from the pilot agreed with the responses of the larger survey when the full sampling was taken.

The characteristics survey portion plainly needed some clarification. To clarify the layout, the first set of instructions for scoring characteristics was totally separated from the second in order to help the participant understand the process. Also, the data on membership trends such as baptisms, new members, etc., was difficult for people simply because it required them to recall or look up statistics. They wanted to do the survey quickly, and the statistics I asked for took a little more time. The list of characteristics was also cut to the final twenty two.

### **Instrumentation**

A survey was sent to ten clergy from each conference. The potential of 130 pastors would be surveyed. Several variables were explored in the survey to determine if those variables affected a pastor's decision to attend growth opportunities. For example, it compared whether a pastor with a recorded growth was more inclined to attend continuing education events than a pastor with no growth or decline.

The survey included a mixture of fill-in-the-blank questions, circle the most appropriate answer, and prioritizing of categories. Three area college professors gave advice on the development of the instrument and the research format. The major portion of the survey was a table listing characteristics that they scored on degree of importance to ideal pastors.

The characteristic questions determined if local church pastors and district superintendents view the traits of effective leadership congruently. The results were to

demonstrate either agreement or disagreement on the important characteristics of ideal pastors. The assumption is that pastors with ideal characteristics would be effective pastors. Agreement would indicate that district superintendents see effectiveness analogous to local church pastors. Agreement between the two would provide for matching what is offered and what local pastors need in order to improve their effectiveness. If agreement occurs, offerings by the larger church would be more likely to appeal to local pastors because offerings meet identified needs. Disagreement would mean that the offerings, no matter how good, would not merit participation from the wide number of pastors in the conference. This data would also help to identify areas to work on as pastors became aware of the essential characteristics of effective ministry in comparison to their own strengths and weaknesses. The questions around offerings explored program types, the level of interest, and participation by pastors.

A pilot group of ten pastors completed the survey twice prior to sending it out to test its reliability. A one-week interval separated the two sessions. Then the consistency of their answers was computed to be .82. The participants made comments about the survey after the test to identify wording and confusing aspects of the survey in order to perfect the instrument.

### **Data Collection**

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis was used in recording the data from the surveys. Because of the degree of mistrust between district superintendents and local pastors, a need to guarantee anonymity in the process was essential. The surveys needed to be numbered in order to do follow-up on the surveys that were not returned; however, the number was the only identification on the survey. The original list of participants was

assigned a number to track returns and to follow up on non-respondents.

The surveys were mailed directly to the participants. The mailings included a cover letter with instructions (see Appendixes D and F). A piece of Juicy Fruit gum was enclosed as a token of my appreciation for their help. The strong fruity odor lingered for a few minutes to remind people to complete the survey. The mailing included a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the return of the survey. All participants not returning their surveys received a follow-up mailing after one month to remind them of the survey. The second cover letter was stronger in its encouragement to return the survey and a date of 15 February 2004 was set as the deadline.

The surveys met with some resistance. Pastors were uncertain as to whether their responses would somehow be reported back to their district superintendents, some district superintendents were uncomfortable evaluating pastors on their district for this study.

As the data was received, it was put into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for analysis.

### **Variables**

In this kind of a study where the measurements are looking at the relationship of a variety of factors, determining which factors have greater or lesser impact is difficult. The following list includes some of the factors explored as having potential impact upon the outcome of the study.

#### **The Level of Pastoral Effectiveness**

The Level of Pastoral Effectiveness is really the goal of the project. How can district superintendents assist local church pastors in growing in effectiveness? Effectiveness is obviously impacted by the other variables in this list. Indicators of

effective ministry also demonstrate what characteristics effective pastors exhibit. Other variables were more difficult to operationalize but must be taken into consideration in interpreting the findings.

### **The Context of Pastors' Ministry**

The context of ministry presents several dynamics that affect pastors' ability to be effective. A person with good qualifications and gifts may not be able to develop an effective functioning in certain settings. On the other hand, pastors may be placed in situations of ministry where the congregation's functioning is on such a highly effective level that the pastors make little difference.

### **The Leadership Style of District Superintendents**

William B. Lawrence speaks of a study in the 1950s that states that the leadership of the district superintendent is critical to the effectiveness of ministry so much so that he writes, "[T]he whole Methodist connection functions through the district superintendent" (11). Today, the position has evolved, and the Church is a very different institution.

Leadership styles have moved from managerial to relational. How a district superintendent functions in that position makes a big difference in the impact he or she may have on the pastors of that district. Friedman has studied congregational life and indicates that the functioning of the leader affects the whole system and is of vital importance (220-21). Gafke develops the role of district superintendent from a more sacramental and spiritual leader model (12-13). He sees the priority of the district superintendent as prayer and liturgy, following the spiritual leader model.

### **The Pastors' Natural Gifts and Graces for Ministry**

This mix of the pastors' natural gifts and graces for ministry is different in every

pastor. The reality exists that some have skills to interact well with people. Some preach like Jesus and lead worship well while others struggle to lead worship and preach at all. A complement of gifts may work well in one situation but not in another.

### **The Pastors' Education and Subsequent Training**

The education and training of pastors affect how they go about ministry and the skills they bring to the office. Seminary gives pastors a sense of confidence for ministry. A local pastor without seminary training may be less confident than an elder. Continuing education and training in conflict management, visioning, and finances, to name a few, will enhance the ability of all pastors to lead congregations. Education directly influences their effectiveness.

### **The Pastors' Propensity to Continue to Grow and Develop in Their Pastoral Formation**

Pastors who desire further development of their ministry have an edge over those who do not. Often pastors, when asked, "What books have you read lately?" respond, "I don't have time to read books!" People who do not see their professional, personal, and spiritual development as a key ingredient to staying fresh and equipped for ministry often demonstrate the consequences of their choices. Pastors who take advantage of the opportunities to grow will be blessed by that experience.

### **The Length of Pastorate**

The Church has come to realize the benefits of longer-term pastorates. Church leaders commonly accept that growth will not happen in ministry until five to seven years into a pastoral appointment. The dynamics of having a longer time to get to know the congregation and the community reaps many benefits for effectiveness. A pastor who has

been in a community for several years may have a much better understanding of the needs of the community and how to lead that congregation in ministry to those needs.

### **The Relationship with District Superintendent**

A pastor's relationship with a district superintendent can be a variable affecting effectiveness. Conflict or disagreement with the superintendent spills over into the functioning of the pastor and affects congregational life. Conversely, a good relationship with the district superintendent creates a sense of team ministry with both the pastor and the district superintendent being on that team. NFL football teams know that good coaching takes multiple coaches with unique spheres of expertise. The Church needs to awaken to that team approach both for the congregation and the pastor-coaches of that congregation.

### **The Pastors' Household Support or Challenges**

The amount of household support or non-support may have huge consequences in the ministry of a pastor. If stress, disagreement, or lack of support is in the home, the pastor carries a heavy burden alone. Good support and a family that understands the pastor's call to ministry and are comfortable about it allow the pastor to focus on ministry rather than the stress at home. If in conflict, often little or no growth is taking place because the energies are focused in a different direction.

### **Whether Pastors are Full or Part-Time Clergy**

Full-time or part-time ministry can affect a pastor's effectiveness. Full-time allows a pastor to be singularly focused professionally; whereas, a part-time pastor may have another full-time or part-time job to consider. In part-time ministry, taking advantage of growth opportunities is difficult.



Pastors who are in ministry as their primary career will be much more attuned to the process of ministry and the needs around them. Tent-maker ministers are more narrowly focused because their time and energies are limited. They may be very effective amid the unyielding limitations of their schedule.

### **Conference Standards for Continuing Education and the Size of the Conference**

When a pastor has an intentional focus on continuing education and growth opportunities, the pastor will be intentional about fulfilling these expectations. The environment of improvement and growth will engender participation and thinking about what areas need some attention. The size of the conference could also impact this in regards to the number and type of growth opportunities offered. Larger bodies are able to pool their funds and provide in-house opportunities that small conferences may not be able to do. In addition, the human resources to follow up on pastors' continuing education plans are more limited in a smaller conference.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis was both human and computerized. Surveys were reviewed, and data was entered directly into spreadsheets in Excel data files. Values were assigned to various written responses in order to code them for the analysis of the statistics. The characteristics portion of the survey as well as most of the numerical responses were averaged, and the averages were used to determine patterns. The data was synthesized into categories that were then compared for relationship. The qualitative material of this study provided insights into effectiveness from the field experience of pastors. The quantitative material offered statistical data of patterns of functioning and perceptions about effectiveness in ministry. The statistics identified characteristics that were

perceived to be essential to effectiveness in ministry.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

#### **Introduction**

The survey responses clearly point to some of the issues that need to be taken seriously in Chapter 5. The old phrase “jack of all trades, master of none” becomes startlingly clear in the data. Both local pastors and district superintendents have a naïve response as to what characteristics are necessary for pastoral effectiveness. The ideal pastor profile if taken from this data would frighten even the boldest away from local church pastoral ministry. The high expectations of “very important” characteristics for effective ministry demonstrate an impractical view of what complement of gifts a pastor might have in order to be effective. A likely hypothesis is that effective pastors often have primary characteristics in which they excel and others where they demonstrate a basic competency. Chapter 4 begins with a brief demographic profile of the participants who answered the surveys. The organization from that point follows the order of the research questions as presented in Chapters 1 and 3. Collected data that correlates with the particular research question is presented in the section corresponding to that particular question.

#### **Overview of Participants**

The surveys were mailed to all district superintendents in the Northeast Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. The Northeast Jurisdiction includes thirteen annual conferences made up of ninety-three districts. The population size (N) is ninety-three and the census survey was mailed to all ninety-three (n). A stratified random sample survey was mailed to ten local church pastors in each conference. The pastoral population

in the Northeast Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church is 8,834 (N). A stratified sample of 130 (n) was used (G. C. F. & A.). The district superintendents responded at a rate of 58 percent with 51 percent being sufficiently completed to provide useful data. In using the data around a particular question the total number of participants may change due to incomplete or unusable answers in that response while the rest of the survey was complete. The local church pastors responded at 45 percent with 38 percent being useful for data collection (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1. Population Response Statistics**

Subjects	Population (N)	Sample (n)	%	Responses Returned	%	Unusable	Usable	%
District Supt.	93	93	100	54	58	7	47	51
Pastors	8834	130	1.5	59	45	10	49	38

The gender and ethnicity of those surveyed is presented in the following table. Of the forty-six district superintendents who responded, thirty-four (74 percent) were male and twelve (26 percent) female (see Table 4.2). Among the pastors who responded, thirty-seven (76 percent) were male and twelve (24 percent) were female. These gender statistics match the general gender statistics of the Northeastern Jurisdiction. District superintendents are always elders so the female response rate of 26 percent for female superintendents is slightly ahead of the jurisdictional cross section of female pastors. The Northeastern Jurisdiction has more female clergy. Four of the five conferences having the greatest percentage of female clergy in the denomination are in the Northeast Jurisdiction. For the jurisdiction 17.69 percent are female full elders, and 50.97 percent of probationary elders are female (G. C. F. & A.).

**Table 4.2. Participants' Gender and Ethnicity**

Gender	Male	Female	Ethnicity	Male White	Males Black	Males Other	Female White	Female Black	Female Other
Dist. Supt. Total (46)	34	12	34 Males 12 Females	29	3	2	9	3	0
%	74	26	<u>% Males</u>	85	9	6			
			<u>% Females</u>				75	25	0
Pastors Total (49)	37	12	37 males 12 Females	35	2	0	10	2	0
%	76	24	% of males	95	5	0			
			% of Females				83	17	0

Among the district superintendents' ethnicity, twenty-nine (85 percent) of the males were white, three (9 percent) were black and two (6 percent) were other. In the female statistics nine (75 percent) of the females were white and three (25 percent) were black with no other ethnic representation. In the pastors thirty-five (95 percent) of the males were white and two (5 percent) black with no other ethnic representation. For the female pastors, ten (83 percent) were white and two (17 percent) were black with no other ethnic representation. The General Council on Finance and Administration for the United Methodist Church reports the statistical ratio of blacks in the Northeastern Jurisdiction to be 7.2 percent blacks with 4.4 percent other (G. C. F. & A.). The district superintendents and pastors seem to be representative of the ethnic ratios of the jurisdiction.

The ages of the participants range in a very expected pattern (see Table 4.3). District superintendents are typically appointed to that position having completed more years of ministry. Hence, a higher age range for district superintendents was expected. The district superintendents that responded were 72 percent male and 28 percent female,

and all of them were 41 to 70 years of age. In contrast the pastors' ages ranged across the scale with 76 percent male and 24 percent female with 14 percent under the age of 40.

**Table 4.3. Ages of Survey Subjects**

<b>Ages</b>	<b>No. of Male D.S.</b>	<b>No. of Female D.S.</b>	<b>No. of Male Pastors</b>	<b>No. of Female Pastors</b>
20-30	0	0	2	1
31-40	0	0	2	2
41-50	3	2	6	3
51-60	24	8	17	4
61-70	7	3	10	2
Totals	34	13	37	12
%	72	28	76	24

The location of ministry was no surprise with 64 percent of the ministry locations being in rural or small town settings (see Table 4.4). Suburban ministers provided 19 percent of the responses, 14 percent were urban ministers, and 3 percent served in university or college settings. This large number of rural and small town ministries accounts for the 23 percent of the local pastors serving in part-time ministries and 77 percent in full-time appointments (see Table 4.5). Of the part-time pastors, three were white males and eight were white females with no ethnic persons serving in part-time ministry responding. Of the thirty-six full-time pastors, twenty-five were white males, seven were white females, two were black males, and two were black females. accounts for the 23 percent of the local pastors serving in part-time ministries and 77 percent in full-time appointments (see Table 4.5). Of the part-time pastors, three were white males and eight were white females with no ethnic persons serving in part-time ministry responding. Of the thirty-six full-time pastors, twenty-five were white males, seven were white females, two were black males, and two were black females.

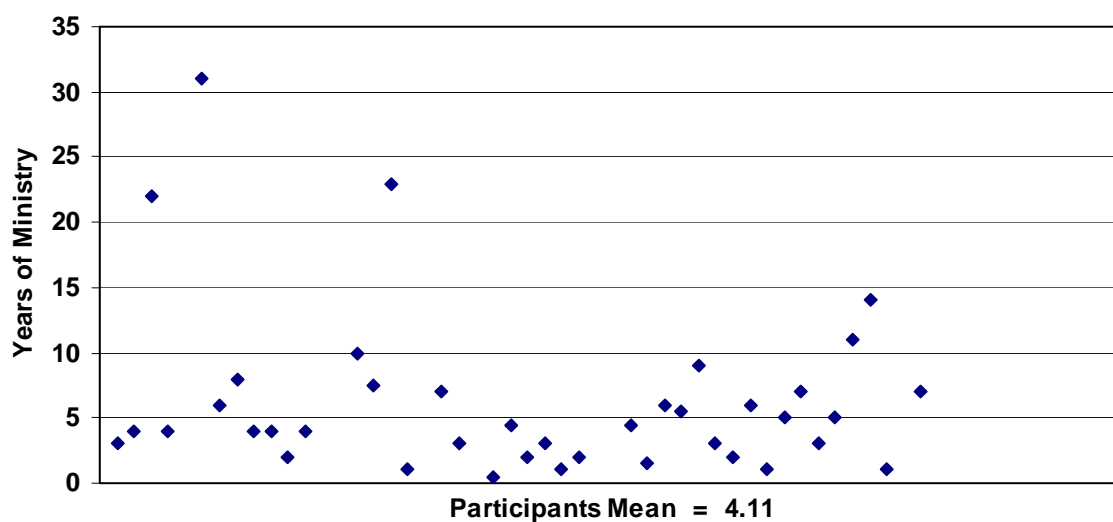
**Table 4.4. Ministry Location**

<b>Ministry Location</b>	<b>Rural/Small Town</b>	<b>Suburban</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>University</b>
Numbers	1542	444	335	71
Total (2392)				
%	64	19	14	3

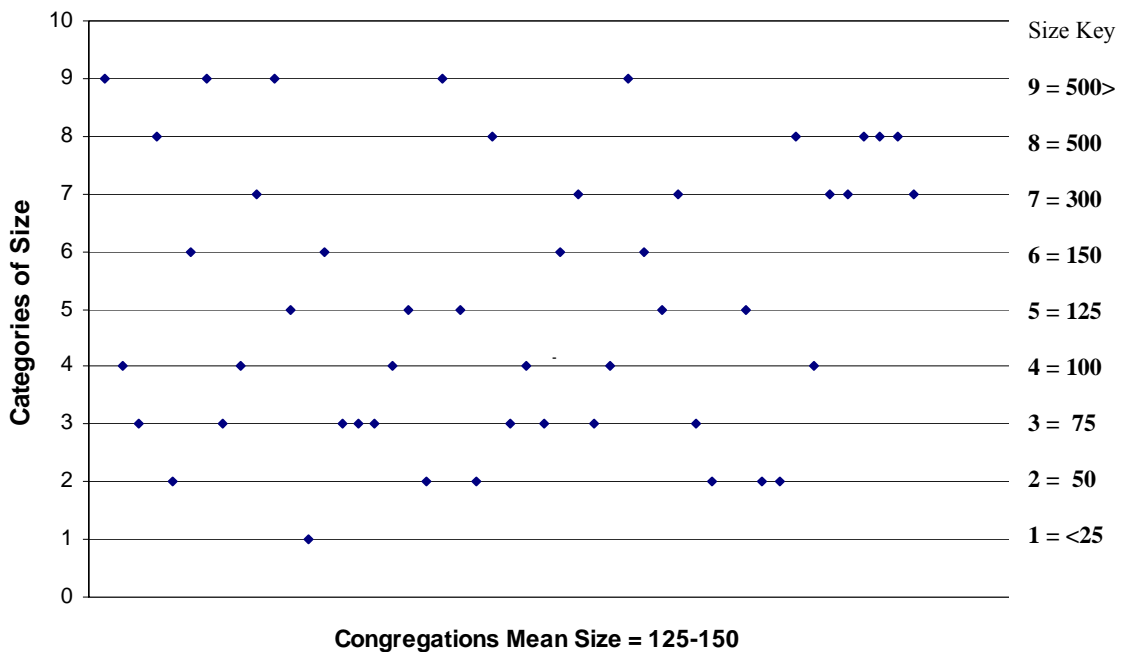
**Table 4.5. Part-Time—Full-Time Status**

<b>Pastors</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Other</b>
Full-time	27	9	Full-time	32	4	0
Part-time	8	3	Part-time	11	0	0
Total	35	12		43	4	0

The fact that the average for total years in ministry was 4.11 years is pertinent. The clustering of data around the lower levels of Figure 4.1 indicates that only five pastors of the people surveyed had served more than ten years.

**Figure 4.1. Years of ministry.**

The cross-section of pastors serving a variety of different-sized churches indicates that the survey data examined pastors in a variety of settings of ministry (see Tables 4.4 and 4.5 and Figure 4.2). The size of a pastor's church is often a reflection of their ability to be effective in different settings of ministry (see Figure 4.2). One of the complexities of the study was the number of variables that impact effectiveness. Many of the variables lie beyond the characteristics and skills of the person who is the pastor. For instance, some churches may be in a congregational (family) system that is immovable and unable to get out of that condition. Other churches may be victims of a history of misconduct or unethical behavior without any intervention, counseling or a process of healing.



**Figure 4.2. Size of congregations.**

Another facet of the demographic profile is the theological stance of the district



superintendents, pastors, and congregations served. The pastors' theological stance on a nominal scale of one to four has a mean score of 2.51. The district superintendents' mean score on theological stance was 2.71. The pastors' stance ranged from one to four while the district superintendent's ranged from two to four indicating that the pastors were slightly more conservative. Although the variance is slight, it does suggest some difference in theologies. The congregations' theological stance as viewed by the pastors had a mean score of 2.40. This score indicates that most of the congregations are viewed by the pastors as being slightly more conservative than the pastors or district superintendents who serve them (see Table 4.6). This difference in theological stances could raise a question regarding the ability to be effective when a disparity in theology is present. Further research on the effects of the theological stance would be interesting. These three mean scores indicate that for the most part the pastors, district superintendents, and congregations cluster around the 2.5 area of Table 4.6. This puts the majority in a more moderate theological stance. The variance between the congregations and the district superintendents indicated a broader variance of just over 0.3. This variance could be significant in that the congregations and district superintendents may have differing views and understandings of the church, its mission, and its behavior Table 4.6 shows the three theological stances in one table.

**Table 4.6. Comparison of Theological Stances**

<b>Scores</b>	<b>Congregations</b>	<b>Pastors</b>	<b>District Superintendents</b>
4	3	2	5
3.5			
3	13	21	19
2.5	4	3	6
2	22	17	15
1.5			
1	3	3	
Means	2.40	2.51	2.71

One of the key pieces of data is the agreement of the pastors' and district superintendents' scoring of the characteristics. When the scores from the pastors and district superintendents are combined, the overall score indicates a very high idealism about what characteristics are essential for effectiveness. The pastor's combined score was 3.47 and the district superintendent's score was 3.39. These scores indicate that district superintendents may have a greater realism about the characteristics of effectiveness. This could result in the district superintendents being able to help pastors to moderate their unrealistic expectations about their effectiveness in ministry and concentrate on the areas that might grow.

Thus far the data demonstrates the complexity of variables impacting effectiveness in pastoral ministries. The variables are multiplistic in the variety of ways that they come together in each particular situation. The next section presents findings that focus on the four research questions.

### **Research Question #1: Congruence**

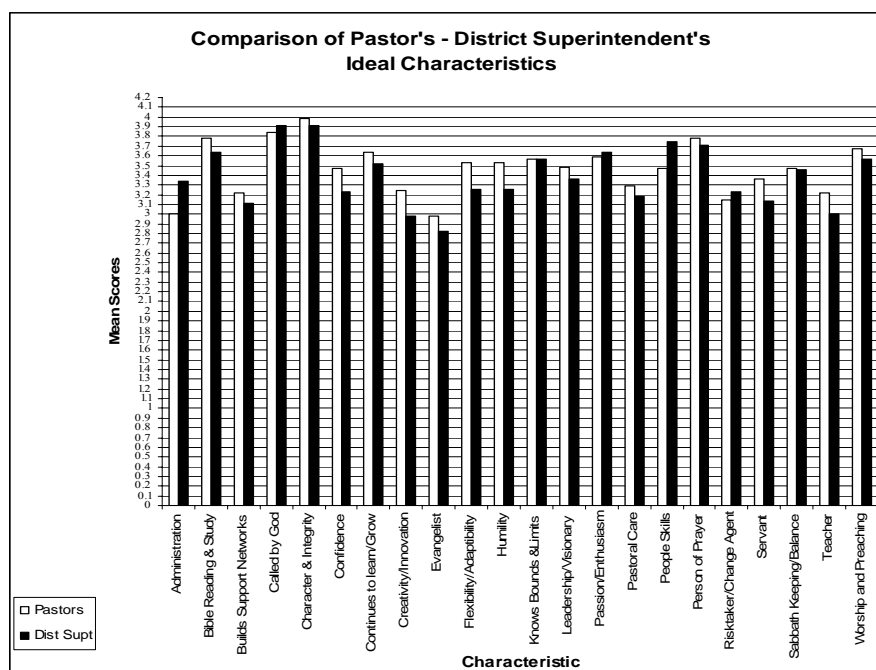
What is the congruence between perceptions and definitions of pastoral effectiveness? As stated earlier in this work, the United Methodist Church and other denominations are trying to determine the content of effective leadership and procedures

so the Church can sustain long-term effectiveness in ministry.

The findings indicated that most characteristics were rated as “important” to “very important.” Figure 4.3 illustrates that the difference between the mean scores of the pastors’ perception of ideal characteristics for effectiveness and that of district superintendents is quite small. Nineteen of the twenty-two characteristics tested had a mean score of three or above for both groups. The lowest scoring characteristics were builds support networks, teacher, creativity/innovation, and evangelist.

In this study those characteristics with a 3.5 or higher mean score were selected as the most important characteristics. Eight characteristics are at or above 3.5. They are designated with the gray shading on Table 4.7. These traits include

- Character and integrity,
- prayer,
- Bible reading,
- Called by God,
- preaching and worship,
- passion,
- knows boundaries and limits,
- and enthusiasm.



**Figure 4.3. Comparison of pastors'—district superintendents' ideal characteristics.**

The surveys suggest that an effective pastor must continue to grow and develop by continuing to learn more about the things of God and the Church. The statistics indicate that these eight are at least perceived to be more important and highly valued traits of a pastor who is effective. The comparison of what pastors see as ideal and what pastors identify as their own gifts is worth consideration. Caution must be used because an impartial evaluation of the impact of the characteristics on a pastor's effectiveness would be difficult. Three other characteristics were above 3.5 but not in both groups. The district superintendents' mean score for people skills was 3.76 while the pastors included flexibility/adaptability and humility both attaining a mean score of 3.53. The fact that pastors and district superintendents see people skills so differently is noteworthy.

**Table 4.7. Ranking of Characteristics**

Characteristics	Pastors	Rank	Dist.Supt.	Rank
Administration	3	21	3.195652	17
Bible reading & study	3.77551	* 3	3.652174	* 5
Builds support networks	3.22449	18	3.108696	19
Called by God	3.836735	* 2	3.891304	* 2
Character & integrity	3.979592	* 1	3.913043	* 1
Confidence	3.469388	13	3.23913	15
Continues to learn/Grow	3.632653	* 6	3.543478	* 9
Creativity/Innovation	3.244898	17	2.978261	21
Evangelist	2.979592	22	2.826087	22
Flexibility/Adaptability	3.530612	* 10	3.23913	14
Humility	3.530612	* 9	3.23913	13
Knows bounds & limits	3.571429	* 8	3.586957	* 8
Leadership/Visionary	3.479167	11	3.391304	11
Passion/Enthusiasm	3.591837	* 7	3.652174	* 6
Pastoral care	3.285714	16	3.195652	16
People skills	3.475482	12	3.76087	* 3
Person of prayer	3.77551	* 4	3.695652	* 4
Risk taker/Change agent	3.142857	20	3.23913	12
Servant	3.367347	15	3.152174	18
Sabbath keeping/Balance	3.469388	14	3.478261	10
Teacher	3.22449	19	2.978261	20
Worship and preaching	3.673469	* 5	3.586957	* 7

\* Indicates a score of 3.5 or higher

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In the literature review, seven characteristics were lifted up as normative to pastors who demonstrate effectiveness in ministry. They are

1. Spirituality,
2. Vision,
3. Leadership characteristics,
4. Personhood,
5. Change agent,
6. Relationship focus, and
7. Ongoing development.

The perception of those surveyed did not substantiate these seven in total. Spirituality, personhood, and ongoing development were clearly in the top eight. Leadership and vision were number eleven in both groups. People skills which corresponds to the relational focus was number three for the district superintendents and number twelve for the pastors. The category of risk taker or change agent was twenty in the pastors' data and twelve in the district superintendents'. At least in the participants' perception, these were trailing somewhat. These differences in some characteristics' scores make it important to collect some experiential data.

In order to compare these findings with what seems to be working in the field, district superintendents were asked to indicate the characteristics found in ministries that they deem effective. In addition, pastors were asked to give statistical growth data as an operational indicator of possible effectiveness in their ministry.

District superintendents were asked to describe two effective pastors/ministries in their district. The responses were scored and tallied. The characteristics lifted up by the district superintendents created a list of thirty-two. They were then merged into the categories found in this study. Most were easily translated into the twenty-two categories used in the survey. The findings are found in the Table 4.8.

The data in Table 4.8 raises some questions. Is leadership a characteristic, or is it a combination of characteristics that provides leadership in a group setting? Two surprises showed up in this data. First, four characteristics were clearly ahead of the others in what district superintendents see in pastors who are effective. The list of the top eight ideal characteristics from the survey of both pastors and district superintendents did not include people skills. It was in the top ten for district superintendents but not for the

pastors surveyed. Leadership was number eleven for both groups. The characteristics of leadership and people skills scored lower in importance in the pastors' perceptions, yet they appeared as the top two characteristics in descriptions of effective ministries.

**Table 4.8. District Superintendents' Description of Effective Ministries**

Characteristics	Number of Times Mentioned by DS	Characteristics	Number of Times Mentioned by DS
Leadership/visionary	37	Knows boundaries/ limits	3
People skills	19	Flexibility/adaptability	3
Called of God	12	Bible reading/study	3
Risk taker/change agent	10	Confidence	3
Transformation			
Worship/preaching	8	Character & integrity	2
Passion/enthusiasm	7	Evangelist	2
Servant	7	Pastoral care	2
Administration	5	Continue to learn/ grow	1
Creative/innovative	5	Person of prayer	1
Teacher	4	Sabbath keeping/ balance	0
BuildsSupport networks	4	Humility	0

The second comparison was done with nineteen local pastors. Twenty-nine pastors reported growth statistics but only nineteen completed their own assessment of characteristics. Their surveys were usable because they filled in both the numerical growth data and their own assessment of characteristics. These nineteen demonstrated effectiveness through growth in one or more areas over an eight-year period. They were asked to respond with numbers from 1995, 1999, and 2003. The areas requested were

1. The number of baptisms,
2. The number of new church members,
3. The Sunday school attendance,
4. The number in small group ministries,
5. The number involved in outreach ministries weekly,

6. The number of new disciples (profession of faith, not transfers), and
7. The number of new programs developed.

The data from the pastors who reported growth in one or more areas was correlated with their self-assessed ten most important characteristics. The analysis was to determine how many times various characteristics were found among pastors who reported growth. The findings are found in Table 4.9.

The agreement between characteristics of pastors who indicated growth and their self-assessed characteristics had a high degree of parallelism with the eight characteristics from Table 4.7. Of the eight characteristics that pastors and district superintendents rated as 3.5 or above, seven of the eight were in more than 50 percent of the responses. Six of the eight characteristics had a relationship of 66 percent or more. The top characteristics were worship and preaching, called by God, character and integrity, continues to learn and grow, Bible reading and study, and a person of prayer. Characteristics that showed up in more than 66 percent of the responses for pastors who reported growth were pastoral care, people skills, flexibility and adaptability, and teacher. These four characteristics were not in the eight primary characteristics from earlier data.

**Table 4.9. Characteristics of Pastors Reporting Growth**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Worship and Preaching	18	Leadership/Visionary	8
Called by God	16	Humility	8
Character and Integrity	15	Passion/Enthusiasm	7
Continues to learn/grow	13	Servant	7
Bible Reading and Study	13	Sabbath Keeping/Balance	7
Pastoral Care	12	Administration	6
People Skills	12	Builds Support Networks	4
Person of Prayer	12	Creativity/Innovation	4
Teacher	12	Confidence	3
Flexibility/Adaptability	10	Risk taker/Change Agent	2
Knows boundaries/Limits	9	Evangelism	2



**Research Question #2: Characteristics of Effective Pastors**

What characteristics are most commonly found in effective pastors? In many ways this research question dovetails significantly with research question one. The perceptions of pastors and district superintendents result in an agreement of eight characteristics. They are

1. Character and integrity,
2. Called by God,
3. Bible reading and study,
4. Person of prayer,
5. Worship and preaching,
6. Knows bounds and limits,
7. Continues to learn and grow, and
8. Passion and enthusiasm.

This above list has significant agreement between the two sample groups regarding the critical characteristics for effective ministry. The study lifts up the principles of personhood, integrity, and knowing one's boundaries as very important characteristics for effectiveness. Called by God, Bible reading, and prayer are essential dynamics of spiritual leaders. The eight categories also include leading worship and preaching as well as passion, enthusiasm, and continued growth. The surveys of district superintendents along with the literature conclude that leadership, vision, and the skills to work with people play an important role in ministry. Superintendents also identified risk taking and change agent skills of clergy as important.

In the assessment of the pastors' characteristics, the district superintendents and

the pastors only agreed on eight characteristics of effectiveness at or above a mean score of 3.5. When placed along side the characteristics that district superintendents used to describe effectiveness in ministry other characteristics needed to be added to the primary list. The combined list from the literature review, the perceptions of effectiveness, and the district superintendent descriptions of effectiveness give a more complete list of essential characteristics for effectiveness:

1. Character and Integrity—Personhood,
2. Called by God—Spirituality,
3. Bible Reading and Study—Spirituality,
4. Person of Prayer—Spirituality,
5. Worship and Preaching—Spirituality,
6. Knows Bounds and Limits—Personhood,
7. Continues to Learn and Grow—Ongoing Development,
8. Passion and Enthusiasm,
9. People Skills/Relationship Focus,
10. Leadership/Visionary, and
11. Risk taker/Change Agent.

In light of the fact that all sources of information identify essential characteristics, the importance of remembering that other competencies in areas deemed less important is essential. The combination of effective competencies will enhance the effectiveness of ministry. The characteristics not in the above list are secondary. Such characteristics as administration, pastoral care, teacher, and evangelism will help to round out the effectiveness in specific areas and in particular settings of ministry. These characteristics

of personhood traits, spirituality, or professional skills do not make a comprehensive list of the possibilities. The characteristics I have identified as primary are simply characteristics that will augment the opportunities for effective ministry in that place.

### **Research Question #3: Growth Opportunities**

What growth opportunities would pastors be more inclined to take to improve their effectiveness? One's original education for ministry relates to this question. The church is increasingly finding more and more persons in full-time ministry who do not have a seminary education. In Chapter 1 Robert Kohler was quoted in describing a church-wide trend that dynamic new leaders are not as attracted to ordained ministry that requires a seminary degree. He also states that more licensed local pastors are serving United Methodist churches (qtd. in McAnally 1). The data collected from district superintendents corresponded to these general church statistics. Table 4.10 gives statistics for the districts of the district superintendents that participated in the survey. Only the information from the district superintendents who responded is in this data.

**Table 4.10. Categories of Pastors as Reported by District Superintendents**

<b>Total/ Percent</b>	<b>Elder</b>	<b>Probationer</b>	<b>Deacon</b>	<b>Associate</b>	<b>Local Pastors</b>	<b>Elders Other Denominations</b>	<b>SOSC Lay Pastors</b>
2603	1338	208	40	82	701	86	148
% of Total	51.5	8	1.5	3	27	3.3	5.7

In the past seminary-educated clergy was vastly the norm. Today the cost of having a fully ordained elder is out of reach for many churches. Also, many pastors are entering ministry as a second career and are not inclined to do full-time seminary work.

The participants indicated that seven of the forty-nine pastors (14 percent) were under 40 years of age. Sixteen (33 percent) were under the age of 50. In reverse these percentages report that of the participants in this study thirty three (67 percent) were over the age of 50 and forty-two (86 percent) were over the age of 40. Of those pastors who indicated that they were less inclined to participate in any continuing education, elders represent four out of nine. Forty out of forty-nine participants indicated an interest in continuing education programming. The indication is that 82 percent of the clergy whether ordained or not would take part in education in order to grow in their pastoral abilities and effectiveness. This high number of pastors willing to participate in growth opportunities strengthens the need for offering continuing education programming.

Twenty-nine pastors indicated some numerical growth and responded to the question about whether they are inclined to take continuing education events. Of that group, 93 percent were inclined to do continuing education. Table 4.11 reports the type of continuing education event those twenty-nine would likely go through.

**Table 4.11. Comparison: Pastors Reporting Growth and Continuing Ed. Taken**

<b>Continuing Ed. Events</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percentage of Responses</b>
1.None	4	14%
2.Personal development, renewal, personal goals	6	21%
3.Professional, skill development/training	5	17%
4.Church development focus on vision of the church	9	31%
5.Variety of events	5	17%

This comparison indicates that pastors who are inclined to do continuing

education would take advantage of programs in the area of church development or a diverse selection of programs. The data indicates that 31 percent would do some kind of church development program, 17 percent would do professional development, and 21 percent would do personal development. These percentages increase when you factor in the pastors who participate in a variety of events.

The majority of pastors and district superintendents indicated that some funding was available to pastors to encourage them to do continuing education. The district superintendents reported that 74 percent of their conferences and/or local churches have continuing education funds in place. That would mean that 26 percent either have no conference or local church continuing education funds or that they are not aware of what is available. The pastors reported that forty of the forty-nine surveys (82 percent) have continuing education funds available through the conference or local church. Nine (18 percent) are without funds or with no knowledge of funding. Some conferences are more proactive in enforcing the participation in continuing education events. Of the pastors surveyed, forty-four out of forty-nine (90 percent) indicated that continuing education was enforced to some degree in their conference. District superintendents had a slightly different take on enforcement. Twenty-eight out of forty-four who responded, (64 percent), said that continuing education was enforced. A significant difference in the degree of enforcement was indicated. The difference could be accountable to the degree of pressure and accountability placed upon pastors by Boards of Ordained Ministry and the district superintendents in regards to doing continuing education. Chapter 5 draws implications and conclusions from this data.

#### **Research Question #4: Role of the District Superintendent**

What role does the district superintendent play in promoting effectiveness? The United Methodist Book of Discipline charges district superintendents with “encouraging [clergy’s] personal, spiritual, and professional growth; etc” (Olson 283) The phrase quoted from the 2000 Discipline defines what district superintendents are to do but this project sought to determine ways of doing it. The pastors who indicated some form of numerical growth and saw the leadership style of their district superintendent in terms of being a coach, visionary, spiritual leader, and servant leader equaled seventy percent of the group. Nevertheless, the model of CEO was more prevalent than expected. Of the pastors who described their district superintendent as a CEO, 73 percent scored their relationship at three or below with 36 percent rating their relationship at one or two on the ordinal scale. Overall the mean score of relationships of pastors with their superintendents was 3.42 on an ordinal scale of one to four. Forty-two out of forty-nine (86 percent) rated their relationship with their district superintendent as being good to very good. This percentage appears to indicate a pattern of positive relationships between the district superintendents and their pastors. Also, to discover that pastors rated their appointments positively was a positive finding especially in an appointive system. The mean score for degree of satisfaction was 3.57 on an ordinal scale of one to four. The degree to which pastors find ministry generally satisfying was a mean score of 3.38 on the four-point ordinal scale.

The data pointed to the fact that relationship is important. The statistics in Tables 4.12 and 4.13 point out that many in both groups practice a coaching or servant style of leadership. By simply acknowledging a good relationship with one’s district

superintendent, they indicated a value attributed to that relationship, yet pastors ranked people skills twelfth.

The survey asked for data in regards to leadership styles. The data was categorized into seven leadership styles:

1. CEO,
2. Charismatic,
3. Spiritual leader,
4. Servant,
5. Coach or mentor,
6. Visionary, and
7. Consensus.

Visionary and consensus were added to the original five noted in the literature review. Visionary leadership is when the leader follows a vision and takes risk in order to achieve the vision. Consensus, collaboration, and committee styles were mentioned enough to categorize them under one heading.

The leadership style identified by the pastors who reported numerical growth is reported in Table 4.12. Twenty-six pastors who reported growth statistics in their ministries responded to the question about leadership style. They reported their own leadership style and that of their district superintendent. The statistics indicated that both the pastors and district superintendents function mainly in three styles. Coaching, spiritual leadership, and servant leadership were identified for most of the two groups. CEO surfaced for five of the district superintendents and consensus was named as the style of four pastors.

Pastors more frequently classified their style of leadership as servant leadership and coaching. They classified their district superintendents' style most frequently as coach and CEO; however, district superintendents clearly indicated that they function out of the styles of servant leader, coach, and consensus builder most frequently.

**Table 4.12. Identification of Leadership Styles as Reported by Growth Pastors**

<b>Style of leadership (As reported by Growth Pastors)</b>	<b># of Pastors</b>	<b># of DS</b>
Coach	9	9
Spiritual leader	4	3
Servant leader	5	3
CEO	0	5
Consensus	4	2
Charismatic	1	0
Visionary	2	1

**Table 4.13. Self-Assessment Leadership Style**

<b>Style of Leadership</b>	<b>Pastors Self-Assessment</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Pastors on Their DS</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>DS Self - Assessment</b>	<b>%</b>
1. CEO	2	.045	11	.282	0	0
2. Charismatic	1	.023	2	.051	1	.026
3. Spiritual Leader	6	.136	3	.077	4	.103
4. Servant Leader	14	.318	6	.154	12	.307
5. Coach	10	.227	12	.308	9	.231
6. Visionary	4	.091	1	.025	5	.128
7. Consensus	7	.159	4	.102	8	.205

The review of literature summarized the leadership styles into five categories. The surveys demonstrated a need for a sixth and seventh category in order to process the data. Visionary leadership was the sixth category that appeared in significant surveys. The seventh category is consensus or collaborative. The distinctions between these styles of leadership sometimes become blurred. Chapter 2 helps to distinguish between the original



five.

Three questions focused directly on the role of the district superintendent and what they can do to promote growth in effectiveness:

1. What continuing education programs for greater effectiveness are offered in your district or conference?
2. What continuing education opportunities would you be most likely to take advantage of?
3. How could your district superintendent be most helpful in assisting you in your continued growth in ministry?

The offerings at district and conference level indicated how in tune the conference leadership is with the pastors in the field. Do the offerings synchronize with the perceived needs of pastors? The offerings of district and conference leadership fell into four categories. Thirteen did not indicate any conference programming to enhance their effectiveness. It was unclear as to why these thirteen did not indicate district or conference programs; they either did not know about the programming or they did not choose to endorse or report what the district and conference offers. The responses around continuing education offerings were similar in the areas of personal and professional development (see Table 4.14). Less than expected agreement was identified between the programs offered and that in which pastors would participate in. Table 4.16, the third column, indicates greater interest in church development. The surveys demonstrated that many would participate in additional training if offered. The written responses to the question, “is ministry what you expected when you responded to God’s call?” were intriguing; it revealed no difference between the yes or no answers; they expressed that

local church ministry is not that for which they were adequately trained in seminary or elsewhere. The numbers are not large enough to draw major conclusions but do point to topics for further study.

In Table 4.14 the district and conference are apparently hearing the need in area one and two. Area three does not indicate as strong a response to the expressed need. Pastors indicated that they would participate in continuing education offerings with 88 percent responding that they would be inclined to take part. Only six or 12 percent said that were not very inclined to participate.

**Table 4.14. Continuing Education Offerings**

<b>Continuing Education Opportunities</b>	<b>Number offered by District and Conference</b>	<b>Number of Pastors who said they would take advantage of CE Programming in areas of Interest</b>
1. Personal development and spiritual development	11	9
2. Professional skills development	8	11
3. Church development, program and vision	6	11
4. More than 2 of above categories	11	

The surveys also asked what deterrents kept pastors from doing continuing education (see Table 4.15). The answers indicated that they fall into four areas. The church would do well to take note of what deters pastors from participating in continuing education and provide new and accessible ways of growing into effectiveness.

**Table 4.15. Deterrents to Continuing Education**

<b>Deterrents</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
1. Personal and family	2
2. Professional job demands	0 (Several indicated their work in the church but put it into # 3)
3. Practical issues: money, time and location.	29
4. Quality and relevance	8

The survey asked, “How could your district superintendent be most helpful in assisting you in your continued growth in ministry?” The responses pointed out that pastors do look to the district superintendents for direction and suggestions of how they could improve their effectiveness. The responses are in Table 4.16.

**Table 4.16. Ways the District Superintendent Can Be Helpful**

<b>Ways the DS can be helpful</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
1. To make the location of events easier to get to.	1
2. Type of Program – to provide relevant events.	1
3. To help identify needs	17
4. Offer Support	26

Collected data from the pastors about their own assessment of characteristics was compared with the assessment reported by their district superintendents, I found that the mean agreement was only .545. This level of agreement indicates that district superintendents agreed with their pastor’s assessments slightly over 50 percent of the time. Such results could indicate a false reading on either the pastor or the district superintendent; however, it could also indicate that an observer of ministry as a district superintendent could have a clearer assessment of one’s characteristics than the pastor does. The reverse could also be true in that the pastor could be more aware of their characteristics than others.

In review of Chapter 4, several things surface as implications from the collected data. The findings confirmed much of what was suspected and provided direction for the development of the “Reaching for Excellence” tool found in Appendixes K and L. The survey data helped to understand parameters, concepts, and perceptions around clergy

effectiveness. Following are key findings of the study:

- The survey population provided a good cross-section of the Northeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church.
- The Northeastern Jurisdiction mirrors the statistics of the General United Methodist Church except for the slightly higher number of district superintendents who are female.
- The perceptions and definitions of effectiveness are not overwhelmingly congruent to deem certain characteristics essential to effectiveness without regard to other characteristics.
- An effective ministry is due to a complex set of dynamics working in harmony to fulfill the call of God on the pastor and the congregation.
- Pastors and district superintendents both scored most characteristics as highly important compounding the unwieldy tasks of ministry and the expectations placed upon pastors.
- District superintendents viewed people skills as more important. Pastors did not score people skills as high. Relational styles of leadership appear to be more effective.
- Pastors have expectations of the district superintendents' role regarding encouragement and nurture. In light of that, district superintendents must cultivate an environment of learning and growth.
- Evangelism was rated lowest among the characteristics. This was somewhat surprising in that "making disciples" is the primary mission of the Church.

These findings are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

This project grew out of a passion for pastors who are dedicated to the Lord and the Church, yet these pastors have difficulty experiencing effectiveness and enjoying a sense of making a difference. The dynamics at work create discouragement, defeat, and fruitless efforts. District superintendents find pastors trying harder and harder with little success.

The frustration of watching local churches decline in vitality year after year raises the question of what could be done. Pastors appear to lack the personal and professional growth in order to be effective. Life does not have to be that way. Something can be done and should be done to reverse the trend. With leadership being such a key issue in the Church today, the logical place to start making a change is among the pastors who lead these churches. The desire for effective leadership is a continuing search of the Church today.

Conference congregational development staffers are becoming increasingly convinced that strong, effective pastoral leadership is vitally crucial to the success of new church starts. Not only has the paradigm shift affected new church starts, but also church revitalization, turnarounds, and high potential appointments. (“Leadership, Leadership, Leadership” 1)

Hence, this project sought to survey pastors and district superintendents around the issue of effectiveness. The outcome hoped for was to discover ways to encourage growth and effectiveness in pastors and to create a tool that pastors and district superintendents may use to determine areas of need. As a district superintendent, the difficulty comes in seeing pastors who are great people repeat fatal mistakes again and again. Some have noteworthy skills but need other pieces of the puzzle in order to

accomplish effective ministry. Sadly, many efforts to revitalize the Church have convinced pastors that gimmicks and programs will do it. After a while, a sophisticated body of Christ finds the gimmicks lacking spiritual integrity and depth. The literature in Chapter 2 and the survey data both point to the reality that the functioning of the leader is critical to vitality (Friedman 108).

### **Project Findings**

The research and literature point to three things that need to be addressed.

1. The perceptions and definitions of effectiveness are not overwhelmingly congruent to deem certain characteristics essential to effectiveness without regard to other characteristics. The study has identified a two-tier structure to the characteristics tested. No one set of characteristics preordains effective ministry. Rather, effectiveness is more complex. This supports the literature of leadership that has moved away from measuring traits of effectiveness to the study of relationships in effective leadership.

2. An effective ministry is due to a complex set of dynamics working in harmony to fulfill the call of God on the pastor and the congregation.

3. District superintendents not only have the opportunity but the responsibility to help nurture an environment of learning and encourage the pastors in their districts to continue to grow.

### **Congruence of Perceptions of Effectiveness and Practice of Ministry**

Though some agreement exists between the characteristics for ideal effectiveness and the characteristics of pastors whose ministry is deemed effective, the agreement lacks full promise of being the secret to success. One of the goals of this project was to

determine what, if any, characteristics appear to be necessary for effectiveness in pastoral ministry.

Characteristics that received a mean score 3.5 or higher were identified as the most important characteristics according to the perceptions of pastors and district superintendents surveyed. Eight characteristics were at or above a score of 3.5. These eight are at least perceived to be more highly valued traits of a pastor who is effective according to the surveys. Comparing the ideal characteristics identified in the survey with characteristics named in effective ministries, the picture changes somewhat. These eight characteristics were compared to those of effective ministries from the responses by pastors who indicated growth in discipleship and programming as well as the district superintendents' description of effective pastors on their district. When the descriptive data is added to the ideal characteristics, the list results in eleven primary characteristics:

1. Character and integrity,
2. Called by God,
3. Bible reading and study,
4. Person of prayer,
5. Worship and preaching,
6. Knows bounds and limits,
7. Continues to learn and grow,
8. Passion and enthusiasm,
9. People skills/Relationship focus,
10. Leadership/Visionary, and
11. Risk taker/Change agent.



Caution in not overstating the significance of the characteristics must be practiced. To achieve true and impartial evaluation of any set of characteristics is difficult. Premature predictions or prescriptions based on the agreement of the characteristics and pastor's effectiveness after only one test would be naive. Longer-term studies would be needed to further test any hypothesis, yet this information can be used to ascertain the primary characteristics identified by the four various parts of the study:

1. Survey responses from pastors,
2. Survey responses from district superintendents,
3. Survey responses of pastors who indicated growth, and
4. District superintendents' descriptions of effective ministries.

The eleven characteristics listed above play a very important role in a pastor's ability to be effective; however, the other characteristics are not significantly lower in score. In fact, the lowest score on the list of ideal characteristics was evangelism for both the pastors and district superintendents at 2.98 and 2.82 on a four-point ordinal scale. This finding suggests that the other eleven characteristics are secondary and play a major role in effective ministry. These secondary characteristics are

1. Flexibility/adaptability,
2. Servant,
3. Humility,
4. Teacher,
5. Builds support networks,
6. Pastoral care,
7. Sabbath keeping,

8. Confidence,
9. Creativity/innovation,
10. Administration, and
11. Evangelist.

Recognizing that perception and reality can be very different is an important concept in this study. The survey responses drive that point home. Perception may or may not be accurate. In the assessment of the pastors' characteristics, the district superintendents and the pastors only agreed on eight characteristics of effectiveness. When placed alongside the characteristics that district superintendents used to describe effectiveness in ministry, the combined list of the literature review, the survey perceptions, the district superintendent descriptions, and the characteristics of pastors who experienced growth, a list of eleven characteristics for effectiveness emerges. These characteristics all fit into other parallel categories identified in the review of literature. Vision, personhood, spirituality, change agent, relationship focus and ongoing development all parallel characteristics from the survey. The reality is that they are all key pieces of effectiveness:

1. Character and integrity—Personhood,
2. Called by God—Spirituality,
3. Bible reading and study—Spirituality,
4. Person of prayer—Spirituality,
5. Worship and preaching—Spirituality or ongoing development,
6. Knows bounds and limits—Personhood,
7. Continues to learn and grow—Ongoing development,

8. Passion and enthusiasm—Vision,
9. People skills—Relationship focus,
10. Leadership/Visionary—Vision, and
11. Risk taker/Change agent.

In light of the fact that all sources referred to other important characteristics, pastors and district superintendents are reminded that competencies in various areas will enhance the effectiveness of any pastor's ministry. The larger picture is that both primary and secondary characteristics play an important role in the process that leads to effective ministry and ministry fruit. Secondary characteristics will help to round out the effectiveness in specific areas and in particular settings of ministry.

These two lists of characteristics identify which characteristics are primary in contributing to a pastor's effectiveness and what secondary characteristics play a role in effective ministry.

A clear definition of effectiveness is still to be discerned. In 1990, the General Board of Higher Education in the United Methodist Church attempted to clarify and provide help in evaluating and understanding effectiveness. The Division of Ordained Ministry published a pamphlet based on the questions that ministry candidates are asked at the time of their ordination. These questions give a basic framework regarding effectiveness:

The effective pastor will have:

1. *A personal faith and awareness of God whereby the minister can and does speak naturally (justly, readily, and clearly) about God from experience as well as from Biblical and traditional sources ([1988], par. 403).*
2. *A sincere desire for continually growing in faith and love ([1988], par. 425, 2, 3, 4), and is able to motivate and lead others in doing likewise.*
3. *Integrity in putting together personal convictions, lifestyle, and self-control with the expectations and beliefs of the church ([1988], par. 414.8g).*

4. *Enthusiasm and a high level of energy for ministry. This implies a person in good emotional and physical health ([1988], par. 425.5,17, 414.4, and 448)*
5. *Self Awareness in the following areas: personal faith, theological stance, skills and abilities, and current call to ministry in reference to a) the church, b) integration of work, family, and self, and c) compatibility of lifestyle ([1988 United Methodist Church Book of Discipline],par.532.2) (Patterson)*

The pamphlet gave the church a broad description of effectiveness but the effort did not translate into effectiveness of ministry in the local church.

The district superintendents' descriptions included "leadership and vision" in a significant number of responses indicating a higher priority than the survey characteristics indicated. Could this view of leadership and vision be a clue to the lack of effectiveness? Could the lack or presence of effectiveness ultimately turn on the ability of the pastor to "implement vision"? The question may be, "Can the district superintendent function as a 'vision caster' for the district if the pastors are not visionary leaders? The very appropriate saying, "a leader without any followers is simply a person out for a walk" illustrates the need for leaders to be people who are able to influence others (Maxwell, 21 Irrefutable Laws 17).

Alongside vision, the need for effective leadership is crucial. The debate remains as to whether leadership is a characteristic by itself or is a combination of characteristics that give a person the ability to motivate people and accomplish the vision of the Church. Paul in his teaching on the spiritual gifts included the concept of leadership in "administration" (1 Cor.12:28, NIV) and "shepherding" (Eph. 4:11, NIV). Leadership includes the ability to organize purposely. It includes the capability to recognize the latent potential in other people and coordinate their giftedness in the mission of the church. This process includes the shepherding ability to pastor, guide and nurture people with concern and sensitivity (Kinghorn 10-13). One negative critique of some of the church growth

movement is how vision is sought at all costs without regard to the people involved or those who have been faithful in earlier movements of the church. Leadership is critical for the Church to follow its vision.

Vision is the driving force of the mission of the Church. Many traditional mainline congregations demonstrate that they have lost their vision. It was a part of their heritage. Churches would not have been established and beautiful facilities built in service to God unless the people had a driving vision. The Church transitioned from God's vision to a mind-set of survival over a period of time. This condition has weakened the Church and it takes much more effort to turn a church around that has lost its vision (Priddy).

People skills were identified in the effective ministry descriptions. People skills and leadership were not perceived to be as important as other characteristics in the lists of ideal characteristics, yet they appear as the top two characteristics in the district superintendents' description of effective ministries. The difference between perception and practice raises some important questions. Pastors ministering out of their perceptions about what makes ministry effective may get unexpected negative results if their perception is wrong.

People skills are crucial to leadership in ministry. Unless pastors are able to deal with the basics of communicating and valuing persons, they will fail as leaders in the church. Many falter simply because they cannot deal with the relationships and dynamics of a congregation. Pastors also need skills in understanding, respecting, working with, and dealing with the conflict of people in the church. To preach, teach, and lead worship,

one needs communication skills that will first listen to God, then listen to people, and then deliver God's message to the people.

The literature was clear that spirituality is at the heart of what a pastor does. The literature findings agreed with the perceived characteristics of the two sample groups. The characteristics called by God, Bible reading, and prayer are at the heart of a pastor's vocation. This spirituality allows and empowers pastors to preach and lead worship well. If pastors have the Spirit without other characteristics or skills, they quite likely will fail. Nevertheless, the combination of spirituality along with other characteristics will more likely be effective.

The pastor as a person must be healthy and have good balance and clear boundaries in order to be effective. Pastors also need to be persons of integrity. As the literature points out in 1 Timothy 3, pastors must live lives of integrity. Paul gives an ethical and moral model for the ministry and the life ministers must live. Chapter 2 refers to Willimon's work on vocation and integrity and its importance in pastors' lives. Willimon says, "There is no procedural, principled means of bypassing the need for character" (38). In order to live that life of integrity, pastors need to know who they are, the boundaries that define and shape their lives, and the limits of where they end and God and others take over.

The combination of data resources presents a good argument that pastors must continue to grow and learn. Pastors who do not read regularly find their spiritual lives and their ministry becoming flat and uneventful. Growth is a key to the transformation principles of the Christian faith and as in biology when growth or change stops so does life. In growth and transformation of themselves pastors come to understand how God

wants to use them to transform others. When pastors know that they are doing the will of God an excitement in ministry is generated that witnesses people coming to faith, creating and sustaining the passion and enthusiasm for their calling.

Last, superintendents lifted up risk taking and being an agent of change as an important characteristic. Transformation is about change, growth is about change, and life is about change. The prophetic role of a pastor is not simply to anger people by the outlandish assessments of the condition of the culture, the church, and the world. The pastor's role is to help the church hear direction from God as to where God wants them to go. Like Abraham, the prophet will convince people to move out of their comfort zones and trust God to lead the Church to a better place. Pastors who are effectively able to bring about change without bringing down the church are greatly needed in the Church of Jesus Christ today. In many ways the Church has lost its way and is rediscovering its identity and the direction of its mission. The struggle is that the need for change is enormous in the current state of the Church. Pastors need finesse in dealing with people and taking necessary risks to bring about change and transformation.

The leadership style of pastors is another part of effectiveness that needs to be considered. The literature pointed to the recognition of the growing importance of relationship. Lucas asserts, "Leadership has to do with relationships, the role of which cannot be overstated" (2). Her focus on relationships agrees with the findings based on the descriptions of effective ministry. People skills practiced through a coaching model of leadership appear to have more merit in the church than some other characteristics or styles of leadership. Good relationships with people are the most effective way to do transformational ministry.

The New Testament has promulgated relational and transformational leadership throughout its pages. The statistics of this study point out that many who practice a coaching or servant style of leadership get results and are more effective. Pastors frequently classified their style of leadership as servant leadership and coaching. They classified their district superintendents' style most frequently as CEO and coach. Many perceive the role of district superintendents as administrators more than pastors; however, district superintendents clearly indicated that they function out of the styles of servant leader, coach, and consensus builder most frequently. If district superintendents are to fulfill the Discipline's charge to be "encouraging [pastors'] personal, spiritual, and professional growth, etc." (Olson 283), then relational ministry is what has to be done.

The positive responses regarding the pastors' relationships with the district superintendent was somewhat surprising. Mostly superintendents hear the grumbling and what is wrong with the system and their leadership. According to the research, superintendents are viewed as having a positive relationship and supportive role to be played out in their relationships with the pastors.

### **The Complex Mix That Engenders Effectiveness**

Leslie D. Weatherhead gives a helpful definition of divine healing.

By healing, then, is meant the process of restoring the broken harmony which prevents personality, at any point of body, mind, or spirit, from its perfect functioning in its relevant environment; the body in the material world; the mind in the realm of true ideas; and the spirit in its relationship with God. (464)



Frank Bateman Stanger espouses this definition of the healing ministry of the Church. In this definition healing is described as the harmonious functioning of the parts. In the areas of leadership, effectiveness, and making disciples, many characteristics, circumstances, and personalities need to work together in harmony giving God the christian's best effort. Effective ministry cannot be an individual endeavor. As the Trinity represents the community dynamic of God, the body of Christ comes together to function in wholeness to do God's will. Pastors must realize that they are only one part of the picture. Congregations also must understand their critical role in the effectiveness of a church's ministry. Effective churches happen in a complex world, and pastors function in a ministry composed of inexhaustible combinations of skills, gifts, and environments. Like Dr. Weatherhead's definition of healing, leadership is when the parts work together to lead the Church of Jesus Christ in health and making disciples. Leadership is about bringing pastors, faith, and God's people into a harmonious functioning; the best of its ability to do kingdom work:

Leadership is about providing the appropriate functions needed by the church at the right time, promoting health, maturity, and differentiation in others. It means challenging the system more than it means keeping people happy.... When the focus of leadership is on the appearance of competence, it results not in personal and congregational growth but in stagnation. (Galindo 19)

Many are quick to point out the need for effectiveness; however, the answer of how to meet that need is complex and one size does not fit all. Effectiveness is not the goal in ministry but is an essential means by which fruitful ministry happens. The reality that ministry is more complicated than a set of characteristics must be kept in the churches' collective mind. Complexity must not become an excuse for mediocrity but a

reason to press on and grow the leadership God wants for the Church. God wants the Church to be effective. Corrine McLaughlin writes about visionary leadership:

Visionary leadership is based on a balanced expression of the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical dimensions. It requires core values, clear vision, empowering relationships, and innovative action. When one or more of these dimensions are missing, leadership cannot manifest a vision.

Effective leadership is necessary for a Church of any size. Much too often the small church has been training ground for new pastors and experience decades with leadership that is learning how to be effective. This has weakened the smaller churches in the United Methodist connection. A plan to alternate seasoned and effective pastors with pastors who are new to ministry could be one way to address this. Another way would be to team minister much like classroom education is doing. This would focus on strengths and provides an environment of growing in one's weaker characteristics.

McLaughlin suggests that leadership is a balance of several orchestrated abilities and dynamics that together are manifested in a way that offers leadership to the organization. The same community dynamic is portrayed through the language of the body of Christ. The concept of the body of Christ with each part having its own function is the picture of ministry that Paul uses in his letters. Nevertheless, in individuals Paul clearly makes the point that everyone does not have the same gifts, and people should engage their own ministry gifts for the good of the body.

Effectiveness is a combination of many variables. Chapter 3 suggested ten variables for the purpose of this study. This project attempted to operationalize these variables through the survey data collection. Effective ministry occurs when the combination of a pastor's characteristics alongside of the environment and the variables in a specific place of ministry all work well together. The characteristics identified as

primary are simply ones that will augment the opportunities for effective ministry in that place rather than being a set of magical formulas.

The implication of these first two sections of Chapter 5 is that the Church needs a more holistic approach to improving effectiveness. The approach must acknowledge pastors' need for growth as well as their competencies for ministry. The Board of Ordained Ministry's eleven categories of effectiveness are not enough. The church must look at all the dynamics are critical to pastors' ability to be effective.

### **The Incalculable Opportunity and Responsibility of District Superintendents**

Effectiveness is a combination of gifts, abilities, and graces that when working in harmony within a sitting of ministry create an environment of transformation and fruit bearing. The survey results define the characteristics that are perceived to contribute most significantly to an effective ministry. If pastors truly desire to grow in their effectiveness then district superintendents have a ministry before them. The goal of this project is to develop a tool to use in planning a process to improve the pastor's personal and vocational abilities in order to serve more effectively. The data collected appears to be indicating pastors' willingness and desire to improve their effectiveness in ministry and have educational experiences that allow growth to happen. This goal rests on the assumption that pastors want to be as effective as they can possibly be.

Twenty-two characteristics were tested by asking local church pastors and district superintendents what characteristics they deemed important to effectiveness in ministry. A positive response to any such list is not a surprise. Nevertheless, the survey results appear to suggest that pastors and district superintendents have a very high expectation level, which may be difficult to attain. If a plan is put in place that is not overwhelming

and not beyond the resources of the pastor then it can become a tool to improve and not simply another burden.

The surveys indicate that pastors look for support from their district superintendents. This support is critical because churches are often in a mind-set that is not conducive to educational leaves or further study. A good relationship between the pastor and district superintendent is essential in order to be able to talk openly and frankly about the needs and plans for growth. The survey was encouraging because pastors indicated a good relationship for the most part. Overall the mean score of relationships of pastors with their superintendents was 3.42 on an ordinal scale of one to four. Forty-two out of forty-nine (86 percent) rated their relationship with their district superintendent as being good to very good, which is a statistically significant percentage. One part of leadership is relationship building and a good rapport between pastors and their district superintendents. This rapport stimulates positive outcomes. District superintendents rated people skills high which may indicate that they are consciously or unconsciously aware of the importance of relationships in their own ministry. At least, they are very much aware of what good or bad relationships can do.

Several factors point to the express need for growth in ministry effectiveness. First, the church has been getting results for several years that demonstrate a serious lack of ineffectiveness. Few churches, especially in the mainline denominations, are having great success in making new disciples. Many do not report any Sunday school programs, small groups, or Bible studies. Only twenty-nine of the forty-nine participants reported statistical growth of any sort in the survey questions.

The participants also stated that ministry was not what they expected. Coming out of seminary with a theological degree did not do enough to train them for practical day-to-day ministry. The survey responses indicated a need for more tools, assistance, and training on how to minister in the local congregation.

Yet, in contrast, the district and conference leaders are apparently hearing the need in two out of three areas of continuing education according to the responses to the question asked about personal, professional, and congregational development opportunities. Eighty eight percent of the pastors indicated that they would be inclined to participate in continuing education offerings. Only six (12 percent) said that were not very inclined to participate.

The surveys also asked what deterrents kept pastors from doing continuing education (see Table 4.18 p. 115). The answers fell into four areas. The practical considerations such as time, money, and family responsibility were the primary reasons that pastors are not doing continuing education. Quality and relevance, professional job demands and personal and family reasons were the other deterrents.

Like the local convenience store on the corner, opportunities for education must come closer to the pastor and the local church. Seminaries are realizing this need and are providing a variety of paths for seminary education. The Church would do well to take note and provide new and accessible ways for programs to promote growth in effectiveness. District superintendents are being prodded to take the disciplinary mandate seriously to find ways to encourage growth. In the survey I asked, “How could your district superintendent be most helpful in assisting you in your continued growth in

ministry?” The responses were not earth shattering but very helpful to point out that the pastors do have expectations of the district superintendents (see Table 4.19 p.116).

These responses clearly mandate that district superintendents be willing and prepared to offer guidance as to the growing edges of the pastor and to provide support in order to meet those needs. The district superintendents have an opportunity to offer support which pastors may need in order for the congregation to accept and embrace continuing education and growth plans. District superintendents are usually graced with resources and contacts to create opportunities for growth and ministry retooling. For instance, a district could bring speakers to a rural area to teach on the vitality of the small church, training pastors with skills to help congregations that are stuck, or hosting seminars on conflict resolution. Also district superintendents tend to be well read in the areas of church leadership. A reading list or book study to expose pastors to greater resources for their personal growth and effectiveness in ministry could be a place to begin. District superintendents also have the opportunity to nudge congregations into greater responsiveness for the building effectiveness in pastors’ leadership abilities.

This study helps pastors and district superintendent understand the complexities that impact a pastor’s effectiveness. District superintendents offer critically needed support to pastors and encouragement to keep growing. District superintendents need to take the lead on enforcing and promoting growth opportunities and find ways of doing helpful assessment for pastors. The tool “Reaching for Excellence” from this project has been developed as an assessment process. The process requires great integrity to face the pastor with the reality of what the district superintendents see and to speak that word in truth and in love.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of this project were obvious, and many were expected. The ability to get pastors to do paperwork is an everyday battle in the office of a superintendent. So the hope of an excellent return of the surveys was naïve. Yet, many were extremely gracious to return their surveys. The people who did respond deserve congratulations for their willingness to participate. Another limitation was the time limitation. A second study to compare the findings would be more substantive. To determine the impact and effectiveness of the tool, the usage will need to be followed and data collected over time. The third limitation is the fact that much of the data is dealing with perceptions. Perceptions create a subjective nature to some of the data that cannot be avoided. The fact that the data is also self-disclosed responses could skew the data in one way or another. An inadvertent limitation is the responses themselves. Pastors may be cautious about being totally honest. The suspicion that somehow this may get back to their superintendent carries a great deal of negative weight. Also, pastors may be fading and need help, yet they feel a pressure to be eternally optimistic rather than truthful and potentially find some life changing help.

### **Unexpected Findings**

One of the unexpected findings was how the study of leadership in the secular arena and the Church parallel each other. This common journey cannot go unnoticed because the study in business and other fields mirrors the churches experience over the centuries, even though the Church is slightly behind the secular studies currently.

Another more major find from this study was the view of evangelism. The General Conference of the United Methodist Church adopted this statement: “The

mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs” (Olson 87). Matthew 28:19-20 clearly calls the church to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (NIV).

One does not have to be very perceptive to see that the work of evangelism has not been done. To have the leaders of the church relegate evangelism to last place in the list of essential characteristics is surprising and deeply disturbing even though the variance was relatively small. More study of evangelism in the Northeast Jurisdiction needs to take place and possibly could be the most significant find of this whole project. Evangelism is a critical issue for the Church arising from this project. If effectiveness is about both spiritual and numerical fruit then the church is greatly hindered if “making disciples” or evangelism is not part of the profile of an effective leader. This finding points back to the lack of vision and its consequences on the effectiveness of the ministry of the church.

Evangelism can be a word with many different connotations depending on a person’s experience and exposure. Different contexts of leadership may change the way that a person would rate the characteristic of evangelism. The intent of this study was to use evangelism in its broadest sense leaving room for individuals to interpret from their own perspective. Without well-defined parameters and with the ability to interpret from their own understanding, it is surprising that people would not respond more positively.

Leadership, vision, and boundaries are topics that are receiving much attention in the church today. The survey of ideal characteristics puts them well down on the list. The



place they received was both surprising and troubling. The question it raises is, “How could the leadership of the church in the twenty-first century miss the crucial nature of these topics and their relationship to effectiveness?”

With the typical bantering among pastors, the degree to which pastors indicated their positive relationship with district superintendents was both puzzling and refreshing to find. A positive relationship with the district superintendent could likely provide security to address the more difficult issues of effectiveness in a pastor’s ministry. Just as in marriage, healthy relationships help a couple to work through the difficult issues. This healthy relationship paired with intentional support and guidance provides for feedback that the pastor may have never experienced before. When pastors believe that superintendents’ words are given with grace and out of love, they are more willing to receive that constructive guidance. Also a good relationship provides for greater indepth conversation around the successes and failures (perceived or real).

### **Practical Applications**

The most practical application of this project is the strong mandate to support pastors in their efforts to do continuing education. District superintendents are given the opportunity to champion the cause by identifying and encouraging growth in areas that will hopefully lead to more effective ministries. The tools in Appendixes K and L provide one approach to seek information, feedback, and input into the areas of perceived need. It will be based on the perception of the district superintendent, the pastor, and some trusted layperson in the congregation.

The second practical application is to be more observant of the total picture. Realizing that effectiveness is more than a list of characteristics, monitoring (supervising)

the personal dynamics of the pastor as a person in complex relationships becomes a very important part of the work of the district superintendent. The dynamics of the setting of ministry and the family system of the local congregation and the community must be part of the whole picture. The identification of competencies and shortcomings of pastors' professional skills will be a task to be honed. Together these will make up the model called effective ministry.

On a personal note, this tool has the potential to create more conversation around the whole area of effectiveness. It could provide some concrete feedback good and bad. In my own setting of ministry, the tool will be used as I meet with the pastors. Hopefully we can forge a positive relationship around helping the pastors to grow in areas they are or are perceived to be weaker. One of the pieces that is exciting is how the use of the "Reaching for Excellence" tool will collect feedback from at least one in the congregation. If pastors are more daring, the tool could easily be adapted to be used by more than one lay person in the congregation. Another part and possibly the more important piece of this tool is to use it to write a growth plan for the pastor. I contend that unless a plan is intentional it will not prove to be very valuable.

### **Further Study**

The obvious subject for further study is evangelism. Further study around the place of evangelism in light of the mission of the United Methodist Church "to make disciples" could be very enlightening. With the Northeast in serious decline, finding whether these scores truly represent the minds of the leadership would assist the goal of effective ministry.

The pastors surveyed reported a relatively short time in ministry. A comparative

study of short-term versus long-term ministry and the effectiveness of the two groups could indicate if pastors are really able to grow into effectiveness. Some work has been done around length of pastorates and effectiveness, but geographically to study the Northeast from this perspective would be interesting.

An interesting study could be developed around the theological stances of pastors and the congregations they serve. A broad based study could look at the differences in the various jurisdictions of the United Methodist Church.

Research on the topic of perception versus practice and the implications on ministry would be enlightening. For instance, a ministry decision made on perception could have a very different outcome than one based on the practice of ministry and experience.

Congregations often bury past pain and do not realize the impact it can have on the effectiveness of the ministry. They often blame pastors for low or no results. A study could be helpful if it looked at the closed stance of a congregation in relation to past significant hurts and pains and how the closed nature impacts the effectiveness of ministry.

Another area interesting for superintendents would be to study the elements of a good match in itinerant ministry like the United Methodist Church. A helpful study would be to look at the dynamics that make an appointment work and whether it is really the match or the other dynamics that create healthy and effective ministries.

Researching the dynamics of a positive relationship between a district superintendent and the pastors he or she supervises could extend the quest for effectiveness. Honesty is a crucial part of being able to really discuss the more difficult

topic of one's weakness. Without a trust between the two parties pastors and their superintendents would dance around the issues and never fully address how to change or improve the leadership of the pastor.

One last area of further study would be why the survey data and the literature did not place the same degree of importance on leadership, vision, risk-taking and change. These characteristics are critical issues in the church today, yet they scored lower than other characteristics.

Any study of effectiveness will have a built in bias. However, each study can contribute its own unique information to the process. The fact that leadership is not a static posture makes any definition less than adequate. Yet, patterns of effectiveness arising out of characteristics, personalities, and settings of ministry give clues to what is working in the church. As a result, efforts to increase effectiveness may take very different paths but all contribute to the perfecting of the leader for ministry in the name of Jesus Christ.

## APPENDIX A

### Gardner's Leadership Attributes

#### Gardner's leadership attributes

**John Gardner studied a large number of North American organizations and leaders and came to the conclusion that there were some qualities or attributes that did appear to mean that a leader in one situation could lead in another. These included:**

- Physical vitality and stamina
- Intelligence and action-oriented judgment
- Eagerness to accept responsibility
- Task competence
- Understanding of followers and their needs
- Skill in dealing with people
- Need for achievement
- Capacity to motivate people
- Courage and resolution
- Trustworthiness
- Decisiveness
- Self-confidence
- Assertiveness
- Adaptability/flexibility

John Gardner (1989) On Leadership, New York: Free Press

Appendix A helps to see Gardner's attempt at developing a list of leadership characteristics compiled from Gardner's book.

Source: "Classical Leadership" Michele Erina Doyle and Mark K. Smith, infed.org, [http://www.infed.org/leadership/traditional\\_leadership.htm](http://www.infed.org/leadership/traditional_leadership.htm) Pg 3-4.

## APPENDIX B

### Transactional and Transformational Leadership

<b>Transactional and Transformational Leadership</b>	
<b>Transactional</b>	<b>Transformational</b>
The transactional leader:	The transformational leader:
Recognizes what it is that we want to get from the work and tries to ensure that we get it if our performance merits it.	Raises our level of awareness, our level of consciousness about the significance and value of designated outcomes, and ways of reaching them.
Exchanges rewards and promises for our effort.	Gets us to transcend our own self-interest for the sake of the team, organization or larger polity.
Is responsive to our immediate self interest if they can be met by getting the work done.	Alters our need level (after Maslow) and expands our range of wants and needs.
Based on Bass 1985 – Wright 1996:213	

This is a helpful chart to understand transactional and transformational leadership. It is a overview of the work of Bass and Wright by Doyle and Smith. The original published work did not use this chart, Doyle and Smith developed Wrights concept into a chart.

Source: “Classical Leadership” Michele Erina Doyle and Mark K. Smith.  
<[http://www.infed.org/leadership/traditional\\_leadership.htm](http://www.infed.org/leadership/traditional_leadership.htm)>.

## APPENDIX C

### Summary of Coaching Change: Coaching Teams

Mission Attitude	Work Ethic	Variable Game Plan	Winning Faith
Clarity—core of values and beliefs	Gift development—help members discover their spiritual gifts	Listening—they listen, observe and interpret the changes/transformation	Long-term relationships—stay with the team through ups and downs
Humility—flexible, aware of what they do not know	Skills development—motivate team toward continued development	Leverage—looking to maximize the impact	Tolerance for errors—remarkable tolerance for errors and mistakes
Passion—emotional commitment to a vision of change	Testing—taking risks, experimenting and evaluating	Opportunism—seize opportunities	Uncompromising about growth—insist on constant growth
Urgency—impatient to move forward	Persistence—perseverance	Partnership—partner with volunteers	Desire for God—self-fulfillment comes from relationship with God
Curiosity—always learning and growing			
Caring—prioritize relationships			
Joy—live in harmony with their destiny			

Bandy gives an overview of the posture of a coach working with teams. This is a very helpful approach for pastors who desire to lead team ministry.

Source: Bandy, Thomas G. *Coaching Change: Breaking Down Resistance, Building Up Hope*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2000.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Pastors' Survey Cover Letter**

Rev. Ronald V. Isaman  
1801 West State Street  
Olean, New York 14760

January 5, 2004

Dear Pastor,

Happy New Year!

I am a Doctor of Ministry participant at Asbury Theological Seminary and I am conducting a research project on the role of district superintendents and its relationship to pastoral effectiveness. As a district superintendent in the Western New York Conference, it has become increasingly apparent to me that district superintendents are often in a position to encourage "Spiritual Excellence in Leadership." I am seeking your input through this survey, I will be able to study what effect, if any, district superintendents have on pastoral effectiveness. You and other pastors have been selected in a random selection process to represent the pastors of your annual conference. District superintendents are also being surveyed.

By doing this I am fulfilling two of my passions. It will help me to finish my D. MIN. work but more importantly it will be a help to others and myself in our leadership roles. I believe that we all want to be the best leaders possible in our places of ministry whether local churches, districts or some other role of ministry. We all desire to do quality work for Jesus Christ and the church. You and 229 pastors and district superintendents in the Northeast Jurisdiction will be part of this study.

Please take a few moments right now, if possible, and answer the questions. Then if you would be so kind to put it back into the self-addressed stamped envelope and stick it in the mail, I would be grateful to you for your help. Also, if you prefer, the survey can be found on my website: [www.mtnviewdistrict.org](http://www.mtnviewdistrict.org). Log on and go to the link "Effectiveness Survey," open it, complete and email the survey to: [mtview1@localnet.com](mailto:mtview1@localnet.com). If interested in receiving a summary of results at the end of this study enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope and I will send it to you when I complete the project. If you prefer an email version send your email address to me. After the research, individual surveys will be destroyed while the results will be kept on computer at least until the project is complete.

Please know that you can refuse to respond to this survey in full or in part. Your participation is completely voluntary and I appreciate your willingness to consider being a part of this project. Feel free to call (716-372-8047), email or write at any time if you need any more information. As a small thank you I have enclosed a piece of chewing gum for you to enjoy. It will make filling this out just a little sweeter.

Thanks so much for your cooperation.

In Christ

Ronald Isaman



## APPENDIX E

## Survey of Pastors on Pastoral Effectiveness and Spiritual Excellence in Leadership

Instructions: Please be as factual and honest as possible in your responses. No specific answers are considered right or wrong.

<b>Name of Conference</b>	<b>Name of District</b>
---------------------------	-------------------------

**Personal Data:**

<b>Age:</b>	20-30 _____	<b>Sex:</b>	Male _____
	31-40 _____		Female _____
	41-50 _____		
	51-60 _____		
	61-70 _____		

**Ethnicity:** White \_\_\_\_\_  
Black \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Status:** U.M. Elder \_\_\_\_\_  
 Probationer \_\_\_\_\_  
 Deacon \_\_\_\_\_  
 Associate Member \_\_\_\_\_  
 Local Pastor \_\_\_\_\_  
 Elder/Other Denomination \_\_\_\_\_  
 (SOSC) Lay Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ (SOSC—Serving Our Smaller Churches)

**Continuing Education Allowance: \$**\_\_\_\_\_

**Continuing Education is a conference requirement and is enforced?** Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

**Location of ministry:** Rural/Small Town \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suburban \_\_\_\_\_  
 Urban \_\_\_\_\_  
 University/College Community \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Years in present ministry location</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>	<b>% of time</b>
---	------------------	------------------	------------------

**Number in weekend worship services:** Under 25 \_\_\_\_\_ 126-150 \_\_\_\_\_  
(Check One) 26-50 \_\_\_\_\_ 151-200 \_\_\_\_\_  
51-75 \_\_\_\_\_ 201-300 \_\_\_\_\_  
76-100 \_\_\_\_\_ 301-500 \_\_\_\_\_  
101-125 \_\_\_\_\_ 500- ↑ \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Theological Stance:** On a scale of 1-4 (1 = very conservative to 4 = very liberal) \_\_\_\_\_

**Church's Theological Stance:** On a scale 1-4 (1=very conservative to 4 = very liberal)\_\_\_\_\_

2003      1999      1995

Number of baptisms in ..... \_\_\_\_\_

Number of new church members in .....

Number of people involved in outreach ministries weekly.....

Number of **new** (profession of faith—not transfers) \_\_\_\_\_

disciples for Jesus Christ in .....

Number of new programs developed in .....

**Pastors Call:** Check the statement that is true for you (Check One)

I had an overwhelming sense of God calling me to pastoral ministry.

My call came when I heard God speak to me, I had a dream or spiritual experience. \_\_\_\_\_

I gradually found myself leaning toward pastoral ministry and made a decision. \_\_\_\_\_

I decided that pastoral ministry is where I would be most satisfied professionally. \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**1** Please rate the following characteristics according to their degree of importance in effective pastors: 1= not important to effectiveness to 4=Very Important to Effectiveness (Circle a number for each characteristic)

**2** **Second:** Go back through the list and identify your 10 most significant characteristics Put your answers in the second column by order of effectiveness (1 is most effective to 10 least)

(1) Ideal Characteristics of Pastors					(2) My Char.
Not important --- Very Important					1 MOST TO 10 LEAST
Administration.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Bible Reading & Study.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Builds Support Networks.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Called by God.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Character & Integrity (Trustworthy, responsible) .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Confidence .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Continues to Learn/Grow.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Creativity/Innovation.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Evangelist.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Flexibility/Adaptability .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Humility .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Knows Boundaries & Limits.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Leadership & Visionary (influencer).....	1	2	3	4	_____
Passion/Enthusiasm .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Pastoral Care, (Visitation, Counseling, Spiritual Guide) .....	1	2	3	4	_____
People Skills (Approachability, empowers people, communication, delegation, values & invests in people, conflict management skills).....	1	2	3	4	_____
Person of prayer .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Risktaker/Change Agent, (Courage, decisiveness, assertiveness) .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Servant (helping the group accomplish their goals) .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Sabbath Keeping & Balance, (Physical self-care, family time, renewal time) ..	1	2	3	4	_____
Teacher .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Worship & Preaching .....	1	2	3	4	_____

In my words my style of leadership is: \_\_\_\_\_

**My district superintendent's style of leadership is:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of close support people you rely on?** \_\_\_\_\_

**They are:**

Family	_____
U.M. colleagues	_____
Other Colleagues	_____
Friends	_____

**On a Scale of 1-4 (1 low to 4 high)**

Rate your satisfaction in your current appointment

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Rate your overall degree of satisfaction in pastoral appointment

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Rate yourself on inclination to participate in continuing education in areas where you feel you need or desire to develop your effectiveness:

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

What continuing education programs for greater effectiveness are offered in your district or conference?

What continuing education opportunities would you be most likely to take advantage of?

What deterrents keep you from doing continuing education events? \_\_\_\_\_

How could your district superintendent be most helpful in assisting you in your continued growth ministry?

What is your relationship with your district superintendent? (1 = Poor to 4 = Very Good) 1    2    3    4

Is pastoral ministry what you expected when you responded to God's call? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

Explain why or why not \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your sense of fruit, results, or success in ministry. Use two examples that demonstrate this in your ministry.

1.:

2.:

## APPENDIX F

### District Superintendents' Survey Cover Letter

Rev. Ronald V. Isaman  
1801 West State Street  
Olean, New York 14760

January 5, 2004

Dear District Superintendent,

Happy New Year!

I am a Doctor of Ministry participant at Asbury Theological Seminary and I am conducting a research project on the role of district superintendent and its relationship to pastoral effectiveness. As a district superintendent in the Western New York Conference, it has become increasingly apparent to me that district superintendents are often in a position to promote "Spiritual Excellence in Leadership." I am seeking your input through this survey. I will be able to study what effect, if any, district superintendents have on promoting pastoral effectiveness. You have been selected because of your position as a district superintendent. I am surveying all the district superintendents in the Northeast Jurisdiction.

The survey is also going to 130 local church pastors. One of those pastors may be on your district. If so, you will receive a survey regarding your perception of their areas of effectiveness. Their name will be on the survey, if you receive a blank copy then you do not have any pastors from your district being surveyed. Some may have as many as four. Please answer the survey as to the top ten characteristics of effectiveness for each pastor named. Start with one as the most effective characteristic and proceed to identify ten in their order of effectiveness.

By doing this I am fulfilling two of my passions. It will help me to finish my D. MIN. work but more importantly it will be a help to others and myself in our leadership roles. I believe that we all want to be the best leaders possible in our places of ministry whether local churches, districts or some other role of ministry. We all desire to do quality work for Jesus Christ and the church.

Please take a few moments right now, if possible, and answer the questions. Then if you would be so kind to put it back into the self-addressed stamped envelope and stick it in the mail, I would be grateful to you for your help. Also, if you prefer, the survey can be found on my website: [www.mtnviewdistrict.org](http://www.mtnviewdistrict.org). Log on and go to the link "Effectiveness Survey," open it, complete and email the survey to: [mtview1@localnet.com](mailto:mtview1@localnet.com). If interested in receiving a summary of results at the end of this study enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope and I will send it to you when I complete the project. If you prefer an email version send your email address to me. After the research, individual surveys will be destroyed while the results will be kept on computer at least until the project is complete.

Please know that you can refuse to respond to this survey in full or in part. Your participation is completely voluntary and I appreciate your willingness to consider being a part of this project. Feel free to call (716-372-8047), email or write me at any time if you need any more information. As a small thank you I have enclosed a piece of chewing gum for you to enjoy. It will make filling this out just a little sweeter.

Thanks so much for your cooperation.

In Christ

Ronald Isaman

## APPENDIX G

### Survey of District Superintendents on Pastoral Effectiveness and Spiritual Excellence in Leadership

Instructions: Please be as factual and honest as possible in your responses. No specific answers are considered right or wrong.

Name of Conference \_\_\_\_\_ Name of District \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Data:** Age: 20-30 \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: Male \_\_\_\_\_  
 31-40 \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_  
 41-50 \_\_\_\_\_  
 51-60 \_\_\_\_\_  
 61-70 \_\_\_\_\_

**Ethnicity:** White \_\_\_\_\_  
 Black \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**In your district what is the number of:** U.M. Elders \_\_\_\_\_  
 Probationers \_\_\_\_\_  
 Deacons \_\_\_\_\_  
 Associate Members \_\_\_\_\_  
 Local Pastors \_\_\_\_\_  
 Elders/Other Denominations \_\_\_\_\_  
 (SOSC) Lay Pastors \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Serving Our Smaller Churches) \_\_\_\_\_

**Continuing Education Allowance:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Continuing Education is a conference requirement and is enforced?** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Context of district ministry; please indicate numbers of churches in each:**

Mostly:  
 Rural/Small Town \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suburban \_\_\_\_\_  
 Urban \_\_\_\_\_  
 University/College Community \_\_\_\_\_

**Years in present ministry location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Theological Stance: On a scale of 1-4 (1 = very conservative to 4 = very liberal)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Call: Check the statement that is true for you (Check One)**

I had an overwhelming sense of God calling me to pastoral ministry. \_\_\_\_\_

My call came when I heard God speak to me, I had a dream or spiritual experience. \_\_\_\_\_

I gradually found myself leaning toward pastoral ministry and made a decision. \_\_\_\_\_

I decided that pastoral ministry is where I would be most satisfied professionally. \_\_\_\_\_

**Other** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>1</b>	<b>Please rate the following characteristics according to their degree of importance in effective pastors: 1= not important to effectiveness to 4=Very Important to Effectiveness (Circle a number for each characteristic)</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Second:</b> Go back through the list and identify your 10 most significant characteristics Put your answers in the second column by order of effectiveness (1 is most effective to 10 least)

(1) Ideal Characteristics of Pastors					(2) MyChar.
	Not important --- Very Important				1 MOST TO 10 LEAST
Administration.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Bible Reading & Study.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Builds Support Networks.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Called by God.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Character & Integrity (Trustworthy, responsible) .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Confidence .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Continues to Learn/Grow.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Creativity/Innovation.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Evangelist.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Flexibility/Adaptability .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Humility .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Knows Boundaries & Limits.....	1	2	3	4	_____
Leadership & Visionary (influencer).....	1	2	3	4	_____
Passion/Enthusiasm .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Pastoral Care, (Visitation, Counseling, Spiritual Guide) .....	1	2	3	4	_____
People Skills (Approachability, empowers people, communication, delegation, values & invests in people, conflict management skills).....	1	2	3	4	_____
Person of prayer .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Risktaker/Change Agent, (Courage, decisiveness, assertiveness) .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Servant (helping the group accomplish their goals) .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Sabbath Keeping & Balance, (Physical self-care, family time, renewal time) ..	1	2	3	4	_____
Teacher .....	1	2	3	4	_____
Worship & Preaching .....	1	2	3	4	_____

**In my words my style of leadership is:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of close support people you rely on:** \_\_\_\_\_

They are:      Family      \_\_\_\_\_  
                     U.M. colleagues      \_\_\_\_\_  
                     Other colleagues      \_\_\_\_\_  
                     Friends      \_\_\_\_\_

**On a Scale of 1-4 (1 low to 4 high)**

Rate your satisfaction in your current appointment	1	2	3	4
--	---	---	---	---

Rate your overall degree of satisfaction in pastoral appointment	1	2	3	4
--	---	---	---	---

Rate yourself on inclination to participate in continuing education in areas where you feel you need or desire to develop your effectiveness

	1	2	3	4
--	---	---	---	---

What continuing education programs for greater effectiveness are offered in your district or conference?

What continuing education opportunities would you be most likely to take advantage of?

What deterrents keep you from doing continuing education events? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Is pastoral ministry what you expected when you responded to God's call? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

Explain why or why not\_\_\_\_\_

How are you asked to be helpful in assisting continuing education among the pastors of your district?

As a DS can you articulate your vision for our district?



Describe two effective leaders in your district and tell why you picked them:

1.

What is the tenure of their ministry in that church? \_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor's total years of ministry, service in all churches served \_\_\_\_\_

2.

What is the tenure of their ministry in that church? \_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor's total years of ministry, service in all churches served \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX H

### District Superintendents' Assessment Of Pastors On their District

Please fill out this form on the pastor named from your district. The inventory will be used for this study and the results are purely for correlation of your own assessment compared to the self-assessment of your pastor.

Pastor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please identify the areas of effectiveness you witness in the pastor named from your district: Select 10 areas beginning with 1 as the most effective and number them in order of effectiveness.

#### Characteristics of the above named pastor

Administration.....	_____
Bible Reading & Study.....	_____
Builds Support Networks.....	_____
Called by God.....	_____
Character & Integrity (Trustworthy, responsible) .....	_____
Confidence .....	_____
Continues to Learn/Grow.....	_____
Creativity/Innovation.....	_____
Evangelist.....	_____
Flexibility/Adaptability .....	_____
Humility .....	_____
Knows Boundaries & Limits.....	_____
Leadership & Visionary (influencer).....	_____
Passion/Enthusiasm .....	_____
Pastoral Care, (Visitation, Counseling, Spiritual Guide) .....	_____
People Skills (Approachability, empowers people, communication, delegation, values & invests in people, conflict management skills).....	_____
Person of prayer .....	_____
Risktaker/Change Agent, (Courage, decisiveness, assertiveness) .....	_____
Servant (helping the group accomplish their goals) .....	_____
Sabbath Keeping & Balance, (Physical self-care, family time, renewal time) ..	_____
Teacher .....	_____
Worship & Preaching .....	_____

**District Superintendents: Please do one survey for each pastor's name sent to you in the original mailing. Remember you only do this if one of your district's pastors is also being surveyed.**

## **APPENDIX I**

### **Survey Reminder Letter**

Rev. Ronald V. Isaman  
1801 West State Street  
Olean, New York 14760

January 23, 2004

Dear Pastor,

I am a D.Min. student at Asbury Theological Seminary and I am completing my dissertation project on clergy effectiveness. On January 5, 2004 I mailed a survey to you and to date I have not received your response. I understand how busy you are. However, I want you to know that your responses are important to me and I don't want to lose out on your input.

For your convenience I am enclosing another copy of the survey or you can find the survey on line at [www.mtnviewdistrict.org](http://www.mtnviewdistrict.org). I hope that you will fill it out and return it as soon as possible. If you have already completed the survey and mailed it I thank you for your time. I need to have all my responses in by Feb 15 in order to process the data and complete the work on the project. Remember, if you would like a summary of my findings, enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope or an email address for me to forward them to you.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

In Christ

Rev. Ronald V. Isaman

## APPENDIX J

### Scoring Key for Surveys

Some of the survey questions required a key to score the responses.

Questions:

In my words my style of leadership is

1. CEO,
2. Charismatic,
3. Spiritual Leader,
4. Servant Leader (Pastoral was put here),
5. Coach/Mentor,
6. Visionary, and
7. Consensus (Collaborative and Committee).

The answer regarding style of leadership used the save seven style descriptions.

What continuing Education programs for greater effectiveness are offered in your district of conference?

1. Personal development (renewal and personal goals),
2. Professional (skills and training),
3. Church development (focus on the vision and mission of the church), and
4. More than two of the above.

What continuing education programs would you be most likely to take advantage of [sic]?

1. Personal development (renewal and personal goals),
2. Professional (skills and training),
3. Church development (focus on the vision and mission of the church),
4. Required attendance programs, and
5. A variety of programs.

What deterrents keep you from doing continuing education events?

1. Personal and family reason,
2. Professional or job demands,
3. Money, time, location and when offered, and
4. Quality and relevance.

How could your district superintendent be most helpful in assisting you in your continued growth in ministry?

1. Location and schedule of events,
2. The types of program offered,
3. Help in identifying needs, and
4. Support in a variety of ways.

Describe your sense of fruit, results, or success in ministry.

1. Numbers,
2. Program participation results (growth),
3. Transformation,
4. Outreach project involvement,
5. Faithfulness and understanding the Christian faith, and
6. Build community.

APPENDIX K

# Reaching For Excellence

A Growth Plan for Pastors  
Using Feedback from  
Laity and District Superintendents



DESIGNED BY RONALD V. ISAMAN  
IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY DISSERTATION

**IDENTIFYING AND PROMOTING EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP  
THROUGH THE ROLE OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT IN THE  
NORTHEAST JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Directions for Usage of this Growth Plan

1. Before you use the survey fill out the **Name Section** and **Section One** on the next page. List the areas that you have already identified some desired growth.
2. Have **three sets of the surveys filled out**, one by each of the following:
  - a. Your District Superintendent,
  - b. Yourself—be very honest with yourself and
  - c. A trusted lay person who will be very forthright in responding to the questionnaire.
    - i. Each person will answer their survey questions from their own vantage point, even though the questions are written from the point of a lay person in the congregation.
3. Put your **scores on the tally sheet**.
  - a. Under the number put the score 1-5 from the surveys.
  - b. Do this for all three persons
  - c. Total the scores and place that number on the total line
  - d. You can perform a mathematical percentage by dividing the total from the survey by the total possible scores in the parenthesis.
  - e. Underneath the total you will find one or more numbers in parenthesis. Place on the line the corresponding response score from the survey that matches these numbers. **Do Not** add the number into the total above it. It stands alone!
  - f. When the sum is close in value to the number in the bracket, you are doing well.
4. Look over the results of the tally and look for categories that are less than 80% of the potential score. For instance: a total of 60 out of 75 possible points is at 80%. Anything under a score of sixty would be low enough to take a look at.
5. Identify your lowest scores and write them into **Section Two**.
6. Compare the list with the areas you listed in Section One as areas where you desire to grow.
7. Identify the areas you are ready to work on in **Section Three**.
8. Design a growth plan in conversation with your district superintendent under **Section Four**. Indicate what the plan will include and how you will be accountable and to whom you will be accountable. Accountability reporting should include what you have learned.

## Pastor Characteristics Growth Plan

Please circle the number the best represents your agreement or disagreement with the statement. Please read carefully! You may find that you are not sure of some things, please answer from what you perceive to be the case.

1 = Disagree

2 = Somewhat Disagree

3 = Somewhat Agree

4 = Nearly Always Agree

5 = Totally Agree

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The Pastor expresses contagious enthusiasm.....                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I trust my pastor totally.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The pastor gets frustrated easily when things change.....                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The pastor unwraps the meaning of God's word in bible study.....            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. We love to learn from our pastor.....                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The pastor has appropriate expectations of congregational support .....     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Our pastor is a well-rounded person.....                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The pastor remains confident in times of disagreement.....                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. The pastor leads us in making new disciples.....                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Paperwork and deadlines are a priority.....                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Confidential sharing is protected by our pastor.....                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Our pastor's confidence accepts the challenges of ministry.....            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Pastor is usually a positive.....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Our pastor indicates areas where she/he would like to grow.....            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Pastor seeks to make good changes in the ministry of our church.....       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. The pastor works at growing spiritually.....                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. Our pastor encourages the congregation to take Sabbath time.....           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. The pastor's confidence can be shaken easily.....                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. Pastor establishes good boundaries for work, community and family.....     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. The pastor seldom struggles to know what to do next.....                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. The pastor has an ego that will not stop.....                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. The pastor teaches above our heads.....                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. Our pastor has a support network of friends and colleagues.....            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. Shut-ins and those in the hospital feel the pastor cares about them.....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. Sermons show that the pastor knows what life is like in the lay world..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. Pastor knows when to ask for outside help.....                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. Pastors leads worship so that we all feel connected to God.....            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. Our pastor can adapt when things go in a different direction.....          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. The pastor does not like to do Bible studies.....                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30. The pastor pursues opportunities of self-development.....                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |



31. Pastor loves what she/he is doing in ministry.....	1	2	3	4	5
32. Our pastor is able to help rivals understand and get with the vision. ....	1	2	3	4	5
33. Our pastor is willing to take risk for the sake of the gospel.....	1	2	3	4	5
34. The pastor feels positive about being call to pastoral ministry.....	1	2	3	4	5
35. Our Pastor has a humble heart.....	1	2	3	4	5
36. Our pastor follows through on commitments.....	1	2	3	4	5
37. The pastor considers himself/herself an evangelist.....	1	2	3	4	5
38. Our pastor follows through on tasks.....	1	2	3	4	5
39. Pastor is a person who enjoys people.....	1	2	3	4	5
40. People feel prayerful support from the pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
41. People get involve in active worship participation.....	1	2	3	4	5
42. Pastor helps us to understand the Bible and theology.....	1	2	3	4	5
43. People comment on the humble spirit of the pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
44. The pastor is clear about counseling boundaries/limitations.....	1	2	3	4	5
45. Has a special sense so that when something happens pastor is there .....	1	2	3	4	5
46. Our pastor thinks of others before himself/herself.....	1	2	3	4	5
47. Pastor sees his/her cup as half-full rather than half-empty.....	1	2	3	4	5
48. The pastor seeks to discern God's will for the church.....	1	2	3	4	5
49. The pastor helps me to grow in my faith.....	1	2	3	4	5
50. The pastor displays great modesty of self.....	1	2	3	4	5
51. Pastor establishes time for self, family, and/or spouse.....	1	2	3	4	5
52. Our pastor enjoys being a leader.....	1	2	3	4	5
53. The pastor has a clear vision of what God is calling him/her to do.....	1	2	3	4	5
54. Our pastor overworks at times.....	1	2	3	4	5
55. The pastor exemplifies Christian character.....	1	2	3	4	5
56. People feel valued by the pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
57. Our pastor loves surprises.....	1	2	3	4	5
58. The pastor looks for ways to serve others.....	1	2	3	4	5
59. Our pastor has someone to confide in outside the congregation.....	1	2	3	4	5
60. Pastor makes sure that pastoral care is given to all the congregation.....	1	2	3	4	5
61. The pastor uses an inner quiet strength to lead.....	1	2	3	4	5
62. The pastor finds that sometimes it is hard to find time to pray.....	1	2	3	4	5
63. The pastor shares the vision of the church in helpful ways.....	1	2	3	4	5
64. People get excited about efforts to reach new people.....	1	2	3	4	5
65. People affirm the call of the pastor to pastoral ministry.....	1	2	3	4	5
66. Our pastor sees change as positive not negative.....	1	2	3	4	5
67. With our pastor conflicts get resolved and healing comes.....	1	2	3	4	5

68. Worship is a bore.....	1	2	3	4	5
69. People come to Bible study because they learn so much.....	1	2	3	4	5
70. Our pastor sometimes appears to be forlorn.....	1	2	3	4	5
71. People appreciate the pastoral care given by the pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
72. People affirm our pastor's creativity.....	1	2	3	4	5
73. The pastor reflects the spirit of Christ.....	1	2	3	4	5
74. The pastor shares insights from her/his Bible study.....	1	2	3	4	5
75. The pastor does not know if she/he is called by God to ministry.....	1	2	3	4	5
76. The integrity of our pastor is very positive.....	1	2	3	4	5
77. The congregation knows what the pastor's passion is.....	1	2	3	4	5
78. Pastor protects his Sabbath time and takes regular times away.....	1	2	3	4	5
79. People feel respected by the pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
80. Pastor uses available continuing education funds.....	1	2	3	4	5
81. Pastor does things with no intention of getting something in return.....	1	2	3	4	5
82. The pastor is able to articulate a clear vision and give direction.....	1	2	3	4	5
83. Our pastor lives by what he/she preaches.....	1	2	3	4	5
84. People understand what the pastor is saying.....	1	2	3	4	5
85. Pastor is dependable.....	1	2	3	4	5
86. Pastor seeks out feedback about where they could improve.....	1	2	3	4	5
87. Sometimes I feel my pastor is not truthful.....	1	2	3	4	5
88. People feel that talking to the pastor is like talking to a stone.....	1	2	3	4	5
89. We have seen answers to our pastor's prayers.....	1	2	3	4	5
90. The pastor feels he/she is a good preacher.....	1	2	3	4	5
91. We hate the word evangelism.....	1	2	3	4	5
92. The pastor causes conflict.....	1	2	3	4	5
93. We are lead into servant ministries by our pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
94. People feel listened to when they talk to the pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
95. Our pastor prays with power.....	1	2	3	4	5
96. We regard our pastor as a spiritual leader.....	1	2	3	4	5
97. It is evident that our pastor is into reading God's word regularly.....	1	2	3	4	5
98. Our pastor is not very aware of the needs of the congregation.....	1	2	3	4	5
99. Creative problem solving is normal for our pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
100. Our people feel the pastor wants them as part of the team.....	1	2	3	4	5
101. People seldom know what the pastor has in mind for the church.....	1	2	3	4	5
102. The pastor demonstrates an inner confidence.....	1	2	3	4	5
103. People are glad to follow the leadership of the pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
104. Pastor does not get involved in compromising situations.....	1	2	3	4	5

105. Our pastor acts as though he/she does not enjoy ministry.....	1	2	3	4	5
106. We do not see evidence of our pastor's prayer life.....	1	2	3	4	5
107. Pastor takes adequate time for family and self.....	1	2	3	4	5
108. Pastor goes over the edge creatively.....	1	2	3	4	5
109. Confidence in self allows the pastor to remain non-defensive.....	1	2	3	4	5
110. Pastor has other positive interests besides our church.....	1	2	3	4	5
111. Uses off-color, hurtful, or prejudicial humor and offends people.....	1	2	3	4	5
112. People feel that they and the pastor have a connection.....	1	2	3	4	5
113. We see that continuing education renews our pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
114. The congregation appreciates the pastor's sermons.....	1	2	3	4	5
115. The pastor doesn't express a vital faith.....	1	2	3	4	5
116. Serving people gives joy to our pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
117. Our pastor is a good manager/administrator.....	1	2	3	4	5
118. The congregational is comfortable around the pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
119. The pastor calms anxiety, tension, and conflict.....	1	2	3	4	5
120. When the pastor is to do something, it never gets done.....	1	2	3	4	5
121. The pastor is able to help others see good in changes.....	1	2	3	4	5
122. The pastor's confidence overcomes any nervousness.....	1	2	3	4	5
123. Worship is exciting because of the creative way our pastor leads it.....	1	2	3	4	5
124. Pastor deals with conflict quickly and effectively.....	1	2	3	4	5
125. Pastor does not let antagonists get to him/her.....	1	2	3	4	5
126. The pastor is afraid to make any significant change.....	1	2	3	4	5
127. People understand the pastor's expectations.....	1	2	3	4	5
128. Our pastor came that we might serve him/her.....	1	2	3	4	5
129. The pastor takes too much time for self.....	1	2	3	4	5
130. Pastor responds to negative people with tack and grace.....	1	2	3	4	5
131. Pastor uses continuing education time for vacation.....	1	2	3	4	5
132. People discuss the points of the sermon.....	1	2	3	4	5
133. The pastor demonstrates Christian warmth and love.....	1	2	3	4	5
134. The pastor helps individuals understand their call.....	1	2	3	4	5
135. The pastor cares about our traditions of worship.....	1	2	3	4	5
136. The pastor does not take sides in conflict.....	1	2	3	4	5
137. The pastor preaches helpful sermons.....	1	2	3	4	5
138. The pastor builds momentum through teams.....	1	2	3	4	5
139. The pastor always tries to help people understand her/him.....	1	2	3	4	5
140. People remember what the pastor preached about during the week.....	1	2	3	4	5
141. The pastor helps people understand God and the Bible.....	1	2	3	4	5

142. We often have some creative element in worship.....	1	2	3	4	5
143. Pastor makes worship meaningful.....	1	2	3	4	5
144. Pastor is not a lone ranger and likes to involve and work with others.....	1	2	3	4	5
145. The pastor is friendly to everyone.....	1	2	3	4	5
146. The pastor gets much done in a short amount of time.....	1	2	3	4	5
147. Sunday services I feel closer to God.....	1	2	3	4	5
148. People often move from being a problem to being supportive.....	1	2	3	4	5
149. The pastor leads the congregation to embrace the risks of ministry.....	1	2	3	4	5
150. The pastor has favorites in the congregation.....	1	2	3	4	5
151. Pastor has a sense of being called by God into ministry.....	1	2	3	4	5
152. The pastor seldom has many from the congregation in his/her court.....	1	2	3	4	5
153. The congregation affirms the gift of teacher in our pastor.....	1	2	3	4	5
154. The pastor can work with all people.....	1	2	3	4	5
155. The pastor seeks to follow God's call in their ministry.....	1	2	3	4	5
156. The Pastor exemplifies a personal relationship with God.....	1	2	3	4	5
157. Pastor backs down to antagonists.....	1	2	3	4	5
158. The pastor prays for the needs of the people other than in worship.....	1	2	3	4	5
159. Many attend the pastor's Bible study.....	1	2	3	4	5
160. The pastor can challenge us and still not make us feel judged.....	1	2	3	4	5
161. The pastor is flexible when someone has a different idea.....	1	2	3	4	5
162. Our pastor is never organized.....	1	2	3	4	5
163. Our pastor has a servant's heart.....	1	2	3	4	5
164. Our pastor loves to teach.....	1	2	3	4	5
165. Our pastor can think on her/his feet.....	1	2	3	4	5
166. Our pastor speaks of having many friends outside the congregation.....	1	2	3	4	5
167. Pastor offers the congregation comfort and support in times of need.....	1	2	3	4	5
168. The pastor seldom gets flustered.....	1	2	3	4	5
169. Our pastor takes a regular day off for Sabbath renewal.....	1	2	3	4	5
170. Our pastor comes up with great ideas.....	1	2	3	4	5
171. Organization is our pastor's gift to the congregation.....	1	2	3	4	5
172. We often welcome new Christians into our congregation.....	1	2	3	4	5
173. People are not fed by the sermons.....	1	2	3	4	5
174. Our pastor loves to bring new people to Christ.....	1	2	3	4	5

Thank You for Filling This Out!

## REACHING FOR EXCELLENCE CHARACTERISTICS TALLY

Characteristics Survey Tally: Write responses on lines that correspond by number for all three persons. Place responses with number in ( ) on the line after the number. The number in [ ] after the total is the highest possible score.

### 1. Called of God

	34					
	65					
	134					
	151					
	155					
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [75]
						( 75)_____

#### a. Relationship w/ God

	16	49	73	96	156	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [75]
						(115)_____

### 2. Worship and preaching

	27	41	135	143	147	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
	90	114	132	137	140	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [150]
						(68 + 173)_____

### 3. Character and integrity

	2	25	55	76	79	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
	7	36	83	85	110	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [150]
						(87 + 120) _____

### 4. Continues to learn and grow

	14	30	80	86	113	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total\_\_\_\_[75]

(131)\_\_\_\_

5. Bible reading and study

4 29 74 141 159

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total\_\_\_\_[75]

(97)\_\_\_\_

6. People skills

56 84 94 100 139

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total\_\_\_\_[75]

(88) \_\_\_\_

a. Conflict Management

26 67 119 124 136

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total\_\_\_\_[75]

(92) \_\_\_\_

b. Dealing w/Antagonists

32 125 130 148 154

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total\_\_\_\_[75]

(157)\_\_\_\_

c. Approachability

112 118 133 145 160

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total\_\_\_\_[75]

(150)\_\_\_\_

7. Person of prayer

40 62 89 95 158

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total\_\_\_\_[75]

(106)\_\_\_\_

8. Know Boundaries and Limits

11 19 44 51 104

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total\_\_\_\_[75]

(111)\_\_\_\_

9. Leadership/ visionary	52	103	127	138	144	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
	20	48	53	63	82	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [150]
						(152 + 101)_____
10. Flexibility/Adaptability	28	57	161	165	168	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [75]
						(3) _____
11. Passion and Enthusiasm	1	13	31	47	77	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [75]
						(105)_____
12. Servant	58	81	93	116	163	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [75]
						(128)_____
13. Humility	35	43	46	50	61	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [75]
						(21) _____
14. Teacher	5	42	69	153	164	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
Laity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Total_____ [75]
						(22) _____
15. Builds Support Networks	6	23	39	59	166	
Pastor Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
DS Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_[75]

(70) \_\_\_\_\_

16. Pastoral Care

24      45      60      71      167

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_[75]

(98) \_\_\_\_\_

17. Sabbath Keeping

17      54      78      107      169

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_[75]

(129) \_\_\_\_\_

18. Confidence

8      12      102      109      122

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_[75]

(18) \_\_\_\_\_

19. Creativity/Innovation

72      99      123      142      170

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_[75]

(108) \_\_\_\_\_

20. Risk-taker, Change Agent

15      33      66      121      149

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_[75]

(126) \_\_\_\_\_

21. Administration

10      38      117      146      171

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_[75]

(162) \_\_\_\_\_

22. Evangelist

9      37      64      172      174

Pastor Score \_\_\_\_\_

DS Score \_\_\_\_\_

Laity \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_[75]

(91) \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX L

### Reaching for Excellence Growth Plan

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. List three or four areas that you feel you could experience growth in order to be more effective and achieve a greater level of excellence in your ministry:


2. List the characteristics that received the lowest percentage of total possible points:


3. Check the characteristics you are ready to work on.

4. Design a plan to address these areas and established the date you will begin: Some ways of addressing the areas chosen: classes, books, counseling, seminars, mentoring etc. Indicate how and to whom you will be accountable:


\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Superintendent    Date

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